

About Cassville Bluffs

This 244-acre bluffland property was a farm that had served as a nature retreat for the Roe family for over 50 years. Cassville Bluffs State Natural Area was conserved through a joint effort by Mississippi Valley Conservancy and the Wisconsin DNR. The Conservancy owns 190.6 acres and the Wisconsin DNR owns the remaining 53 acres (primarily the bluffland goat prairies and savannas along the River).

The nature preserve was hit by a tornado in 2015 from which it is still recovering. The Conservancy did a salvage harvest in 2016-2017 as the first step in helping the land recover.

Restoration projects on the nature preserve have included seeding cropland with permanent cover of native grasses and planting 2,000 oak trees at the top of the bluff in accordance with the land management plan for the property. This work was done in 2021.

Cassville Bluffs contains a variety of habitats including upland and lowland oak-hickory forest as well as rare oak savannas and goat prairies overlooking the Mississippi River. Because the preserve is adjacent to the Upper Mississippi River Fish & Wildlife Refuge, it provides habitat for species that require large areas of connected forest, such as neotropical migrating birds. In spring, the forests are alive with vibrant color and song from the many warblers passing through.

Activities allowed

Hiking, birding, nature photography, stargazing, snow-shoeing, cross-country skiing, hunting and fishing are allowed according to state and local ordinances

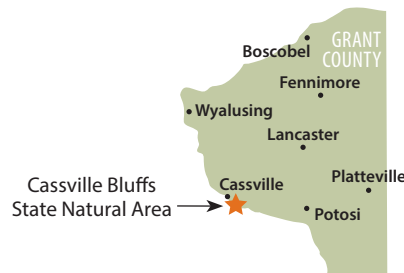
Activities NOT allowed

Dog-walking, seed collecting, taking flora or fauna, biking, operating motorized vehicles, camping or campfires

Please respect landowners near Conservancy tracts by observing property boundaries.

Some plants and animals seen here

- Common milkweed
- Purple rattlesnake root
- False Solomon's seal
- Jack-in-the-pulpit
- Crested flycatcher
- Blue-winged warbler
- Yellow-billed cuckoo
- Bald eagle
- White-tailed deer
- Coyote
- Eastern milk snake



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TRAIL MAP

Cassville Bluffs State Natural Area

5338 Sand Lake Lane, Cassville, WI 53806

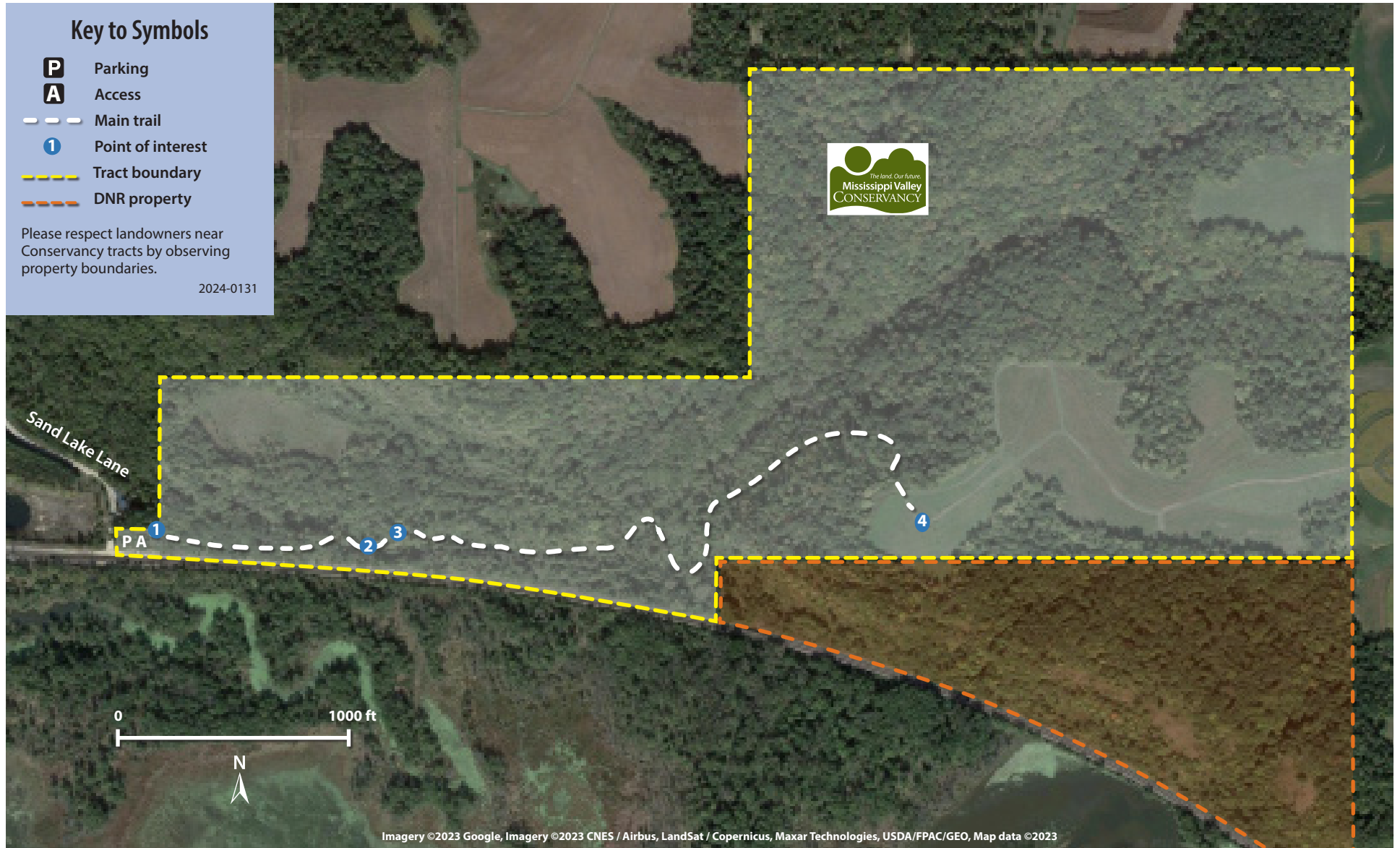


Key to Symbols

- P** Parking
- A** Access
- - - Main trail
- ① Point of interest
- Tract boundary
- DNR property

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2024-0131



Hiking Cassville Bluffs Nature Preserve (5338 Sand Lake Lane, Cassville, WI 53806)

This out-and-back trail is 1.9 miles long. The difficulty level is *medium*, due to a long hill and a stream crossing.

How to get to the trail access point from La Crosse:

Follow Hwy 35 south to Prairie Du Chien. Then follow Hwy 18/35 to Hwy 133. Turn right onto Hwy 133 and proceed to Cassville. From Cassville, continue southeast on Hwy 133. You will pass a sign that says "Potosi-18mi." Two miles beyond this sign, turn right onto Sand Lake Lane. Another landmark for this turn is a large white building, the Grant County Highway Shop, just before the turn. Follow Sand Lake Lane to its end. The Cassville Bluffs State Natural Area gate will be on your left. Please park just beyond the house on the left and no farther than the railroad tracks.

Hike: Start at gate ① and hike the wide trail, parallel to the railroad tracks. Continue straight along the main trail to the stream crossing ② where you'll find a small wooden footbridge bridge on the left side of the trail. Continue on main trail (ignoring the old farm road that goes sharply to the left) ③ as it meanders through the forest and up a long hill to a prairie at the top of the bluff, where the trail ends ④. Return the way you came.