



ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL

Illinois and Wisconsin

INVENTORY, ANALYSIS AND PLAN

**ROCK RIVER TRAIL
INITIATIVE**

Rockford, Illinois
Hustisford, Wisconsin

August 2012



On the Front Cover:

*Kayak and Canoe Launch Sign of the Rock River Water Trail,
Oregon Park East, Oregon, Illinois*

Photo courtesy of Erin Folk, Oregon Park District

On the Back Cover:

*Rock River Water Trail Sign at Happy Hollow County Park,
Rock County, Wisconsin*

Photo courtesy of Joleen Stinson, Rock County Parks Division

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FORWARD

The Rock River is a constant oxymoron of moving water, as its name, “Rock”, normally implies stationary hardness. When I returned to my Rockford childhood home in 1982, after living in the Seattle area for five years with its seven city lakes and the Puget Sound, I experienced a very severe case of stationary hardness. I was cured of the stasis of water withdrawal by exploring our backyard river, and thirty years later we are presenting a plan for a water trail on the wonderful Rock River.

I am a river rat. I have canoed over 235 miles of the Rock. I have driven the length of it more than 20 times and enjoyed our bookstores, museums, local attractions, campsites, fish stocks and people’s good will and hospitality. I am in love with this river we call the Rock.

So when I began writing a book called *The River of Hearts*, local legend retelling was added and tales of being on the Rock swam into the ink of a paper I would one day own and name after what flows in my heart.

Our valley has the land and water art of the ice age’s massive power, prehistoric natives who built mysterious mounds and pyramids, and French holy men, explorers and fur trappers opening our new world. Every county has its pioneer; every county has its farmers -- the first conservationists – and even inventors and new industrialists, like John Deere.

And let’s not forget that two of our nation’s first transcontinental highways crossed the Rock, the Yellowstone Trail at Theresa, Wisconsin and the Lincoln Highway at Dixon, Illinois, home of a shoreline life guard named Ronald Reagan.

The presidents of both sides of the Civil War pursued Sparrow Hawk up the Rock, and Abraham Lincoln helped to bury the first dead. That war has the ignominious legacy of hastening the removal of Native Americans from east of the Mississippi.

We have many fine sculptures on our rocky shores from Waupun to Rockford, to Oregon, to Rock Island. Add in the depth of our parks, great towns and fine festivals. We have the ever-improving quality of the river water itself – which we must make cleaner still. Look at the important water resource work of Wisconsin’s Rock River Coalition and Illinois’ River Action. Look at the constant, long-range, budget-challenged work of both states’ departments of natural resources—they need our thanks and support. No eco-tourist wants to swim or paddle in polluted water, even if the river is tremendously pastoral with even a few rapids and many dell-like bluffs. Look to the Rock’s sky because the white pelicans are here and the eagles are back in growing numbers every day.

This heritage and these qualities need protection, so we asked the National Park Service to become our consultant. We held the first meeting where all the counties and most of the municipalities on the Rock gathered to “Meet the Neighbors.” Our friends and civic leaders in Winnebago and Ogle Counties joined with me in 2010 to establish the Rock River Trail Initiative. In April of that year we held the inaugural paddle on the river from Oregon to Dixon, with a stop in Grand Detour, to establish the Rock River Trail. And now all eleven counties of the Rock River valley are represented on the trail initiative council.

The Native American Awareness Committee of Winnebago County has been advising the council and participating in our efforts. Winnebago County government, as the founding county, made a substantial in-kind donation of mapping time on its WinGIS system; the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District and Rockford Park District established four new campsites on the river, both rural and urban; and the City of Rockford contributed signage, dam warning, portage, launch and campsite signs, for installation in Rockford, Beloit, Byron Forest Preserve (which made five new campsites), Oregon and Milan.

We are grateful for the continued support of our partners.

Legislation has been passed by the Illinois legislature to create the Rock River Trail Scenic and Historic Route. Efforts are underway in Wisconsin to continue the road route to the headwaters; to make a reality out of our motto, "The Rock River Trail: Drive It. Hike it. Bike it. Kayak it. Canoe it."

We have taken big steps to establish a water trail on the Rock River; it has been equally challenging, exciting and fun! I've had the privilege to meet and work with special people along all 320 miles of the river who share a passion: the Rock River. This river joins two states of wonderful people, Wisconsin and Illinois, and our uniqueness is shining through our common current.

Thanks to the guidance and quality efforts of our Wisconsin Coordinator Greg Farnham and Dane County council member Dave Schreiber, the trail initiative council has prepared an inventory, analysis and plan for the Rock River Water Trail. Council members have installed a variety of signage and helped to open all sections of the water trail in Wisconsin and Illinois. We are working with local communities, resource managers and agencies to promote the water trail for all to enjoy.

My sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to this eventful journey on the Rock River! You truly are a River of Hearts.

Frank Schier
Founder and Coordinator
of Rock River Trail Initiative
Editor and Publisher of *The Rock River Times*,
Rockford, Ill.

August 2012

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of persons and organizations provided valuable recommendations and guidance to assist in development of the Rock River Water Trail Plan.

Firstly, we acknowledge the integral contributions to plan development by members of the Rock River Trail Initiative Council. Council members are talented professionals in various fields representing the 11 counties in Illinois and Wisconsin through which the Rock River flows. They volunteered their time and energies to support the trail initiative and develop the water trail plan, and are responsible for its implementation.

We also recognize the contributions of Diane Banta and Angie Tornes of the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program; Brigit Brown, state trails coordinator, and Tom Watkins, property planner, of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; and Dick Westfall, greenways and trails section manager, Amy Madigan, greenways and trails outreach coordinator, and George Bellovics, Grand Illinois Trail coordinator, of Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Special thanks to Sarah Brown and Burnie Turner of WinGIS, Winnebago County, Ill., for development of the water trail maps, and to Nadine Paplow of Madison, Wis., for graphics and production of the plan document.

Lastly, we want to emphasize that development of the water trail plan has been the result of a collaborative process of local community interest, support and participation. Each of the 11 counties and 37 cities and villages along the Rock River has stepped forward to affirm the Rock River as a vital natural resource and backbone for local recreation, cultural and historical interests, and economic and community development activities. Each of our river communities is a pearl; the Rock River links these communities together to produce a beautiful string of pearls through our two states.

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August 2012

Every effort has been made to provide accurate information in maps, inventories and segment descriptions of the Rock River Water Trail. However, river conditions change continually and river corridor infrastructure and facilities, including dams and access sites, are subject to modification. Users of the water trail have primary responsibility for their own safety and are encouraged to investigate river conditions and available access sites while planning a trip. The agencies, organizations and individuals involved in development of the water trail plan and maps provide the information in good faith and assume no liability for personal safety and property of trail users.

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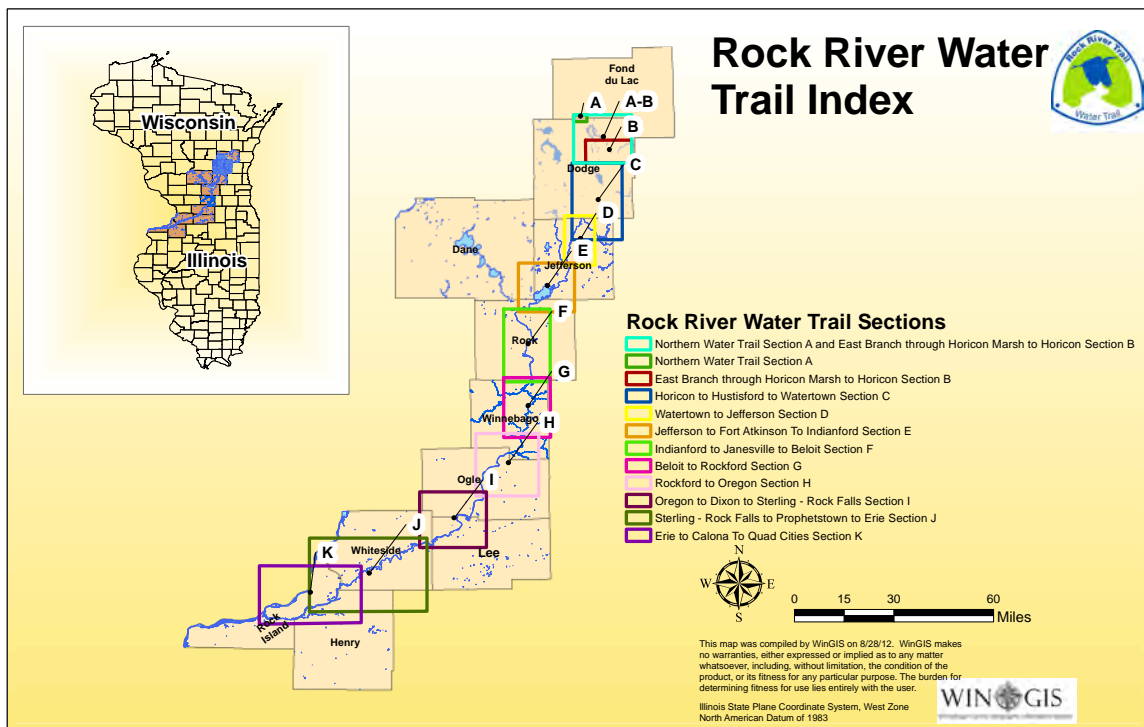
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The mission of the Rock River Trail Initiative is twofold: first, to establish and interpret a Rock River Water Trail that meanders down a gentle gradient to carry the water traveler and recreational enthusiast alike over 300 miles from headwaters in Fond du Lac and Dodge Counties, Wisconsin to the Mississippi River at the Quad Cities of Illinois and Iowa; and second, to create a parallel system of land-based routes that offer visitors and residents the opportunity to also drive, bike and hike the river corridor.

This plan deals with the first element of the mission of the Rock River Trail Initiative - establishment of the Rock River Water Trail. The vision, structure and organization of the water trail are described in this Inventory, Analysis and Plan.

Two future reports will address details of the water trail including (1) trail and corridor management and (2) trail promotion.

The water trail plan unifies under the service mark of **Rock River Water Trailsm** a framework for identifying suitable carry-in access sites and boat launches, parks,

campsites and cultural facilities that will enhance the water trail experience. The plan addresses water trail management needs, dam safety, opportunities for connecting with other regional trail systems and approaches to marketing and promoting the trail corridor.

A unique element of the plan is a consistent set of standards developed to identify segments of the river with common characteristics and facilities and to link each segment with an appropriate water trail experience. The set of skill level and type for each water trail segment provides to users an easy way of selecting routes that meet their needs and interest and match their abilities and expectations.

Finally, the plan recognizes the Rock River Water Trail as a recreation resource for many users in addition to those with paddle craft. Users of motorized boats for pleasure cruising, water skiing, fishing and hunting; boaters who wish to access parks and overnight camping sites from the river; and individuals accessing the river shore for fishing, bird watching or hiking will all benefit from a water trail plan for the Rock River.



Rock River, Jefferson County



*Kayak on the Rock River downstream of Sterling-Rock Falls, Illinois
Photo courtesy of Blackhawk Waterways Convention and Visitors Bureau, Polo, Ill.*

GOALS OF THIS PLAN

The following goals are set for this plan:

- Establish a vision for the Rock River Water Trail linking two states and 11 counties along the 320-mile river course.
- Seek designation of the Rock River Water Trail as a national water trail.
- Establish the Rock River as a recreation destination by identifying opportunities to enhance river access and safety for non-motorized watercraft and by connecting the water trail with other recreation trails.
- Identify opportunities for educating water trail users and the public about the natural resources, scenic beauty, cultural heritage, communities and economic potential of the river corridor.

ORIGIN OF THE TRAIL INITIATIVE

The Rock River Trail Initiative began in 2010 in Rockford, Illinois to develop along the Rock River corridor a system of trails with recreational, scenic and historic interest and significance. The mission of the Initiative is to establish and interpret a Rock River Water Trail along the 320-mile river course, and a separate Rock River Route on roads within the river corridor for driving, biking and hiking to provide access for all to the natural resources, recreational opportunities, scenic beauty and historic and cultural assets of the Rock River Valley. The focus of this plan is the water trail component.

On April 17, 2010 the inaugural paddle to officially establish the Rock River Trail was conducted in Illinois from Oregon to Lowell Park in Dixon with a stop in Grand Detour. That inaugural paddle also set in motion the engagement of political leaders, local government officials and resource managers whose support would be needed to make the trail a reality.

The first Rock River Trail Conference was held in Rockford in April of 2010, followed in February 2011 by a legislative briefing with Members of Congress from Illinois and Wisconsin and federal, state and local agencies and private partners representing the eleven counties of the Rock River Valley. A second river trail conference was held in April 2011.

The trail initiative was presented to the Wisconsin Governor's State Trails Council in Stevens Point in July 2011 and to the Illinois Greenways and Trails Council in Springfield in January 2012.

Key objectives for the water trail as envisioned in the trail initiative include:

- Establish the Rock River Water Trail and achieve designation as a state and national recreation water trail,
- Promote ecotourism and recreational opportunities throughout the river corridor, including safe portage of the dams,
- Enhance the river ecosystem through natural resources conservation, stewardship and environmental planning and design,
- Support economic development and revitalization of communities along the river, and
- Enhance public recognition of the trail using unique signage, markers, kiosks and information materials to promote the natural, recreational, scenic and historic assets of the trail.

1 – INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL?

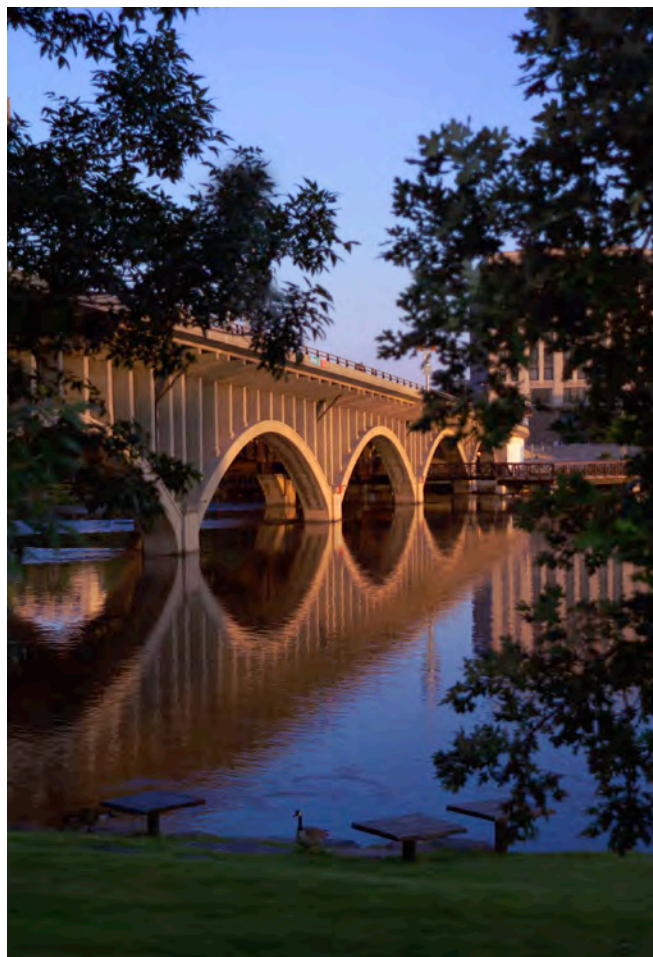
The water trail is a delineated path on the Rock River that connects access sites, resting places and attractions for users of water craft. The trail will enhance public use of the river for recreation with wayfinding and amenities such as restrooms, shelter, parking and camping. While the water trail is primarily designed for use by paddle craft, it also provides significant recreational value to those who enjoy swimming, fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, pleasure

boating and river stewardship. The trail project establishes standards for environmental types and recreational experiences on the river, and provides description of river segments and access sites, unified signage, maps and other public educational materials for safe and enjoyable recreational use of the Rock River. The water trail is unified under the service mark of Rock River Water Trail.



VISION

The Rock River Water Trail will provide enhanced recreational opportunities for all to enjoy paddling, boating, camping and nature viewing, with connections to other recreation trails and to the natural, scenic, historic and cultural assets of the river corridor.



Rock River at Jefferson Street Bridge, Rockford, Winnebago County

Photo courtesy of Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

ROCK RIVER BASIN IN WISCONSIN AND ILLINOIS

The Rock River Basin comprises over 10,000 square miles across northwestern Illinois and south central Wisconsin and represents about 8 percent of the Upper Mississippi River region (Fig. 1). Much of the basin is rolling topography with glacial features predominating in the northern region, narrow valleys in the middle and sandy plain lowland in the lower basin. Recreation and wildlife abound on over 150 lakes and impoundments and over 2,000 miles of streams. The Horicon Marsh in the upper river basin is an internationally-recognized wetland and bird sanctuary.

Major tributaries of the Rock River include the Bark, Crawfish and Yahara Rivers in Wisconsin, and in Illinois the Green, Kishwaukee and Pecatonica Rivers.

Water quality of the Rock River is impacted by agricultural and urban polluted runoff. Efforts are being made at local, state and federal levels to reduce pollution of surface waters. Improved water quality will enhance recreational values of the river.

Although the basin is experiencing rapid growth, it is still largely rural in character with agriculture using nearly 75 % of the land area. The economy is mixed with a balance of agricultural, industrial and service businesses. Major urban centers along the river include Rockford and Moline-Rock Island, Illinois, and Beloit-Janesville, Wisconsin. The population of the basin is expected to exceed 3,000,000 by 2020, according to the Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Basin Study by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

The Rock River corridor is within an hour's drive of the major urban areas of Chicago, Madison, Milwaukee and the Quad Cities and is expected to provide water resources and green space to meet future demands for recreation and conservation.

2 – A WATER TRAIL FOR THE ROCK RIVER

A number of state and federal scenic trails intersect the Rock River including the Grand Illinois Trail and Hennepin Canal State Trail in Illinois and the Glacial Drumlin State Trail and Ice Age National Scenic Trail in Wisconsin.

There is a rich heritage of human development along the river corridor. From the aboriginal peoples, explorers and early settlers to the industrialists, agriculturalists, statesmen and visionaries of more recent times, unique and significant contributions to the evolution of America have originated in the Rock River Valley.

The river communities share a commonality of interests and respect for the Rock River with award-winning riverfronts, beautiful sculpture and art work, diverse recreational activities and cultural events. Many communities also have a vision for revitalization and sustainable economic development along their riverfronts for the benefit of present and future generations.

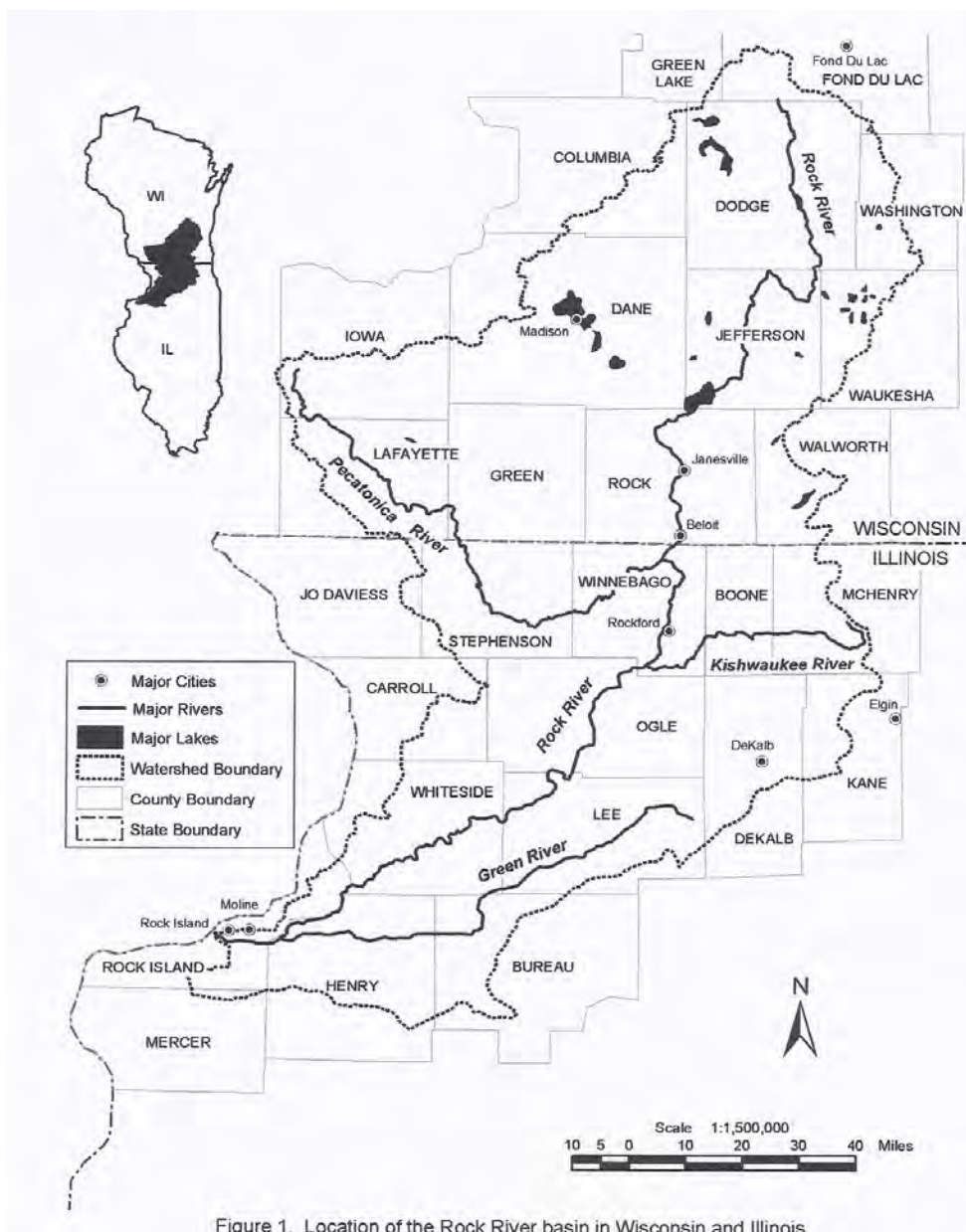


Figure 1. Location of the Rock River basin in Wisconsin and Illinois

Source - US Geological Survey

THE ROCK RIVER

The Rock River is over 320 miles long, flowing south over 160 miles from its headwaters in Fond du Lac and Washington Counties, Wisconsin, to the Illinois border, then 162 miles to the southwest where it meets the Mississippi River at Rock Island. A map of the Rock River Trail is shown in Figure 2.

The river maintains a fairly consistent, shallow gradient of about 1 foot per mile. The elevation of the South Branch of the river in Waupun is 863 feet, while the elevation at the river end in Rock Island is 541 feet, a total fall of 322 feet in 318 miles.

The South and East Branches in Dodge County are about 50 – 75 feet in width. The width of the main stem at Horicon widens to 100 - 150 feet, while further downstream in Illinois the gradually widening channel is 500 – 1000 feet in width. The depth of the river during normal flows generally ranges from 6 – 15 feet, shallower in the upper reaches and deeper as the river cuts through the middle reach around Dixon and the sandy plain downstream of Sterling-Rock Falls.

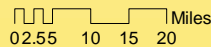
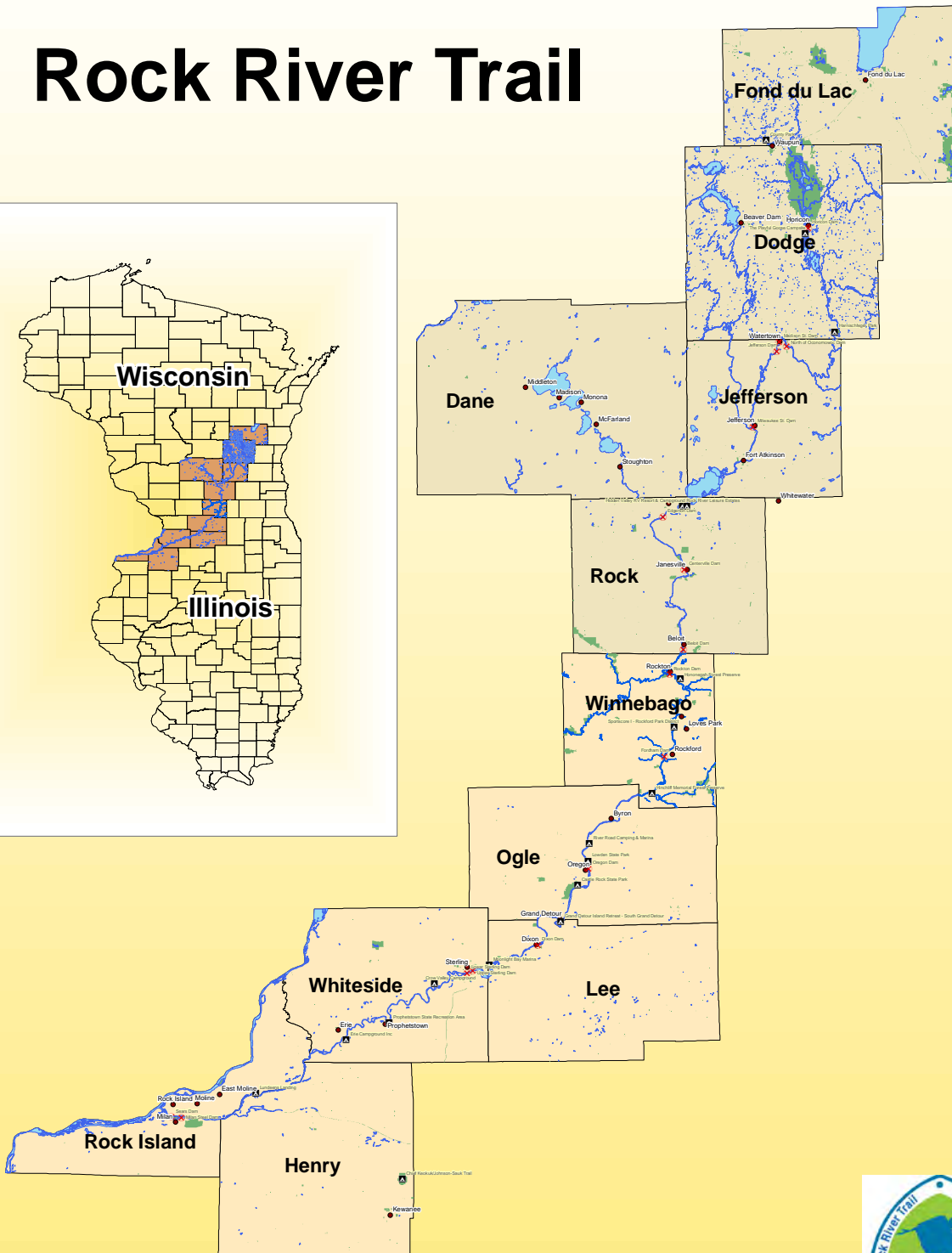
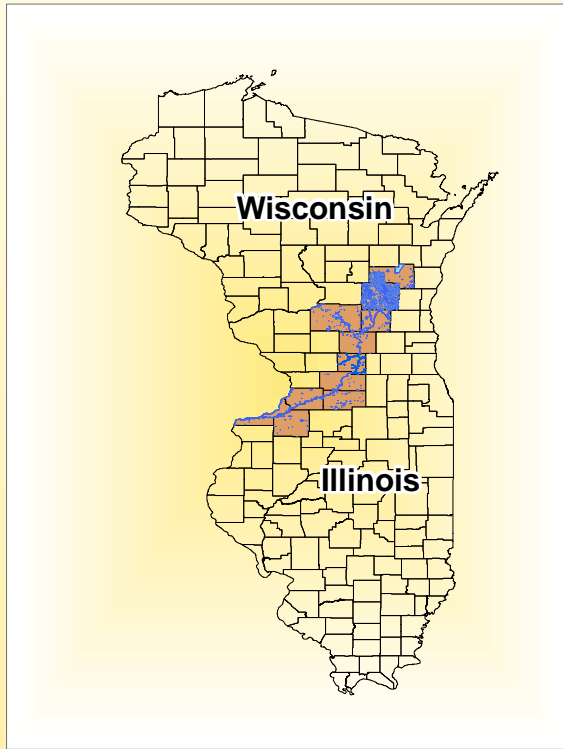
In Wisconsin the river flows through rolling, glaciated topography generally lying to the west of the Niagara Escarpment. In Illinois the river flows through a broad valley, but near Grand Detour it cuts through a narrow valley with 100-foot high rock bluffs in Ogle and Lee Counties. Through Whiteside, Henry and Rock Island Counties the flow is through the sandy plain known as the Green River Lowland.

