



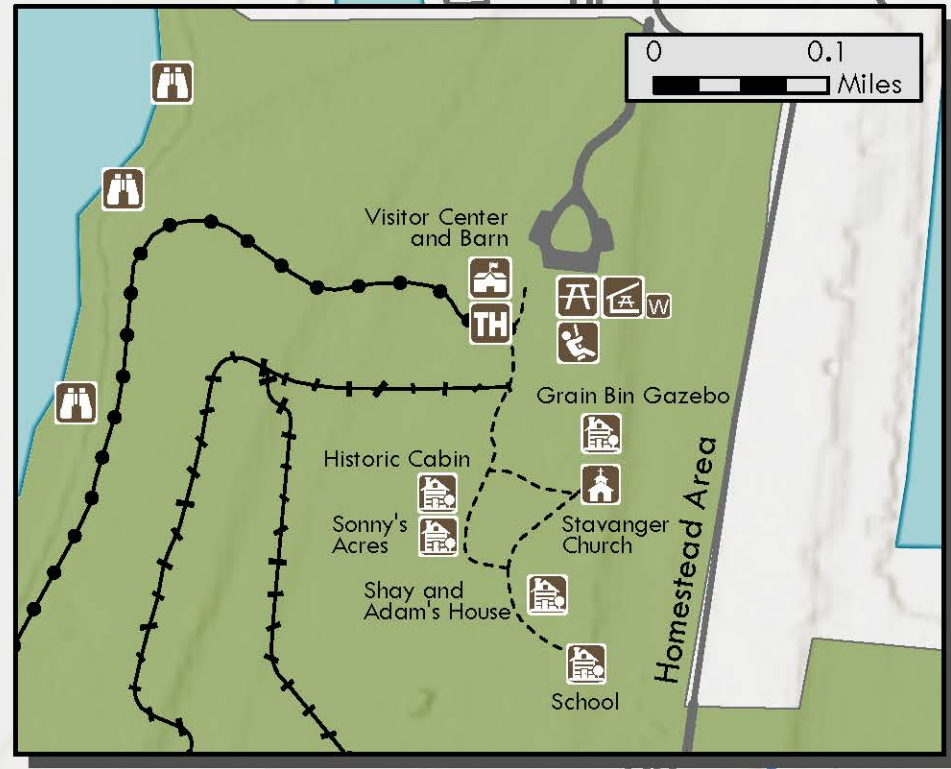
# ADAMS HOMESTEAD AND NATURE PRESERVE

April 2022  
McCook Lake, SD



- Homestead Loop, 0.3 mi
- Cottonwood Crossing, 1.4 mi
- ▲— Lake Loop Trail, 2.3 mi
- - - Mary's Avenue, 0.3 mi
- ★— North Primitive Laps, 1.2 mi
- ✚— Donkey Run Loop, 0.9 mi
- ▲— River Loop, 4.0 mi
- - - Southern Primitive Loop, 0.7 mi

- Church
- Drinking Water
- Historic Building
- Picnic Area
- Picnic Shelter
- Playground
- Trailhead
- Visitor Center
- Wildlife Viewing



# **Adams Homestead & Nature Preserve**

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## **Adams Trail**

**Type of trail:** Hiking, biking, interpretive/viewing nature, interpretive history and cross-country skiing

**Trail surface:** Gravel/limestone

**Rated:** Easy, appropriate for all ages

**Fee required:** No fee

**Location of the trailhead:** By the Visitor Center

**Length of trail in miles:** 13

**Facilities at or near the trailhead:** Drinking water, toilet, parking, picnic table and warming shelter

**Facilities along the trail:** Toilet and bench

**Will there be interpretive information available:** Yes

**What lodging opportunities are provided IN the park:** None

**Does this trail connect with any other trails:** No

**Nearest facilities for purchasing snacks, sunscreen etc.:** Gas stations within about two miles

**Nearest motels/restaurants OUTSIDE the park:** North Sioux City, several within a couple miles

**Nearest Chamber of Commerce:** North Sioux City, (605) 232-4276

**Emergency phone numbers:**

Ambulance - 911

Sheriff - (605) 356-2679

Fire Department - (605) 232-4286

**Do most cell phones work on this trail:** Yes

# **Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve**

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## **Adams Trail**

### **Prairie Area**

As you entered Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve, you were surrounded by a habitat where tall grasses dominant and animal diversity is prominent. This is a prairie habitat. The prairie extends from the entrance to Mud Lake. This prairie habitat is similar to the one that homesteaders may have crossed as they traveled west. This prairie is a reconstructed prairie planted in 1995. A mixture of Indian grass, switch grass and big bluestem make up this area of grass. Many birds, insects, mammals, reptiles and amphibians use this area for food and protection. Listen for a rooster pheasant cackle or insects buzzing.

### **Mud Lake**

Mud Lake is an oxbow lake of the Missouri River. As the Missouri River channel meandered, it often left behind “oxbows” old portions of the channel left behind when the main channel shifted. McCook Lake is also an oxbow lake of the Missouri. Many species of wildlife use this lake for food, shelter and a resting spot during migration. Ducks, geese, turtles, frogs, deer muskrats and raccoons enjoy this habitat. Stop at any of the three wildlife-viewing blinds and look for some “lake life”.

### **Cottonwood Groves**

Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve has one of the largest stands of cottonwood trees in the state of South Dakota. It is close to 450 acres. These cottonwood trees have been here for 50 years. Their history dates back to a time when the Missouri meandered freely and formed sandbars. The sandbars soon were filled with vegetation. This vegetation then developed into these large cottonwood forests. The cottonwoods are slowly dying out and new growth such as cedars and dogwoods are taking their place. There is still a lot of wildlife that lives in and use this area. Keep your eyes open for woodpeckers, deer, coyotes and other critters. Take time to walk or bike on some of the primitive trails, but make sure you stay on the trails. Another plant has made itself known in this area - poison ivy. This plant covers the forest floor and likes to climb the cottonwoods as vines. Remember “leaves of three, let it be”.

### **Missouri River**

The Missouri River, also known as the “Mighty Mo”, has always had a dominant presence in this area. For thousands of years, it has charted an ever-changing course. Floods of 1881 and 1952 showed everyone that the Missouri River could not be tamed. That was soon to change due to the construction of hydroelectric dams and shoreline channelization. This dramatic alternation of the river ecosystem resulted in the decline of river dependent species like the pallid sturgeon, least tern and piping plover. As you stop at the river overlook, imagine what Lewis and Clark must have seen as they passed or may be even stopped in this area.