

SD State Parks
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South Dakota
State Park
Bicycle Tours



PUBLISHED BY
THE SD DIVISION OF PARKS & RECREATION
AND THE SD DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

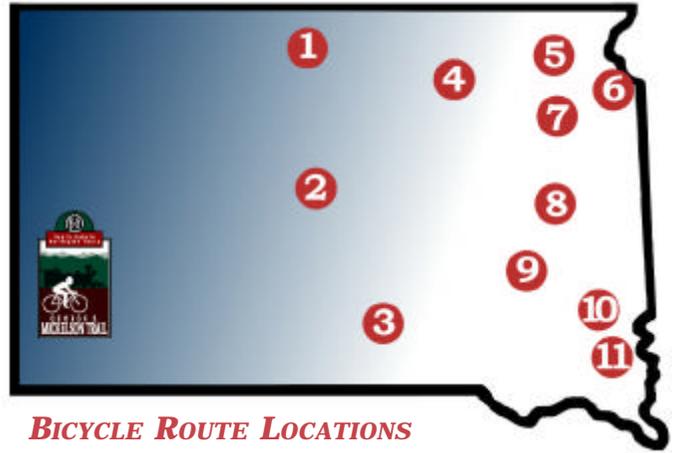
BICYCLE TOURING GUIDE
AND RECOMMENDED ROUTES
FOR SOUTH DAKOTA
STATE PARKS & RECREATION AREAS

31,250 copies of this brochure were printed at a cost of \$.16 each.

Welcome to SD state parks ...

South Dakota has welcomed the moniker “Land of Infinite Variety,” and one of the best ways to become acquainted with this land is by bicycle.

Here, you’ll find eleven routes that connect South Dakota state parks and recreation areas through areas of flatland, rolling hills, vast prairie and croplands, wide lakes, meandering rivers, challenging climbs and scenic vistas.



BICYCLE ROUTE LOCATIONS

The routes are intended primarily for road cyclists, though distances and surfaces accommodate a wide variety of cycling abilities.

If you prefer fat-tire cycling, state parks can accommodate you with a wide variety of trails throughout the state. Learn more about additional trail opportunities, including the George S. Mickelson Trail in the Black Hills, at the end of this booklet.

We hope you enjoy South Dakota state parks by bicycle and encourage your feedback. Feel free to visit us online at www.sdgap.info/Parks.

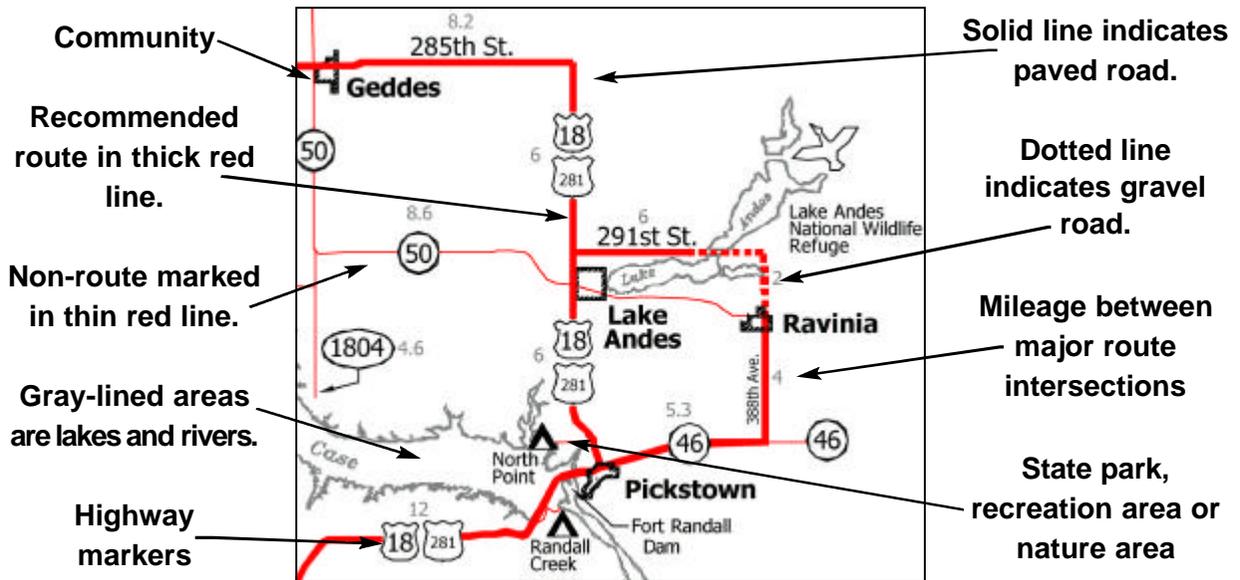
Happy trails and tailwinds!

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How to use this guide

Thank you for picking up this guide. To learn about the maps and how we chose the routes, review this page and you'll be one step closer to a bicycle adventure with state parks. The main points you'll find in each map are detailed below.



The Routes & Travel Planning ...