The river is considered a warm-water sports fishery. Portions of the river are on the federal EPA 303(d) list of impaired waters for pollutants. While undesirable from an ecological standpoint, these impairments do not directly impact the paddling experience on the river.

Gaging stations operated by the US Geological Survey measure streamflows at a number of river locations. Long-term mean streamflows range from 100 cubic feet per second on the South and East branches in Wisconsin, 1,000 cfs in Watertown and 2,500 cfs in Afton, Rock County, to 4,000 cfs in Rockton, 6,500 cfs in Joslin and 8,000 cfs in Moline, Illinois. Real-time data of streamflows and gage height of river stages are available on-line at waterdata.usgs.gov and can be used to assess safe water flows for paddling and boating.

There are 22 dams on the Rock River Water Trail (not including the federal dam in the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge), 14 in Wisconsin and 8 in Illinois. Each dam has some level of portage infrastructure in place, although work at some of the dams to improve infrastructure and signage is required. The Initiative will partner with federal, state and local agencies in this work. In most cases, maneuvering the portages is relatively straightforward for paddlers with some experience.

Rock River Trail



This map was compiled by WinGIS on 04/14/10. WinGIS makes no warranties, either expressed or implied as to any matter whatsoever, including, without limitation, the condition of the product, or its fitness for any particular purpose. The burden for determining fitness for use lies entirely with the user.
 Illinois State Plane Coordinate System, West Zone
 North American Datum of 1983

WHY PREPARE A PLAN NOW?

The statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans for Illinois and Wisconsin identify priorities that provide impetus to establishment of the Rock River Water Trail.

- **Water Resources** Acquire lands and develop facilities that expand and improve public recreational access to rivers, streams and lakes.
- **Children in the Outdoors** Provide interpretive facilities in parks and outdoor recreation areas that expand children's experiences in the outdoors and appreciation and understanding of the values of natural resources.
- **Conservation of Natural Resources** Practice stewardship in using natural resources.
- **Demand for Outdoor Recreation** Demand for outdoor recreation facilities, especially for water-based recreation activities, is expected to increase with population growth.

- **Outdoor Recreation, Health, and Wellness** Increase health and wellness benefits from outdoor recreation.
- **Connecting Urban and Rural Populations to Open Space Land for Recreation and Conservation** An interconnected network of open space across the landscape supports healthy ecosystems and a high quality of life.

In addition, a presidential memorandum was signed in April 2010 establishing America's Great Outdoors Initiative. A goal of the Initiative is to reconnect Americans, especially children, to America's rivers and waterways, landscapes of national significance, ranches, farms and forests, great parks, and coasts and beaches by exploring a variety of efforts, including promoting community-based recreation and conservation, including local parks, greenways, beaches, and waterways.



John Rose Canoe & Kayak Launch, Beloit, Rock County Photo courtesy of Visit Beloit

2 – A WATER TRAIL FOR THE ROCK RIVER

In March 2012 the US Department of the Interior, to achieve some of the goals of America's Great Outdoors Initiative, established the National Water Trails System. The Water Trails System is a new network intended to increase access to water-based outdoor recreation, encourage community stewardship of local waterways and promote tourism that support local economies. The System establishes national water trails as a class of national recreational trails under the National Trails System Act of 1968.

The Wisconsin State Trails Network Plan for the south central region identifies segment 34, Rock River, Watertown to Beloit, as a potential component of the regional network. This river segment is described as a major natural resource corridor having trail potential. The 60-mile river corridor also has interstate trail potential with a connection at the state line in Beloit.

WHO WILL MAKE USE OF THE WATER TRAIL?

The Rock River is a diverse recreational waterway with a gentle gradient, 22 dams and three river impoundments that form Lake Sinissippi and Lake Koshkonong in Wisconsin and Sinnissippi Lake in Illinois. Recreational uses include canoe and kayak paddling, motorized boats for pleasure, water skiing, fishing and hunting; even sail boats are used on the large lakes.

The gentle gradient of the river (1 foot per mile) provides both novice and intermediate paddlers with miles of scenic beauty and enjoyment, while long distances on the meandering river course will be challenging for even the advanced paddler. The river

provides diverse and varied rural, scenic and wilderness landscapes, as well as exciting paddling experiences in urban environments. Travelers have access to cultural, educational and historic assets and points of interest in the river communities.

River access sites along the water trail vary in type and condition. Sites are numerous and in proximity of each other in urban areas, while infrequent and widely spaced in rural and wilderness segments of the trail.

A number of river sites and portions of the water trail are accessible to persons with disabilities. The Initiative encourages accessibility in all aspects of the water trail.

Camping is available along the trail at over 20 public and private facilities, although spacing between facilities varies considerably. The US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, owns three river islands in Wisconsin, each of which is available to the water traveler for primitive camping.

In addition many river communities have made their riverfronts a destination for residents and visitors alike. A community can serve as a recreational center that integrates the water trail, adjacent land trails and urban bike and pedestrian paths with the cultural and historic center of the community. The concept of a confluence of water trail, land trails and community as a recreational center can be replicated in most of the river communities.

In summary, the Rock River Water Trail will serve a variety of user age groups, abilities and skill levels, offering to all diverse trail experiences, accommodations and trip destinations.

INTRODUCTION

The preparation of the water trail plan was directed by the Rock River Trail Initiative Council. The Council consists of members representing the 11 counties that make up the river corridor and key recreation and resource conservation groups, including local government and non-governmental organizations. The Council was given the responsibility to engage local government and stakeholders, inventory existing public access locations and camping sites on the river, investigate portage infrastructure at each of the dams and evaluate the river environment and stream conditions for paddle craft.

The Council analyzed the condition and frequency of access sites, facilities and amenities; evaluated infrastructure and signage at each dam for convenience and safety of portage; assessed paddling experiences along all river sections; and prepared recommendations for improvements and enhancements. It was also the role of the Council to identify trail marketing and promotion needs and to identify opportunities for water resource education along the river.

In consultation with state and federal recreation and resource planners, the Council also decided to prepare two future reports to guide implementation of the trail plan:

Trail and Corridor Management Report to provide details to local resource managers of recommendations for trail improvements and enhancements based on the analysis of river segments, corridor infrastructure and natural and cultural resources.

Trail Promotion and Public Information Report to identify media and content that will convey user information about the water trail to prospective paddlers and recreationists, as well as outline marketing strategies and materials to promote the trail to the general public.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

During the planning process each of the counties, municipalities, park districts and park departments along the river was contacted by representatives of the Council and provided with information on the proposed water trail. In a number of cases, formal presentations were made to county park and planning committees, city councils and village boards. In addition, presentations were made to community organizations with interests in public health, resource conservation, public recreation, tourism and economic development. The Council received 98 letters and resolutions of support of the water trail from local government and non-governmental organizations and from owners of private boat launches and camping sites along the river in Illinois and Wisconsin. A list of these documents is included in the Appendices.

Individual public comment was sought to provide input to the planning process. Public information meetings were announced in local news media and held in Hustisford, Jefferson and Janesville, Wisconsin, and Rockford, Sterling and Rock Island, Illinois. The trail initiative hosted two public Rock River Trail Conferences in Rockford, Illinois.

Local news media also provided informative coverage of the trail initiative and plans to establish a recreation water trail. Local newspapers that published articles on the proposed water trail include: *Beaver Dam Daily Citizen*, *Dodge County Independent News*, *Dodge County Pionier*, *Watertown Daily News*, *Jefferson County Daily Union*, *Edgerton Reporter*, *Janesville Gazette*, *Beloit Daily News*, *The Rock River Times*, *Sauk Valley News* and *Quad-City Times*. Several of these articles are included in the Appendices.

Finally, since 2010 the Rock River Trail Initiative has maintained a website at www.rockrivertrail.com and issues periodic updates and news releases.

3 – THE WATER TRAIL PLAN

FACILITIES INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

The water trail plan involved assessment of stream and channel conditions, obstacles and hazards, landscapes, access sites and development along the length of the river. This information was used to categorize river reaches and segments into the types of water trail experiences that are available to users.

Comprehensive outdoors, recreation and greenways plans prepared by Illinois and Wisconsin departments of natural resources and by counties and municipalities along the river corridor were reviewed. Comments and recommendations of counties, municipalities and park districts along the river, community organizations and user groups were incorporated into the planning process. Owners of private boat launches and camping facilities on the river were contacted.

An inventory of river access sites and launches, river parks and camping sites, and river dams was prepared by researching public information on existing sites, discussion with river users, agencies and facility owners. Site visits were conducted to verify information on access facilities and to assess potential safety issues at each dam. In all, facilities and other amenities at nearly 200 sites were inventoried including signage, restrooms, potable water, shelter, camping, vehicle access and parking and accessibility.

As a result of that inventory 155 suitable access sites and 22 portages were identified based on legal and safe access to the river; site location and condition, facilities and amenities; frequency and spacing of adjacent sites; and accessibility from public roads. Several dam portages were identified as needing improvement of infrastructure and signage for safety and convenience of users. In addition it was found that there is an abundance of state and municipal parks, forests and open areas along much of the river. However, access to camping facilities on the river in each river segment is lacking.

RESULTS

STANDARDS FOR ACCESS SITES, DAMS AND CAMPING FACILITIES

Access Sites

Standards for river access sites were established based on the method by which the river can be accessed and the ease of access:

- **Developed** (includes a paved or gravel launch for trailered motor boats and other watercraft; usually with a pier or dock and often with other facilities and amenities; includes both public and private facilities)
- **Carry-In** (river shore and beach areas that provide easy public access for canoes and kayaks; facilities and other amenities usually not available.)
- **Alternate** (carry-in sites for canoes and kayaks that present some challenge to access the river: steep slope, require wading through marshy fringe, undeveloped dirt road, etc; may include sites with potential for future development as Carry-In or Developed sites)

While there are many developed launch and carry-in sites along the river that provide public access, long segments exist without suitable sites for put in, rest and carry out. This is especially true along river segments in Dodge, Henry and Jefferson Counties. A metric of 4 – 6 miles was used as the recommended maximum distance between access sites. River segments with inter-site distances that exceed the maximum value were evaluated for locations of potential development for new access sites.

Fifty of the 155 access sites are designated as accessible to persons with disabilities, representing over 30 percent of the total number of river sites.



*Rock River near Castle Rock State Park, Ogle County
Photo courtesy of Debbie Thompson*

Recommendations in the future trail and corridor management report will address the need for additional access sites and improvements and enhancements of some existing sites.

Dams

A dam safety checklist was developed by the Council and used to evaluate existing portage infrastructure, safety and convenience at each of the dams. Most of the dams require some enhancement of infrastructure and signage to improve portage use and safety. Detailed recommendations will be found in the trail and corridor management report.

Camping Facilities

Sixteen river-access camping facilities are included in the trail inventory. Additional facilities are available within the river corridor. Spacing of camping facilities varies and

some river segments do not have camping sites. Some of the camp grounds are privately owned and certain restrictions apply to use. Public parks and forest preserves exist along many river segments in both urban and rural environments.

Recommendations in the trail and corridor management report will address the need for additional camping facilities.

The inventory of existing river access sites, dams, camping facilities and resources is given in the Appendices.

Maps of the Rock River Water Trail incorporating appropriate symbols to designate access type at each site and additional information on river sections and park and camping facilities are included in the Appendices. Smaller maps for the user can be downloaded from the Rock River Trail website.



Rock River, Dodge County Photo courtesy of Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department



Rock River near Sterling-Rock Falls, Whiteside County

RIVER OBSTACLES AND SAFETY CONCERNS

Obstacles and safety concerns on the Rock River Water Trail are generally of two types:

- **Natural** These obstacles may include tree branches extending into the river, log jams, partially submerged rocks, flooding with high velocity current, low-water conditions, rough water during high wind on a large waterway, etc.
- **Infrastructure** Each dam is a potential hazard and the paddler must portage around the dam. Other safety concerns from infrastructure include piers, bridge abutments, barbed wire and debris along shore, etc.

River users are cautioned to exercise care when near one of the dams. Hazard zones exist both upstream and downstream of each dam. Although some of the dams have signage and infrastructure that provide safe portage, most of the dams along the river need enhancement of both infrastructure and signage.

The physical carrying capacity of the Rock River is generally unconstrained due to the length and spatial area of the waterway, with the exception of reaches in Dodge and Jefferson Counties. In those counties some areas of the river channel are narrow and passage is potentially impacted by shoreline tree falls. Low-water conditions can also affect water trail use in the upper river reaches. Certain river sections in urban areas, such as Traxler Park in Janesville, Wis, Shorewood Park in Loves Park, Ill and Ben Williamson Park in Rock Island, Ill, experience heavy use at times by motor boats and water skiers. Caution by paddle craft users is needed to avoid conflict with motorized boats.

STANDARDS OF PADDLING EXPERIENCES ON THE ROCK RIVER

The water trail plan is designed to provide safe, positive and enjoyable experiences on the river that meet the expectations of the users. A key element to attain this objective is to balance the trail experience options among urban, rural and wilderness waterway characteristics with availability of amenities and historic and cultural resources. A second element is to provide accurate information in various forms to trail users so as to facilitate selection of trail routes commensurate with user skills and experience, available time and accessibility.

Assessments were made of the stream conditions, channel configurations, obstacles and hazards, natural landscapes, degree of development and types and spacing of access sites along the length of the river. A set of standards was developed to classify segments of the river by user skill level needed to navigate the river and the type of travel experience that could be expected. Plan standards, skill level and environmental type segments were developed for each river section based on planning guidelines used by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

The segmentation of the river by skill level and type of travel experience provides users an easy way of selecting routes that meet their needs and interest and match their abilities and expectations. Information on the length of segments and distances between access sites allows the user to select a route commensurate with time available, e.g. short float trips versus day or multi-day trips. This approach also provides safe opportunities for paddlers of different skill levels and physical abilities to enjoy a variety of river conditions, locations, landscapes and types of paddling experiences.

Three skill levels are described for the water trail.

- **Gateway skill level** At normal flow conditions, a gateway segment provides the most predictable experience for paddlers. This segment is a good introductory trail for beginners and those seeking shorter trips. Small hazards such as tree falls can be easily avoided. Gateway segments are intended for high use levels. Portage is normally not required. Launch facilities and carry-in access sites are normally closely spaced and well developed with amenities near parking areas.
- **Recreational skill level** This segment generally requires a higher level of skill and experience than the gateway segment. At normal flow conditions, some maneuvering around obstacles and short portages is likely. Launch facilities may be less developed or with less convenient access, and site spacing will be varied and longer than in gateway segments. Amenities may be available at some sites.
- **Challenge skill level** The challenge segment is only for experienced paddlers. A number of hazards will be present including tree falls, rocks, bridge abutments, proximity of motorized boats or large open-water crossings with potential for high waves and limited egress. Long portages may be required and access site spacing will be varied. Launch areas are usually more difficult to reach and amenities are usually not available

3 – THE WATER TRAIL PLAN

Three types of river travel experiences are described for the water trail:

- **Urban** Urban segments are predominately within developed areas of cities and villages and are typically of short distance. Access sites and launch facilities are convenient, streets are close by and amenities are usually within a short walk. Parks and cultural offerings are available. A municipal dam may connect two urban segments and would require portage.
- **Rural** This river segment lies within open landscape with limited development, often in agricultural areas. River banks may be heavily vegetated with tree falls along shoreline. Roads may be a distance from the river and access sites less developed and widely spaced.

- **Wilderness** The wilderness segment provides a paddling experience in the natural environment with minimal human-made distractions and amenities. Spacing between access sites may be long and varied. Overnight camping facilities may be present. Launch facilities may be carry-in only and in primitive condition.

WATER TRAIL SECTIONS AND SEGMENTS

Maps of the water trail included in the Appendices show the segmentation of each section of the river by skill level, landscape type and paddling experience, along with designated access sites, dams and camping facilities. Each access site listed in the tables is coded to a location within a particular river section and segment.



Harnischfeger County Park on Rock River, Dodge County

The water trail comprises 11 river sections, 6 in Wisconsin and 5 in Illinois, with each river section having two or more unique paddling experience segments. The 11 river sections are:

	miles
A. Northern Water Trail	7
B. East Branch through Horicon Marsh to Horicon	30
C. Horicon to Hustisford to Watertown	53
D. Watertown to Jefferson	22
E. Jefferson to Fort Atkinson to Indianford	26
F. Indianford to Janesville to Beloit	29
Total Wisconsin	167
G. Beloit to Rockford	27
H. Rockford to Oregon	27
I. Oregon to Dixon to Sterling-Rock Falls	35
J. Sterling-Rock Falls to Prophetstown to Erie	36
K. Erie to Colona to Quad Cities	38
Total Illinois	163
Total Rock River Water Trail	330

WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE

Wayfinding for the water trail incorporates elements of graphic communication, including signage, color coding, maps, brochures and website, to provide orientation, direction, identification and regulatory information to the trail user.

Key to effective wayfinding for the water trail will be a consistent appearance and application of signage from trailhead to river mouth. The goals are to increase the public’s awareness of the trail, direct users and visitors to available access sites and indicate dams and hazards, thereby providing users a safe recreational experience.

The signage system will incorporate the logo identifying the **Rock River Water Trail** and complement existing municipal signage. Universal facility icons may be used to identify available facilities and provide enhanced directional information. Interpretive signage will provide information on natural, cultural and historic points of interest for water trail users.

Details of the wayfinding and signage system will be included in the trail and corridor management report.



3 – THE WATER TRAIL PLAN

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION

In order to assure the long-term success of the water trail, a commitment is necessary for routine maintenance and operation of trail facilities. This includes maintenance and upkeep of boat launches, carry-in access areas, dam portages and site amenities. These activities are typically the responsibility of the state, county or municipality in the case of publicly-owned facilities or individual owners of private launch facilities and campgrounds. Certain maintenance activities such as clearing of tree blockages and debris require participation by private individuals and organizations. The role of the Council in this regard will be to work with project partners – public and private – to deliver a pleasurable water trail experience, provide consistent trail information and assure minimal facility standards are identified and applied.

The trail and corridor management report will recommend enhancements to several access sites and construction of new sites on lengthy river segments. The Council will partner with local authorities in planning new launches and enhancements of existing sites. Where feasible, new access sites can incorporate universal launch design based on specifications included in the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Council may also partner with government units to secure grants and other funding that would enhance the water trail experience.

IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING - TIMELINE – FUNDING

GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

The water trail crosses many jurisdictional boundaries of state and local government. Designation of the Rock River as a water trail will create continuity and uniformity among access sites, dam portages and signage, and consolidate and disseminate information about the trail, recreational experiences and safe practices. Such an approach requires partnerships among government and non-government organizations and coordination with government agencies. Resources and expertise can be shared to develop and maintain the best possible recreational experience for users of the water trail.

In development of the water trail, the Council has established working relationships among the 11 counties and 37 municipalities along the river in Wisconsin and Illinois; with lake management districts, park districts and various non-profit recreation and conservation organizations; and with state and federal agencies. It is imperative that these relationships are maintained as they form the foundation for ongoing cooperative planning and management of the water trail.

As this plan moves forward, new opportunities for partnerships and coordination will be presented. This will especially be the case with funding agencies and providers of trail maintenance and dam portage infrastructure. It is incumbent upon the Council and trail management to continually support and nurture the working relationships and partnerships.



Rock River at Heritage Crossing Riverfront Plaza, Dixon, Lee County
 Photo courtesy of Dixon Riverfront Commission

NEAR-TERM IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

To achieve the vision for the water trail, the Council identified the following near-term (1-2 years) implementation priorities that will enhance the usability, visibility and safety of the water trail.

- Signage is prepared and distributed to local government and private entities for installation according to the wayfinding and signage requirements.
- Water trail maps and guides are distributed to recreation providers, tourism associations, state, county and local government, and made available on the website.
- Counties, municipalities, park districts, lake management districts and private owners include the water trail recommendations in their comprehensive land use, greenways and outdoor recreation plans and in development plans for private facilities.
- Owners of access sites and dams provide ongoing trail maintenance and upkeep to assure safe and accessible use and include in their operational and capital budget plans the recommended water trail improvements.
- The Council provides a contact person in each county and a mechanism to facilitate coordination, management and implementation among governmental jurisdictions, user groups and other stakeholders.
- Applications are made to the Illinois and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources to include the Rock River Water Trail as a state trail, and to the National Park Service for designation of the water trail as a national water trail.

3 – THE WATER TRAIL PLAN

FUNDING

Work of the Rock River Trail Initiative Council is supported by membership fees, donations and contributions of services and materials by partner organizations.

The Council receives funding through Friends of the Rock River, Inc., (*dba* **Rock River Trail Initiative**), an Illinois not-for-profit corporation established in 1991. The Initiative is tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization engaged in charitable, educational and scientific purposes. As a charitable organization, the Initiative is eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions in accordance with section 170 of the Code.

The Council also plans to apply directly for grants and partner with local government and other organizations in funding requests to support purchase and installation of signage, development of public access sites on the river, development of safe portage infrastructure at river dams and other trail uses. Funds may also be requested from government and organizations to support educational and marketing efforts to promote interest in and recreational use of the water trail by the public.



*Rock River, Dodge County
Photo courtesy of Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department*

BRANDING, MARKETING AND PROMOTION STRATEGIES

Developing the Rock River Water Trail as a brand is a process to define and communicate the idea and attributes of the water trail based on its purpose, vision and mission. The brand of a water trail on the Rock River is an identity manifested in the services, places and experiences one expects to realize while recreating on the river. The water trail brand is more than its name, logo, website and signs. It is the idea and anticipation of a safe, pleasurable and memorable experience while recreating on the Rock River.

The water trail brand is predicated on a simple, yet critical, concept: it promotes healthy, nature-based recreational activities for residents and visitors. These activities serve not only to improve the physical and mental well-being of those participating, but also to foster a deeper appreciation of place and nature. Such use translates into greater involvement of people in ways that influence long-term stewardship of the river.

Additionally, users of the water trail contribute financially to local communities while they recreate, further enhancing appreciation of community and regional resources.

Marketing and promotion strategies are designed to build the identity of the Rock River Water Trail, formulate a consistent message about the water trail and promote it to diverse user groups and audiences. Promotion strategies will be detailed in the trail promotion and public information report and include marketing and communications, strategic alliances, on-line marketing, advertising, public relations, literature and tools, events, wayfinding and public education plans.

An objective of the Initiative is to seek state and national designation of the Rock River Water Trail as a recreation trail. Designation provides for enhanced public awareness of the river, will help build brand identity and aid in marketing and promotion activities. It may also assist in funding efforts for enhancement of the water trail.

4 – MARKETING AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

WATER RELATED TOURISM

The water trail will become a recreation destination, bringing paddlers and other river users to the Rock River and its communities. Each community can serve as a recreational center that integrates the water trail, adjacent land trails and bike and pedestrian paths with the cultural and historic center of the community. Recreation trails also enhance the livability of a community, providing improved facilities for residents and helping to showcase the community as an attractive place to live and work.

Water trails comprise a rapidly growing segment of the recreation and tourism industry. Case studies demonstrate that economic development of communities is enhanced by water trails. Lodging and camping facilities, food and beverage establishments, retail businesses and recreational and travel services experience positive economic impact from water trail users.

