1. Turn your bow into the wake of barges and boats.
2. Stay clear of moving barges. They have a blind area directly in front of the barge.

**Lockage Signals**

Upon approach to lock, signals are provided. Small signal cord located at midpoint on upper and lower guide walls as shown above.

**Traffic Signals**

Use green light. Signal cord in lock is for the lock operator. Red light means do not approach lock. Green light means signal has been given to approach lock.

**BARGE TRAFFIC SAFETY TIPS**

1. Stay clear of moving barges. They have a blind area directly in front of the barge.
2. Stay clear of the owners of trees, brush.
3. Turn your bow into the wake of barges and boats.
4. The rules of the navigation channel are marked with red and green buoys. Where possible, stop outside the channel. RED-ON-RIGHT RETURNING UPSTREAM.

**PROCEDURE FOR USING NAVIGATION LOCKS**

1. Lockage Signals
2. Looking Through
3. Locking Through

**NOTE:** (R) and (L) represent right and left banks of the river when facing downstream.

**Route Description of the Mississippi River**

875.9 (L) Mississippi West Regional Park; water access. 
875.6 Clearwater Islands. 
873.4 (R) DuSable Galloway Riverside Park rest area. 
873.3 (L) Mississippi River Community Park rest area. 
872.8 Anoka-Champlin (Hwy 67) Bridge. 
872.6 (L) Farmers Point Park rest area. 
872.1 (R) Point Park, there is a water access and rest area. 
869.9 Porteau crossing. 
868.5 (L) Coon Rapids Regional Park water access and outfitter (for canoes only). 
866.0-6.9 (R) Corn Ridge Dam; portage left 480 yards. 
866.0 Dam Island. 
865.0 I-94 bridge. 
864.0 Bass Island, it belongs to the University of Minnesota and is preserved as a natural area. 
863.0 No camping is permitted. 
862.0 (R) Water access to the River Park. 
862.0 (L) S. St. Charles. It is dominated by the McCarren pumping station at St. Paul, Rossville and Charles. 
861.9 (L) Maplewood Park, Confluence of Rice Creek. Rest area. Next to the park and accessible by foot is the Rice Lake House, an Anoka County historical site. 
861.6-6.9 Islands of Peace, a recreational area on the left, upstream and across the Damm Island. 
860.8 good nature trails. Rest area and small rapids on the island. 
860.5 St Paul’s Water Works. Three brown brick buildings on the left bank pump, soften, chlorinate and filter the water to a half million people. 
859.6-5.0 Minnesota Water Works. Three brown brick buildings on the left bank pump, soften, chlorinate and filter the water to a half million people. 
858.5-5.0 Stearns, Stearns County. 
859.7-9.0 Porteau crossing. 
859.5-9.0 Stearns, Stearns County. 
859.3-7.0 Porteau crossing. 
859.3-7.0 Stearns, Stearns County. 
859.2 St. Peter, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
858.9-9.7 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
858.8-9.7 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
858.7-9.6 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
858.6-9.5 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
858.4-9.4 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
858.3-9.3 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
858.2-9.2 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
858.1-9.0 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
858.0-8.9 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
857.9-8.8 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
857.8-8.7 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
857.7-8.6 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
857.6-8.5 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
857.5-8.4 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
857.4-8.3 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
857.3-8.2 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
857.2-8.1 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
857.1-8.0 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
856.9-7.9 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
856.8-7.8 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
856.7-7.7 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
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856.5-7.5 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
856.4-7.4 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
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855.9-7.0 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
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853.4-4.6 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
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851.8-3.0 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
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851.2-2.4 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
851.1-2.3 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
851.0-2.2 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
850.9-2.1 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
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850.6-1.8 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
850.5-1.7 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
850.4-1.6 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
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850.0-1.2 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
849.9-1.1 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
849.8-1.0 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
849.7-0.9 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
849.6-0.8 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
849.5-0.7 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
849.4-0.6 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
849.3-0.5 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
849.2-0.4 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
849.1-0.3 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
849.0-0.2 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
848.9-0.1 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge. 
848.8-0.0 Lisbon, Hennepin Avenue bridge.
The Mississippi River

The beginning of this stretch of the Mississippi is bounded by rolling, sparsely wooded farmland, though houses, other buildings and bridges become more numerous as the river approaches downtown Minneapolis. Nonetheless, many of the city’s buildings are set high on bluffs so that a strip of natural land survives along the river.

This stretch of the Mississippi River is “young.” A series of seas covered the region until 400 million years ago, when the Ordovician Sea retreated from this area. Each of these seas left deposits that now form the sedimentary layers of limestone, sandstone and shale through which the river has cut. These layers are clearly exposed in the river gorge from St. Anthony Falls to Fort Snelling.