- Maps are oriented so the top of the map is directed north.
- Non-route roads and highways are included for reference points only and are not a portion of the recommend route.
- In rural areas, services may be limited or far between. Be sure to plan ahead and be prepared. Cellular phone service may be limited in some areas, as well.
- Every intention was made to keep the route on paved, low traffic roads. However, in some instances, a gravel or higher traffic roads are the best or only options. The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks cannot guarantee your safety on any of these routes.
- Be prepared. Always check your travel plans in advance. Pay attention to weather forecasts. Check with the SD Department Transportation for road construction information. Call (866) 697-3511 or, on cellular phone, 511. Online, visit www.sddot.com and visit "Traveler Info."
- South Dakota travel information and state maps can be obtained from the SD Department of Tourism by calling (800) S-DAKOTA or online at www.travelsd.com.
- You may also contact South Dakota's Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator to aid in tour planning. Phone: (605) 773-4912 or email Craig.McIntyre@state.sd.us.

Tips for an enjoyable ride

Bicycling is a great way to maintain a healthy, active lifestyle. By considering your health and safety, you can make for a more enjoyable ride. The South Dakota Department of Health recommends these tips for a more safe and enjoyable ride.

BICYCLING FOR HEALTH

Bicycling is a fun way to be active. The SD Department of Health recommends a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week to reduce incidents of:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Cardiovascular disease
- Feelings of depression and anxiety
- Obesity
- Hypertension

WEAR A HELMET

- Buy a bike helmet that has been tested and meets federal safety standard issued by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Wear it for every ride.
- Make sure your helmet fits and is worn properly.
- The helmet should fit evenly between the ears and rest low on your forehead. There should 1-2 finger widths' space above your eyebrow.

NUTRITION

- Drink plenty of water before, during and after activity, especially when it is hot or humid. If you plan to be active for an hour or more, drink water at least 15 minutes before and every 15 minutes during your activity. Don't wait to feel thirsty to drink.
- Carry high energy foods. Good foods for bicycling include the following:
 - cereal snack mix or trail mix, granola
 - fresh fruits like apples and bananas
 - bagels, whole wheat crackers, pretzels, rice or popcorn cakes, fruit and nut breads made with minimal sugar and fat
 - low fat commercial snacks such as vanilla wafers, animal crackers, ginger snaps, graham crackers or fig bars.

ROAD WISE

- Ride on the right in single file in the same direction as traffic. Use the shoulder when possible. If no shoulder is available, take the lane so you may be visible to traffic.
- When riding in groups, always pass on the left. Slower moving cyclists should stay on the right.
- Use hand signals. Announce your intentions when riding in groups like when stopping or passing.
- Wear bright clothing for better visibility.
- Obey traffic laws and signs.

STRETCHING TIPS

- Always stretch within your limits. Relax and breathe while you stretch. Stretching should not be painful. If you feel pain, you are over-stretching.
- Stretch with steady pressure and hold the stretch for 20-30 seconds. Never bounce while stretching.
- After physical activity, stretch again while your muscles are warm. This decreases muscle soreness.

USEFUL TIPS

- Use a sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher.
- Know basic bicycle maintenance. Carry a flat kit that includes patches, tire irons and a spare tube.
- Be sure that someone knows of your riding plans - i.e. where you are going, when you plan to be back.
- Carry a small first aid kit including band aids, sterile gauze pads, cleansing agent, tweezers, non-latex gloves and some cash for a phone call or a ride.
- Prepare your body for riding long distances through regular exercise and bicycling.
- Wear clothing in layers. Choose sweat-wicking materials. Padded shorts reduce saddle soreness.

CAPITOL TOUR

As South Dakota's capital city, Pierre offers much for recreation. For bicyclists in particular, there is an extensive trail system through and near the community.

The Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Trail connects Farm Island, LaFramboise Island, Oahe Downstream and the communities of Pierre and Fort Pierre. Through Pierre, the path follows the shore of Lake Sharpe through two city parks, Griffin and Steamboat parks.