The Allegheny Trail Alliance, in its publication *Guides for Trail Towns*, has developed basic elements of a strategy to help communities take advantage of the economic opportunities of trail users. Elements of that strategy applicable to this water trail include:

- Entice trail users to get off the trail and into the community
- Welcome trail users to the community by making information about the community readily available at the trail
- Make a strong and safe connection between the community and the trail
- Educate local businesses on the economic benefits of meeting trail tourists' needs
- Recruit new businesses or expand existing ones to fill gaps in the goods or services that trail users need
- Promote the "trail friendly" character of the community
- Work with neighboring communities to promote the trail corridor as a tourist destination



Rowing on the Rock River, Rockford, Winnebago County
Photo courtesy of Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

ROCK RIVER CORRIDOR CONNECTIONS TO OTHER WATER TRAILS AND TO HIKING, BIKING AND EQUESTRIAN TRAILS

The Rock River corridor includes other water trails on tributary streams and a number of hiking, biking and equestrian trails. Many of the river communities have developed riverfront walks and parks with urban paths for pedestrians and bicyclists.

In Wisconsin, the Wild Goose State Trail runs in proximity to the Rock River on the west side of the Horicon Marsh and eventually crosses the river near STH 49 outside of Waupun. The southern trailhead of the Niagara Escarpment Great Arc Bike Route is situated near the river between Mayville and Kekoskee in Dodge County. The Horicon Marsh Parkway crosses the river in several locations.

The Glacial Drumlin State Trail crosses the river just north of Jefferson, while the Ice Age National Scenic Trail crosses the river in Janesville. The Glacial River Bike Trail runs to the east of Lake Koshkonong and meets the river at Fort Atkinson. In Janesville, the Spring Brook and Kiwanis Bike trails are part of the Ice Age Trail Corridor that runs along the river to Riverside Park.

In Dane, Jefferson and Rock Counties, several tributary waterways have been marked as recreation trails including Turtle Creek and the Yahara, Bark and Crawfish Rivers.



A number of waypoints of the Great Wisconsin Birding & Nature Trail for the Southern Savanna Region lie within the Rock River Valley.

In Dodge County equestrian trails are located in Harnischfeger Park, which is on the river near Ashippun, and on the Wild Goose State Trail between Clyman Junction and Burnett.

East of the river in Jefferson County are miles of trails in the Southern Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest, including a horse rider's camp in Palmyra. Four equestrian trails in Rock County are in proximity of the river corridor: Gibbs Lake County Park, Magnolia Bluff Park, Pelishek Nature Trail and Happy Hollow Park, which is located on the river.

The Grand Illinois Trail crosses the Rock River at Colona and Carbon Cliff, Illinois, near the site at which the Hennepin Canal joins the river, and to the north at Rockford. The Hennepin Canal Parkway State Park runs contiguous with the river at the Quad Cities, while the Hennepin Feeder Canal begins at the river at Rock Falls. The Rock River Trail Loop of the Grand Illinois Trail runs along the river from Rockford to Rock Falls.

4 – MARKETING AND PUBLIC EDUCATION



*Portage from River at Hennepin Canal Lock No. 30, Rock Island County
Photo courtesy of Dan McNeil, River Action, Quad Cities*

The trailhead of the Great River Trail is in Sunset Park, Rock Island, at the confluence of the Rock River and the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River Trail, a bicycle and pedestrian-friendly highway route, crosses the river at Milan and continues north through Sunset Park. And, the Great River Road National Scenic Byway passes over the river at Rock Island and heads north through Sunset Park.

In Winnebago County, the Kishwaukee and Pecatonica Rivers are tributaries of the Rock River and are designated as water trails.

A number of equestrian trails are found in Winnebago County Forest Preserves and at Rock Cut State Park. The Lowden-Miller State Forest along the eastern shore of the river in Ogle County has an equestrian trail. In Lee County trails are found in Franklin Creek State Natural Area, Green River State Conservation Area and in Dixon at The Meadows.

Whiteside County has horse trails at Morrison-Rockwood State Park. Trails also exist on the Hennepin Canal Parkway through Whiteside and Henry Counties toward Colona and on the feeder canal from Rock Falls south toward Sheffield. In Rock Island County the Loud Thunder Forest Preserve offers horse trails.

In summary, these complementary trails, along with the historical and cultural resources and special river-focused events in many of the communities along the Rock River, offer the water trail user an exceptional look at Midwest landscape, culture and history, thereby enhancing the water trail experience.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Natural Resources An important objective of the Rock River Trail Initiative is to enhance the river ecosystem through natural resources conservation, stewardship and environmental planning and design. Several examples demonstrate the commitment of the Initiative to this objective.

For the past two years the Initiative (now the Council) has teamed with Living Lands & Waters of Moline, Illinois, to distribute 10,000 oak trees to the 11 counties along the Rock River. The trees are provided free-of-charge to municipalities, conservation organizations and civic groups with the only request that the trees be planted within sight of the Rock River.

One of the partners of the Initiative is Lake Sinissippi Improvement District, a Wisconsin inland lake protection and rehabilitation district based in Hustisford, Wisconsin. Since 2002 the lake district has conducted water sampling programs to assess the ambient and recreational quality of the lake and river and provided the information to the public. The programs are run in conjunction with Dodge County Public Health Unit and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources and Health Services.

The Rock River Coalition, a supporting organization in Wisconsin, is active in public education on natural resources and conservation within the Rock River Basin. It sponsors an annual event called “Send Your Legislator Down the River” to connect with local and state officials and discuss water resource issues.

Another supporter of the Initiative is Rock River Sweep of Oregon, Illinois, a not-for-profit organization that conducts river cleanups in cooperation with river community groups in both states. The Sweeps are annual events and have been conducted since 2010. Council members also participated in a 2012 river cleanup sponsored by River Action in the Quad Cities.

In 2010 the Initiative sponsored a design contest for schools and industries along the river to construct an American renewable energy product – a working micro-hydro generating device that produces electrical energy from the flow of the Rock River. Also in 2010 representatives of the Initiative participated in Earth Day at Rock Valley College, Chicago’s Green Festival and the Illinois Renewable Energy Fair.

Cultural Heritage There is a rich panorama of human history in the river valley. From the aboriginal peoples, explorers and early settlers to the industrialists, agriculturalists, statesmen and visionaries of more recent times, unique and significant contributions to the evolution of America have originated in the Rock River valley. An objective of the Initiative is to protect, preserve and educate about the historic assets of the valley and our cultural heritage. Examples of these activities include:

Advisors to the Council include the Native American Awareness Committee of northern Illinois and the president of the Wisconsin Archeological Society. A presentation of “An Inventory of Native American Effigy Mounds on the Rock River” was made at the 2011 Rock River Trail Meet the Neighbors Conference held in Rockford, Illinois.

4 – MARKETING AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

In 2011 a representative of the Council met with members of the Kekoskee Historical Society and the Theresa Historical Society, both members of the Wisconsin Local Historical Societies, to develop plans for showcasing local history of these river communities. In 2012 the Yellowstone Trail, one of the first transcontinental highways in the US, celebrates its centennial. The Yellowstone Trail passed over the Rock River in Theresa and the Council is helping the Yellowstone Trail Association and local officials organize a commemorative event for the Trail.

Also, in 2013 the Lincoln Highway, another pioneering transcontinental highway, will celebrate its centennial. The Lincoln Highway passed over the Rock River in Dixon, Illinois, and the Council will work with the Lincoln Highway Association and community organizers to help celebrate the anniversary.

The Council is collaborating with Friends of the Hennepin Canal, Sheffield, Illinois on historical preservation and public education of the heritage elements of the Rock River, the guard lock gate of the Hennepin Feeder Canal and the Canal. The Hennepin Canal is on the National Register of Historic Places.



On the river from Oregon to Grand Detour, Ogle County

Photo courtesy of Frank Schler, The Rock River Times

Boating Skills, Safety and Outdoor Ethics

In 2010 the Initiative presented information on recreation and safety on the Rock River at a jamboree held in Rockford, Illinois by the Blackhawk Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

In Hustisford, Wisconsin representatives of the Initiative have for the past two years held canoe and kayak instruction and tours of the Rock River and Lake Sinissippi.

A member of the Council is a certified paddle instructor and was chosen as Outstanding Instructor of 2009 by the American Canoe Association. An article written by this individual is entitled *River in a Box*, which presents teaching methods for river canoeing and kayaking. The article and safety posters from ACA and the US Coast Guard Auxiliary are available on the website of the Initiative.

Since 2010 the Council has advocated for development of uniform dam portages for all dams on the river. Uniform portages will incorporate principles of conservation design to include warning and directional signage; approach channels with marker buoys; construction of take-out landing, path and launch with natural rock or permeable pavement; recycling and waste containers; and information kiosks.

The National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management partner with Tread Lightly! Inc and Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics to promote and educate about responsible land and water stewardship. The Council supports the principles of outdoor ethics and responsible recreation to improve and enhance public lands and waters. Tread Lightly! Principles and Leave No Trace Seven Principles are available on the Initiative website.

RESTORATION AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The Initiative recently partnered with Interstate Resource Conservation & Development of the Quad Cities to seek funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a watershed improvement project for the Argillo Creek, a tributary of the Rock River in Rock Island County.

In 2011 the City of Rockford Park District teamed with the Initiative to develop three campsites at three city parks, with each site having 3-5 primitive camping areas. Additionally, the park district posted river directional signs and established a portage system to transport canoes and kayaks around the Fordham Dam.

Also in 2011 a member of the Council spoke at the Rock River Trail - Meet the Neighbors Conference in Rockford, Illinois on "Riverside Buffer Zones and Ponds Addressing Water Quality Issues." At the same conference the Rock River Basin Educator of the University of Wisconsin-Extension gave a presentation on "The Rock River Coalition: Making Positive Change through Partnerships."

The Council has joined with Friends of the Hennepin Canal, the Rock River Development Authority and the Tri-City River Group (Dixon, Rock Falls and Sterling riverfronts) to establish a world-class system of multi-use recreational trails in the lower Rock River valley centered on the waterways of the Rock River and the Hennepin Canal.

Recently the Council provided support to the Jefferson County Parks Department for its grant application to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for funding to implement shoreline restoration at the Rock River Park in Johnson Creek, an important boat launch and carry-in site for diverse recreational use of the river.

WATER TRAILS: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

North American Water Trails, Inc., has developed guiding principles for water trails. An adaptation of those principles for the Rock River Water Trail includes:

- **Partnerships**
A water trail is the product of partnerships among governmental and non-governmental entities, user groups and private individuals. A successful water trail will be maintained with broad-based and long-term support among the partners.
- **Appreciation**
Water trail users share a deep appreciation of the natural and scenic beauty of our rivers and streams, lakes, shorelands and wetlands, and the communities that thrive there.
- **Education**
Water trail organizations use comprehensive trail guides, signage, public outreach and information to encourage awareness of the natural, cultural and historic attributes of the trail.
- **Recreation and Well-being**
Water trails are wholesome; fresh air and exercise bring fitness and health to trail users.
- **Conservation**
Water trail activities can support conservation of the aquatic ecosystem and contiguous shorelands.



Rivers Edge Park on the East Branch, Rock River, Theresa, Dodge County

- **Community Vitality**
A water trail is part of a network of recreational and educational opportunities. Hiking and biking trails, greenways, parks, museums, historic sites and preserves are connected, creating frontiers for exploration, discovery and enrichment. The connections build a sense of place and bind citizens in a love for their community.
- **Local Economics**
Water trails are recreation and tourism destinations, bringing new visitors and economic opportunities and revitalization to communities.
- **Stewardship**
Water trails promote minimum impact practices that insure a sustainable future for the waterway and adjacent lands. Water trails embrace the “Leave No Trace” code of responsible outdoor ethics.
- **Volunteerism**
Community involvement and volunteerism are the keys to developing a sense of trail stewardship.
- **Diversity**
Water trails are open to all who want to respectfully enjoy and appreciate the trail experience.

ROCK RIVER TRAIL INITIATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

Frank Schier, Founder and Coordinator
Editor and Publisher,
The Rock River Times, Rockford, Ill.

Greg Farnham, Coordinator
Commissioner, Lake Sinissippi
Improvement District, Hustisford, Wis.

Carles and Dorothy Brown
Natural Area Guardians,
Henry County Soil and
Water Conservation District,
Geneseo, Ill.

Sheila De Forest
City Councilor, City of Beloit
Beloit, Wis.

Dave Druen
Rock Falls Canal Trail Blazer Volunteers,
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Bill Ehlenbeck
Parks Manager, Dodge County Land
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Waupun, Wis.

Erin Folk
Assistant Executive Director,
Oregon Park District
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Jim Kerler
Director, Rock River Coalition
Lake Mills, Wis.

Tom Lindblade
President, Illinois Paddling Council
Rockford, Ill.

Joe Nehmer
Parks Director,
Jefferson County Parks Department
Jefferson, Wis.

Webbs Norman
Executive Director Emeritus,
Rockford Park District
Rockford, Ill.

Chris Ontiveros
Retired Business Executive
Moline, Ill.

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Founder, Living Lands & Waters
East Moline, Ill.

David Schreiber
Principal, SAA Design Group
Madison, Wis.

Joleen Stinson
Community Coordinator,
Rock County Parks Division
Janesville, Wis.

Debbie Thompson
Artist and Canoeist
Dixon, Ill.

Robert Vogl
Director, Illinois Renewable Energy
Association
Oregon, Ill.

LIST OF PARTNERS



Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

County of WINNEBAGO, ILLINOIS



US Army Corps of Engineers®
Rock Island District

Lake Sinissippi Improvement District
Hustisford, Wisconsin



LETTERS AND RESOLUTIONS OF SUPPORT AND CONSENT

Albion, Town of, Dane County, Wis.
 Ashippun, Town of, Dodge County, Wis.
 Beloit, City of, Rock County, Wis.
 Beloit, Town of, Rock County, Wis.
 Blackhawk Hills Resource Conservation and Development Area Council, Rock Falls, Ill.
 Blackhawk Waterways Convention & Visitors Bureau, Polo, Ill.
 Bubba D's Boat Launch and Beer Garden, Edgerton, Wis.
 Byron Forest Preserve District, Byron, Ill.
 Carbon Cliff, Village of, Rock Island County, Ill.
 Cleveland, Village of, Henry County, Ill.
 Coal Valley, Village of, Rock Island, Ill.
 Coloma Township Park District, Rock Falls, Ill.
 Colona, City of, Henry County, Ill.
 Colona, Township of, Henry County, Ill.
 Dane County Land & Water Resources Department, Madison, Wis.
 Discover Dodge, Inc., Juneau, Wis.
 Dixon Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Dixon, Ill.
 Dixon Park District, Dixon, Ill.
 Dixon Riverfront Commission, Dixon, Ill.
 Dixon, City of, Lee County, Ill.
 Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department, Juneau, Wis.
 Dodge County Unit of the Wisconsin Towns Association, Waterloo, Wis.
 Dodge-Jefferson Healthier Community Partnership, Inc., Watertown, Wis.
 Edgerton, City of, Dane and Rock Counties, Wis.
 Fond du Lac County Planning/Parks Department, Fond du Lac, Wis.
 Fort Atkinson, City of, Jefferson County, Wis.
 Friends of Dodge County Parks, Juneau, Wis.
 Friends of Horicon Marsh International Education Center, Horicon, Wis.
 Friends of Riverside Park, Janesville, Wis.
 Geneseo, City of, Henry County, Ill.
 Hanna, Township of, Henry County, Ill.
 Henry County Board, Cambridge, Ill.
 Henry County Illinois Tourism Bureau, Cambridge, Ill.
 Henry County Soil and Water Conservation District, Cambridge, Ill.
 Horicon Marsh Boat Tours/Blue Heron Landing, Horicon, Wis.
 Horicon, City of, Dodge County, Wis.
 Hubbard, Town of, Dodge County, Wis.
 Hustisford, Village of, Dodge County, Wis.
 Illinois Paddling Council, Rockford, Ill.
 Illinois Renewable Energy Association, Oregon, Ill.
 Ixonia, Town of, Jefferson County, Wis.
 Janesville, City of, Rock County, Wis.
 Janesville, Town of, Rock County, Wis.
 Jefferson County Board, Jefferson, Wis.
 Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium, Jefferson, Wis.
 Jefferson County Health Department, Jefferson, Wis.
 Jefferson County Parks Department, Jefferson, Wis.
 Jefferson, City of, Jefferson County, Wis.
 Johnson Creek, Village of, Jefferson County, Wis.
 Kekoskee, Village of, Dodge County, Wis.
 Koshkonong, Town of, Jefferson County, Wis.
 Lake Sinissippi Improvement District, Hustisford, Wis.
 Lee County Board, Dixon, Ill.
 Living Lands & Waters, East Moline, Ill.

LETTERS AND RESOLUTIONS OF SUPPORT AND CONSENT

Lundeens Landing Campground, Barstow, Ill.
Machesny Park, Village of, Winnebago County, Ill.
Mayville, City of, Dodge County, Wis.
Milan, Village of, Rock Island, Ill.
Moline, City of, Rock Island County, Ill.
Ogle County Board, Oregon, Ill.
Oregon Park District, Oregon, Ill.
Ox-Bo Marine, Lake Sinissippi, Juneau, Wis.
Playful Goose Campground, Horicon, Wis.
Prophetstown, City of, Whiteside County, Ill.
Quad Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau, Moline, Ill.
Quad Cities Waterkeeper, Port Byron, Ill.
River Alliance of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.
Rock County Board, Janesville, Wis.
Rock Falls Community Development Corporation, Rock Falls, Ill.
Rock Falls Tourism, Rock Falls, Ill.
Rock Falls, City of, Whiteside County, Ill.
Rock Island County Board, Rock Island, Ill.
Rock Island Parks & Recreation, Rock Island, Ill.
Rock Island, City of, Rock Island, Ill.
Rock River Coalition, Jefferson, Wis.
Rock River Sweep, Oregon, Ill.
Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, Rockford, Ill.
Rockford Park District, Rockford, Ill.
Rockford, City of, Winnebago County, Ill.
Rock-Koshkonong Lake District, Newville, Wis.
Rockton, Village of, Winnebago County, Ill.
Roscoe, Village of, Winnebago County, Ill.
Sheila Simon, Lieutenant Governor, State of Illinois
Silvis, City of, Rock Island County, Ill.
Sinissippi Ski Club, Hustisford, Wis.
South Beloit, City of, Winnebago County, Ill.
Sterling Park District, Sterling, Ill.
Sterling, City of, Whiteside County, Ill.
Sumner, Town of, Jefferson County, Wis.
Theresa, Village of, Dodge County, Wis.
Visit Beloit Convention & Visitors Bureau, Beloit, Wis.
Watertown, City of, Dodge and Jefferson Counties, Wis.
Waupun Area Recreation Project, Waupun, Wis.
Waupun, City of, Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties, Wis.
Whiteside County Board, Morrison, Ill.
Winnebago County Board, Rockford, Ill.
Winnebago County Forest Preserve, Rockford, Ill.

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MEDIA COVERAGE



Rockford passes resolution supporting Rock River Trail Initiative

• Two-state, 11-county Rock River Trail Initiative Council formed

Staff Report

Rockford City Council passed a resolution of support for the Rock River Trail Initiative (RTTI) at its Nov. 21 meeting at the request of the trail's founder, *The Rock River Times*' Editor & Publisher Frank Schier.

City Administrator Jim Ryan facilitated the resolution, which was brought to the floor by Ald. Doug Mark (R-3). It passed by a unanimous vote, 10-0, with four absent.

"In the appropriate spirit of true Thanksgiving, I'd like to thank Jim, Doug, the entire council and the mayor. This letter will be used on several levels to garner further support for the trail and our region's environment," said Schier.

Schier added: "This letter reflects similar resolutions of support by the following cities, counties and organizations in Wisconsin and Illinois that enjoy and extol the potentials of the Rock River: City of Jefferson, City of Waupun, Dodge County, Fort Atkinson, Friends of Dodge County Parks, Horicon Marsh, Hustisford, Illinois Renewable Energy Association, Jefferson County, Kekoskee, Lake Sinissippi, Chad Pregracke's Living Land Waters, Lt. Gov. of Illinois Sheila Simon and the Mississippi River Coordinating Council, Ogle County, Oregon Park District, Rock County, Rockford Park District, Rock River Coalition, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Stephen Russell, Village of Hustisford, Village of Theresa, Visit Beloit, Watertown, Waupun Area Recreation Program, Winnebago County."

Schier was very happy to say, "Trail Coordinator Greg Farnham has garnered the majority of these letters of support, and some I don't have access to at deadline. He has made so many presentations in Wisconsin; his effort is amazing. I am so very, very thankful for his hard work, talent and finesse. Greg has been a real gift, and we would not be as far along as we are without him."

"Dave Druen from Sterling/Rock Falls is helping us, too. Through his efforts, we will be making a presentation to Sterling/Rock Falls area stakeholders and officials very soon."

Schier also announced the RTTI Council had been formed, and held its first meeting at the offices of Visit Beloit Nov. 4. Those council members are as follows:

- Dick Flynn, director of Public Works, City of Waupun, Wis.
- Bill Ehenbeck, Parks manager, Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department, Fond du Lac, Wis.
- Greg Farnham, commissioner, Lake Sinissippi Improvement District, RTTI Trail Coordinator, Juneau, Wis.



ROCK RIVER TRAIL INITIATIVE

Rockin' on the Rock

Two-state group encourages tourism, recreation on the river

By Alma Gail
agail@qctimes.com

While the Mississippi River dominates the Quad-City region's geographical landscape, the Rock River doesn't get much attention except when it floods.

A two-state citizens group based in Oregon, Ill., is working to change that.

The Rock — which begins at the Hoosier Marsh on the western Wisconsin and winds down through Illinois to join the Mississippi at Rock Island — is full of natural beauty, points of historic interest and other terrific spots for tourists and anglers, the group's organizers say.

To encourage exploration of the 300-mile-long Rock by area residents and visitors, the group has launched the Rock River Trail Initiative.

ROCK RIVER A-4

INSIDE
10 pages
covering
Rock Falls
Page A1

IF YOU GO
WHERE: 10 a.m. Thursday
WHERE: Waupun Tower, Lakes Park, Hawk State Historic Site, 1900 4th Ave., (Blairstown, Rock Island)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
rockrivertrail.com, call Greg Farnham (608) 752-2122, or 800-369-2400, or 800-369-2122.

TOP: Tom Wagner of Columbia, Ill., casts his fishing line into the Rock River where it is joined by the Wisconsin Canal. This stretch of the Rock is near the spot where television cameras capture it during broadcasts of the annual John O'Connell Classic Rock Boat Tournament. **ABOVE:** The site sits on the Rock River with the Interstate 80 bridge near Rockford, Ill., in the foreground.

MONDAY
May 14, 2012
75 cents

Watertown Daily Times

24 pages 2 sections
Water-town, WI 53094
www.watertimes.com
Ms. 148

New logo selected for Rock River trail

HUSTISFORD — A logo has been selected for the Rock River Water Trail, according to the Rock River Trail Initiative Council.



At a meeting held in Rock Falls, Ill., the council approved the new logo design after evaluating several options. The logo is needed after the service mark of the Rock River Trail, originally created by staff of the Rock River Times newspaper of Rockford, Ill. The logo design includes a stylized river meandering over a stylized landscape of the Rock River as perspective flowing downstream. The color used in the logo is blue and green, representing the water and fertile land of the Rock River valley.

"This is an important step in our efforts to establish a recreational water trail on the Rock River through Wisconsin and Illinois," according to trail founder Frank Schier of Rockford, Ill. "The mark of the Rock River Trail was introduced in 2010 and serves as the basis for identity of a trail use trail along the river in over two neighboring states."

Greg Farnham, trail coordinator from Hustisford, headed council efforts to develop a logo for the water trail.

"The water trail will be a delineated path on the Rock River that connects scenic sites, resting places and attractions for users of water craft," Farnham said. "Unified signage incorporating the logo will provide a consistent appearance along the river."

"This will help to increase public awareness of the water trail, direct users and visitors, identify access sites, and use the trail."

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TELEGRAPH

Tuesday, August 28, 2012 • SERVING OREGON AND THE ROCK RIVER AREA SINCE 1921

A Rock River runs to it

Rock Falls Canal Trail Blazers co-founder Dave Druen (center) is flanked by Sterling Mayor Steve Lee (left) and Kay Miller and Larry Head of the Dixon Riverfront Corporation as they stand along the Hennepin Canal in Rock Falls about a mile to join Sterling, Rock Falls and Dixon via the Rock River. The group hopes to have a river taxi that could take passengers from city to city.

New group envisions floating taxi to connect Twin Cities, Dixon

BY BRIGHT FLYNN
815-836-9899 ext. 201
830-794-4022 ext. 202

ROCK FALLS If Dave Druen's vision becomes a reality, someday you may be able to take a taxi on the Rock River.

His idea is grand but feasible: connecting Sterling, Rock Falls and Dixon with a river taxi and turning the area into a booming tourism town.

Druen, a Sterling resident and a 15th Rock Falls High School graduate, has co-founded the Rock Falls Canal Trail Blazers. The group is dedicated to bringing tourists to the Sauk Valley by creating a...

Story first published in SV Sunday Extra

the area and working with the three cities to create a boat service that would take people along the Rock River and the Hennepin feeder canal.

To give the boat taxis to turn around, and and would be placed where the feeder canal meets the river in Rock Falls, Dixon and Dixon would cost between \$30,000 and \$68,000, he said.

ADAM CARCA takes his dog Bow for a dip in the Hennepin Canal on Thursday afternoon in Rock Falls. While the dog was enjoying a nice summer day in the water, officials from Sterling and Dixon were meeting with Dave Druen of the Rock Falls Canal Trail Blazers about an idea to connect the cities' waterfronts with a river taxi.

ADAM CARCA takes his dog Bow for a dip in the Hennepin Canal on Thursday afternoon in Rock Falls. While the dog was enjoying a nice summer day in the water, officials from Sterling and Dixon were meeting with Dave Druen of the Rock Falls Canal Trail Blazers about an idea to connect the cities' waterfronts with a river taxi.

