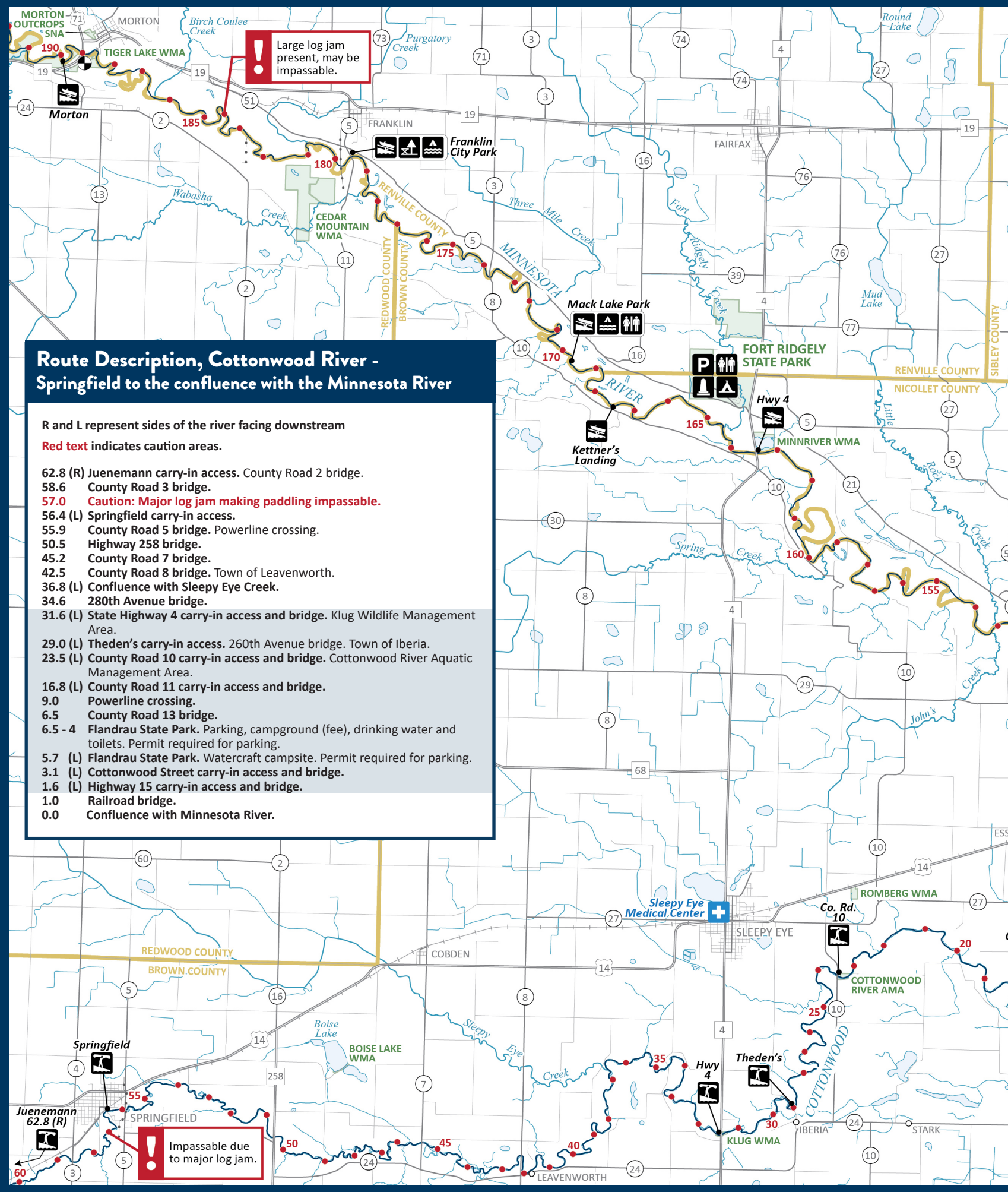


# MINNESOTA RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL

## MAP 4 - Morton to Cambria

### Includes the Cottonwood River

### Route Description, RM 191 to 123



Carry-in Access	Rest Area	State Public Lands
Trailer Access	Campground	Wildlife Management Area
Parking	Watercraft Campsite	Aquatic Management Area
Historic Site	Toilet	Scientific and Natural Area
Hospital/Clinic	River Miles	
Drinking Water	Powerline	
River Level Gauge		

Scale 1:145,000  
Scale in Miles

NOTE: Recommended Paddling Sections are highlighted in blue in the route description. See text side for details.

**Route Description, Cottonwood River - Springfield to the confluence with the Minnesota River**

R and L represent sides of the river facing downstream  
Red text indicates caution areas.