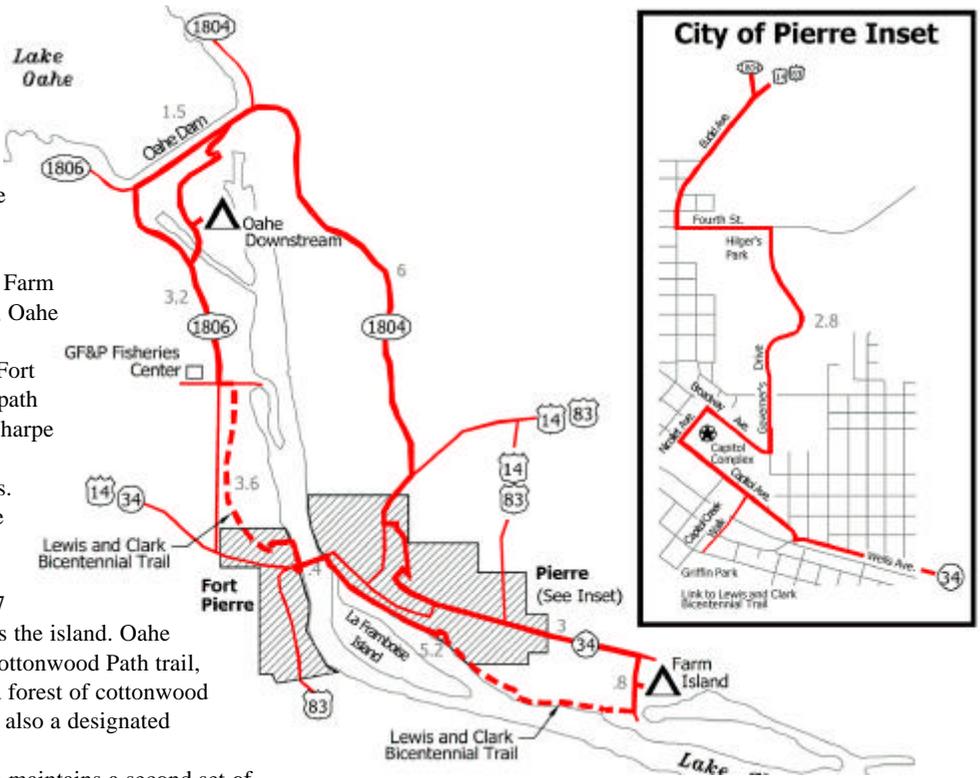
At Farm Island, fat tire bicyclists will enjoy the 3-mile Island Nature Trail. LaFramboise Island offers 7 miles of trails that criss-cross the island. Oahe Downstream also has the Cottonwood Path trail, which leads users through a forest of cottonwood trees. Each of these trails is also a designated National Recreation Trail.

The City of Pierre also maintains a second set of paved trails which follow Wells Avenue, run past the Capitol Building and grounds and through Hilgers Gulch. Note the Capitol Complex on the inset map. Near the Capitol is Capitol Lake, known for the flaming fountain and the geese and ducks who visit year-round. South Dakota's World War II Memorial stands on the lakeshore, as well.

In addition to being the state's capital, the Pierre area is known for its Lewis and Clark connection. In September 1804, the expedition met the Teton Sioux near the mouth of the Bad River, located in Fort Pierre. You can view the site from LaFramboise Island where an interpretive sign describes the meeting.

With the city bike path as part of the tour, this becomes an easy route. The route turns onto Highway 1806 at the Game, Fish and Parks Fisheries Center. From highways 1806 and 1804, you can ride across the dam or below the dam near the park. Riding below the dam may be a better option if cross-winds are a problem.

Modern camping facilities and camping cabins are found at Oahe Downstream and Farm Island recreation areas. LaFramboise Island offers no camping facilities.



Route Basics

Mileage: 26 miles

Road Characteristics: City bicycle path with paved or crushed rock surface between Farm Island and the GF&P Fisheries Center.

Paved road with narrow shoulders and moderate traffic on 1806 and 1804

Difficulty: Easy to Moderate. Moderate climb to top of the dam north of Oahe Downstream.

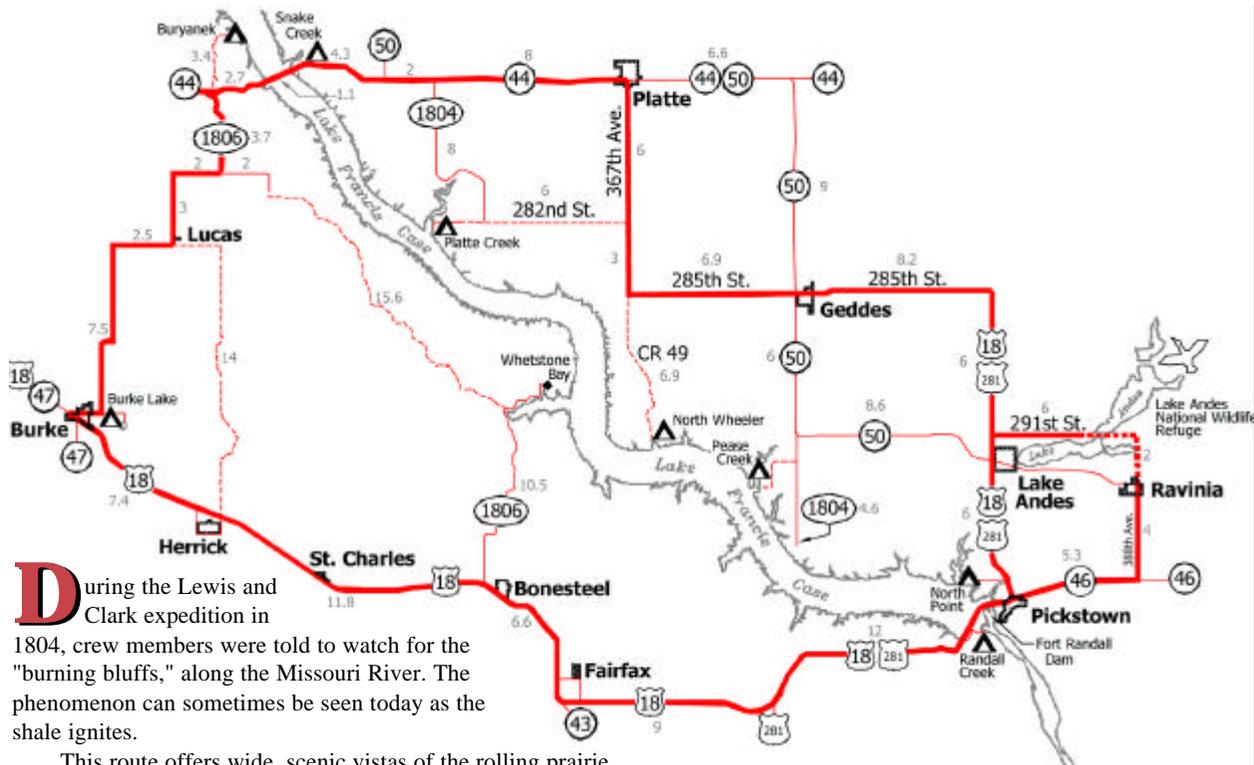
Parks included: Oahe Downstream and Farm