MEDIA COVERAGE

Tuesday, July 31, 2012 - WATERTOWN DAILY TIMES



Trail opened

The Rock River Water Trail in Watertown was officially opened Monday morning near the lower dam by the Watertown Senior and Community Center. The official opening of the water trail segment was organized by the Rock River Trail Initiative Council. Segments have already been opened in Horizon and Macfarland. Attending the opening in the city were, back row from left, Joseph Nehmer, director of Jefferson County parks department, Rick Scheitz, Watertown streets superintendent, Tom Chacki, Watertown parks and rec director and Dr. Mike Grajewski of the Dodge/Jefferson Healthier Communities Partnership. Front row from left, Greg Farnham of the Rock River Trail Initiative, Augie Tietz, Jefferson County supervisor, and Watertown Mayor Ron Krueger.

DIANE GRAFT/Daily Times

Quad-City Times

Rock River gets signs in effort to spur tourism



AUGUST 12, 2012 3:30 AM - ALMA GAUL

The Rock River is getting easier for canoeists and kayakers to find and navigate. Naturally, the river still runs the same course — from Horizon in southern Wisconsin to the Mississippi River in Rock Island — but now signs are being installed to mark launch areas and to provide information such as the location of portages, resting places and area attractions.

The signs are a project of a Wisconsin-Illinois citizens group called the Rock River Trail Initiative that wants to encourage exploration of the 300-mile-long Rock — as well as the cities and points of interest along it — by area residents as well as tourists.

On Tuesday, two signs marking access points for the Cleveland, Ill., Boat Ramp and the boat ramp close to Hennepin Canal Lock 25, near Colona, both in Henry County, will be given to officials of those two communities by members of the trail initiative council, which is based in Rockford, said Greg Farnham, the coordinator of the initiative.

Members of the initiative have "divided" the Rock into 11 sections with some 20 segments among those sections; the signs to be donated Tuesday are for the segment between Erie and Colona, he said.

About half the segments in Wisconsin have been marked and this is the second segment in Illinois, he added.

Segments between Sterling/Rock Falls and Erie and between Colona and the Mississippi River will be "opened" with signs later this month or in September.

Tuesday, November 12, 2011 - WATERTOWN DAILY TIMES - Page 1

Communities along Rock River support trail initiative

The Rock River Trail Initiative received a milestone Monday night as the Mayville City Council adopted a resolution in support of the trail.

With the action by the council, all seven cities and villages along the Rock River in Dodge County have now gone on record in support of the Rock River Water Trail and the scenic and historic Rock River route, according to Greg Farnham, coordinator of the Rock River Trail Initiative.

"I am grateful that Mayor (Todd) Steger of Waupun, President (George) March of Theresa, Mayor (Jerry) Mosler of Mayville, President (Steve) DeBard of Keshoqua, Mayor (Henry) Grigg of Horizon, President (Dennis) Tucker of Hustisford and Mayor (Ron) Krueger of Watertown indicated the potential value of the trail initiative to our communities and to Dodge County," Farnham said.

"Protecting, preserving and promoting the natural, scenic mission of the initiative is to establish a Rock River water trail along the 300-mile river course from the headwaters in Fond du Lac and Dodge counties to the Mississippi River at Rock Island in Illinois. The group is also looking to create a separate Rock River route on roads within the river corridor to provide access to the natural resources, recreational opportunities, scenic beauty and historic and cultural assets of the Rock River Valley.

The river flows through five counties in Wisconsin: Dodge, Waupun, Keshoqua, Horizon and Theresa. The trail will follow the river from Fond du Lac County in Wisconsin to Rock Island in Illinois. The trail will follow the river from Fond du Lac County in Wisconsin to Rock Island in Illinois. The trail will follow the river from Fond du Lac County in Wisconsin to Rock Island in Illinois.

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Kickboxer LaBree fights for title belt

PHOTO — Pg. 12

Beloit Daily News

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Beaver Dam Daily Citizen
Beaver Dam, Wisconsin 53916

Waupun council likes Rock River Trail idea

By HANK SNYDER Staff Reporter | Posted: Thursday, June 30, 2011 12:07 am

WAUPUN - Waupun City Council members were excited after hearing about an initiative to establish a Rock River National Recreation Water Trail along the 300-mile river that starts in Fond du Lac County and ends in the Mississippi River.

Greg Farnham, Lake Sinissippi commissioner spoke at Tuesday's committee of the whole meeting. He asked the committee to show support as the first step in achieving federal designation of the Rock River Trail as a national recreation water trail.

Farnham said the Rock River winds through five counties in Wisconsin, and six counties in Illinois. He also went into some of the river's history, such as President Ronald Reagan serving as a life guard on the Rock River.

Farnham said the effort for a national Rock River Trail began in 2010 and if achieved, would promote ecotourism and recreational opportunities throughout the river corridor, including safe portage of the dams from Waupun to Rock Island, Ill.

He said it would also support economic development and revitalization of river communities.

"We'll draw up a paper voicing our support of the idea," said Mayor Jodi Steger.

Rock River Trail gains momentum

Initiative supported by most surrounding communities

By Bill O'Brien

Members of the Rock River Trail Initiative Council convened at Union Beloit Friday afternoon to discuss the project's status. From left: Chair, Farnham; Vice Chair, Mike Duffy; Mayor of Beloit, Bob Saliba; Stateline Area Transportation Study, Sheila De Figue; Beloit City Council, Elder Fleming; Scott Fink; Peter Forster, representing Rep. Nancy Lurie.

Beloit's city council approved the trail route through the city. The council also approved a resolution to support the trail. The council also approved a resolution to support the trail. The council also approved a resolution to support the trail.

Members of the initiative council met at the Beloit Convention Center on Friday afternoon to discuss the project's status. From left: Chair, Farnham; Vice Chair, Mike Duffy; Mayor of Beloit, Bob Saliba; Stateline Area Transportation Study, Sheila De Figue; Beloit City Council, Elder Fleming; Scott Fink; Peter Forster, representing Rep. Nancy Lurie.

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MEDIA COVERAGE



The opening of a segment of the Rock River Water Trail in Hustisford was attended by from left, Dennis Uecker, Hustisford village president; Jim Gronowski, Lake St. Clair Improvement District chairman; Bob Grueneberg and Josh Presscher, both directors of Lake St. Clair Association.

Rock River Water Trail opened in Hustisford Saturday

HUSTISFORD — Local kayak enthusiasts and officials from the Village of Hustisford and the Lake St. Clair Improvement District gathered at Vista Park on Saturday to formally open a segment of the Rock River Water Trail.

The river segment extends from Hustisford through Lake St. Clair Park to Dodge County Park in Hustisford. It is the continuation of the village.

The "Waterway segment is dedicated to its named today. The official opening of the water trail segment was organized by the Rock River Trail Initiative Council.

Dennis Uecker, Hustisford village president, Jim Gronowski, Chairman of Lake St. Clair Improvement District, joined Jim Ann John Presscher and Bob Grueneberg to launch the segment for the Rock River Water Trail. Presscher is a director of Lake St. Clair Association and owns Vista Park, and Uecker and John are both on the Lake St. Clair Association board. Uecker is also a member of the Lake St. Clair Association board.

The group gathered with Greg Farnham of Lake St. Clair Association and other officials to discuss the trail's progress and future plans.

Signs erected for Rock River Trail Initiative
Quad-Cities Online

Posted Online: Aug. 14, 2012, 7:11 pm

By Lisa Hammer, rlhammer@qconline.com

COLONA -- Twenty-five miles of the Rock River Initiative were officially opened Tuesday.

While the river has always been a resource, the new trail initiative strives to "establish and interpret" the river and create a separate Rock River Route along roads within the river corridor to provide access to the area's natural resources, recreational opportunities, scenic beauty and historic and cultural assets.



Wednesday, August 1, 2012 • Our 167th Year • 75¢

Gazette at a Glance

LOCAL • 2A-3A, 10A

Trail group marks milestone

At a ceremony Tuesday, the Rock River Trail Initiative placed the first Janesville sign in Riverside Park. The sign, one of more than 100 river access and portage markers that will be placed along the trail, marks the start of the Rock River Trail from the Rock River headwaters near the Huron Marsh to Rock Island, Ill., and the Mississippi River. The group also wants to designate a road route parallel to the river to which cyclists and hikers could use existing and yet-to-be built trails that would allow cyclists to experience the Rock River.

By Catherine W. Idzerda
cizden@jgazetteextra.com

JANESVILLE

The easiest way to get to the Mississippi River is to get into a canoe at Riverside Park and just float.

That's a slight exaggeration, of course. You'll have to haul the canoe around some pesky portages. You also might want to get off the river occasionally to experience the local flora and fauna found in the many parks, museums and taverns you'll float past on the way down river.

At a ceremony Tuesday, the Rock River Trail Initiative placed its first Janesville sign in Riverside Park. The sign is one of more than 100 river access and portage markers that will be placed starting at the Rock River headwaters near the Huron Marsh to Rock Island, Ill., and the Mississippi. The Rock River Trail, which runs through 11 counties in two states, is 300 miles long. The trail initiative worked with public officials and private individuals to identify river access points and portages. In addition, organizers also have compiled a list of parks, camping areas and other amenities that might be of interest to travelers.

The water portion of the river trail is only the first step. "This is one leg of a three-legged stool," said Greg Farnham, coordinator for the Wisconsin portion of the trail. The second part of the initiative involves creating a "scenic and historic" road route parallel to the river to encourage stops at natural areas, historic sites and, of course, businesses and hotels along the way. Finally, the group wants to create a bike route using existing and yet-to-be built trails that would allow cyclists to experience the Rock River.



Mark Kautzarich of the Rock River Trail Initiative hangs a sign at the boat launch at Riverside Park in Janesville as Sandy Mendricks and Pam Van Brocklin of Friends of Riverside Park and Joleen Stinson of Rock County Parks look on.



That would allow cyclists to experience the Rock River.

County Park, just across County M, about one-tenth of a mile. After another 13 miles, another portage takes travelers around the Centerville Dam. For the Monterey Dam, travelers get out at Monterey Park and carry their canoes about four-tenths of a mile to the next river entry.

After that it's smooth sailing for another 14 miles to the Beloit dam.

The development of all three segments of the river trail can only boost local efforts to attract visitors to the city, said Christine Rebut, executive director of the Janesville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Some of the features local residents take for granted, such as Riverside Park, are attractive features to those used to bland suburbia. The river trail also fits into a variety of hobbies including canoeing, kayaking and bird watching. "For us, what's next is to put the whole package together," said Rebut. "We can do that in stages. We'll start by putting some information on our website about the trail."



8/8/2012 11:26:00 AM

Rock River Trail formally dedicated in Jefferson

By Karyn Spory
Union staff writer



ACCESS POINT — Shown at the newly opening Jefferson segment of the Rock Rotary Waterfront Park canoe takeout near the Milwaukee Street dam, are, from left, Administrator Tim Freitag; Rock River Trail coordinator Greg Farnham; Cyndi K Parks, Recreation and Forestry; Mayor Dale Oppermann and Jefferson County F Joe Nehmer. Below, the Rock River Trail map is color-coded to identify the different segments, such as its difficulty level and the type of scenery along the way.

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<http://dailyunion.com/main.asp?SectionID=344&SubSectionID=1110&ArticleID=122324>

JEFFERSON - A 300-mile journey can lead a traveler through a vast variety of scenery and adventures while making this trek via water trails.

Thanks to the Rock River Initiative, this opportunity now is available to those seeking to make their flows into the mighty Mississippi.

On Friday, the Jefferson segment of the trail formally was opened with a brief ceremony.

The Rock River Trail extends 320 miles from the river's headwaters in Fond du Lac to the Mississippi River in Rock Island, Ill. The river flows through five counties in Wisconsin and six in Illinois.

The segment opened at Jefferson is located at the Rotary Waterfront Park canoe takeout just north of the Milwaukee Street dam.

MEDIA COVERAGE



Delivery of signs, clockwise from upper left, Byron, Ill., Horicon, Wis., Waupun, Wis., Rock Island, Ill., Davenport, Iowa, Oregon, Ill., and Colona, Ill.

Photos courtesy of *The Rock River Times*, *Dodge County Pioneer*, *Beaver Dam Daily Citizen* and *Quad-City Times*



INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER DAMS

	Name	Community	River Mile	Dam Height* (Hydraulic Height (in feet))	Dam Structural Height* (in feet)	Hydro Power Generation	Portage	Comments
1	Waupun Dam	Waupun (South Branch)	314.9	8	10	No	Left to Shaler Park	Restrooms and water available at Harris Mill Park
2	Federal Horicon Dam	USFWS Refuge (Main Stem)	301.2	1	8	No	Closed to the Public	No access to Federal Marsh
3	Theresa Dam	Theresa (East Branch)	323.8	2	5	No	Left to village park	Low head fixed crest - Needs portage infrastructure
4	Upper Mayville Dam	Mayville (East Branch)	312.8	10	15	No	Left to city boat launch	Close to downtown
5	Lower Mayville Dam	Mayville (East Branch)	311.8	10	14	No	Either side to river bank	
6	Kekoskee Dam	Kekoskee (East Branch)	306.5	10	16	Yes	Right to village park	
7	Horicon Dam	Horicon	294.6	1	12	No	Right to Legion Park	Needs portage infrastructure Long portage
8	Hustisford Dam	Hustisford	285.2	7	11	No	Right to Lions Park	Restrooms and water available
9	Upper Watertown Dam	Watertown	240.8	11	17	Yes	Right to city launch	Needs portage infrastructure Long portage
10	Lower Watertown Dam	Watertown	238.2	11	13	Yes	Left to S. 1st Street river walk	Close to downtown
11	Milwaukee Street Dam	Jefferson	218.6	6	11	No	Left to Rotary Waterfront Park	Close to downtown
12	Indianford Dam	Indianford	193.0	6	13	No	Right to roadside or left to BubbaDs launch	Steep bank at right Put-in at Indianford Park across road
13	Centerway Dam	Janesville	180.5	9	14	Yes	Right to walkway	
14	Monterey Dam	Janesville	178.4	7	10	No	Right to Monterey Park before bridge	Steep gravel bank for put-in
15	Beloit Dam	Beloit	163.6	10	17	Yes	Right to Wooton Park or left to Riverside Park	Long portage to Rose Canoe Launch
16	Rockton Dam	Rockton	158.9	8	10	Yes	Right	Portage right at Spillway Dam Avoid Millrace Dam and Hydropower House
17	Fordham Dam	Rockford	136.6	10	12	Yes	Left or as alternate use Beattie Park	Challenging portage Needs PITO access

Dam Height* Hydraulic height is the difference between normal pool elevation and normal tailwater elevation.

Dam Structural Height* in Wisconsin is the difference between the design elevation (lowest elevation that is not designed to overtop or pass water) and the lowest elevation of the natural streambed at the downstream toe of the dam. In Illinois the structural height is the difference between spillway crest and streambed.

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER DAMS

	Name	Community	River Mile	Dam Height* (Hydraulic Height (in feet))	Dam Structural Height* (in feet)	Hydro Power Generation	Portage	Comments
18	Oregon Dam	Oregon	109.6	8	12	No	Left to Oregon Park East or right to Kiwanis Park	Restrooms available
19	Dixon Dam	Dixon	87.3	11	19	Yes	Right to Fellows Street Boat Ramp	Long portage
20	Upper Dam	Sterling/Rock Falls	73.9	9	12	Yes	Left to Arduini Boat Launch near Hennepin Canal or right to Martin's Landing	
21	Lower Dam	Sterling/Rock Falls	73.2	9	9	No	Left to boat ramp near dam	Short portage through park
22	Milan Steel Dam	Milan	4.5	4	6	No	Left to Hennepin Canal Lock 30	
23	Sears Dam	Rock Island	2.7	11	13	Yes	Avoid	Portage at Milan Steel Dam



Lower Dam, Rock Falls/Sterling, Whiteside County

Dam Height* Hydraulic height is the difference between normal pool elevation and normal tailwater elevation.

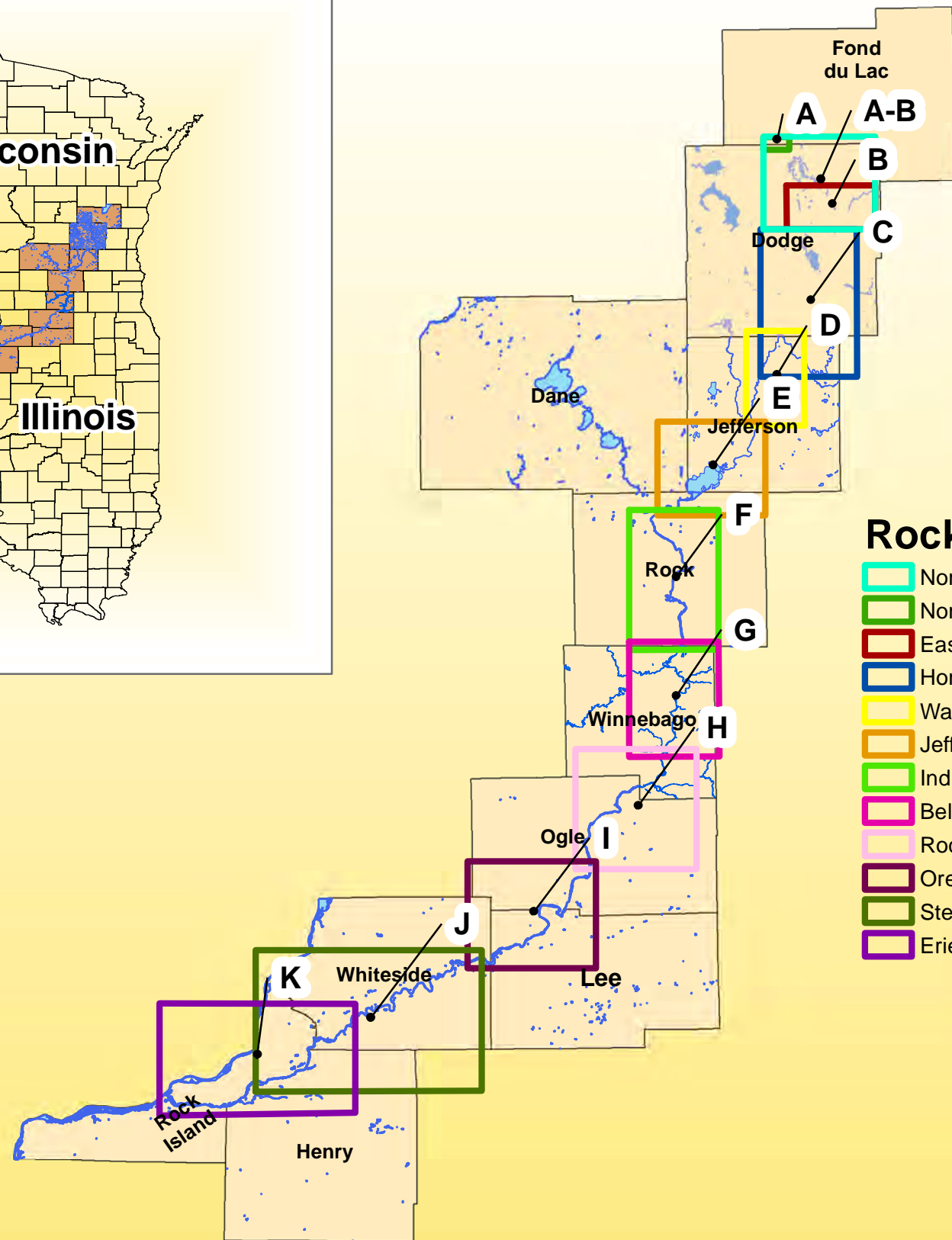
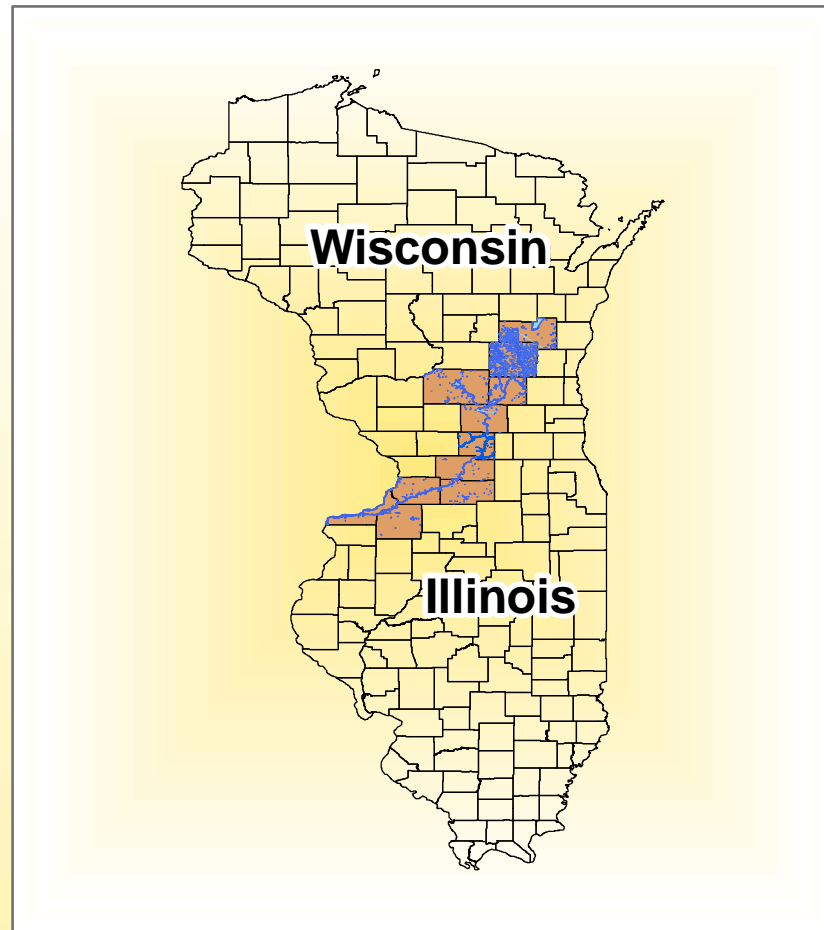
Dam Structural Height* in Wisconsin is the difference between the design elevation (lowest elevation that is not designed to overtop or pass water) and the lowest elevation of the natural streambed at the downstream toe of the dam. In Illinois the structural height is the difference between spillway crest and streambed.

The 23 dams listed are generally considered to comprise the Rock River dams. However, there are other water control structures that should be noted.

1. A half mile downstream of the Waupun Dam is a low-head weir across the South Branch. Under normal water conditions the weir can be easily crossed.
2. Upstream of the Theresa Dam about 1.6 miles is a dam across the East Branch that impounds water for the Theresa Marsh. The dam is owned and operated by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. It has several sluice gates and a metal ramp for paddle craft. Users can paddle upstream from Rivers Edge Park in Theresa, use the ramp to cross the dam and explore the Theresa Marsh.
3. Downstream of the Lower Watertown Dam about 1.8 miles is Boomers Dam, a rock remnant of an old dam. Under normal water conditions it can be run on the right with no portage necessary.
4. Rockton Dam is a collection of three water control structures: the main spillway dam that is used for portage, the millrace dam that pools water for hydropower and the power house. Portage should be made at river right at the spillway dam; the millrace should be avoided.

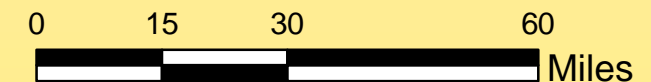


Rock River Water Trail Index



Rock River Water Trail Sections

- █ Northern Water Trail Section A and East Branch through Horicon Marsh to Horicon Section B
- █ Northern Water Trail Section A
- █ East Branch through Horicon Marsh to Horicon Section B
- █ Horicon to Hustisford to Watertown Section C
- █ Watertown to Jefferson Section D
- █ Jefferson to Fort Atkinson To Indianford Section E
- █ Indianford to Janesville to Beloit Section F
- █ Beloit to Rockford Section G
- █ Rockford to Oregon Section H
- █ Oregon to Dixon to Sterling - Rock Falls Section I
- █ Sterling - Rock Falls to Prophetstown to Erie Section J
- █ Erie to Calona To Quad Cities Section K



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Illinois State Plane Coordinate System, West Zone
North American Datum of 1983





INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL SECTION A

Northern Water Trail

7 Miles (Fond du Lac and Dodge Counties)

Trailhead of the Rock River Water Trail is at Waupun County Park, where overnight camping facilities are available. The South Branch of the Rock River flows through Waupun, an easy travel in the City of Statues during normal water levels. The river is narrow and can be shallow in places if weather conditions have been dry, especially below the dam. Enjoy the famous *End of the Trail* statue at Shaler Park near the Waupun Dam and Harris Mill Park. The South Branch joins the West Branch to form the main river stem near STH 49 at the northern edge of the Horicon Marsh. The river then flows south through rural and wilderness landscapes to the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge. Take out at the Wild Goose State

Trail Bridge near East Waupun Road or return to STH 49 wayside. The Horicon National Wildlife Refuge lies just beyond the Wild Goose State Trail Bridge and is closed to the public. After take-out at either the Wild Goose State Trail Bridge or at the STH 49 wayside, the water trail can be accessed downstream at two sites: (1) Burnett Ditch boat landing on the west side of the Horicon Marsh near the community of Burnett, and (2) Greenhead Landing on the East Branch of the river at the eastern edge of the Horicon Marsh 4 miles downstream of the Village of Kekoskee. Both access sites enter the Horicon Marsh State Wildlife Area, the southern portion of the Horicon Marsh that is open to paddlers.