- 62.8 (R) Juenemann carry-in access. County Road 2 bridge.
- 58.6 County Road 3 bridge.
- 57.0 **Caution: Major log jam making paddling impassable.**
- 56.4 (L) Springfield carry-in access.
- 55.9 County Road 5 bridge. Powerline crossing.
- 50.5 Highway 258 bridge.
- 45.2 County Road 7 bridge.
- 42.5 County Road 8 bridge. Town of Leavenworth.
- 36.8 (L) Confluence with Sleepy Eye Creek.
- 34.6 280th Avenue bridge.
- 31.6 (L) State Highway 4 carry-in access and bridge. Klug Wildlife Management Area.
- 29.0 (L) Theden's carry-in access. 260th Avenue bridge. Town of Iberia.
- 23.5 (L) County Road 10 carry-in access and bridge. Cottonwood River Aquatic Management Area.
- 16.8 (L) County Road 11 carry-in access and bridge.
- 9.0 Powerline crossing.
- 6.5 County Road 13 bridge.
- 6.5 - 4 Flandrau State Park. Parking, campground (fee), drinking water and toilets. Permit required for parking.
- 5.7 (L) Flandrau State Park. Watercraft campsite. Permit required for parking.
- 3.1 (L) Cottonwood Street carry-in access and bridge.
- 1.6 (L) Highway 15 carry-in access and bridge.
- 1.0 Railroad bridge.
- 0.0 Confluence with Minnesota River.

R and L represent sides of the river facing downstream  
Red text indicates caution areas.

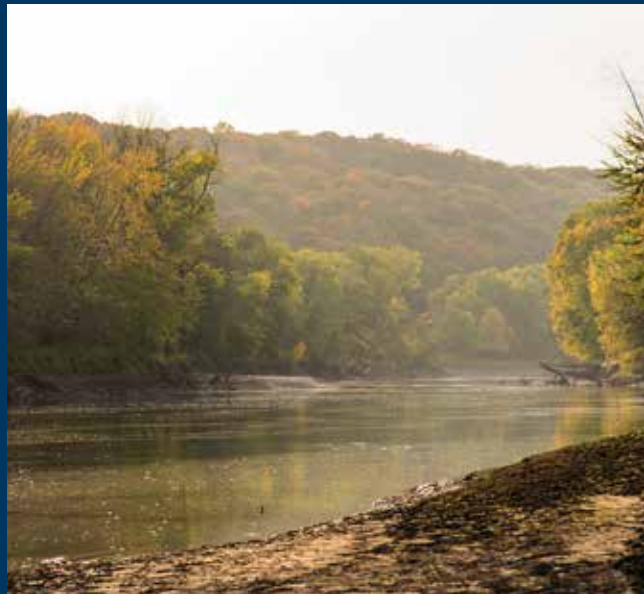
- 191.5-188 Tiger Lake Wildlife Management Area.
- 190.9 (R) Confluence with Crow Creek.
- 189.9 (R) Morton trailer access.
- 189.0 Highways 71/19 bridge. River level gauge.
- 188.8 Railroad bridge.
- 186.5 (L) Confluence with Birch Coulee Creek.
- 184.0 **Caution: Large log jam present, may be impassable at times.**
- 182.6 Powerline crossing.
- 180.8 (L) Confluence with Purgatory Creek.
- 179.7 (L) Franklin City Park trailer access. Watercraft campsite and rest area. County Roads 11/5 bridge. Town of Franklin.
- 178.8 (R) Confluence with Wabasha Creek.
- 173.8 County Roads 3/8 bridge.
- 172.0 (L) Confluence with Threemile Creek.
- 169.6 (L) Mack Lake Park trailer access. Watercraft campsite and toilet.
- 167.7 (R) Kettner's Landing trailer access.
- 165.7 (L) Fort Ridgely State Park. Parking, campground (fee), historic site, drinking water and toilets. Permit required to park.
- 164.8 (L) Confluence with Fort Ridgely Creek.
- 163.6 (L) Highway 4 trailer access and bridge. Minnriver Wildlife Management Area.
- 159.8 (L) Confluence with Spring Creek.
- 158.8 250th Avenue bridge.
- 153.1 (L) Confluence with Little Rock Creek.
- 153.1 (R) Confluence with John's Creek.
- 151.8 (L) Confluence with Eight Mile Creek.
- 148.7-146.9 (R) Boesch Wildlife Management Area.
- 146.8-144 (R) River Valley Wildlife Management Area.
- 143.3 Buessmann Bridge trailer access. County Road 14 bridge.
- 141.3 (L) Powerline crossing.
- 140.5 (L) Confluence with Fritsche Creek. Fritsche Creek Wildlife Management Area.
- 138.8 Highways 14/15 bridge.
- 138.7 (R) Minnecon Park trailer access. Rest area and drinking water.
- 138.1 (R) Riverside Park trailer access.
- 136.4 County Road 37 bridge.
- 135.9 (L) Eckstein trailer access. May be inaccessible to the main channel in low water.
- 133.8 Railroad "turnstyle" bridge.
- 133.5 (R) Confluence with Cottonwood River.
- 128.0 (R) Courtland trailer access. County Road 24 bridge.
- 127.5 (R) Confluence with Little Cottonwood River.
- 127.1 (R) Confluence with Morgan Creek.
- 126.0 (R) City of Cambria.