Island recreation areas and LaFramboise Island Nature Area

Communities with services: Pierre and Fort Pierre

Contact: Farm Island Recreation Area: (605) 224-5605 or FarmIsland@state.sd.us; Oahe Downstream Recreation Area: (605) 223-7722 or Oahe@state.sd.us

BURNING BLUFFS TOUR



During the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1804, crew members were told to watch for the "burning bluffs," along the Missouri River. The phenomenon can sometimes be seen today as the shale ignites.

This route offers wide, scenic vistas of the rolling prairie and Missouri River, and can easily become a 3-day tour. It follows primarily rural roads with some more heavily traveled state highways. Riders have the option of also riding to the Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge.

The most challenging areas are through the Missouri River watershed. Otherwise, away from the river, the land is mostly rolling prairie. Near the river, riders will encounter 5 to 8 percent grades, particularly in the Snake Creek and North Point areas as the route runs through the river watershed.

Rural roads see little traffic and have little to no shoulder. State highways 44/50, 218 and 18 will see the most traffic and have wider shoulders. Riders should be cautious crossing the Missouri River on Highways 44 and 18 due to possible crosswinds and traffic.

SD Hwy 281/18 has a 6-foot shoulder. SD Hwy 44/50 from Platte to the Missouri River will see the most traffic along the route and has a 6-foot gravel shoulder. SD Hwy 18 from Burke to Pickstown is well-traveled with a 2- to 6-foot paved shoulder.

Camping facilities can be found at any of the parks along the route. Burke Lake and Whetstone Bay have primitive facilities, while others have more developed facilities, including showers. Cabins are available at Buryanek, Snake Creek,

6 North Point and Randall Creek.

Route Basics

Mileage: *Main loop:* 130 miles; *Lake Andes NWR loop:* 17.3 miles off-route

Road Characteristics: Paved, rural roads. Light to moderate traffic.

Difficulty: Moderate to challenging in areas of the Missouri River watershed.

Parks included: *On-route:* Burke Lake, North Point, Randall Creek and Snake Creek recreation areas; *Off-route:* Buryanek, North Wheeler,

Pease Creek, Platte Creek recreation areas and Whetstone Bay Lakeside Use Area.

Communities with services: Bonesteel, Burke, Geddes, Lake Andes, Pickstown and Platte.

Contact: North Point RA, (605)487-7046, NorthPoint@state.sd.us; or Snake Creek RA, (605)337-2587, SnakeCreek@state.sd.us

ABERDEEN LAKES TOUR

Aberdeen's area lakes include Richmond and Mina lakes, which each have a state recreation area offering camping, water recreation, fishing and more.

Mina Lake was one of the first constructed lakes in the northeastern part of South Dakota. Mina Dam was completed in 1934, and the lake was named

Shake Maza, a Lakota word for "shaped like a horseshoe." The name never quite caught-on, however, and it was later renamed in honor of a railroad president's daughter.

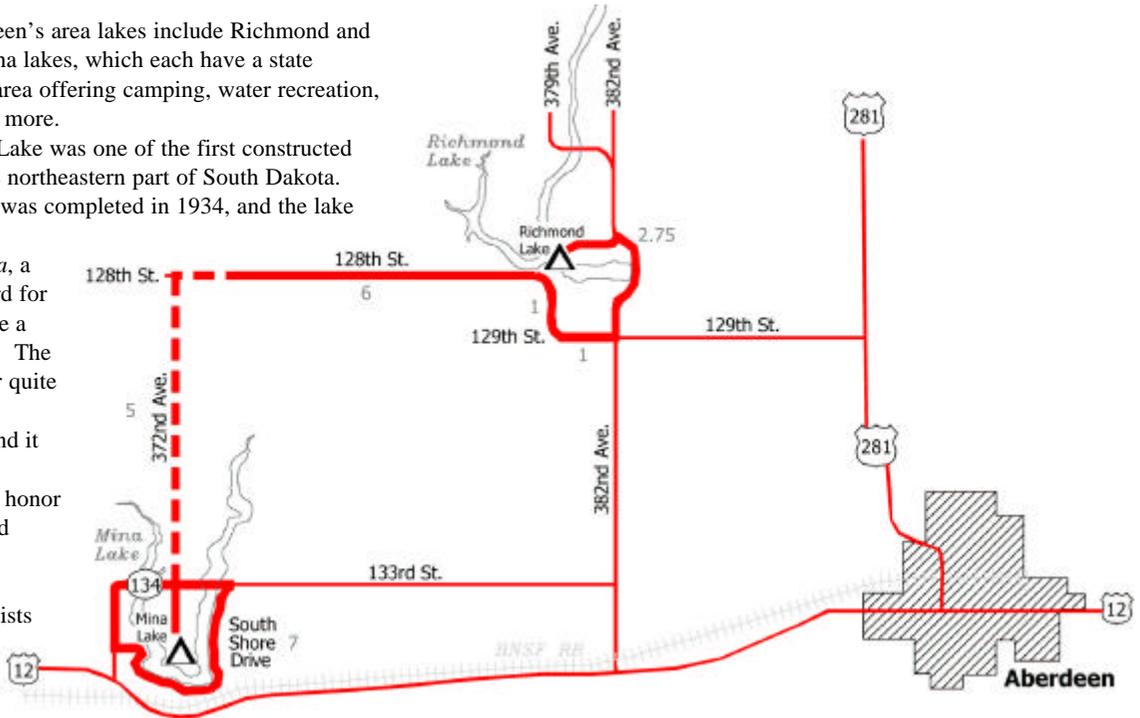
Bicyclists will enjoy Richmond Lake Recreation Area for

