

# ST. CROIX STATE PARK

## FACILITIES AND FEATURES

### Winter:

- 80 miles of groomed and well-marked snowmobile trails
- Snowmobile trails connect the park with state forests and several communities
- Enclosed shelter with two fireplaces and flush toilets
- 11 miles of ski trails
- 2 modern guest houses, each accommodating up to 15 people
- Winter camping

### Summer:

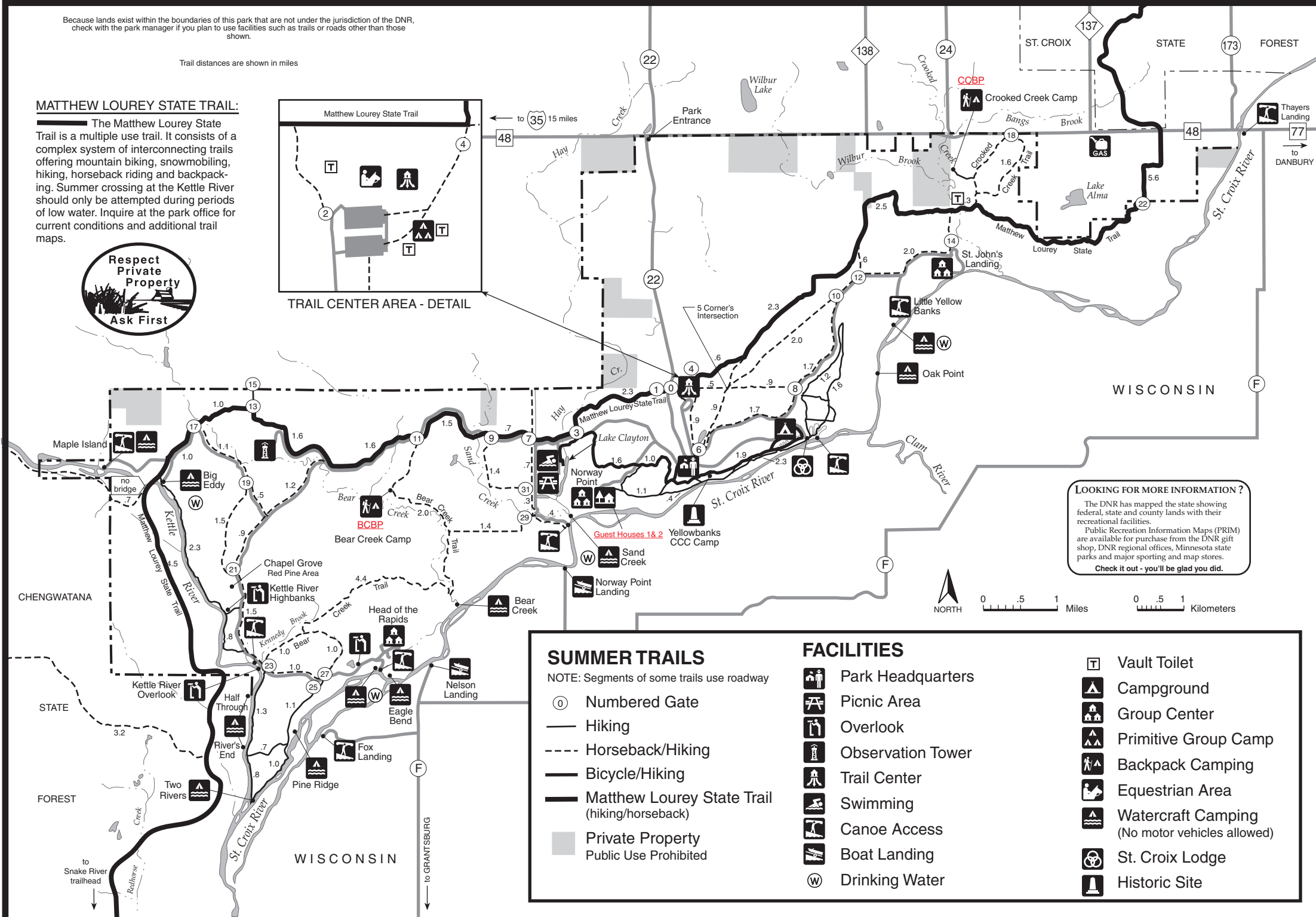
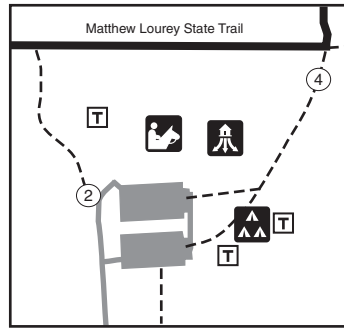
- 215 campsites (42 electric)
- 2 modern group centers
- Primitive tent area for groups
- Horse camp area
- Canoe and backpack campsites
- Picnic ground with enclosed shelter
- Swimming beach and playgrounds
- Hiking, horseback and bicycle trails
- Canoe and kayak rental
- 5 housekeeping cabins (seasonal)