CONTINUE ON TO MAP 5 - Cambria to Henderson

# MINNESOTA RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL



## MAP 4 - MORTON TO CAMBRIA INCLUDES THE COTTONWOOD RIVER



**m** DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## ABOUT THE WATER TRAIL

The Minnesota River begins to widen as it continues a southeastern path through the tallgrass prairie as the channel changes direction before reversing itself once again. On this stretch covered by floodplain trees and grassy areas a paddler will find some gneiss outcroppings and little for development except a few bridges and some farmsteads. Check out some of the smaller tributaries flowing into the Minnesota River like Birch Coulee Creek and Fort Ridgely Creek.

The paddleable portion of the Cottonwood River begins in the city of Springfield and ends 58 river miles later when it empties into the Minnesota River near New Ulm. Carved out some 10,000 years ago, the steep slopes are now saturated with maple, basswood, and hackberry trees, with oak and red cedar on the sunny side. There are no major rapids, which makes this a good river for beginning paddlers. Near the confluence with the Minnesota, the river flows through Flandrau State Park, which offers some great hiking and overnight stay opportunities.



Railroad bridge at Morton.

## TRIP PLANNING AND SAFETY



- Plan your trip with a map before you leave. Tell someone your plans, including put-in and take-out times.
- Travel with a companion or group.
- Most people paddle 2-3 river miles per hour.
- River levels can affect your speed and trip safety. Check conditions at [mndnr.gov/river\\_levels](http://mndnr.gov/river_levels).
- Don't underestimate the power of wind and waves, especially on large lakes.
- Be cautious of obstacles in the river and avoid overhanging and dead trees.
- Bring clean drinking water and a waterproof container with a first aid kit, waterproof matches and extra clothes.
- Wear a life jacket at all times while on the water.
- Purchase a license for your non-motorized watercraft if it's more than 10 feet in length. If you're not from Minnesota, check your state's watercraft license laws.

## WATERCRAFT CAMPING



- Camp only in designated campsites, which are often available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Riverbed camping next to private property is not permitted.
- Stay off private property. Stop only at designated sites; much of the shoreland is private property.
- Be sanitary! Use designated toilet facilities or bury human waste away from the river.
- Practice Leave No Trace principles when camping.
- Follow the rules for firewood. State forests allow you to gather dead wood for a fire, but state parks do not.

## RECOMMENDED DAY TRIP

### Franklin City Park to Mack Lake Park

- Put-in location: Franklin City Park Trailer Access  
River mile **179.7**
- Take-out location: Franklin City Park Trailer Access  
River mile **169.6**
- Length: **10.1** river miles

This stretch is an easy, winding bit of river, surrounded by trees and nearly uninterrupted by roads or other man-made obstructions. Franklin City Park has free rustic campsites that are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Mack Lake County Park is managed by Renville County and has great facilities for an overnight stay. Reservations required.

## RECOMMENDED PADDLING SECTIONS

**NOTE:** River conditions can change at any time. Be sure to check water levels before heading out.

**Recommended paddling sections are highlighted in blue in the route description.**

At typical water levels, these **Recommended Paddling Sections** offer:

- Enjoyable experience for all ages and abilities
- Fewer obstacles and woody obstructions
- Well-marked and maintained portages and public access facilities
- Variety of options for trip length and duration

[mndnr.gov/recommended-paddling](http://mndnr.gov/recommended-paddling)

## PROTECT THE RIVER

Your experience on the river depends on a healthy environment. As you explore the beauty of this waterway, also do your best to protect it.

### Protect Your Waters

Before launching...before leaving

- Clean off aquatic plants and animals.
- Drain all water away from the landing.
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.

[mndnr.gov/invasives/aquatic](http://mndnr.gov/invasives/aquatic)

### Buffer Protection

The Minnesota buffer law establishes new vegetation buffers along rivers, streams and ditches to help filter out chemicals and sediment before they reach waterways.

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

## AREA OVERVIEW



## CONTACTS

### DNR INFORMATION CENTER

500 Lafayette Rd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040  
888-646-6367  
[info.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:info.dnr@state.mn.us)

### DNR AREA OFFICE

175 County Rd. 26  
Windom, MN 56101  
507-832-6030

### DNR REGION

#### HEADQUARTERS

21371 State Highway 15  
New Ulm, MN 56073  
507-233-1200

## MEDICAL

### NEW ULM MEDICAL CENTER

1324 5th St N  
New Ulm, MN 56073  
507-217-5000

### SLEEPY EYE MEDICAL CENTER

400 4th Ave NW  
Sleepy Eye, MN 56085  
507-794-3571

**IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 911**

## More Information

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

- River level reporting
- River conditions reporting
- Interactive water trail map
- Recommended routes
- River rapids definitions
- Virtual tours

Search for outfitters at [exploreminnesota.com](http://exploreminnesota.com)

This document is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by contacting [info.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:info.dnr@state.mn.us), 651-296-6157, or MN Relay 711.