the trails located on the north side of the lake. Mountain bikes are especially suited for this area, which hosts an annual mountain bike race each summer.

From the campground area on the south side of Richmond Lake, bicyclists can ride the 4.75 miles to Forest Drive on the north side of the lake for a 4.3 mile trail and wildlife watching in the 200 acre area. If you prefer to stick closer to the campground, the quarter-mile Quaking Aspen Trail loops the east end of the campground. Mina Lake also has the three-quarter mile Shake Maza Trail suitable for biking and nature viewing.

This bicycle route offers two easy loops around both Mina Lake and Richmond Lake recreation areas. A route connecting the two parks incorporates both gravel and paved roads. Watch for agricultural traffic on the gravel road. The paved section of county road leading to Richmond Lake sees minimal traffic with little to no shoulder. Overall, the route is mostly flat with some minor hills.

Modern camping facilities are found at both Richmond Lake and Mina Lake recreation areas. Mina also has a group lodge available, while each park has a camping cabin.



Route Basics

Mileage: Entire route: 22.75 miles; Mina loop: 7 miles; Richmond loop: 4.75 miles.

Road Characteristics: Mostly paved rural roads with no shoulder and minimal to moderate traffic. Watch for agricultural traffic on gravel section.

Difficulty: Easy. Mostly flat. Moderate on the gravel section due to road surface.

Parks included: Richmond Lake and Mina Lake recreation areas

Communities with services: Off-route: Aberdeen

Contact: Richmond Lake Recreation Area: (605) 225-5325 or RichmondLake@state.sd.us

COTEAU DES PRAIRIE TOUR

Coteau des Prairie, or “hills of the prairie,” is a landscape created by the movement of glaciers. This movement created the hills and ridges that are part of the glacial moraine landscape.

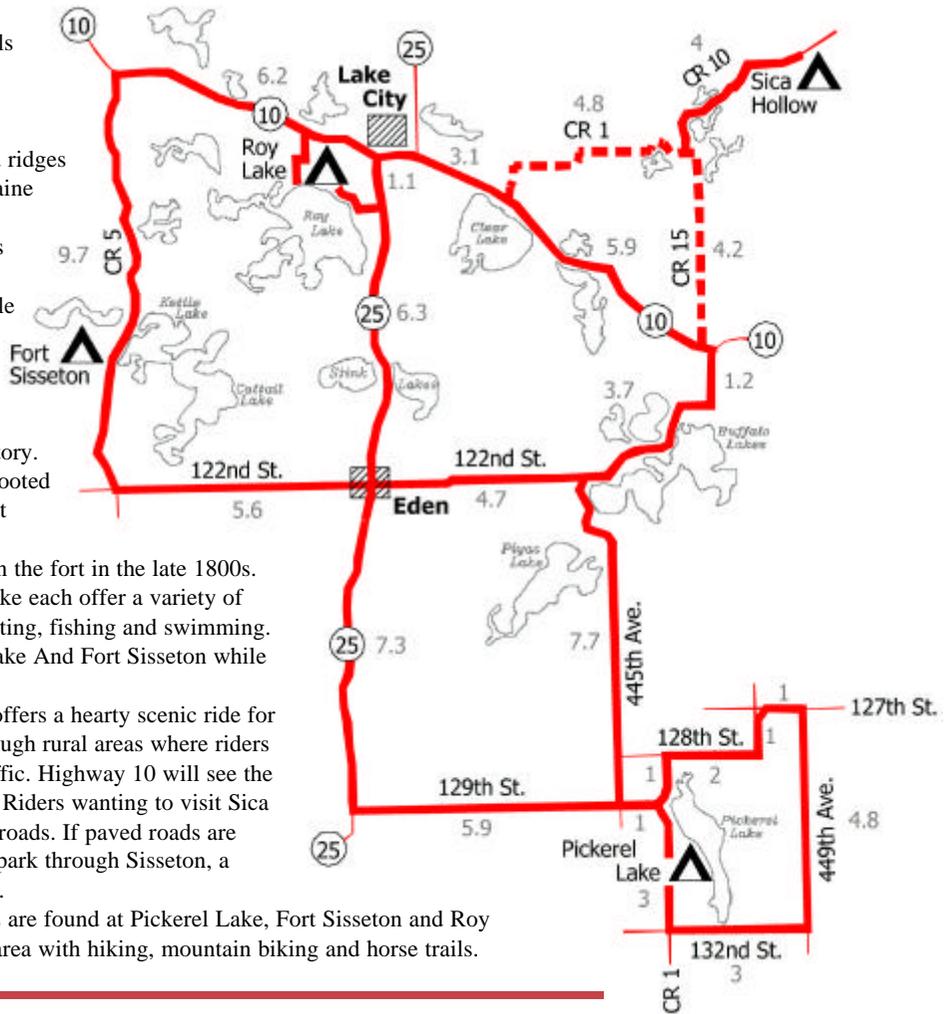
Wildlife, particularly birds and waterfowl, find home among the abundance of pothole lakes, offering memorable experiences for wildlife watchers.