Because lands exist within the boundaries of this park that are not under the jurisdiction of the DNR, check with the park manager if you plan to use facilities such as trails or roads other than those shown.

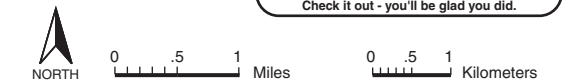
Trail distances are shown in miles

### MATTHEW LOUREY STATE TRAIL:

The Matthew Lourey State Trail is a multiple use trail. It consists of a complex system of interconnecting trails offering mountain biking, snowmobiling, hiking, horseback riding and backpacking. Summer crossing at the Kettle River should only be attempted during periods of low water. Inquire at the park office for current conditions and additional trail maps.



**LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?**  
 The DNR has mapped the state showing federal, state and county lands with their recreational facilities. Public Recreation Information Maps (PRIM) are available for purchase from the DNR gift shop, DNR regional offices, Minnesota state parks and major sporting and map stores. Check it out - you'll be glad you did.



### SUMMER TRAILS

NOTE: Segments of some trails use roadway

- Numbered Gate
- Hiking
- - - Horseback/Hiking
- Bicycle/Hiking
- Matthew Lourey State Trail (hiking/horseback)
- Private Property Public Use Prohibited

### FACILITIES

- Park Headquarters
- Picnic Area
- Overlook
- Observation Tower
- Trail Center
- Swimming
- Canoe Access
- Boat Landing
- Drinking Water
- Vault Toilet
- Campground
- Group Center
- Primitive Group Camp
- Backpack Camping
- Equestrian Area
- Watercraft Camping (No motor vehicles allowed)
- St. Croix Lodge
- Historic Site



# ST. CROIX STATE PARK

FOR MORE INFORMATION

St. Croix State Park  
30065 St. Croix Park Road  
Hinckley, MN 55037  
(320) 384-6591

Department of Natural Resources  
Information Center  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040

(651) 296-6157 (Metro Area)  
1-888-646-6367 (MN Toll Free)

TDD (Telecommunications  
Device for Deaf)  
(651) 296-5484 (Metro Area)  
1-800-657-3929 (MN Toll Free)

[mndnr.gov/parks](http://mndnr.gov/parks)

ST. CROIX STATE PARK is 15 miles east of Hinckley on State Highway 48. Park headquarters is on County Road 22 five miles south of the park entrance. Highway map index: L-13.

St. Croix State Park is Minnesota's largest state park, with over 33,000 acres of forests, meadows, marshes and streams.

The park was established in 1943 after being developed by the National Park Service as a recreation demonstration area. St. Croix remains an important site for a variety of recreational opportunities with over 100 miles of multi-use trails, three group centers and over 200 semi-modern campsites.

Twenty-one miles of the St. Croix River, a National Wild and Scenic Riverway, form the eastern boundary of the park, while Minnesota's first Wild and Scenic River, the Kettle River, joins the St. Croix to form the western boundary. At least ten other

streams flow through the park, creating a watershed of hundreds of square miles. These waterbodies provide important opportunities for canoeing, fishing and kayaking.

**FLORA AND FAUNA:** Once home to stands of virgin red and white pine, today St. Croix State Park is a mix of natural communities including black spruce and tamarack bogs, hardwood forests of sugar maple and basswood, jack pine barrens, and meadows and streams. All of these communities combine to provide an enormous diversity of plants and animals a place to call home. Hundreds of species of wildlife can be found at St. Croix from bald eagles to black bears.