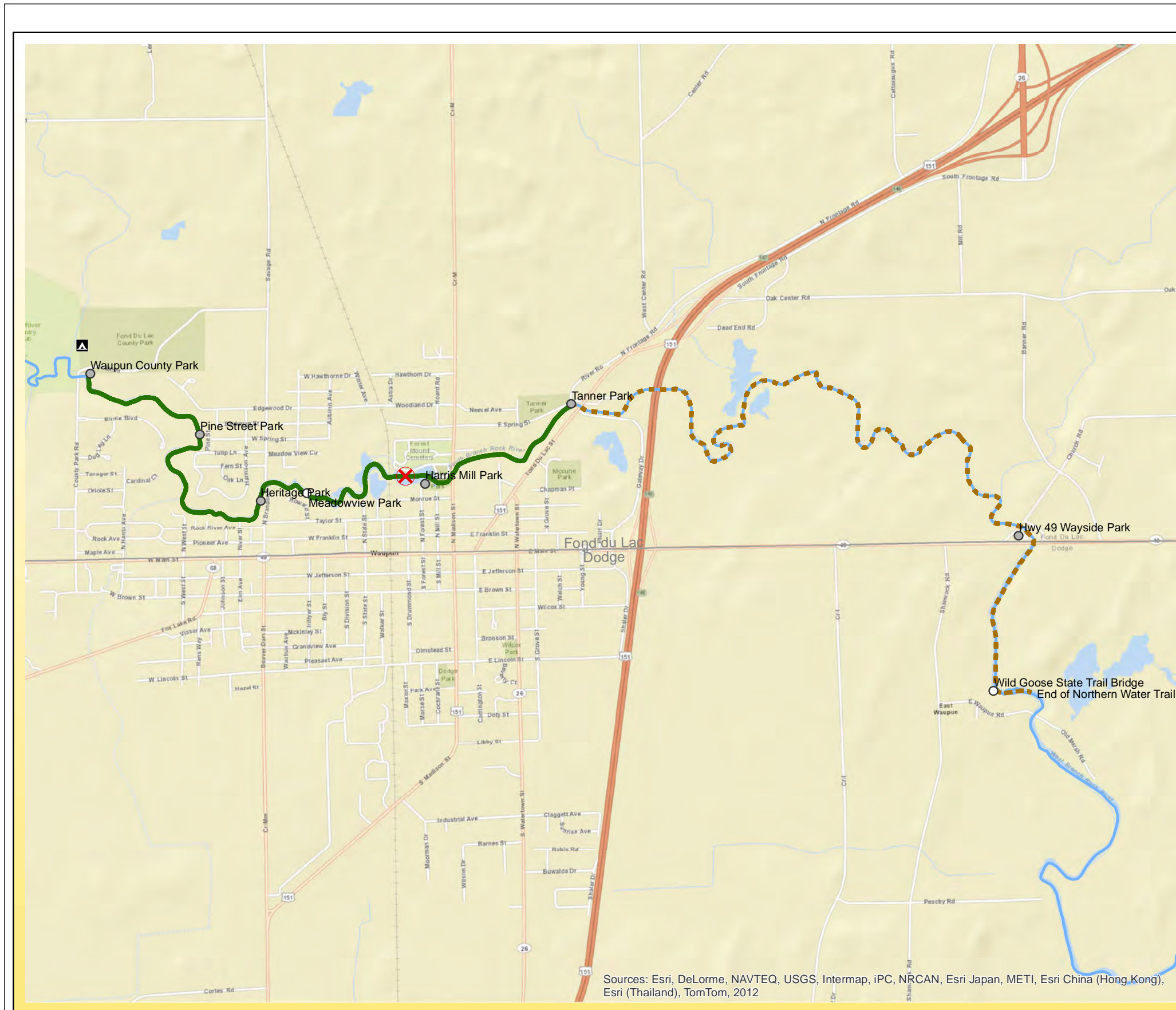
	Length of Segment	Segment Skill Level	Segment Type	Access Sites
Waupun County Park to Harris Mill Park	2 miles	Gateway	Urban	5
To Hwy 49 Roadside Launch	4 miles	Recreational	Rural	2
To Federal Wildlife Refuge	1 mile	Recreational	Wilderness	2

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section A

Northern Water Trail – 7 miles, Fond du Lac and Dodge Counties, WI

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
A1	FOND DU LAC COUNTY Waupun County Park	Waupun	317.4	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Parking Lot	43 38 38	88 45 30	Undeveloped
A2	Pine Street Park	Waupun	316.7	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Street Parking	43 38 25	88 44 59	Small Foot Bridge to Portage
A3	Heritage Park	Waupun	315.9	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Street Parking	43 38 11	88 44 42	
A4	Meadowview Park	Waupun	315.5	Alternate	Y	N	N	N	N	Street Parking	43 38 14	88 44 30	
A5	Harris Mill Park	Waupun	314.9	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 38 14	88 43 55	Dam Portage Take Out
	WAUPUN DAM	Waupun	314.9	Portage	Y						43 38 14	88 43 52	At Shaler Park
A6	Tanner Park	Waupun	314.4	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	43 38 30	88 43 13	Low-Head Weir
A7	Hwy 49 Wayside Park	East of Waupun	311.2	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	N	Parking Area	43 38 01	88 41 06	South and West Branches Merge
A8	DODGE COUNTY Wild Goose State Trail Bridge	Chester	310.6	Alternate	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	43 37 29	88 41 14	Steep Hillside - Short Walk to East Waupun Road
	End of Northern Water Trail	Chester	310.4	No Access							43 37 28	88 41 04	No Access to Federal Wildlife Refuge
	FEDERAL HORICON DAM		301.2	Closed							43 31 39	88 38 39	
A9	Burnett Ditch Road	Burnett	301.8	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Area	43 30 36	88 41 00	Access to Horicon Marsh and Water Trail



Rock River Water Trail



Rock River Northern Water Trail Section A

Water Trail Segment

- Challenge, Urban
- - - Challenge, Rural
- Gateway, Urban
- - - Gateway, Rural
- ⋯ Gateway, Wilderness
- Recreational, Urban
- - - Recreational, Rural
- ⋯ Recreational, Wilderness

⊗ Dam

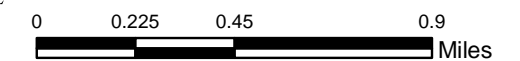
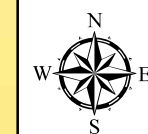
▣ Campsite

Access Sites

- Alternate
- Carry-In
- Developed

Site Locations & River Mile Marker

- Waupun County Park, 317.4
- Pine Street Park, 316.7
- Heritage Park, 315.9
- Meadowview Park, 315.5
- Harris Mill Park, 314.9
- - - Tanner Park, 314.4
- - - Hwy 49 Wayside Park, 311.2
- - - Wild Goose State Trail Park, 310.6
- - - End of Northern Water Trail, 310.4



Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, iPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2012

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Illinois State Plane Coordinate System, West Zone
North American Datum of 1983



INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL SECTION B

East Branch through Horicon Marsh to Horicon 30 Miles (Dodge County)

The East Branch of the river flows west from Theresa State Marsh in Washington County to the Village of Theresa in Dodge County. The water trail begins at Rivers Edge Park in Theresa. Paddlers may choose to first travel upstream through rural and wilderness landscape for a distance of 1.6 miles to the Theresa Marsh Dam. A boat ramp is part of the dam infrastructure allowing paddlers to experience the Theresa Marsh before heading back downstream to begin their journey on the water trail. The Yellowstone Trail alignment, one of America's first transcontinental highways begun in 1912, crosses the river at the Milwaukee Street Bridge in Theresa. The river flows through rural landscapes and the communities of Mayville and Kekoskee and then into the wilderness area of the Horicon Marsh State Wildlife Area where it joins the main river stem. The southern trailhead of the Niagara Escarpment Great Arc Bike Route is near the river between Mayville and Kekoskee.

Four dams must be portaged in this section: a low-head dam in Theresa, two larger dams in Mayville and one in Kekoskee that is part of a small hydropower generating facility. The segment from Theresa Village Park to Mayville Park is 11 miles in length through rural landscape and river meanders with no public access site en route. Rest stops and emergency landings can be made at road crossings. Stream depth between Mayville and Kekoskee is shallow at times and must be checked. Paddlers can take out at Mayville Park and find food, restrooms and other amenities within an easy walk. Near the Lower Dam is a state historical marker commemorating Wisconsin's first iron smelter. The 7-mile segment through the Horicon Marsh is wetland wilderness, an internationally-recognized bird sanctuary with undisturbed natural beauty. The river leaves the Horicon Marsh at the City of Horicon. Several access sites are available in Horicon with portage of the Horicon Dam at Legion Park. Camping is available at Dodge County Ledge Park east of the city.

	Length of Segment	Segment Skill Level	Segment Type	Access Sites
Rivers Edge Park to Theresa Dam	<1 mile	Gateway	Urban	1
Village Park to Mayville Park	11 miles	Recreational	Rural	2
To Lower Mayville Dam	1 mile	Gateway	Urban	1
To Walnut Street and Kekoskee Take Out	5 miles	Recreational	Rural	2
Kekoskee Village Park to Greenhead Landing	4 miles	Recreational	Rural	2
To Nebraska Street Landing	7 miles	Recreational	Wilderness	1
To Legion Park Horicon	1 mile	Gateway	Urban	4

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section B

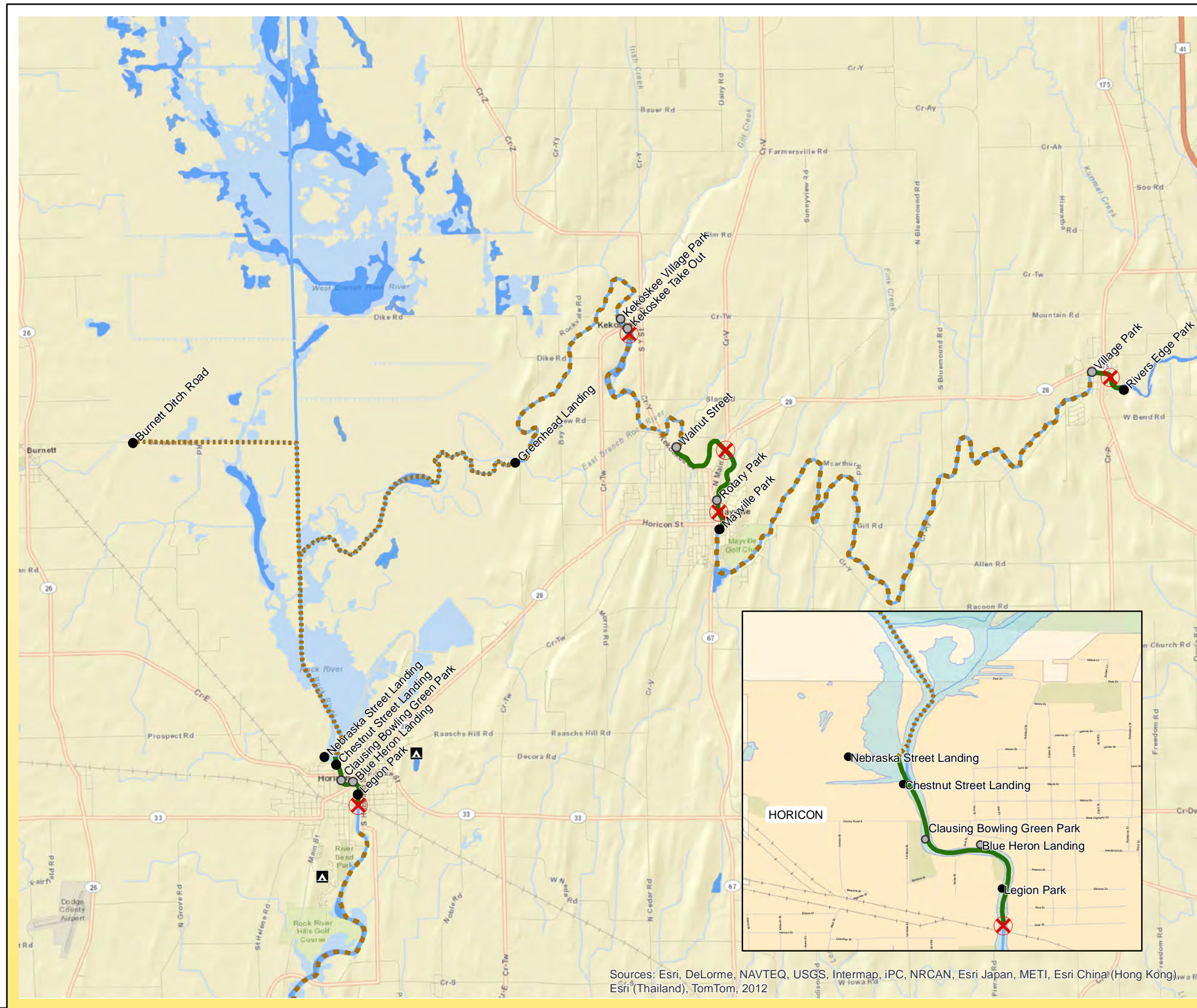
East Branch through Horicon Marsh to Horicon – 30 miles, Dodge County, WI

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
B1	DODGE COUNTY Rivers Edge Park	Theresa	324.1	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 30 57	88 26 46	Accessible
	THERESA DAM	Theresa	323.8	Portage	Y						43 31 08	88 27 08	Low-Head Fixed Crest Dam No Defined Portage
B2	Village Park	Theresa	323.7	Carry In	N	N	N	N	N	Street Parking	43 31 09	88 27 13	Put In After Dam
B3	Mayville Park	Mayville	312.8	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 29 37	88 32 36	Portage Accessible
	UPPER MAYVILLE DAM	Mayville	312.8	Portage	Y						43 29 39	88 32 34	Dam Portage Take Out Left
B4	Rotary Park	Mayville	312.5	Carry-In	Y	N	N	Y	N	Street Parking	43 29 53	88 32 38	East Dayton Street Facilities in Walking Distance
	LOWER MAYVILLE DAM	Mayville	311.8	Portage	Y					Parking Lot	43 30 24	88 32 30	Portage around Dam Take Out Right
B5	Walnut Street	Mayville	311.0	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	43 30 27	88 33 12	End Walnut Street at Bridge
B6	Kekoskee Boat Ramp	Kekoskee	306.5	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	43 31 42	88 33 52	Mill Pond Take Out
	KEKOSKEE DAM	Kekoskee	306.5	Portage	N						43 31 44	88 33 54	Dam Portage Take Out Right
B7	Kekoskee Village Park	Kekoskee	306.4	Carry-In	Y	N	N	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 31 48	88 33 58	Downstream of Dam
B8	Greenhead Landing	Williams-town	302.6	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	43 30 19	88 35 31	Access to Horicon Marsh
B9	Nebraska Street Landing	Horicon	295.5	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	43 27 17	88 38 20	Access to Horicon Marsh
B10	Chestnut Street Landing	Horicon	295.3	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	43 27 12	88 38 10	Accessible
B11	Clausing Bowling Green Park	Horicon	295.1	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 27 02	88 38 06	Amenities Within Walking Distance
B12	Blue Heron Landing	Horicon	295.0	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 27 01	88 37 56	Also Canoe Rental Accessible
B13	Legion Park	Horicon	294.9	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	43 26 53	88 37 52	Dam Portage Take Out Right
	HORICON DAM	Horicon	294.6	Portage	Y						43 26 46	88 37 52	No Portage Infrastructure

Rock River Water Trail



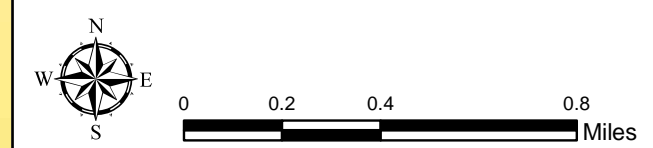
East Branch Through Horicon Marsh To Horicon Section B



- Water Trail Segment**
- Challenge, Urban
 - - - Challenge, Rural
 - Gateway, Urban
 - - - Gateway, Rural
 - ⋯ Gateway, Wilderness
 - Recreational, Urban
 - - - Recreational, Rural
 - ⋯ Recreational, Wilderness
- Access Sites**
- ⊗ Dam
 - ⊠ Campsite
 - Alternate
 - Carry-In
 - Developed

Site Locations & River Mile Marker


- Rivers Edge Park, 324.1
- - - Village Park, 323.7
- Mayville Park, 312.8
- Rotary Park, 312.5
- - - Walnut Street, 311.0
- - - Kekoskee Take Out, 306.5
- - - Kekoskee Village Park, 306.4
- ⋯ Greenhead Landing, 302.6
- ⋯ Burnett Ditch Road, 301.8
- Nebraska Street Landing, 295.5
- Chestnut Street Landing, 295.3
- Clausing Bowling Green Park, 295.1
- Blue Heron Landing, 295.0
- Legion Park, 294.9



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Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, iPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2012

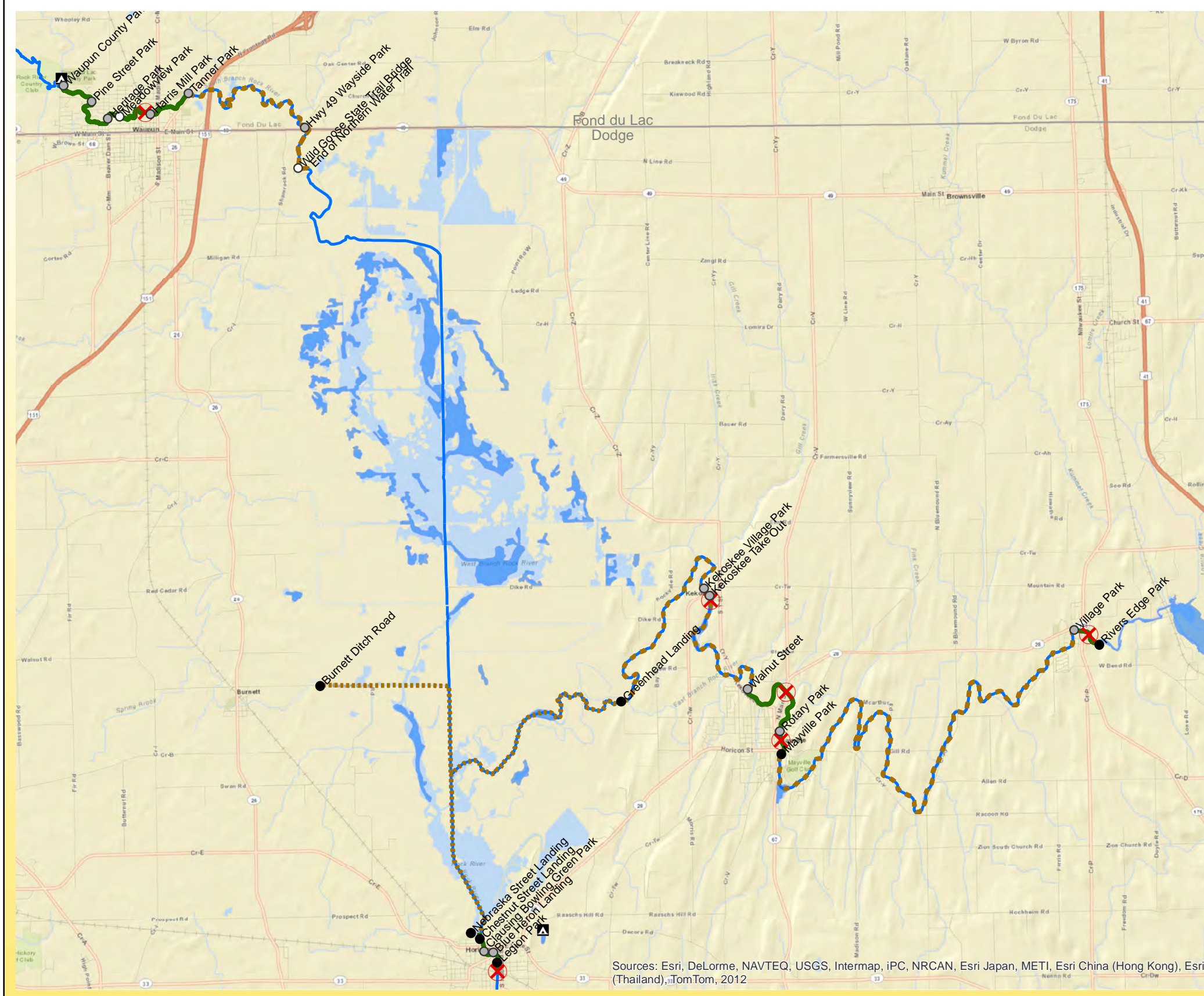
Illinois State Plane Coordinate System, West Zone North American Datum of 1983



Rock River Water Trail

Rock River Northern Water Trail Section A

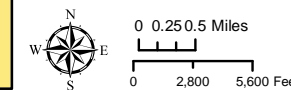
Rock River East Branch Through Horicon Marsh To Horicon Section B



- Water Trail Segment**
- Challenge, Urban
 - - - Challenge, Rural
 - Gateway, Urban
 - - - Gateway, Rural
 - ⋯ Gateway, Wilderness
 - Recreational, Urban
 - - - Recreational, Rural
 - ⋯ Recreational, Wilderness
- Site Locations & River Mile Marker**
- Waupun County Park, 317.4
 - Pine Street Park, 316.7
 - Heritage Park, 315.9
 - Meadowview Park, 315.5
 - Harris Mill Park, 314.9
 - Tanner Park, 314.4
 - Hwy 49 Wayside Park, 311.2
 - Wild Goose State Trail Park, 310.6
 - End of Northern Water Trail, 310.4
 - Burnett Ditch Road, 301.8
 - Rivers Edge Park, 324.1
 - Village Park, 323.7
 - Mayville Park, 312.8
 - Rotary Park, 312.5
 - Walnut Street, 311.0
 - Kekoskee Take Out, 306.5
 - Kekoskee Village Park, 306.4
 - Greenhead Landing, 302.6
 - Nebraska Street Landing, 295.5
 - Chestnut Street Landing, 295.3
 - Clausing Bowling Green Park, 295.1
 - Blue Heron Landing, 295.0
 - Legion Park, 294.9

- Access Sites**
- ✗ Dam
 - ⊠ Campsite
 - Alternate
 - Carry-In
 - Developed

Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, IPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2012



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WINOGIS
North American Datum of 1983

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL SECTION C

Horicon to Hustisford to Watertown

53 Miles (Dodge and Jefferson Counties)



While paddling into Horicon, travelers pass the John Deere Horicon Works factory where lawn and garden tractors are built. Food, restrooms and amenities are available within a short walking distance from any of the four access sites in downtown Horicon. The dam portage from Legion Park to Kiwanis Park in Horicon is a long stretch. Kiwanis Park has carry-in access only, while a short distance downstream River Bend Park offers a boat ramp and loading dock accessible to persons with disabilities. The river flows south from Horicon through rural landscapes and farmland to eventually widen and form Lake Sinissippi, a 3,000-acre impoundment of the Hustisford Dam. Rest or emergency take out at CTH S before the lake can be made at the bridge. Ox-Bo Marina is located where the river opens to form Lake Sinissippi. Several developed access sites are available on the lake. In the Village of Hustisford, Neider Park has an accessible boat ramp and loading dock, while Lions Park at the Hustisford Dam offers carry-in access and a signed portage path. Both parks are within easy walking distance of restrooms, food and amenities.

From Hustisford the river flows 44 miles through scenic meanders and wilderness areas to the City of Watertown. The river is less than 100 feet in width along the segment to Harnischfeger Park and the paddler must watch for possible tree strainers and log jams in narrow spots. There are several long segments with limited access sites, including the 17-mile segment from Hustisford to Harnischfeger Park. Rest and emergency stops can be made at the alternate access site along Monroe Road or at road crossings. Overnight camping is available at Harnischfeger Park. Two long segments from Harnischfeger Park to Kanow County Park and to County Road P in Pipersville are beautiful stretches of the river through undeveloped and rural landscapes. Access sites along these segments are limited. The carry-in access site at STH 16 Wayside has a state historical marker commemorating the nation’s first numbered public highway. The Oconomowoc River joins the Rock River about 3 miles downstream of the CTH F Bridge. The Willow Street Portage on river right is the designated take-out site before the Upper Watertown Dam. Another take out is on river right just before the spillway, but caution is warranted.