The route runs through land that has a rich cultural history. The legend of Sica Hollow is rooted in the Sioux Culture, while Fort Sisseton tells the stories of the soldiers and others who lived in the fort in the late 1800s.

Roy Lake and Pickerel Lake each offer a variety of water recreation, including boating, fishing and swimming. Cabins are found at Pickerel Lake and Fort Sisseton while Roy Lake has a resort.

The quiet, rolling terrain offers a hearty scenic ride for any bicyclist. Roads travel through rural areas where riders should experience minimal traffic. Highway 10 will see the most traffic of the entire route. Riders wanting to visit Sica Hollow should note the gravel roads. If paved roads are preferred, riders can reach the park through Sisseton, a nearly 20-mile detour off-route.

Modern camping facilities are found at Pickerel Lake, Fort Sisseton and Roy Lake. Sica Hollow is a nature area with hiking, mountain biking and horse trails.



Route Basics

Mileage: 93.5 miles

Road Characteristics: Mostly paved rural roads with minimal traffic. Highway 10 will see the most traffic and has a moderate shoulder. Gravel roads lead to Sica Hollow.

Difficulty: Moderate. Rolling hills are found throughout the route as it passes through this area of pothole lakes and wetlands.

Parks included: Pickerel Lake Recreation Area, Roy Lake, Fort Sisseton Historic and Sica Hollow state parks.

Communities with services: *On-route:* Eden, Lake City. *Off-route (not on map):* Sisseton (10 miles east on Hwy 10); Roslyn (3 miles south on Hwy 25)

Contact: Roy Lake: (605) 448-5701 or RoyLake@state.sd.us; Fort Sisseton: (605) 448-5474 or FortSisseton@state.sd.us; Pickerel Lake: (605) 486-4753 or PickerelLake@state.sd.us

BIG STONE LAKE TOUR

Approximately 20 miles north of Hartford Beach you'll find the North-South Continental Divide that acts as a barrier between Lake Traverse and Big Stone Lake. From this point, the two watersheds empty northward into the Hudson Bay and to southward into the Gulf of Mexico, respectively.

Hartford Beach State Park became one of the first state parks in 1945 when the state park system was established in South Dakota. The park's most notable attractions are its history, trails, beach and wooded campground. The park showcases its varying history with a prehistoric village site and the old Robar log cabin trading post, in addition to the heritage the region attributes to the American Indians who lived in the area, as well as the English and French settlers who began arriving in the late 1600s.

Big Stone Island Nature Area is home to a rich and unique history. During the 1800s and early 1900s, when resort hotels dotted the lakeshore, excursion boats would often stop at the island's brothel. In an attempt to close the facility, irate women reportedly burned and sank one excursion boat. Later, in the 1940s, military aircraft practiced landing and taking off from a short runway on the island in preparation for war in the Pacific.

Today, Big Stone Island is accessible only by boat. You can view the island along the route that follows Highway 109. You'll get the best view if you exit Highway 109 at the Rearing Ponds halfway along the route's eastern section. Overall, you'll experience quiet, scenic paved roads along this rural route.

Modern camping facilities are available at Hartford Beach State Park. Big Stone Island Nature Area has no facilities and is accessible only by boat. In addition to camping facilities, Hartford Beach offers five easy hiking and bicycling trails that take visitors along scenic and historic routes through the park.

