

About Holland Sand Prairie State Natural Area

Once part of a vast series of sand prairies on terraces of the Upper Mississippi River, the 61-acre Holland Sand Prairie sits atop a Mississippi River terrace—the La Crosse-Galesville Terrace—created during the last ice age, about 12,000 years ago. Its dunes and hollows are the only undisturbed aeolian (wind-formed) landforms in the area.

The property was part of a larger farm for many years, and the lower areas were primarily used for grazing land and hayfields. The dune ridges contain large numbers of sand-prairie plants that appear undisturbed since European settlement. Although settlement introduced many exotic species, native prairie plants had a survival advantage because the land is sandy, well drained, and dry. Roughly 150 species of plants have been identified, some of which are threatened or of special concern.

George Varnum, a local prairie enthusiast who lived near the prairie, contacted the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources about Holland Sand Prairie in 1997, and in 2004 the Conservancy reached a deal to preserve it and put a conservation easement on the property to permanently protect it. The property is now owned by the Town of Holland. Management and maintenance of the prairie are shared between the Town, the Conservancy, the Prairie Enthusiasts, and the Friends of Holland Sand Prairie.

Public Access

Bikes and dogs are NOT allowed. This property is owned by the Town of Holland. Please observe policies posted at trailhead on Cty. Rd. MH. For more information contact the Town of Holland at **(608) 526-3354** or see their website at **www.townofhollandwi.gov**.

Please respect landowners near Conservancy tracts by observing property boundaries.

Plants found here

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alum root | <input type="checkbox"/> Missouri goldenrod |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird's-foot violet | <input type="checkbox"/> Pasqueflower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black-eyed susan | <input type="checkbox"/> Pasture thistle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue vervain | <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie blue-eyed grass |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Butterfly milkweed | <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie cinquefoil |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canada milkvetch | <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie ragwort |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common evening primrose | <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie smoke |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common ironweed | <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie violet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coreopsis | <input type="checkbox"/> Purple prairie clover |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cream wild indigo | <input type="checkbox"/> Rough blazing star |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dotted mint | <input type="checkbox"/> Showy sunflower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> False toadflax | <input type="checkbox"/> Silky prairie clover |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goat's rue | <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth blue aster |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hairy hawkweed | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiderwort |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hairy puccoon | <input type="checkbox"/> Thimbleweed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heath aster | <input type="checkbox"/> White prairie clover |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hoary vervain | <input type="checkbox"/> Wild bergamot |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadplant | <input type="checkbox"/> Wild rose |



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TRAIL MAP

Holland Sand Prairie State Natural Area

W7781 County Road MH, Holmen, Wisconsin



Hiking Holland Sand Prairie State Natural Area (W7781 Cty Rd MH, Holmen, WI)

The main trail follows the boundary of an open, rolling prairie. An internal trail cuts across the property, allowing more views.

How to get to the trailhead/parking lot from La Crosse: Follow Hwy 53 north to County Rd MH. Turn left onto McHugh Rd and follow it to the trailhead, which is just past (west of) Beaver Builders' Supply. Trailhead and parking area are on the left (south) side of MH.

- 1 Start at the kiosk at the parking area and head either east or west along a 1.3-mile mowed trail along the property's boundary.
- 2 For more views of prairie plants, turn north here.

County Road MH

County Road MH



Hwy 35/53

Beaver Builders' Supply

Key to Symbols

- P** Parking and kiosk
- - - Boundary trail
- Internal trail
- 1 Point of interest
- - - - - Tract boundary
- ==> Road

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