

Videos



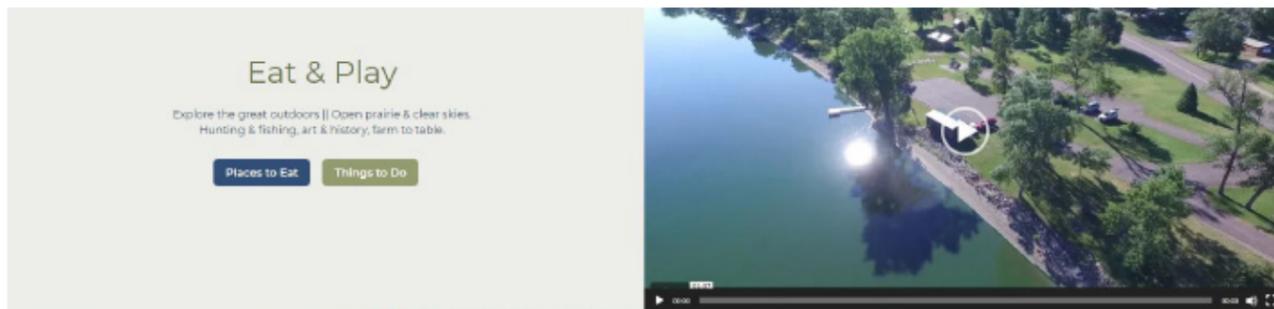
Visitors Guide



Why Here



Stories



Our Stories



Lauren's Story



Breanna's Story



Elisabeth's Story



History & Background

Prairie Waters is a program of the Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission (UMVRDC). It started in the 1980's as a small coalition of partners who saw the benefits of collaborating marketing efforts. In 1999 a study was conducted by the UMVRDC entitled "Regional Tourism Center and Tourism Development Study". This feasibility study recommended an increased effort throughout the region to promote and market the area as a tourism destination. In 2001, voluntary funding was provided by cities and counties to create a Regional Tourism Program at the UMVRDC.

With regional collaboration, our counties and cities pool their resources to make tourism and recruitment efforts more affordable. With the collaboration we are able to produce high quality marketing materials on a very tight budget.

The Prairie Waters Program is a well-developed and supported regional brand and marketing system already in place. In 2018 the goal is to expand the tourism aspects and offer information that makes it easy for someone wanting to make a move to the region, along with helpful tips and tools for locals.



Purpose

Marketing the four-county region of Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift, and Yellow Medicine as a great place to visit, work and live!

Members & Contributors



Local economic development authorities, chambers, cities, counties, businesses and individuals from the region. The 2018 members consists of the following: Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine Counties, Clara City, Milan, Montevideo, Dawson, Madison, Appleton, Canby, Clarkfield, Benson and Granite Falls.



Upper Minnesota Valley
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

2018 Prairie Waters Board Members

Montevideo:

Angel Molden

Canby:

Pat Stanley

Dawson:

Tami Sampson - Schuelke

Swift County:

Gary Hendrickx

Chippewa County:

Matt Gilbertson

Lac qui Parle County EDA:

PJ Ellison

Yellow Medicine County:

John Berends

Granite Falls:

Mary Gillespie

Madison:

Maynard Meyer

Melissa Streich

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Western Minnesota PRAIRIE WATERS



Get Rural Mn



Prairie Waters {Regional Tourism}

The mission of the organization is to serve as a tourism destination marketing the four-county area (Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift, and Yellow Medicine). The purpose is to promote and market the region as a great place to visit, work and live by highlighting and showcasing the natural, cultural, scenic, and historical assets – along with the slow pace of life and low cost of living.

Events

Each year we collect information of all the events happening in the region. The website has a [regional calendar](#) where visitors and/or locals can find information on upcoming events.

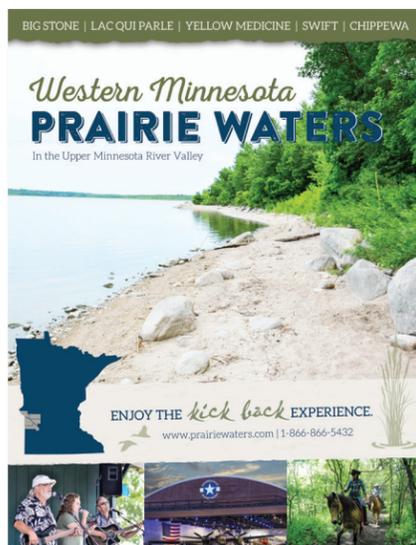
Annual Gathering

Each summer we host an annual gathering and invite visitors and locals to come enjoy free entertainment, food and prizes while learning about the promotional efforts done within the region. The location of the event rotates each year.

Advertising

Each year, Prairie Waters writes a grant to Explore Minnesota Tourism (EMT) to pay for 50% of our advertising up to \$8,000.

Visitor's Guide



This two year guide has a print distribution of 25,000 (online version available on website and Explore Minnesota Tourism website). These guides are distributed to chambers, cities and businesses throughout the region; Travel Information Centers across the state; Mall of America; and sent out as we receive requests for information. The Local Shops guide is a comprehensive listing of shops, restaurants and accommodations available in the Prairie Waters region. It is a collaborative effort between Prairie Waters and Chambers of Commerce from many of the region's member cities.

NEW guides: Spring 2019

Social Media



Search Prairie Waters & Get Rural MN

Get Rural MN {Regional Recruitment}

Is an effort to encourage potential newcomers to move to the region by offering information that would make their move easier. The regional recruitment work the UMVRDC has done over the past years all stemmed from the "Brain Gain" research. The overall vision was to expand [www.prairiewaters.com](#) to include information on employment opportunities, housing, education, healthcare, etc.



Live Here

The NEW website includes information on housing, healthcare, education, childcare, cost of living tool and more.



Work Here

The NEW website includes information on employment opportunities, technology/broadband services, site selector, start/expand a business and more.



New Imagery



The UMVRDC has worked with students from the University of Minnesota Morris, Center for Small Towns, to collect new imagery of the region. Students collected an inventory of new imagery by attending community events and sharing their experiences on social media and on the Prairie Waters website. All of this new content is available for governments, organizations and businesses in the region to access and download through the online sharing platform, [Dropbox](#).

In addition, we worked with a licensed drone pilot to collect aerial footage and create 10 [regional promotional videos](#).