Route Basics

Mileage: 31 miles

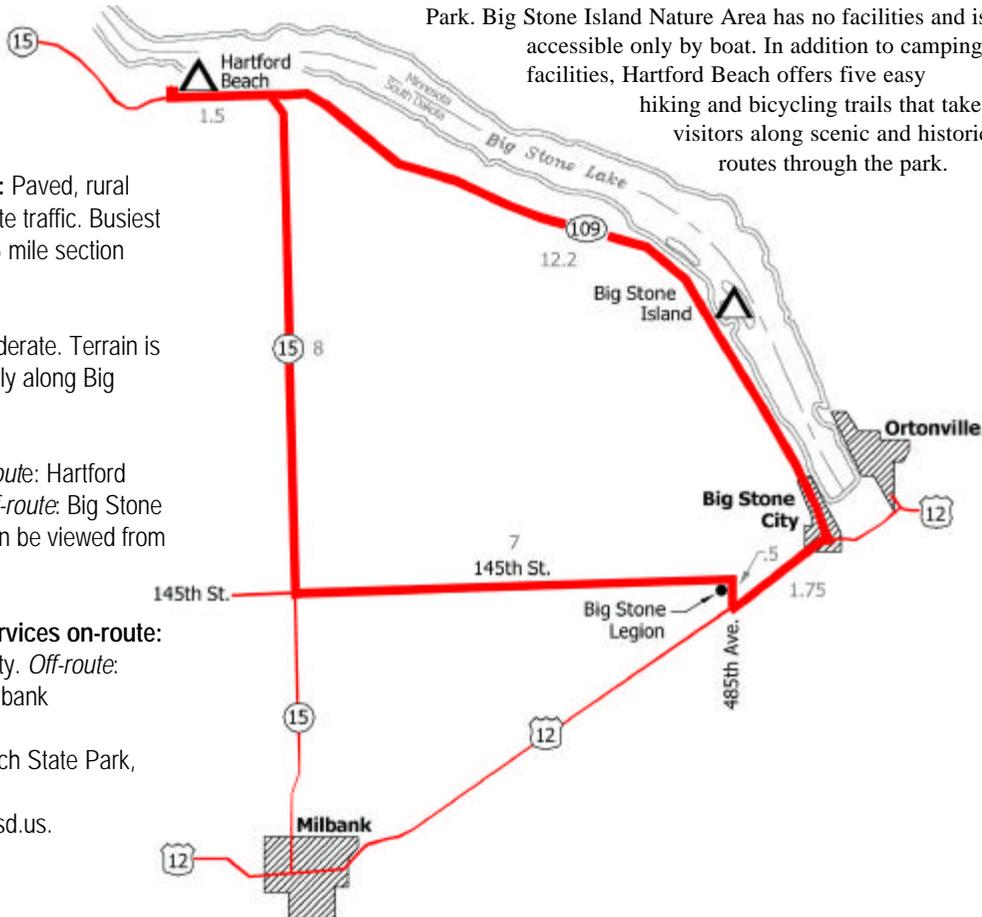
Road Characteristics: Paved, rural roads. Light to moderate traffic. Busiest section will be the 1.75 mile section west of Big Stone City.

Difficulty: Easy to Moderate. Terrain is flat to rolling, particularly along Big Stone Lake.

Parks included: *On-route:* Hartford Beach State Park. *Off-route:* Big Stone Island Nature Area (can be viewed from route)

Communities with services on-route: *On-route:* Big Stone City. *Off-route:* Ortonville, MN, and Milbank

Contact: Hartford Beach State Park, (605) 432-6374 or HartfordBeach@state.sd.us.



MORTIMER'S LOOP TOUR

This route sits on the southern edge of the Glacial Lakes region, which owes its landscape of lakes to the glaciers that carved the land.

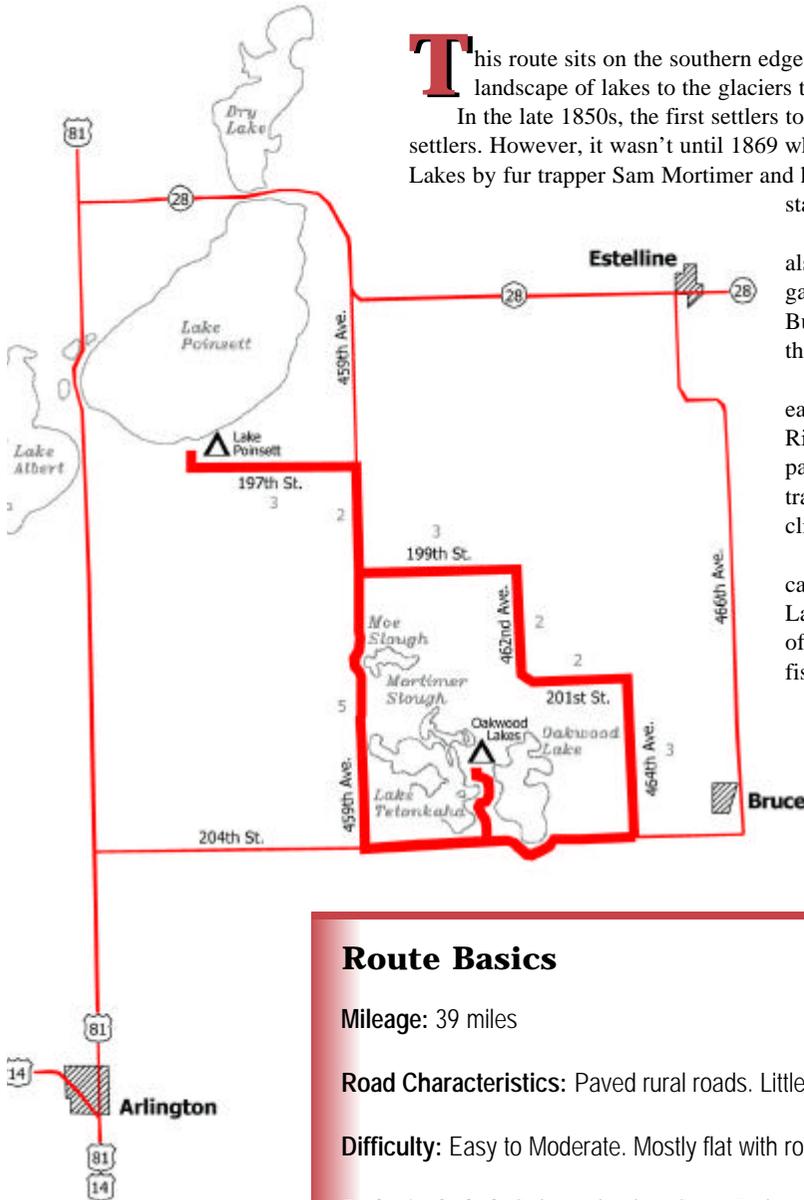
In the late 1850s, the first settlers to call this area home were Norwegian settlers. However, it wasn't until 1869 when a settlement was built at Oakwood Lakes by fur trapper Sam Mortimer and his wife. Mortimer's historic cabin still stands today in the park.