The river is silty and, in places, contaminated with sewage and industrial chemicals. Unless it is extensively treated, the water is undrinkable. According to the most recent Minnesota Department of Health Advisory, children under 6 and women of childbearing years should eat no fish, except panfish from above St. Anthony Falls. Below St. Anthony Falls, no fish species should be eaten by the above group. Others may eat one meal a month.

As the vast forests of white and red pine were cut along the upper reaches of the Mississippi and its tributaries, reefs of logs arrived at local mills. In the 1900s the river again changed as man built locks and dams for barges. This stretch of the river has two locks at St. Anthony Falls and one at the Ford Dam above Fort Snelling. Navigating these locks can be an exciting experience for canoeists and small-boat operators. It can also be dangerous. Use caution.

Some paddling skills are required to avoid snags, sweeper and boulders. The rapids are all Class I or riffles. Motorboats and barges often throw large wakes that can swamp unsuspecting canoeists. These wakes should not be taken broadside. Because the river is so wide, the current can be deceptively swift. Use caution in approaching shore.

Wildlife

All along this route it is possible to spot species of wildlife that are able to coexist with man. Mallards, coots, muskrats, beavers and several species of turtles often are sighted. Along the shore you may see racoons, deer, or fox; you certainly will see their tracks. During spring and fall migrations many species of birds follow the river, including bald eagles, ospreys, warblers and kinglets.

Fishing

Popular game fish in this stretch are smallmouth and largemouth bass, walleyes, saugers, northern pike, muskies and panfish. The DNR is not stocking the river. All of the species currently present are maintained by natural reproduction. Reproduction and survival of smallmouth bass is especially good during years of low spring flows in the river, which happens 3 to 4 years out of 10. The smallmouth bass in the Mississippi River grow to 12 inches by age four and 17 inches by age seven. Regulations allow anglers who are fishing smallmouth bass between the St. Cloud Dam and the confluence of the Crow River to possess three fish. The limit can only include fish under 12 inches, except that one fish over 20 inches may be taken.

The river holds a variety of secrets just waiting for you to explore. Bring your binoculars, a field guide or just your curiosity and enjoy the river’s magic.

Planning A Safe River Trip

A successful river trip is safe. To enjoy a safe journey, you should be prepared by doing the following:

- Get acquainted with your route. Plan your trip with a map before you depart and advise someone of your plans including planned departure and arrival times.
- Travel with a companion or group.
- Choose a distance that is comfortable for you, most people paddle two to three river miles per hour.
- Wear a U. S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device that state law requires be on board the boat for each person.
- Bring a first aid kit that includes waterproof matches.
- Bring an extra paddle in your canoe.
- Be cautious of river obstructions, such as overhanging and dead trees in the river.
- You must pack out all trash.
- Leave only footprints; take only photographs!

Water levels can speed or slow you down. You can get information about water levels from the regional DNR office, or check the DNR website, or the DNR Information Center. Remember that much of the shorelands are privately owned. Respect and protect the water and shorelands.

Sustainable Ecosystems

Outdoor recreation is dependent on a healthy and attractive natural environment. Sustainable outdoor recreation enables people to enjoy the outdoors without negative impacts on the environment.

Communities working together can improve water resources by promoting environmentally sensitive land use practices along rivers and throughout watersheds. Natural shoreline buffers improve water quality by filtering out pollutants and sediments. Healthy and diverse native shoreline plant communities are attractive and provide important shoreline habitat for birds and wildlife.

Boating Information

- Register your watercraft. All watercraft more than 9 feet in length, including nonmotorized canoes and kayaks, must be registered in Minnesota or your state of residence.
- Not all portions of this water trail are suitable for motor use.

Canoeing on Large Rivers

The wide variety of waters can provide an equally wide variety of hazards to canoeists. Although the Mississippi is often very placid, the current can be quick and powerful when the river is near or at flood stage. But most dangers can be anticipated and avoided. Start your trip with the proper safety equipment. Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices (PFD) should be worn at all times.

The wind can often be deceiving. The bluffs often "tunnel" the wind, increasing its velocity. Waves on open stretches can easily fill or flip an open canoe.

Water levels rise and fall and may change dramatically. You must be prepared for all possibilities.

Hypothermia, a rapid loss of body heat, has killed many people who have swamped or tipped. Swimming soon becomes impossible in freezing water. Wear a PFD and stay close to shore if there is a possibility that your craft will swamp. Don't overload your canoe. Snag-ridden waters often are trickier to negotiate than whitewater. Underwater obstacles can easily tip a canoe. Watch carefully.

Rest Areas and Camping Sites

- Public rest areas are available along the route to rest, picnic and explore.
- Camp only in designated campgrounds, which are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- Bring drinking water. It is only available at a limited number of rest areas. Drinking river water is not recommended, but if you do it must be treated.
- Respect 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.

This information is available in alternative format upon request.