

History of the New Amsterdam Grasslands Tract

What is now called the New Amsterdam Grasslands was identified in 1997 by Craig Thompson, a founder of Mississippi Valley Conservancy, as one of our most important areas of conservation need. This 310-acre site in La Crosse County is significant enough in size that it provides critical nesting ground for rare grassland birds like the state-threatened Henslow's sparrow and Bell's vireo.

Northern Engraving Company saved the grasslands from bulldozers and later donated more than one million dollars in land value, which was combined with a nearly million-dollar grant from Wisconsin's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund to make this protection effort possible.

This property provides an accessible outdoor recreational resource for residents and visitors. Thirty-five acres is open to the public year-round. The remainder is open from August through March but closed from April through July (as detailed in the map) to allow undisturbed nesting during breeding season.

Activities allowed

Hiking, showshoeing, wildlife observation, hunting, trapping

Activities NOT allowed

Biking, dog-walking

Please respect landowners near Conservancy tracts by staying on the trail and turning back when signs indicate private property.

Some birds seen at the New Amsterdam Grasslands Tract

2001–2006 by Jean Rusher and Craig Thompson

- American woodcock
- Baltimore oriole
- Bell's vireo
- Belted kingfisher
- Black-billed cuckoo
- Bobolink
- Brown thrasher
- Chipping sparrow
- Clay-colored sparrow
- Cooper's hawk
- Dickcissel
- Field sparrow
- Grasshopper sparrow
- Great crested flycatcher
- Henslow's sparrow
- Northern harrier
- Peregrine falcon
- Vesper sparrow
- Western meadowlark
- Willow flycatcher



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HIKING MAP

New Amsterdam Grasslands Tract

La Crosse County, Wisconsin



Hiking the New Amsterdam Grasslands Tract

(W7900 Old NA, New Amsterdam, WI)

The trails follow the boundaries of an open, rolling prairie. A short trail (a little over a mile) is open year-round. A longer one (2.8 mi) is closed during nesting season, April, May, June, and July.

How to get to the trailhead/parking lot from La Crosse: Follow Hwy 53 north to exit MH. Exit right and follow to stop sign. Turn left onto MH and follow to XX. Turn right on XX and follow it into New Amsterdam. Turn right onto Old NA and follow it for approximately ½ mile to the trailhead and parking lot, which are on the left.

- 1 Start at the kiosk in the parking area and head north through a pedestrian gate.**
43° 59.076'N, -91° 18.036'W
- 2 Turn left here to complete a 1.1-mile loop, taking you back to the parking area. From August through March you may turn right (through a maintenance gate) and walk a 2.8 mi loop in either direction. This area is closed for bird nesting from April through July.**
43° 59.282'N, -91° 18.031'W



Key to Symbols

- P** Parking and kiosk
- - - Trail open all year
- - - Trail open August-March
- 1** Point of interest
- - - Tract boundary
- Road

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