To retain and improve the park's natural diversity, St. Croix's resource management plan utilizes a variety of resource management tools, including prescribed burns, deer enclosures and deer hunts, and landscape plantings. Resource managers believe these tools will provide more opportunities for attracting more wildlife, while preserving the important natural communities that currently exist.

**GEOLOGY:** During the last glacial period, about 10,000 years ago, the St. Croix River Valley served as a major drainage channel for glacial meltwater. As these waters carved the way for the river seen today, the waters left behind a variety of soils and sediment that cover the ancient lava bedrock far below. Over 31 different types of soil have been identified at St. Croix, the most common types being red and yellow clay, and sand. These soils can be seen along the River Bluff Trail, where the St. Croix River has cut away the riverbank. In fact, one area along the river has such a large deposit of yellow clay, it is commonly called Yellow Banks. Many springs can also be found along the river banks. These occur where the river valley has eroded through the glacial gravel to release water trapped between the sediments.

Although the ancient bedrock can often only be found after drilling through 75 to 100 feet of sandy till, the final wave of glacial meltwater cleaned debris from the Kettle River Valley, leaving much of the basalt and sandstone bedrock exposed. A stop at the Kettle River Highbanks is a step back over millions of years.

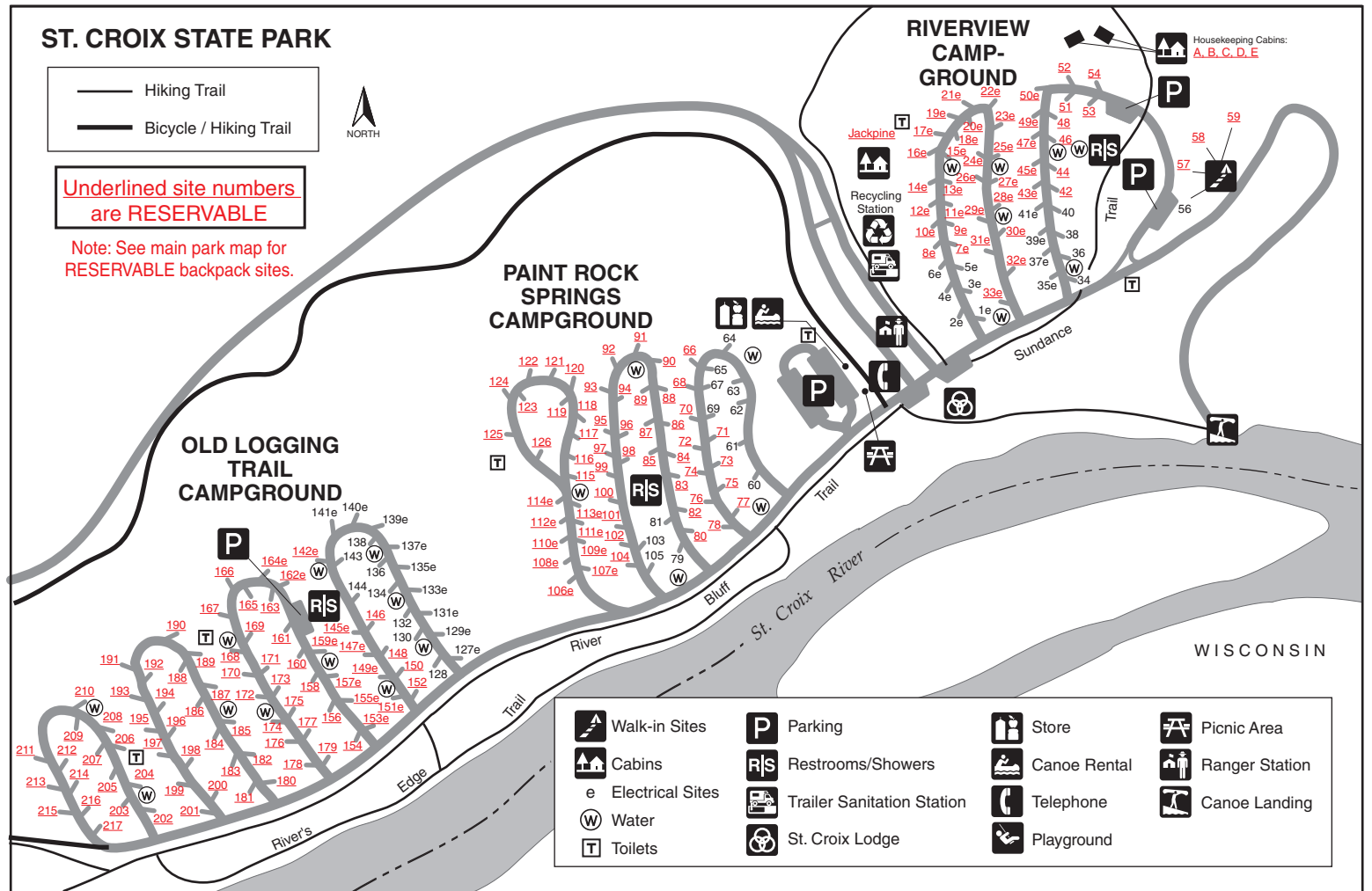
**HISTORY:** The St. Croix River Valley has been home to man for thousands of years. Evidence of Woodland Indians dating back to 3,000 B.C. has been found throughout the valley, including in St. Croix State Park. Their descendants, the Dakota, were here when the first French traders and explorers arrived in the late 1600s. The Ojibwe were attracted to the natural wealth of the area, and with the advantage of firearms, soon took over the St. Croix valley. Native Americans continued to live in the park until the 1930s, when the area was developed for recreation.

