

GSM Tours and Fields Trips

August

Submitted by Dave Wilhelm

Dave Peters, Randy Strobel and Dave Wilhelm are organizing a “Sand and Sandstone” three-day field trip on **Saturday, Sept 7 through Monday, Sept 9** to examine sand and sandstone formations of east central Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin. The locations are within 3 hours of the Twin Cities. The start and end times of the trip are set so that participants can travel from the Twin Cities Saturday morning and return Monday evening. Participants can join for only selected days if that fits their schedules better. The trip will be priced to cover entrance fees and honoraria for the leaders, plus the cost of a coach bus for the last day. Cost to the GSM treasury should be minimal. At this time, 34 are expected for Day 1, 44 for Day 2, and 28 for Day 3. GSM members have already been contacted to determine interest. Further details are being sent only to those who continue to express interest.

Trip Summary:

Day 1 (Saturday afternoon, Sept 7): Led by GSM’s Randy Strobel in the Sandstone, MN area. Start time will be around 1 PM; exact time TBD. This leaves plenty of time to drive from the Twin Cities. First, we will visit a historic sandstone quarry at [Robinson Park](#) on the Kettle River. We will then drive 5 miles to [Banning State Park](#), where we will hike the Quarry Loop, Hells Gate, and Wolf Creek Falls [trails](#) (about 3.5 miles total), where we will observe a large historic sandstone quarry.

Day 2 (Sunday, Sept 8): Led by [Tom Fitz](#) of Northland College in Ashland, WI. This day will feature an examination of evidence of the 1.1-billion-year-old [Midcontinent Rift](#), subsequent sandstone formation in the Lake Superior basin and then the vast belt of outwash sands left across northwestern Wisconsin by recent glaciation.

- Stop 1: Starting at 9 AM, we will observe [Amnicon Falls](#) near Lake Superior.
- Stop 2: Near South Range about five miles away to look at another exposure of mid-continent rift basalt.
- Stop 3: Brule Spillway Natural Scenic Area about 23 miles away shows the story of the outlet of Glacial Lake Duluth.
- Stop 4, etc.: [Namekagon Barrens Wildlife Area](#) near Minong, WI about 37 miles away to look at the landforms and sediments of the area.

Tom will prepare handouts to be distributed that day as he works out more details.

Day 3 (Monday morning): Led by Lauren Finch at [Crex Meadows Wildlife Area](#) near Grantsburg, WI. This day will feature an examination of the human history, disturbance, reclamation and management of that portion of the northwestern Wisconsin sands. We will hire a coach bus for this part of the trip, with boarding at 10

AM and finish 3 hours later. We will meet to board the bus either in Grantsburg or at the Crex Meadows visitor center.

Randy Strobel has tentative plans for a field trip to the **Driftless Area** in the vicinity of the Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa juncture. Dates have not yet been set, but Randy is looking at early October. GSM members will be informed as this field trip develops.

Dave Wilhelm will organize a tour of the St. **Anthony Falls Laboratory** and its varied experiments in late fall 2019, assuming sufficient interest. See reports of previous tours in the Spring 2015 and May 2017 Newsletters.

Dave McGill is still looking into a field trip to Switzerland, but his current thinking is to do a scouting trip in 2020 and the actual trip in 2021.