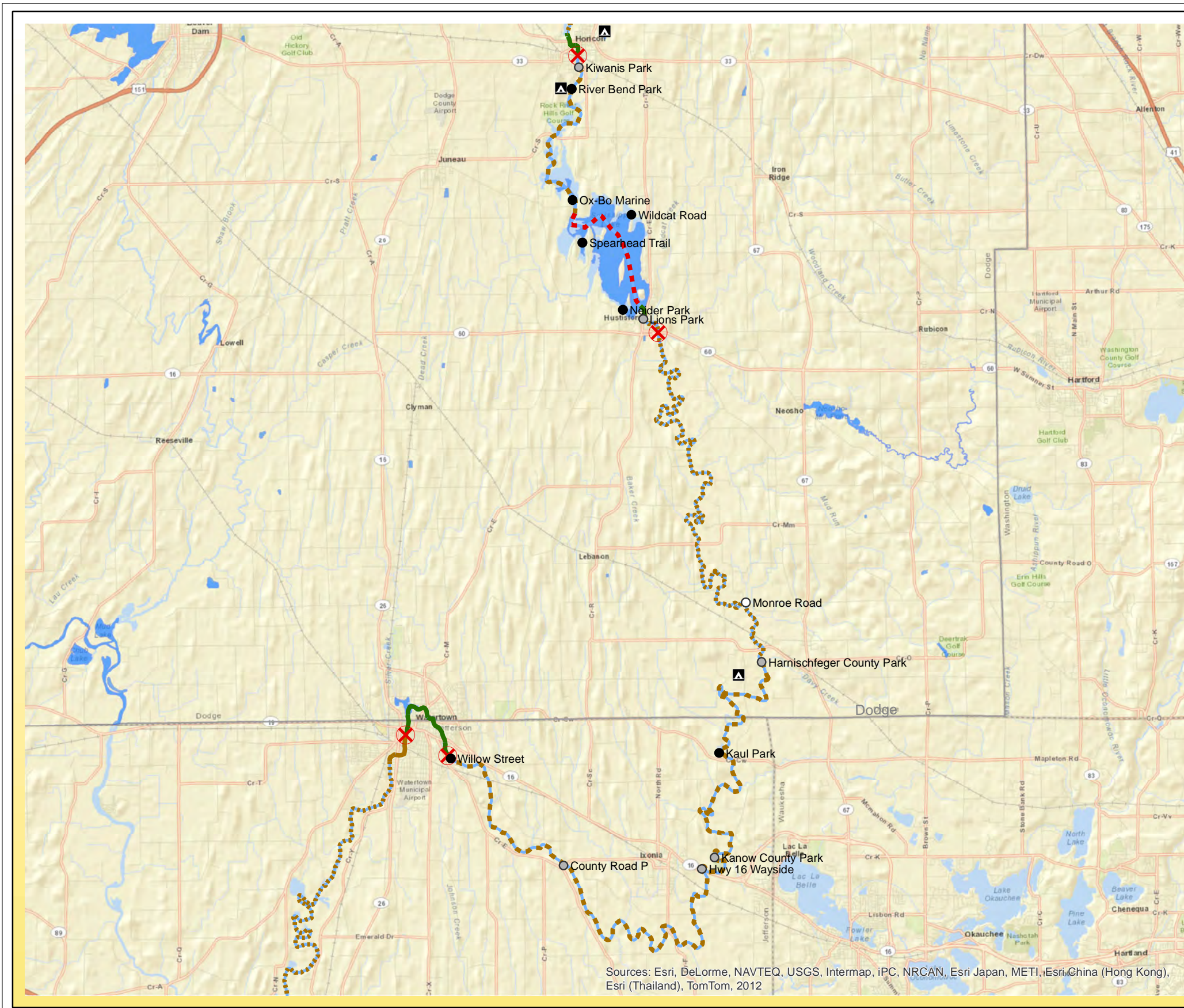
	Length of Segment	Segment Skill Level	Segment Type	Access Sites
Kiwanis Park to Marina at Lake Sinissippi	6 miles	Recreational	Rural	3
Lake Sinissippi	4 miles	Challenge	Rural (lake)	5
Hustisford to Harnischfeger Park	17 miles	Recreational	Wilderness	2
To Kanow County Park	11 miles	Recreational	Rural	2
To County Road P Pipersville	10 miles	Recreational	Rural	2
To Willow Street Portage	5 miles	Recreational	Rural	1

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section C

Horicon to Hustiford to Watertown – 53 miles, Dodge & Jefferson Counties, WI

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
C1	DODGE COUNTY Kiwaniis Park	Horicon	294.3	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 26 30	88 37 50	Put In Below Dam
C2	River Bend Park	Horicon	293.6	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 26 01	88 38 04	Accessible
	The Playful Goose Camp	Horicon	293.4	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Parking Lot	43 25 53	88 38 09	Reserve Ahead
C3	Ox-Bo Marine	Oak Grove	289.0	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 23 13	88 38 08	
C4	Wildcat Road	Hubbard	288.0	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	43 23 09	88 36 17	Limited Parking
C5	Butternut Court	Hubbard	287.7	Alternate	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	43 22 40	88 37 09	Undeveloped - Potential Site
C6	Spearhead Trail	Hubbard	288.7	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Limited on Site	43 22 33	88 37 49	
C7	Neider Park	Hustisford	286.0	Developed	Y	Y	N	N	N	Parking Lot	43 20 56	88 36 32	Amenities Within Walking Distance Accessible
C8	Lions Park	Hustisford	285.2	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Street Parking	43 20 48	88 35 57	Dam Portage Take Out Right Signed Portage Trail
	HUSTISFORD DAM	Hustisford	285.2	Portage	Y						43 20 44	88 35 55	
C9	Monroe Road	Lebanon	269.8	Alternate	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	43 14 22	88 32 59	Undeveloped - Potential Site
C10	Harnischfeger County Park	Lebanon	267.9	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Parking Lot	43 13 01	88 32 32	Canoe Rental Also
	JEFFERSON COUNTY												
C11	Kaul Park	Ixonia-Hwy CW	262.2	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	43 10 53	88 33 41	
C12	Kanow County Park	Ixonia	256.6	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 08 32	88 33 55	
C13	Hwy 16 Wayside	Ixonia	255.7	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Parking Lot	43 08 24	88 34 28	
C14	County Road P	Ixonia	246.2	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	43 08 31	88 38 45	Limited Parking
C15	Willow Street	Watertown	240.9	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Street Parking	43 11 02	88 42 13	Dam Portage Take Out Right
	UPPER WATERTOWN DAM	Watertown	240.8	Portage	Y						43 11 08	88 42 19	



Rock River Water Trail



Horicon to Hustisford to Watertown Section C

Water Trail Segment

- Challenge, Urban
- - - Challenge, Rural
- Gateway, Urban
- - - Gateway, Rural
- ⋯ Gateway, Wilderness
- Recreational, Urban
- - - Recreational, Rural
- ⋯ Recreational, Wilderness

⊗ Dam

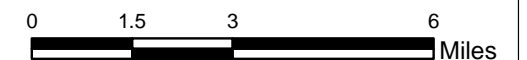
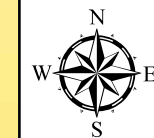
▲ Campsite

Access Sites

- Alternate
- Carry-In
- Developed

Site Locations & River Mile Marker

- Kiwanis Park, 294.3
- River Bend Park, 293.6
- Ox-Bow Marine, 289.0
- Neider Park, 286.0
- Lions Park, 285.2
- Monroe Road, 269.8
- Harnischfeger County Park, 267.9
- Kaul Park, 262.2
- Kanow County Park, 256.6
- Hwy 16 Wayside, 255.7
- County Road P, 246.2
- Willow Street, 240.9



Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, IPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2012

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Illinois State Plane Coordinate System, West Zone
North American Datum of 1983



INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS



ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL SECTION D

Watertown to Jefferson

22 Miles (Jefferson County)

The City of Watertown has several beautiful river parks, including Tivoli Island Park just downstream of the Upper Watertown Dam. Both dams in Watertown are hydroelectric dams. Portages are marked. Rest stops at Fanny Lewis Park and the Riverwalk at South First Street are within a short walk of food, restrooms and amenities in downtown Watertown. Portage around the Lower Watertown Dam is part of the riverfront walkway and is marked. Downstream of the dam just after the STH 26 Bridge is a large island owned by the US Bureau of Land Management that is available for public use. A mile downstream are remnants of the old Boomers dam. The urban landscape fades a mile or so from the island and opens into a wilderness segment through scenic, marshy natural areas including the Arkin Marsh Public Hunting Grounds and Hahns Lake. The trail from Riverview Road in Watertown to Resort Drive in Johnson Creek is a distance of 10 miles with no public access sites except for the alternate site at Arkin Marsh. A fully-developed boat launch at Rock River County Park is 14 miles downstream of Watertown and near the Village of Johnson Creek.

A little over 3 miles west of Rock River County Park on CTH B is Aztalan State Park, an important archaeological site and a National Historic Landmark. The river continues from CTH B through rural, farmland landscapes about 5 miles to Jefferson, the Gemuetlichkeit City. There are several access sites in the city for paddlers wanting a leisurely paddle in the urban environment. Take out for portage of the Milwaukee Street Dam is at Rotary Waterfront Park, a carry-in access site within a short walk of food, restrooms and amenities in downtown Jefferson. A fish ladder is in operation at the dam. The river through Jefferson County and portions of Dodge and Rock Counties is within the state Glacial Heritage Area, a series of parks, preserves, wildlife and natural areas linked together and to nearby cities and village with different types of trails. The Glacial Drumlin State Trail for biking and hiking crosses the river just north of Jefferson.

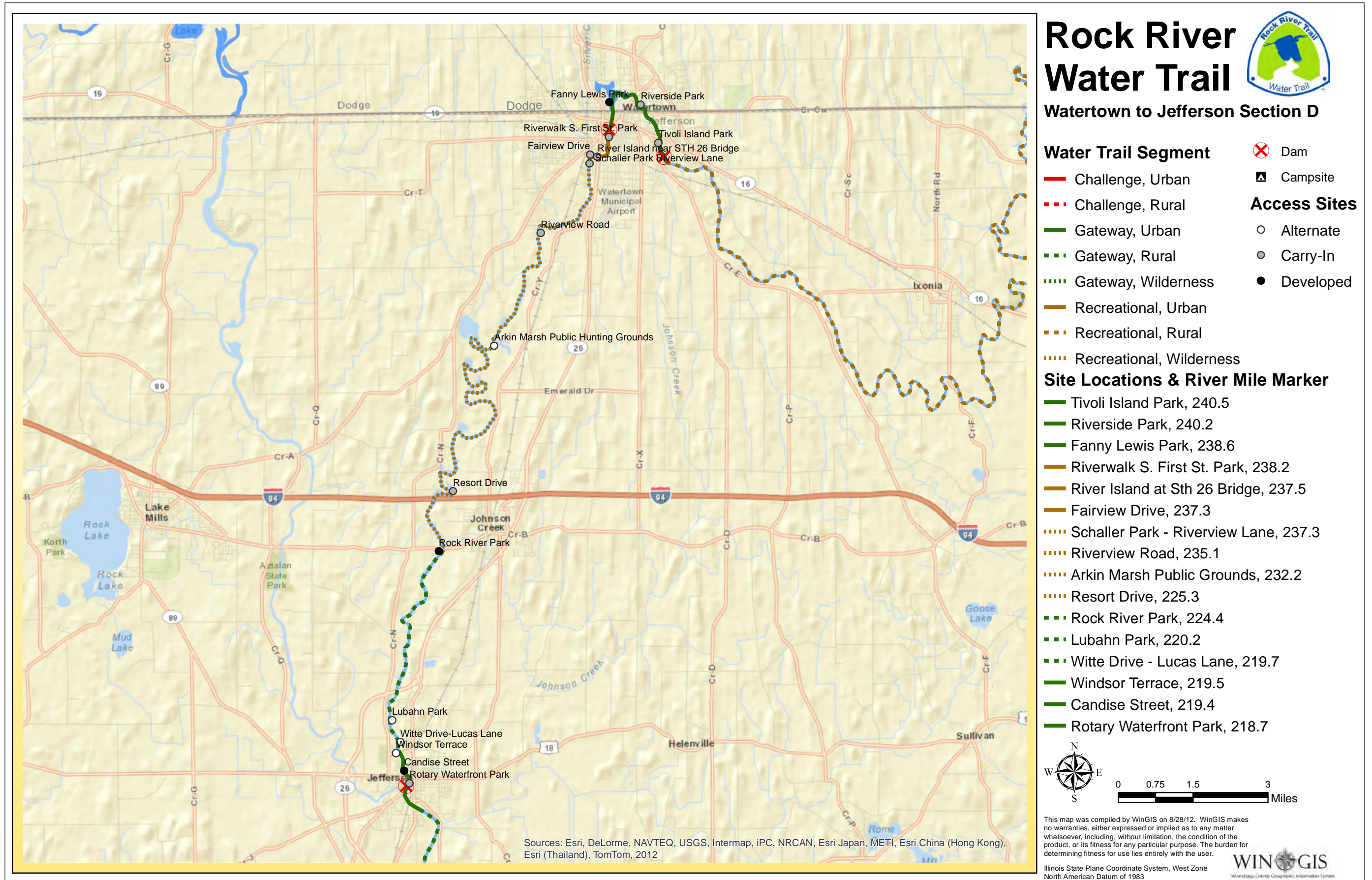
	Length of Segment	Segment Skill Level	Segment Type	Access Sites
Between Watertown Dams	2 miles	Gateway	Urban	3
To Schaller Park Riverview Lane	1 mile	Recreational	Urban	4
To Johnson Creek - Rock River Park	13 miles	Recreational	Wilderness	4
To Rotary Waterfront Park - Jefferson	6 miles	Gateway	Rural	5

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section D

Watertown to Jefferson – 22 miles, Jefferson County, WI

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
D1	JEFFERSON COUNTY Tivoli Island Park	Watertown	240.5	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	43 11 20	88 42 23	
D2	Riverside Park	Watertown	240.2	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 11 55	88 42 50	
D3	Fanny Lewis Park	Watertown	238.6	Developed	Y	N	N	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 12 00	88 43 32	Accessible
	LOWER WATERTOWN DAM	Watertown	238.2	Portage	Y						43 11 31	88 43 33	Dam Portage Take Out Left
D4	Riverwalk S. First St. Park	Watertown	238.1	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	43 11 24	88 43 33	Put In Accessible
D5	River Island at STH 26 Bridge	Watertown	237.5	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	Y	None	43 11 04	88 43 53	Public Land Owned by BLM
D6	Fairview Drive	Watertown	237.3	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	43 10 59	88 44 04	
D7	Schaller Park Riverview Lane	Watertown	237.3	Carry-In	Y	N	Y	N	N	Roadside	43 11 00	88 44 01	
	Boomers Dam	Watertown	236.4		N						43 10 16	88 44 05	Low-head Remnant Rocks — Run Right
D8	Riverview Road	Watertown	235.1	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	43 09 47	88 45 14	
D9	Arkin Marsh Public Grounds	Watertown	232.2	Alternate	N	N	N	N	N	None	43 07 48	88 46 22	Emergency
D10	Resort Drive	Johnson Creek	225.3	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Roadside	43 05 17	88 47 24	
D11	Rock River Park	Aztalan	224.4	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 04 16	88 47 41	
D12	Lubahn Park	Jefferson	220.2	Alternate	N	N	N	N	N	None	43 01 19	88 48 56	Undeveloped - Potential Site
D13	Witte Drive-Lucas Lane	Jefferson	219.7	Alternate	N	N	N	N	N	None	43 00 56	88 48 45	Undeveloped - Potential Site
D14	Windsor Terrace	Jefferson	219.5	Alternate	N	N	N	N	N	None	43 00 46	88 48 51	Undeveloped - Potential Site
D15	Candise Street	Jefferson	219.4	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Roadside	43 00 26	88 48 40	Accessible
D16	Rotary Waterfront Park	Jefferson	218.7	Carry-in	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 00 13	88 48 33	Accessible Dam Portage Take Out Left
	MILWAUKEE STREET DAM	Jefferson	218.6	Portage	Y						43 00 11	88 48 36	Fish Ladder





INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL SECTION E
Jefferson to Fort Atkinson to Indianford
26 Miles (Jefferson, Dane and Rock Counties)

A short distance downstream of the Milwaukee Street Dam at Riverfront Park is the confluence with the Crawfish River. The Crawfish is a designated water trail within the Glacial Heritage Area. The river section from Jefferson to the City of Fort Atkinson is through developed and rural landscape, with a small rapids and a long island owned by the US Bureau of Land Management that is available for public use. The island is in proximity of CTH K that runs along the west river bank most of the distance to Klement Park in Fort Atkinson. The river is about 100 feet in width. There is no dam in Fort Atkinson, so the trail from Jefferson to Groeler Road downstream of Fort Atkinson is unrestricted and the two segments provide over 11 miles of river at the gateway skill level. The Bark River enters the Rock River just before the downtown area and paddling is available on the Bark.

North Water Street West in downtown Fort Atkinson is a developed ramp and boat launch. Paddlers can take out at this site for food and restrooms and enjoy the amenities of the city, including access to the Glacial River Bike Trail.

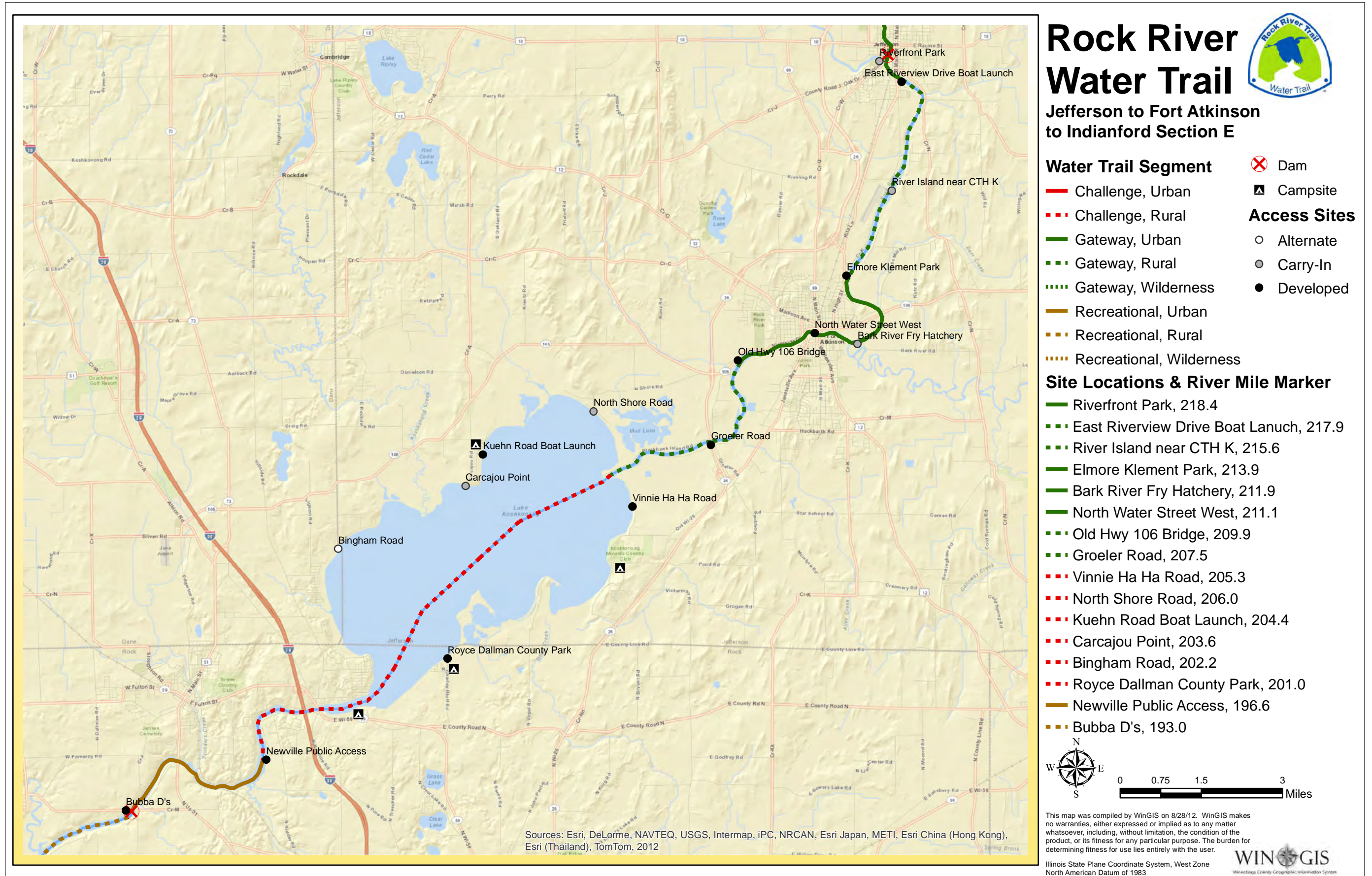
Cultural attractions within easy reach of downtown include the Panther Intaglio Mound, a replica of Fort Koshkonong and the Hoard Historical Museum and National Dairy Shrine. Five miles south of the city is the state Koshkonong Wildlife Area and 10,000-acre Lake Koshkonong. Paddling on the lake is a challenge segment due to frequent recreational boat traffic and expanse of open water; travel on the lake is not advised during approaching storms and high wind conditions. A number of access sites and camping facilities are available on the lake and near the community of Neville. Near the Vine Ha Ha Road access is the Koshkonong Indian Mounds. The river channel reforms at Neville and 3 miles downstream is the Indianford Dam, which impounds water as far upstream as Jefferson. The river is about 200 feet wide at this point and passes through rural and developed landscape along the river and near the City of Edgerton. Recreational motor boating is popular on the river so paddling skill level is recreational. Portage just before the dam at either river right or left with put-in across the road at the county park.

	Length of Segment	Segment Skill Level	Segment Type	Access Sites
Jefferson to Klement Park Fort Atkinson	5 miles	Gateway	Rural	4
Fort Atkinson To Groeler Road	6 miles	Gateway	Urban	4
To Lake Koshkonong to Neville	11 miles	Challenge	Rural (lake)	7
To Indianford Dam	4 Miles	Recreational	Rural	1

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section E Jefferson to Fort Atkinson to Indianford – 26 miles, Jefferson, Dane & Rock Counties, WI

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
E1	JEFFERSON COUNTY Riverfront Park	Jefferson	218.4	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	43 00 07	88 48 49	Crawfish-Rock Confluence
E2	East Riverview Drive Boat Launch	Jefferson	217.9	Developed	Y	Y	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 59 44	88 48 21	Accessible
E3	River Island near CTH K	Jefferson	215.6	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	Y	None	42 57 59	88 48 35	Public Land Owned by BLM
E4	Elmore Klement Park	Fort Atkinson	213.9	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Roadside	42 56 38	88 49 36	Accessible
E5	Bark River Fry Hatchery	Fort Atkinson	211.9	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 55 32	88 49 23	
E6	North Water Street West	Fort Atkinson	211.1	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 55 43	88 50 19	Facilities in Walking Distance Accessible
E7	Old Hwy 106 Bridge	Fort Atkinson	209.9	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	42 55 18	88 52 00	
E8	Groeler Road	Koshkonong	207.5	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 53 57	88 52 37	Accessible
E9	Vinnie Ha Ha Road	Koshkonong	205.3	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 52 59	88 54 21	Access to Wildlife Area
E10	North Shore Road	Sumner	206.0	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	42 54 31	88 55 10	
E11	Kuehn Road Boat Launch	Sumner	204.4	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Roadside	42 53 51	88 57 36	Camping Nearby
E12	Carcajou Point	Sumner	203.6	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Roadside	42 53 21	88 57 59	
E13	DANE COUNTY Bingham Road	Albion	202.2	Alternate	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	42 52 22	89 00 47	
E14	ROCK COUNTY Royce Dallman County Park	Koshkonong	201.0	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y*	Parking Lot	42 50 35	88 58 26	*Rustic Camping by Pre-Approved Permit
E15	Newville Public Access	Fulton Town	196.6	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 49 00	89 02 25	Ellendale Road Accessible
E16	Bubba D's	Indianford	193.0	Developed	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Parking Lot	42 48 14	89 05 17	Take Out Left
	INDIANFORD DAM	Indianford	193.0	Portage	Y						42 48 13	89 05 22	Dam Portage Take Out Right or Left





INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL SECTION F

***Indianford to Janesville to Beloit
29 Miles (Rock County)***

River access below the Indianford Dam is at Indianford County Park located on both river banks. The confluence of the Yahara River flowing from the four lakes in Madison is less than 2 miles downstream of Indianford. An alternate access site for a rest stop or emergency is near CTH H and Gibbs Lake Road less than a half mile from the Yahara confluence. The river passes through relatively undeveloped rural areas and farmland over 8 miles from Indianford to a boat launch and access near the STH 14 Bridge. Two miles downstream of STH 14 is beautiful Riverside Park of Janesville and the beginning of urban paddling segments. Riverside Park has two access sites on river right: a carry-in site on the northern edge and a developed boat launch 0.8 miles downstream. The carry-in site has full amenities and is less than 200 feet from the Devil’s Staircase Segment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail that passes through Janesville.

Developed launch sites and gateway experiences are available in the two large urban areas of Janesville and Beloit. Janesville has two dams and Beloit one dam. Paddlers near Traxler Park in Janesville may encounter boating activity from

the local water ski club. The Kiwanis Bike Trail and the Rock Trail in Janesville run along the river from Riverside Park through the downtown to the Afton boat launch downstream of the Monterey Dam. The 11-mile rural river segment from the Monterey Dam to Preservation Park in the Town of Beloit just north of the City of Beloit is a recreational segment due to its length and presence of power boats. A river island owned by the Bureau of Land Management is near Afton at river mile 172.2 and is available for public use. Camping is available at Happy Hollow County Park. Near the Beloit Dam are large industrial murals on walls of Beloit Ironworks that front the river; the murals are illuminated at night. Just downstream of the Beloit Dam is the specially-designed and accessible John Rose Canoe & Kayak Launch on the river, with the Beloit Bike Path nearby. Janesville and Beloit have rich cultural heritages and attractions for the paddler who may wish to spend time in the cities. The urban access sites in both cities are within proximity of restrooms, food and amenities. Beloit College is a short walk after take out at Riverside Park before the Beloit Dam.