The St. Croix River was an important trade route for hundreds of years, first for the Native Americans, and then for the French, English, and American fur traders. Many fur trade companies established trading posts along the St. Croix, including one here in the park.

Although the fur trade died out during the mid 1800s, another economic era was close behind, one that also relied on the St. Croix River for transportation. With the expansion of the United States, the demand for lumber was high. An untapped source was found in the stands of large red and white pine along the St. Croix River.

Beginning in the mid to late 1800s, logging camps along the St. Croix River sprung up, all taking advantage of the river's force to float logs to lumber mills downstream. St. John's Logging Camp was one of many logging camps in the park where logs sat along the shore of the river until spring thaw. St. John's still serves as a camp, currently, for the Minnesota Conservation Corps.

Another important reminder of the logging era is the main park road, which closely follows the railroad bed for the Flemming Railroad. Owned by the Empire Lumber Company, the railroad hauled cars of sawed logs to the Yellowbanks of



the St. Croix River from 1894-98.

By 1915, the logging era had moved on to other parts of the country. But the newly cleared land was attractive to farmers and immigrants from all over the world. Although these settlers struggled to make a living from the poor soil, many farmers were left in deep despair with the rest of the country during the 1930s. Fortunately, one of the many government relief programs included purchasing poor farmland and converting it to recreational use. In 1934, 18,000 acres of St. Croix area farmland was purchased, and in 1935, became the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area. Under the direction of the National Park Service, other Depression-era relief programs, the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration, set out to transform these lands into group camps, roads, and campgrounds, with all the necessary buildings and structures. Although CCC Camp 2706 finished their work in 1941, much of their efforts remain in use today, and many of the buildings and structures they constructed have been added to the National Register of Historic Sites. Because these historic structures and the surrounding landscape still remain authentic to their original design, the National Park Service recently designated St. Croix State Park a National Historic Landmark. Near the Yellowbanks area along the St. Croix River, interpretive signs describe the lives and work of the CCC's in the St. Croix RDA,

which in 1943, became St. Croix State Park.

SO EVERYONE CAN ENJOY THE PARK . . .

- The park belongs to all Minnesotans. Treat it with respect and consideration.
- Hunting in the park and possessing any weapon is prohibited except if legally cased.
- Pets must be kept on a leash no longer than six feet and attended at all times.
- Motorized vehicles are not allowed on park trails.
- Enjoy the animals, but do not approach or feed them.
- Leave rocks and plants where they are. They make up much of the park's beauty. Do not collect them.
- Information on the use of sanitary facilities, boating, navigation, and water safety is available from park managers.
- Do not park cars or camp along roads inside the park. All campers must register at the park office.
- Backpackers should pack out all trash.
- The park is closed from 10:00 P.M. until 8:00 A.M. the next morning, except in campgrounds or in cabin areas. Loud noises or other disturbances are prohibited after 10:00 P.M.
- Park entry permits are required for every motor vehicle and can be purchased at park headquarters or the

Information Center in St. Paul (see "FOR MORE INFORMATION" to left).

*This information is available in alternative format upon request.*

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