Before settlers arrived, this lake area was also used as a summer camp and an annual gathering place for American Indian tribes. Burial mounds still exist as a reminder of these previous residents.

Overall, the route is a quiet, relaxing and easy ride between two well-visited lake areas. Riders can expect relatively flat, rural roads, passing through cropland and with little traffic. There are rolling hills with moderate climbs along 495th Avenue and 197th Street.

Modern camping facilities and camping cabins are found at both Oakwood Lakes and Lake Poinsett. In addition to camping, each offer a variety of water recreation, including fishing, boating and swimming.

For a change of pace, canoes are also available for rent at Oakwood Lakes for a water tour of the park's chain of lakes. Those preferring to stay on land can also explore Oakwood Lakes' miles of hiking trails.



Route Basics

Mileage: 39 miles

Road Characteristics: Paved rural roads. Little to no shoulder. Minimal traffic.

Difficulty: Easy to Moderate. Mostly flat with rolling hills on the western portion of the route.

Parks included: Oakwood Lakes State Park, Lake Poinsett Recreation Area

Communities with services near route:

Bruce (east), Estelline (northeast) and Arlington (southwest).

Contact: Oakwood Lakes State Park: (605) 627-5441 or OakwoodLakes@state.sd.us

Visiting SD state parks

If you'd like to switch from a road bike to a mountain bike, South Dakota state parks have trails you should try.

- George S. Mickelson Trail. 114-mile rail-to-trail from Lead/Deadwood to Edgemont in the Black Hills. Phone: (605) 584-3896. Web: www.mickelsontrail.com.

- Centennial Trail. 111-miles from Bear Butte State Park through Custer State Park and ending at Wind Cave National Park. Some areas are not open to bicyclists. Managed by the Black Hills National Forest. Phone: (605) 673-9292 Web: www.fs.fed.us/bhnf/.

- The following parks have trails suitable for bicycling:

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve | Big Sioux Recreation Area | Custer State Park |
| Farm Island Recreation Area | Hartford Beach State Park | LaFramboise Island Nature Area |
| Lake Herman State Park | Lewis & Clark Recreation Area | Newton Hills State Park |
| Oahe Downstream Recreation Area | Oakwood Lakes State Park | Pierson Ranch Recreation Area |
| Richmond Lake Recreation Area | Sica Hollow State Park | |

For more information

SD Division of Parks & Recreation

523 E Capitol Avenue

Pierre, SD 57501

Phone: (605) 773-3391

Web: www.sdgfp.info/Parks

Email: parkinfo@gfp.state.sd.us

Print: *Park Times: A guide to SD state parks*

MAKING RESERVATIONS

- Reservations can be made up to 90 days prior to arrival date.
- Call (800) 710-2267 or go online to www.CampSD.com for reservations.
- Camping reservations are accepted for arrival dates from the weekend prior to Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend in all parks. Some parks also accept reservations through Sept. 30.
- Camping cabins and lodges may be reserved for year-round arrival dates. The 90-day advance reservation policy applies to cabins. Lodges may be reserved at any time.
- Phone reservations are accepted Jan. 2 through Sept. 30 from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. CST. Online reservations may be made 24 hours per day.

NO RESERVATIONS?

- We recommend reservations, but you don't need reservations to camp in state parks.
- There are a number of parks which also have first come, first served campsites. These parks include: Bear Butte State Park, Burke Lake Recreation Area, Fisher Grove State Park, Union Grove State Park, Springfield Recreation Area, Lake Hiddenwood Recreation Area. There are others, as well, who offer some first come, first served sites. Refer to the latest issue of the *Park Times: Guide to SD state parks*.
- Also, if you arrive at a park without reservations, you can still camp if there are unoccupied, available sites. Sites will be marked if available. Check at the entrance booth, or, if no one is available, use the self-registration station at the entrance.