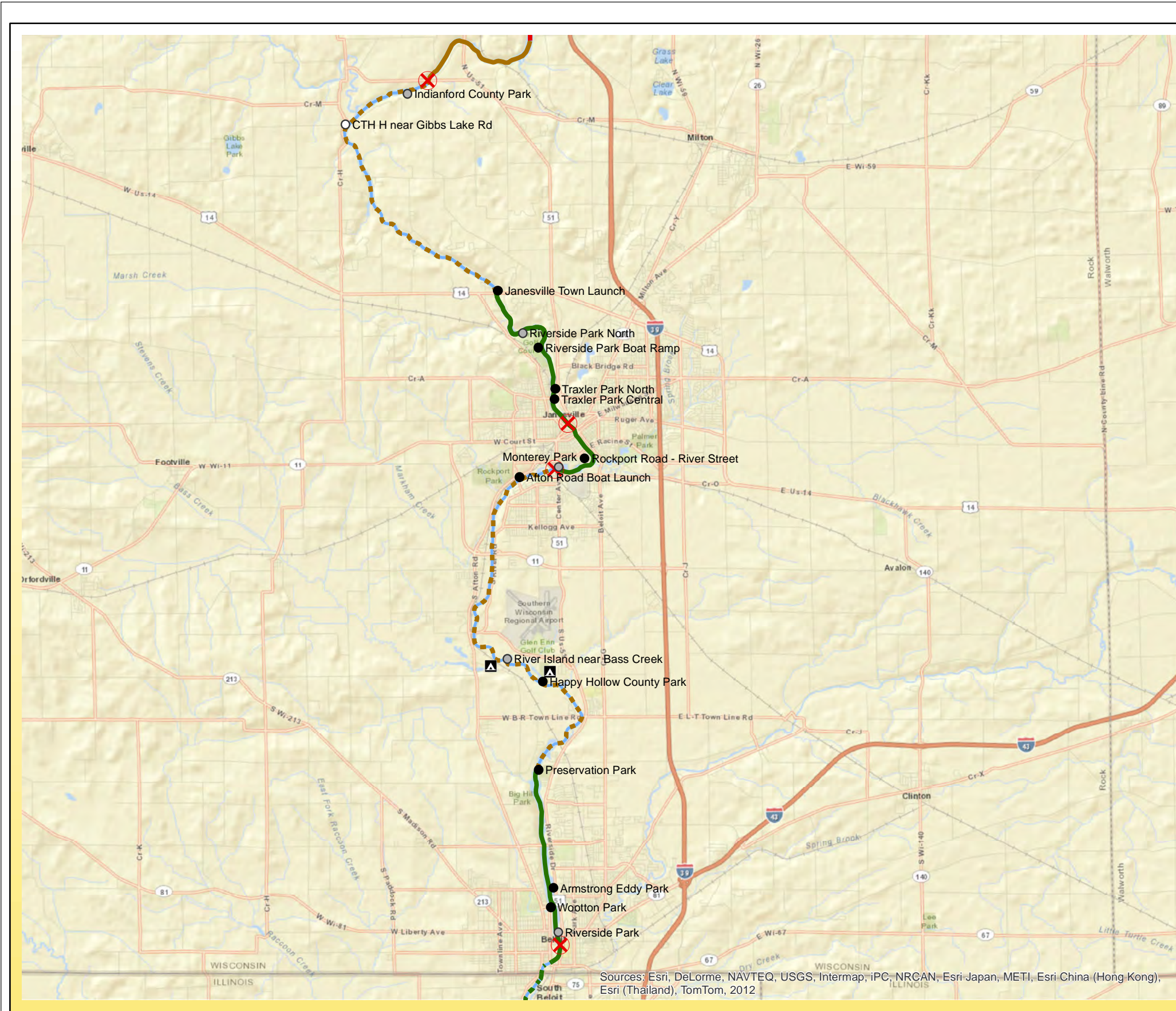
	Length of Segment	Segment Skill Level	Segment Type	Access Sites
Indianford to Janesville Town Park Hwy 14	8 miles	Recreational	Rural	3
To Janesville Centerway Dam	4 miles	Gateway	Urban	4
Between Janesville Dams	2 miles	Gateway	Urban	2
Monterey Dam to Preservation Park	11 miles	Recreational	Rural	4
To Beloit Dam	4 miles	Gateway	Urban	3

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section F

Indianford to Janesville to Beloit – 29 miles, Rock County, WI

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
F1	ROCK COUNTY Indianford County Park	Indianford	192.9	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Limited	42 48 12	89 05 27	Put-In Below Dam Right or Left
F2	CTH H near Gibbs Lake Rd	Fulton Town	190.5	Alternate	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	42 47 19	89 07 41	Potential Site – Near Yahara River
F3	Janesville Town Launch	Town	184.8	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 43 51	89 03 29	Next To Hwy 14 Bridge
F4	Riverside Park North	Janesville	183.1	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 43 03	89 02 29	On Ice Age National Scenic Trail
F5	Riverside Park Boat Ramp	Janesville	182.8	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 42 40	89 02 22	Accessible
F6	Traxler Park North	Janesville	181.4	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 41 49	89 01 55	Accessible Mooring Dock
F7	Traxler Park Central	Janesville	181.1	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 41 36	89 01 56	Accessible
	CENTERWAY DAM	Janesville	180.5	Portage	Y						42 41 06	89 01 32	Dam Portage Take Out Right
F8	Rockport Road - River Street	Janesville	179.4	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Streetside	42 40 21	89 00 56	Unimproved Launch Small Craft
F9	Monterey Park	Janesville	178.8	Carry-In	Y	Y	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 40 12	89 01 51	Dam Portage Take Out Right
	MONTEREY DAM	Janesville	178.4	Portage	Y						42 40 13	89 01 56	
F10	Afton Road Boat Launch	Janesville	177.7	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 40 03	89 02 46	Rock River Parkway Small Watercraft
F11	River Island near Bass Creek	Afton	172.2	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	Y	None	42 36 16	89 03 21	Public Land Owned by BLM
F12	Happy Hollow County Park	Janesville	170.5	Developed	Y	Y	Y	N	Y*	Parking Lot	42 35 47	89 02 22	*Rustic Camping by Pre-Approved Permit
F13	Preservation Park	Beloit Town	167.9	Developed	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 33 58	89 02 31	Accessible
F14	Armstrong Eddy Park	Beloit Town	165.0	Developed	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 31 32	89 02 09	
F15	Wootton Park	Beloit	164.5	Developed	Y	Y	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 31 08	89 02 14	Accessible
F16	Riverside Park	Beloit	164.1	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 30 37	89 02 02	Dam Portage Take Out Accessible Long Portage to John Rose Launch
	BELOIT DAM	Beloit	163.6	Portage	Y						42 30 20	89 01 56	



Rock River Water Trail



Indianford to Janesville to Beloit Section F

Water Trail Segment

- Challenge, Urban
- - - Challenge, Rural
- Gateway, Urban
- - - Gateway, Rural
- ⋯ Gateway, Wilderness
- Recreational, Urban
- - - Recreational, Rural
- ⋯ Recreational, Wilderness

⊗ Dam

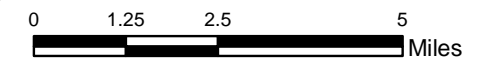
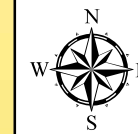
▲ Campsite

Access Sites

- Alternate
- ◉ Carry-In
- Developed

Site Locations & River Mile Marker

- - - Indianford County Park, 192.9
- - - CTH H near Gibbs Lake Rd, 190.5
- Janesville Town Launch, 184.8
- Riverside Park North, 183.1
- Riverside Park Boat Ramp, 182.8
- Traxler Park North, 181.4
- Traxler Park Central, 181.1
- Rockport Road - River Road, 179.4
- - - Monterey Park, 178.8
- - - Afton Road Boat Launch, 177.7
- - - River Island near Bass Creek, 172.2
- - - Happy Hollow County Park, 170.5
- Preservation Park, 167.9
- Armstrong Eddy Park, 165.0
- Wootton Park, 164.5
- Riverside Park, 164.1



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Illinois State Plane Coordinate System, West Zone North American Datum of 1983



Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, iPC, NRCAN, Esri-Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2012

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL SECTION G

Beloit to Rockford

27 Miles (Rock and Winnebago Counties)

From the John Rose Canoe & Kayak Launch in Beloit to the Fordham Dam in Rockford is 27 miles, a river section that offers both rural and urban segments at the gateway skill level and two challenge segments due to power boating in the lower reaches of the river before the dam. Put in sites downstream of the Beloit Dam include John Rose Launch and Water Street parkway, both sites owned by the city. South Beloit has two access sites, one just south of the Shirland Avenue Bridge and the other at the Turtle Creek confluence. The river south of Turtle Creek is several hundred feet in width, with a steady current and islands. Staying on the right side of the river near Rockton the paddler reaches the Rockton Spillway Dam, the first of eight Illinois dams. Unusual in appearance, the dam has a curved face. Portage is at river right. In the left river channel several hundred feet downstream of the spillway dam is a second dam with a long millrace leading to a hydropower facility. The millrace dam should be avoided. About 2 miles downstream of the spillway dam is the confluence with the Pecatonica River, which has a designated water trail.

The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District has five river parks that offer access for paddle craft. The Macktown site is rich in early settlement history and paddlers can view several of the pioneer buildings at this park. The landscape is generally rural from the state line; development transitions to an urban landscape near Atwood Homestead Park. The segments from Atwood to Sportscore and then to the Fordham Dam are designated challenge skill level primarily due to heavy river use by power boats, especially on weekends in the summer. The river roughly divides the metropolitan area of Rockford and there are a number of access sites available to paddlers as rest stops and for exploring the recreational, cultural and historical offerings of the city. The Grand Illinois Trail crosses the Rock River at the State Street Bridge. Rockford has beautiful parks and public facilities along the riverfront, including the Burpee Museum of Natural History and Nicholas Conservatory. Portage of the Fordham Dam is a challenge due to high concrete walls and the need to lower the craft over a steep portage. The city is taking steps to improve the portage infrastructure. Camping facilities for river paddlers are available at Hononegah Forest Preserve and near Sportscore.

	Length of Segment	Segment Skill Level	Segment Type	Access Sites
Beloit to Rockton Spillway Dam	5 miles	Gateway	Rural	5
To Hononegah Forest Preserve Park	4 miles	Gateway	Rural	6
To Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve Park	7 miles	Gateway	Urban	2
To Veterans Memorial Park Sportscore	6 miles	Challenge	Rural	2
To Fordham Dam	5 miles	Challenge	Urban	10

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section G

Beloit to Rockford – 27 miles, Rock County, WI and Winnebago County, IL

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
G1	ROCK COUNTY, WI John Rose Canoe & Kayak Launch	Beloit	163.2	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 30 01	89 02 14	Put In Below Dam, Paddle and Trail Outfitter onsite with restrooms and water Accessible
G2	Water Street PITO	Beloit	162.9	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	42 29 54	89 02 27	
	State Line		162.8								42 29 46	89 02 31	
G3	WINNEBAGO COUNTY, IL Shirland Avenue Bridge	South Beloit	162.8	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 29 45	89 02 29	Two rustic launches south of bridge on left side of river
G4	Turtle Creek Dickop Street	South Beloit	162.2	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	42 29 37	89 02 29	At confluence with Turtle Creek
G5	J Norman Jensen Forest Preserve	Rockton	159.9	Alternate	N	N	N	N	N	None	42 28 10	89 04 40	Undeveloped
	ROCKTON SPILLWAY DAM	Rockton	158.9	Portage	Y						42 27 37	89 04 51	Portage at Spillway Dam Avoid Millrace Dam and Power House
G6	Millrace Isle Forest Preserve	Rockton	157.6	Alternate	N	N	N	N	N	None	42 27 20	89 05 39	Undeveloped
G7	Macktown Forest Preserve	Rockton	157.1	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 27 05	89 05 16	Confluence with Pecatonica River Accessible
G8	Settlers Park	Rockton	156.0	Developed	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Parking Lot	42 27 01	89 04 10	Accessible
G9	Rockton Marine	Rockton	155.8	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 27 03	89 03 54	
G10	Rockton Boat Ramp	Rockton	155.6	Developed	Y	Y	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 27 01	89 03 38	Accessible
G11	Hononegah Forest Preserve	Rockton	154.4	Developed	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Parking Lot	42 26 02	89 03 06	Accessible
G12	Riverside Park	Roscoe	150.7	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 24 49	89 01 01	Accessible

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section G cont.

Beloit to Rockford – 27 miles, Rock County, WI and Winnebago County, IL

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
G13	Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve	Rockford	147.2	Developed	Y	Y	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 23 14	89 02 46	Accessible
G14	Harlem Road Access	Machesny Park	142.9	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	none	42 20 21	89 03 55	Accessible
G15	Veterans Memorial Park (Sportscore)	Rockford	141.5	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 19 29	89 04 04	Camping nearby Accessible
G16	Martin Park	Rockford	140.8	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 18 49	89 04 07	Accessible
G17	Shorewood Park	Rockford	140.0	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Parking Lot	42 18 06	89 03 53	Accessible
G18	Illinois Street Park	Rockford	139.6	Developed	N	Y	N	N	N	Roadside	42 17 48	89 03 38	Accessible
G19	Nicholas Conservatory	Rockford	138.5	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 16 56	89 04 16	Accessible
G20	YMCA Sculling Docks	Rockford	137.8	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 16 45	89 04 52	
G21	Riverfront Museum Park	Rockford	137.5	Carry-In	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 16 37	89 05 16	Near Burpee Museum of Natural History
G22	Beattie Park	Rockford	137.2	Carry-In	Y	N	Y	N	N	Parking Lot	42 16 25	89 05 26	Portage Take Out Phone for Shuttle Accessible
G23	Riverview Park	Rockford	137.2	Developed	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Parking Lot	42 16 22	89 05 18	Prairie Street Boat Access Near Forest City Queen Dock Accessible
G24	Rockford Public Library Docks	Rockford	137.0	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 16 18	89 05 32	
G25	State of Illinois Building Canoe and Kayak Launch	Rockford	136.9	Carry-In	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 16 10	89 05 39	
	FORDHAM DAM	Rockford	136.6	Portage	Y						42 15 57	89 05 44	Challenging Portage

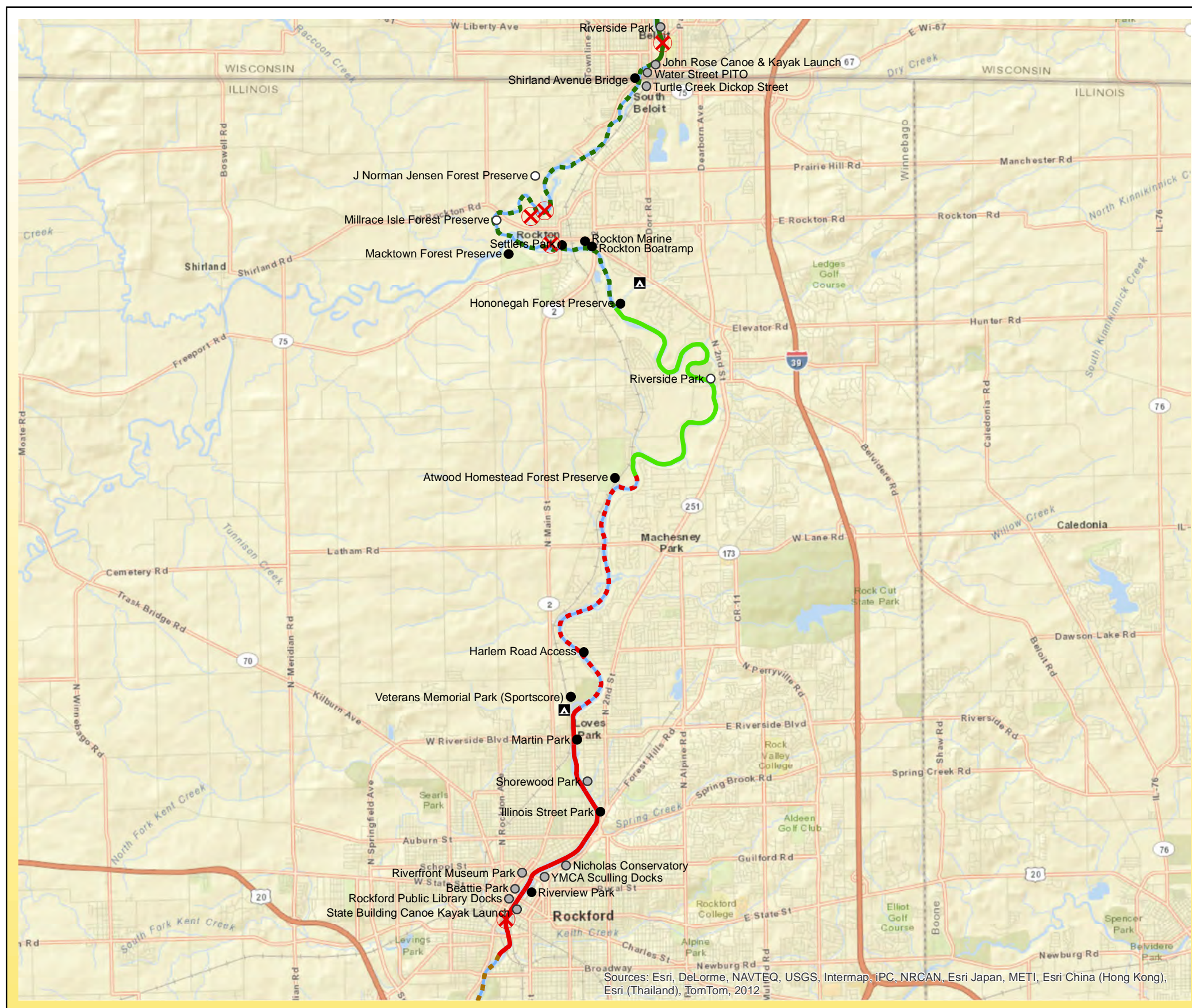
Rock River Water Trail



Beloit to Rockford Section G

- Water Trail Segment**
- Challenge, Urban
 - - - Challenge, Rural
 - Gateway, Urban
 - - - Gateway, Rural
 - · · · · Gateway, Wilderness
 - Recreational, Urban
 - - - Recreational, Rural
 - · · · · Recreational, Wilderness
- Site Locations & River Mile Marker**
- John Rose Canoe & Kayak Launch, 163.2
 - Water Street PITO, 162.9
 - Shirland Avenue Bridge, 162.8
 - Turtle Creek Dickop Street, 162.2
 - J Norman Jensen Forest Preserve, 159.9
 - Millrace Isle Forest Preserve, 157.6
 - Macktown Forest Preserve, 157.1
 - Settlers Park, 156.0
 - Rockon Marine, 155.8
 - Rockton Boatramp, 155.6
 - Hononegah Forest Preserve, 154.4
 - Riverside Park, 147.2
 - Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve, 147.2
 - Harlem Road Access, 142.9
 - Veterans Memorial Park (Sportscore), 141.5
 - Martin Park, 140.8
 - Shorewood Park, 140.0
 - Illinois Street Park, 139.6
 - Nicholas Conservatory, 138.5
 - YMCA Sculling Docks, 137.8
 - Riverfront Museum Park, 137.5
 - Beattie Park, 137.2
 - Riverview Park, 137.2
 - Rockford Public Library Docks, 137.0
 - State Building Canoe Kayak Launch, 136.9

- Access Sites**
- ⊗ Dam
 - ▲ Campsite
 - Alternate
 - ◉ Carry-In
 - Developed



Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, iPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2012



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INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL SECTION H

Rockford to Oregon

27 Miles (Winnebago and Ogle Counties)

Seven miles downstream of the Fordham Dam is the confluence of the Kishwaukee River, one of the water trails of northeastern Illinois. This segment marks a transition from the urban river environment of metropolitan Rockford to the rural and natural landscape of the middle counties of the Rock River Valley. Paddlers will travel by the Greater Rockford Airport and Blackhawk Island in this segment. Just downstream of the island are new campsites built by the Rockford Park District. Take out after Blackhawk Island is at Hinchcliff Memorial Forest Preserve, a short distance upstream on the Kishwaukee River. Two miles south of the Kishwaukee is the county line between Winnebago and Ogle Counties. The second river segment to the City of Byron is through rural landscape, with farmland and natural settings. Illinois Route 2 runs parallel with and in proximity of the river, offering access at several unmarked road waysides on river right. The end of the segment is in Byron, named for the English poet Lord Byron and referred to as the Gateway to the Rock River Valley. Developed boat ramps in Byron offer restrooms, water and amenities of the city within a short walk.

The third segment of this river section has beautiful rural and natural landscape with limestone bluffs, a gentle gradient and slow-moving current, ideal as a gateway segment for paddlers wanting a day trip. New Rock River Trail campsites established by the Byron Forest Preserve District are available at river mile 120. Eight miles downstream the Illinois DNR has established a new boat launch at river right. At river mile 111 in Lowden State Park is the famous statue *The Eternal Indian* by Lorado Taft. The 48-foot concrete statue was dedicated in 1911. Commonly known as the Black Hawk Statue, it is on a bluff 77 feet above the river in the area that was one of the home lands to Black Hawk and the Sauk nation. The site was once the residence of Eagles Nest Artist Colony. About a mile downstream of the park is the Oregon Dam with portages on both river left (Oregon Park East) and right (Kiwanis Park). The portage at river right is within walking distance of downtown Oregon. The city has a heritage of preserving and fostering the arts. The Ogle County Courthouse in Oregon is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

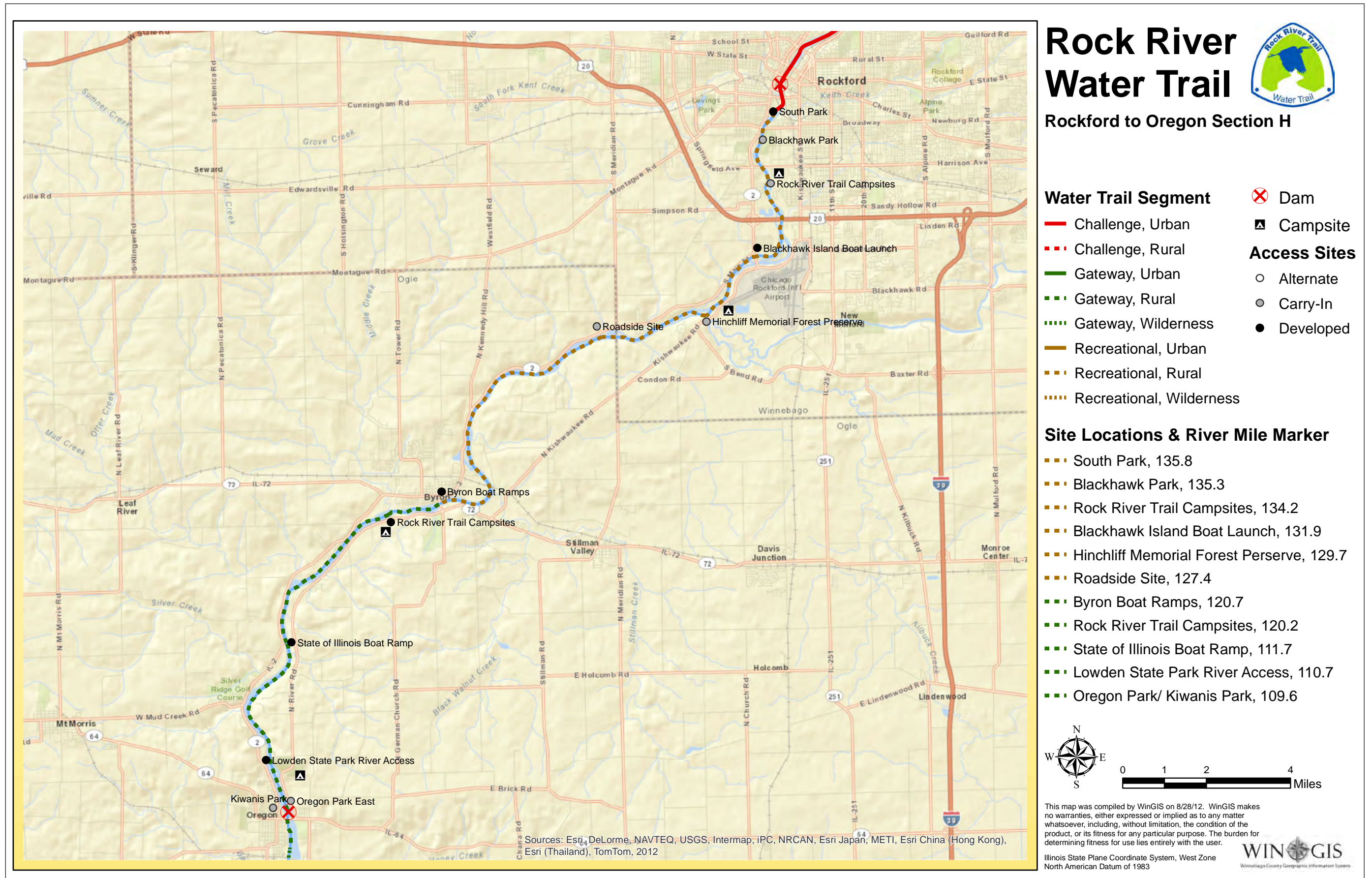
	Length of Segment	Segment Skill Level	Segment Type	Access Sites
Rockford to Kishwaukee River Mouth	7 miles	Recreational	Rural	5
To Byron Boat Ramp	9 miles	Recreational	Rural	2
To Oregon Dam	11 miles	Gateway	Rural	5

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section H

Rockford to Oregon – 27 miles, Winnebago and Ogle Counties, IL

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
H1	WINNEBAGO COUNTY South Park	Rockford	135.8	Developed	Y	N	Y	N	N	Roadside	42 15 24	89 05 55	Portage Put In Accessible
H2	Blackhawk Park	Rockford	135.3	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 14 49	89 06 13	Accessible
H3	Rock River Trail Campsites	Rockford	134.2	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	y	Roadside	42 13 47	89 06 07	
H4	Blackhawk Island Boat Launch	Rockford	131.9	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 12 19	89 06 35	Accessible
H5	Hinchliff Memorial Forest Preserve	Rockford	129.7	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Roadside	42 11 04	89 07 51	Access on Kishwaukee River
H6	OGLE COUNTY Roadside Site	Byron	127.4	Carry-In	N	N	Y	N	N	Parking Lot	42 10 50	89 10 52	
H7	Byron Boat Ramps	Byron	120.7	Developed	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Parking Lot	42 07 22	89 15 22	Accessible
H8	Rock River Trail Campsites	Byron	120.2	Developed	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Parking Lot	42 07 14	89 15 22	
H9	State of Illinois Boat Ramp	Oregon	111.7	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 02 35	89 20 27	Accessible
H10	Lowden State Park River Access	Oregon	110.7	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Parking Lot	42 02 05	89 20 14	Campsites must be reserved Boat launch on river right Accessible
H11	Oregon Park East	Oregon	109.6	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	42 01 04	89 19 32	Existing Portage Accessible
H12	Kiwanis Park	Oregon	109.6	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Roadside	42 01 02	89 19 49	Walking distance of downtown Accessible
	OREGON DAM	Oregon	109.6	Portage	N					Parking Lot	42 00 57	89 19 46	



INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL SECTION I

Oregon to Dixon to Sterling-Rock Falls

35 Miles (Ogle, Lee and Whiteside Counties)

The next river section through three counties is 35 miles in length along scenic wilderness and rural landscape, with the first 22 miles of the section suitable for the novice paddler. Just over 4 miles downstream of the Oregon Dam is beautiful Castle Rock State Park. Castle Rock is a large sedimentary rock outcropping that is a landmark for river travelers. The park has complete facilities for paddlers at a developed access site near the northern boundary. Less than 2 miles downstream is a primitive camping area of the park that is accessible only from the river. The end of the first segment is at Grand Detour, a charming community built on a bend of the river. The historic community is the site of the blacksmith shop of John Deere, who invented the first self-cleaning plow for farmers. Just to the east is the Nachusa Grasslands, a 3,000-acre prairie remnant conservancy. The next segment includes easy paddling through rural landscape with beautiful rock bluffs and ends at Lowell Park on the northern outskirts of Dixon. During his high school years in Dixon, Ronald Reagan was a lifeguard at Lowell Park.

