

A bill for an act
relating to natural resources; designating a state wildlife management area;
amending Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 97A.133, by adding a subdivision.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 97A.133, is amended by adding a
subdivision to read:

Subd. 66. Vermillion Highlands Wildlife Management Area, Dakota County.

Sec. 2. **VERMILLION HIGHLANDS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA.**

(a) The following area is established and designated as the Vermillion Highlands
Wildlife Management Area, subject to the special permitted uses authorized in this section:

The approximately 2,840 acres owned by the University of Minnesota lying within
the area legally described as approximately the southerly 3/4 of the Southwest 1/4 of
Section 1, the Southeast 1/4 of Section 2, the East 1/2 of Section 10, Section 11, the
West 1/2 of Section 12, Section 13, and Section 14, all in Township 114 North, Range
19 West, Dakota County.

(b) Notwithstanding Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8, paragraph
(c), permitted uses in the Vermillion Highlands Wildlife Management Area include:

(1) education, outreach, and agriculture with the intent to eventually phase out
agriculture leases and plant and restore native prairie;

(2) research by the University of Minnesota or other permitted researchers;

(3) hiking, hunting, fishing, trapping, and other compatible wildlife-related
recreation of a natural outdoors experience, without constructing new hard surface trails
or roads, and supporting management and improvements;

2.1 (4) designated trails for hiking, horseback riding, biking, and cross-country skiing
2.2 and necessary trailhead support with minimal impact on the permitted uses in clause (3);

2.3 (5) shooting sports facilities for sporting clays, skeet, trapshooting, and rifle and
2.4 pistol shooting, including sanctioned events and training for responsible handling and
2.5 use of firearms;

2.6 (6) grant-in-aid snowmobile trails; and

2.7 (7) leases for small-scale farms to market vegetable farming.

2.8 (c) With the concurrence of representatives of the University of Minnesota and
2.9 Dakota County, the commissioner of natural resources may, by posting or rule, restrict the
2.10 permitted uses as follows:

2.11 (1) temporarily close areas or trails, by posting at the access points, to facilitate
2.12 hunting. When temporarily closing trails under this clause, the commissioner shall avoid
2.13 closing all trail loops simultaneously whenever practical; or

2.14 (2) limit other permitted uses to accommodate hunting and trapping after providing
2.15 advance public notice. Research conducted by the university may not be limited unless
2.16 mutually agreed by the commissioner and the University of Minnesota.

2.17 (d) Road maintenance within the wildlife management area shall be minimized, with
2.18 the intent to abandon interior roads when no longer needed for traditional agriculture
2.19 purposes.

2.20 (e) Money collected on leases from lands within the wildlife management area
2.21 must be kept in a separate account and spent within the wildlife management area under
2.22 direction of the representatives listed in paragraph (c).

2.23 (f) Notwithstanding Minnesota Statutes, sections 97A.061 and 477A.11, the state
2.24 of Minnesota shall not provide payments in lieu of taxes for the lands described in
2.25 paragraph (a).