Minnesota Valley
National Wildlife Refuge

Chaska, Rapids Lake & Louisville Swamp Units

Trail Descriptions

Chaska Lake Trail 1.7 miles, one way
Starting from either the Chaska Athletic Park or Riverside Park in Carver, the trail winds through floodplain forest along the MN River, as well as passing wetlands, Chaska Lake, former farm fields and a wooded slough. Enjoy hiking, biking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing on this trail. This trail is mostly flat and floods seasonally.

About the Chaska Unit
The 557 acre Chaska Unit occupies a bend in the MN River stretching between the towns of Chaska and Carver. You’ll find lake, marsh, restored farm fields, and floodplain forest to explore.

Carver Creek Trail 1.6 miles
This trail system has two entry points: Bluff Park and Ash Street (downtown Carver). Connect to Bluff Park from the west (Bluff Park Spur, 0.5 mi) or Ash Street from the north (0.2 mi). Portions of this trail experience seasonal flooding.

Levee Trail 2 miles one way
This paved trail runs along the levee top from Carver to Chaska, passing Riverside Park and Chaska Athletic Park

About the Louisville Swamp Unit
The 2,623 acre Louisville Swamp Unit includes marsh, lakes, streams, oak savanna, rock formations, floodplain forest, upland forest and historic homesteads. It is also one of the most isolated areas of the refuge, offering a setting more distant from urban influences. The Carver Rapids Unit, part of the MN Valley State Recreation Area (DNR), is located entirely within the Louisville Swamp Unit.

Trail Descriptions

State Trail Access 1.0 mi, one way
From north to south through the refuge, the trail passes the State Access Trail then drops to cross a bridge over Sand Creek. It veers west to follow the river most of the way through the Louisville Swamp Unit. The trail passes a junction with Middle Road before exiting the Refuge. This trail is mostly flat and floods seasonally.

Mazomani Trail North 2.8 miles, one way
Starting at the W 145 St parking area go 0.4 miles south past the kiosks to the trail junction. Travel west to loop back to the parking area via the State Access Trail. Enjoy a beautiful vista above Louisville Swamp where soaring hawks and Yellow warblers can be seen.

Mazomani Trail South 3.8 miles, one way
Starting at the W 145 St parking area go 0.4 miles south to the trail junction. Continue south passing the historic Ehmlinger home site. Cross the bridge over Sand Creek at 0.8 miles. The trail goes through upland forest, across creeks, and past wetlands until it meets Middle Road. Head east, passing a large glacial erratic boulder. Travel west 1.6 miles through forest to Jabs Farm historic site. Return same way.

Middle Road Trail 1.5 miles, one way
Middle Road passes through areas of marsh, crosses a large stream, and passes the junction with the Mazomani Trail South, then wanders through restored prairie and forest until it meets the State Trail junction heading south. This trail experiences seasonal flooding.

Contact information:
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