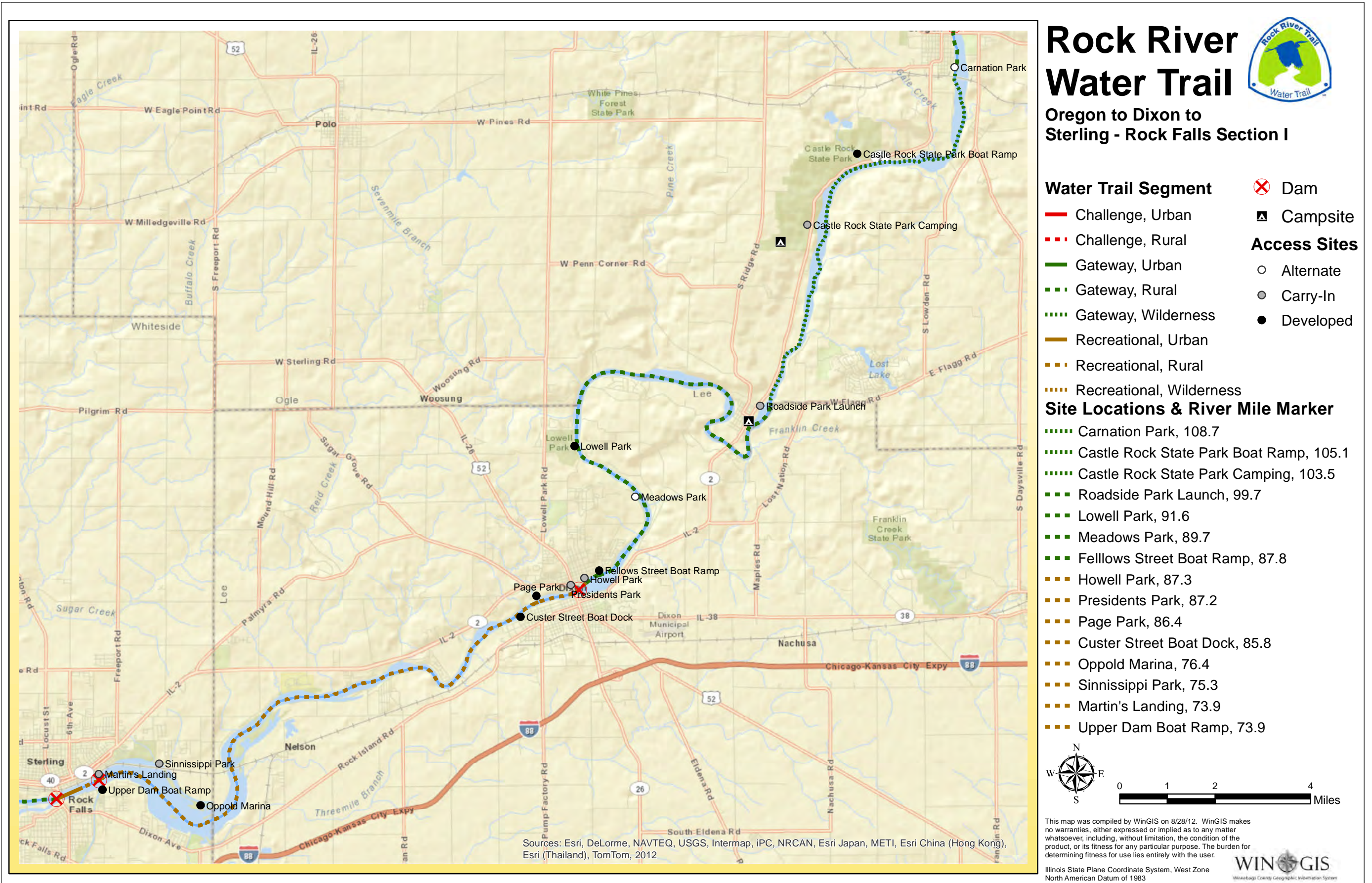
The third segment on river right passes Meadows Park, which is available as an alternate rest stop. Take out for the Dixon Dam is best at Fellows Street Boat Ramp as portage infrastructure at the dam is difficult to access and re-enter. A state historical marker commemorating Abraham Lincoln's army service during the Black Hawk War is on the north shore of the river near the Galena Avenue Bridge. Two parks downstream of the dam have boat ramps for easy access to the river. The landscape to Sterling and Rock Falls is primarily rural with river islands and a few areas of development. The distance between Custer Street Boat Dock in Dixon and the next access site at Oppold Marina in Sterling is over 9 miles, so the skill level for the last segment is recreational. A rest stop or take out could be made at Sauk Valley Community College on river right at river mile 80. A widening of the river upstream of the Upper Sterling-Rock Falls Dam is known as Sinnissippi Lake. Portages of the Upper Dam are available on river right at Martin's Landing and at the boat ramp on river left at Arduini Boat Launch near the Hennepin Feeder Canal.

	Length of Segment	Segment Skill Level	Segment Type	Access Sites
Oregon to Grand Detour	10 miles	Gateway	Wilderness	4
To Lowell Park, Dixon	8 miles	Gateway	Rural	1
To Dixon Dam	4 miles	Gateway	Rural	2
To Upper Sterling/RF Dam	13 miles	Recreational	Rural	8

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section I Oregon to Dixon to Sterling-Rock Falls – 35 miles, Ogle, Lee and Whiteside Counties

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
11	OGLE COUNTY Carnation Park	Oregon	108.7	Alternate	Y	Y	N	N	N	Parking Lot	42 00 14	89 19 38	Steep Banks - Emergency Only
12	Castle Rock State Park Boat Ramp	Oregon	105.1	Developed	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Parking Lot	41 58 29	89 22 03	
13	Castle Rock State Park Camping	Oregon	103.5	Carry-In	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Boat or Canoe	41 57 17	89 23 05	Access by boat/canoe/kayak only
14	Roadside Park Launch	Grand Detour	99.7	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Roadside	41 54 06	89 24 27	Historical Marker John Deere Steel Plow
15	LEE COUNTY Lowell Park	Dixon	91.6	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	41 53 24	89 28 59	Accessible Gangways and Dock
16	Meadows Park	Dixon	89.7	Alternate	Y	N	N	N	N	None	41 52 28	89 27 31	Potential for future access/camp
17	Fellows Street Boat Ramp	Dixon	87.8	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	41 51 04	89 28 27	Portage Take Out
	DIXON DAM	Dixon	87.3	Portage	Y						41 50 48	89 28 51	
18	Howell Park	Dixon	87.3	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	41 50 56	89 28 45	Need Safe PITO
19	Presidents Park	Dixon	87.2	Carry-In	N	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	41 50 52	89 29 06	Steps Caution
110	Page Park	Dixon	86.4	Developed	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	41 50 38	89 29 56	Accessible Gangways
111	Custer Street Boat Dock	Dixon	85.8	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	41 50 19	89 29 56	Accessible Gangways
112	WHITESIDE COUNTY Oppold Marina	Sterling	76.4	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	41 46 54	89 38 09	
113	Sinnissippi Park	Sterling	75.3	Carry-In	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	41 47 40	89 39 09	
114	Martin's Landing	Sterling	73.9	Carry-In	Y	N	N	Y	N	Parking Lot	41 47 29	89 40 37	Sinnissippi Dam Walkway
115	Upper Dam Boat Ramp	Rock Falls	73.9	Developed	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Parking Lot	41 47 12	89 40 32	Arduini Boat Launch at Hennepin Feeder Canal
	STERLING UPPER DAM	Sterling/RF	73.9	Portage	Y						41 47 20	89 40 43	Portage Right or Left



INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL SECTION J
Sterling-Rock Falls to Prophetstown to Erie
36 Miles (Whiteside County)



At the Upper Dam parking lot in Rock Falls is a state historical marker commemorating the Illinois and Mississippi Canal (Hennepin Canal). The Guard Lock Gate of the Hennepin Feeder Canal is just to the east of the marker. The feeder canal provides water to the main canal and is part of the Hennepin Canal Parkway State Park. The feeder canal and main canal are open to paddlers. Less than a mile separates the Upper and Lower dams in the cities of Sterling and Rock Falls. Access to this urban segment and portage from the Upper Dam can be made at Swards Riverside Park in Rock Falls. The Lower Dam has boat ramps above and below the dam at Lower Dam Park at river left for portage take out and put in. Access is also available at Lawrence Park at which point the river environment transcends from urban to rural. The gentle gradient of the river, relatively undeveloped shoreline and agricultural landscape provide a safe and enjoyable experience for even novice paddlers. Several river meanders are long and scenic.

Access sites in the 23-mile segment between Lawrence Park and Prophetstown are infrequent and include Como (between the US 30 and I 88 Bridges), Moline Road, Lyndon and the Prophetstown State Park. Prophetstown is a site of historic significance with the medicine man “Prophet” and opening battles of the Black Hawk War in 1832. A state historical marker on W. 2nd Street in Prophetstown commemorates the events. Prophetstown State Park has camping facilities and is located about 2 miles downstream of the Lyndon access. Glen Miller Marina at Erie is just over 12 miles from the state park with an alternate rest stop at the Big Bend Conservation Area at river mile 42.9. There are several islands along this segment with the conservation area along the left bank and a steady river current. The marina (Erie Boat Ramp) is on river left just after the Erie campground and before the Erie Road Bridge; the boat ramp is located at the southwest corner of the bridge. The marina is the last designated access site for the next 19 miles of the water trail to Cleveland.

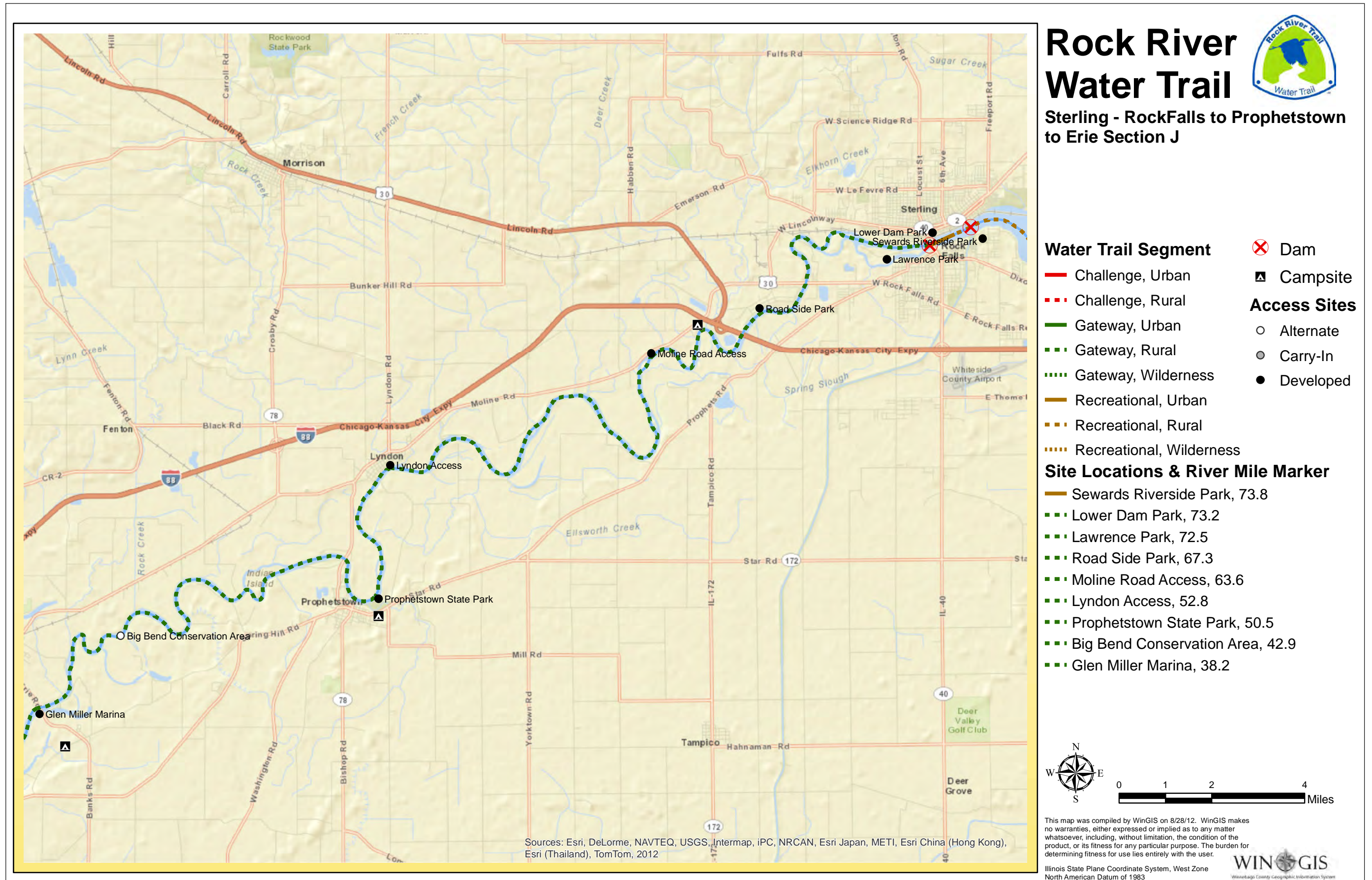
	Length of Segment	Segment Skill Level	Segment Type	Access Sites
Upper Sterling/RF Dam to Lower Sterling/RF Dam	1 mile	Recreational	Urban	1
To Prophetstown	23 miles	Gateway	Rural	6
To Erie	12 miles	Gateway	Rural	2

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section J

Sterling-Rock Falls to Prophetstown to Erie – 36 miles, Whiteside County, IL

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
J1	WHITESIDE COUNTY Sewards Riverside Park	Rock Falls	73.8	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	41 47 08	89 40 59	
	STERLING LOWER DAM	Sterling/ RF	73.2	Portage	Y						41 46 58	89 41 40	Take out close to spillway
J2	Lower Dam Park	Rock Falls	73.2	Developed	Y	N	N	Y	N	Parking Lot	41 46 56	89 41 39	Accessible
J3	Lawrence Park	Sterling	72.5	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	41 46 55	89 42 05	Boat ramp north side
J4	Road Side Park	Como	67.3	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	41 45 52	89 45 55	
J5	Moline Road Access	Lyndon	63.6	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	41 45 02	89 48 38	
J6	Lyndon Access	Lyndon	52.8	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Roadside	41 42 57	89 55 11	Ramp in Poor Condition
J7	Prophetstown State Park	Prophetstown	50.5	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Parking Lot	41 40 27	89 55 29	
J8	Big Bend Conservation Area	Prophetstown	42.9	Alternate						None	41 39 46	90 01 56	Undeveloped-Emergency Only
J9	Glen Miller Marina	Erie	38.2	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	41 38 18	90 03 58	(Erie Boat Ramp)





INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

ROCK RIVER WATER TRAIL SECTION K

Erie to Colona to Quad Cities

38 Miles (Whiteside, Henry and Rock Island Counties)

The long paddling distance of 19 miles between the two designated sites of the first segment makes this a challenge skill level. The scenery is rural, the river wide and much of the shoreline undeveloped, with islands common in the Hillsdale area. A state historical marker commemorating an event in the Black Hawk War is located on the Hurd Road Bridge over the river. There is an undesignated access site that could be used as an intermediate rest area at the IL Route 92 Bridge, 11 miles downstream of Erie. The end of this segment is at the Cleveland Boat Ramp at river mile 18.8. Less than a mile downstream of Cleveland and just before the I 80 Bridge is Lundeen’s Landing in Barstow on river right, a privately-owned campground with a store and launch facilities. Five miles further down river the Hennepin Canal joins the Rock at lock number 29 on river left. The City of Colona has a park and boat launch facility at lock 29 and paddlers can use the launch for take out, as a rest stop or to paddle a ways on the Hennepin.

About a quarter mile from Hennepin Canal Lock 29 the Green River enters the Rock on river left. The river environment continues as rural landscape with little development for the next 4 miles to Green Valley Park on river right at Moline. After Green Valley the landscape of this

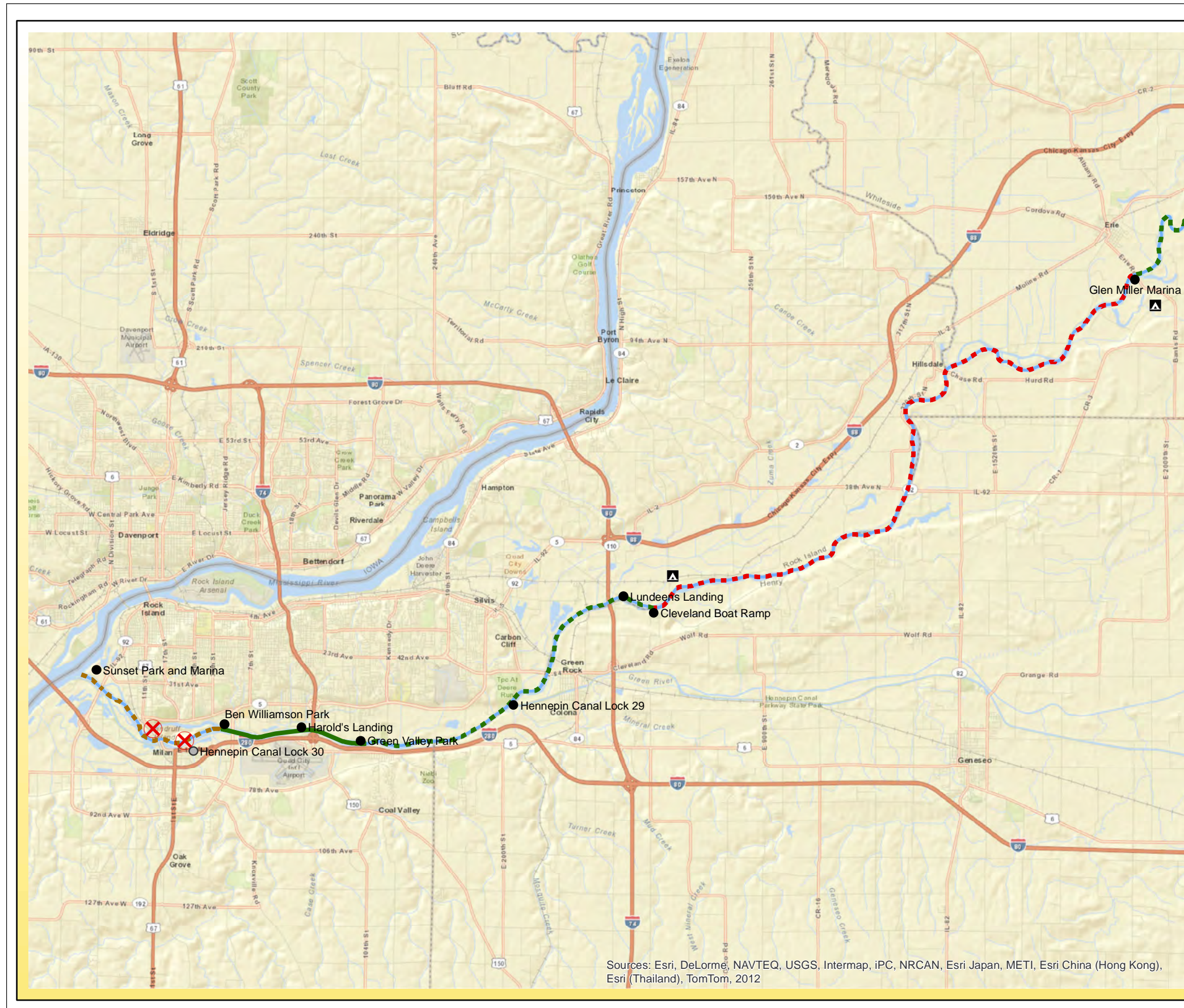
segment changes quickly to urban within the Quad Cities metropolitan area. Care should be exercised when approaching Ben Williamson Park as the local water ski club, the Backwater Gamblers, uses the park access for practice and shows. Safety considerations mean that paddlers should approach the Milan Steel Dam on river left soon after passing Ben Williamson Park. Traveling river right to the Sears Dam should be avoided; safe portage of that dam is not available. Take out before the Steel Dam at Hennepin Canal Lock 30. Put in at a safe distance below the dam in the tailwater or paddle the Hennepin for a ways before crossing the canal bank to the river. Near the end of Vandruff Island a series of mild rapids occur in the location of the US 67 Bridge. On the bluffs at river right is the Black Hawk State Historic Site on land that was Saukenuk, the main village of the Sauk Nation. The last 3 miles before the Mississippi River are rural in landscape. Continue on the water trail to river right and look for the Pettifer Slough that connects the river with Lake Potter and Sunset Park and Marina. Alternatively, paddle to the Mississippi and head upstream on river right to Sunset Park. From Sunset Park trailhead the traveler can enjoy the many recreational, cultural and historical interests in the river communities of the Quad Cities area.

	Length of Segment	Segment Skill Level	Segment Type	Access Sites
Erie to Cleveland	19 miles	Challenge	Rural	2
To Colona	6 miles	Gateway	Rural	2
To Milan Steel Dam	8 miles	Gateway	Urban	4
To Mississippi River (Sunset Park)	5 miles	Recreational	Rural	1

INVENTORY OF ROCK RIVER ACCESS SITES AND WATER TRAIL MAPS

Rock River Water Trail Section K Erie to Colona to Quad Cities – 38 miles, Whiteside, Henry and Rock Island Counties, IL

Site No.	Site Name	Community	River Mile	Access Type	Signs	Restroom	Water	Shelter	Camping	Vehicle Access	Latitude D M S	Longitude D M S	Notes
K1	WHITESIDE COUNTY Glen Miller Marina	Erie	38.2	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	41 38 18	90 03 58	(aka Erie Boat Ramp)
K2	HENRY COUNTY Cleveland Boat Ramp	Cleveland	18.8	Developed	N	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	41 30 10	90 19 00	Shelter and Park one block west
K3	ROCK ISLAND COUNTY Lundeen's Landing	Barstow	18.0	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Parking Lot	41 30 50	90 20 00	Camping, tube rental
K4	HENRY COUNTY Hennepin Canal Lock 29	Colona	13.0	Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	41 28 16	90 23 26	Accessible – Near Green River
K5	ROCK ISLAND COUNTY Green Valley Park	Moline	8.7	Developed	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	41 27 25	90 28 13	Seasonal
K6	Harold's Landing	Moline	7.1	Developed	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Parking Lot	41 27 44	90 30 04	Accessible
K7	Ben Williamson Park	Rock Island	4.8	Developed	Y	Y	N	N	N	Parking Lot	41 27 46	90 32 33	Accessible
K8	Hennepin Canal Lock 30	Milan	4.5	Carry-In	Y	N	N	N	N	Parking Lot	41 27 36	90 32 50	Portage Take Out and Put In
	MILAN STEEL DAM	Milan	4.5	Portage	Y						41 27 40	90 32 54	Sign and Safety Cable
	SEARS DAM	Rock Island	2.7	Closed	Y						41 27 40	90 34 41	Avoid Dam - No Portage
	River Mouth at Mississippi River	Rock Island	0								41 28 59	90 36 58	
K9	Sunset Park and Marina	Rock Island	0.8	End of Water Trail Developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Parking Lot	41 29 09	90 36 19	Trailhead at Marina Access before Pettifer Island to Lake Potter or from Mississippi River



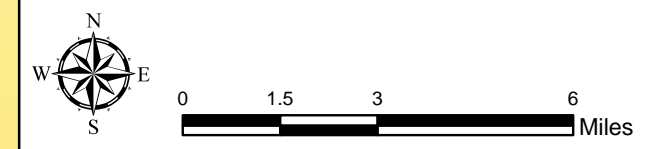
Rock River Water Trail



Erie to Colona to Quad Cities Section K

- Water Trail Segment**
- Challenge, Urban
 - - - Challenge, Rural
 - Gateway, Urban
 - - - Gateway, Rural
 - ⋯ Gateway, Wilderness
 - Recreational, Urban
 - - - Recreational, Rural
 - ⋯ Recreational, Wilderness
- Site Locations & River Mile Marker**
- - - Glen Miller Marina, 38.2
 - - - Cleveland Boat Ramp, 18.8
 - - - Lundeens Landing, 18.0
 - - - Hennepin Canal Lock 29, 13.0
 - Green Valley Park, 8.7
 - Harold's Landing, 7.1
 - Ben Williamson Park, 4.8
 - - - Hennepin Canal Lock 30, 4.5
 - - - Sunset Park and Marina, 0.8

- ⊗ Dam
 - ▲ Campsite
- Access Sites**
- Alternate
 - Carry-In
 - Developed



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Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, iPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2012



*“Everyone must believe in something.
I believe I’ll go canoeing.”*
– Henry David Thoreau

**ROCK RIVER TRAIL
INITIATIVEsm
Rockford, Illinois
Hustisford, Wisconsin**