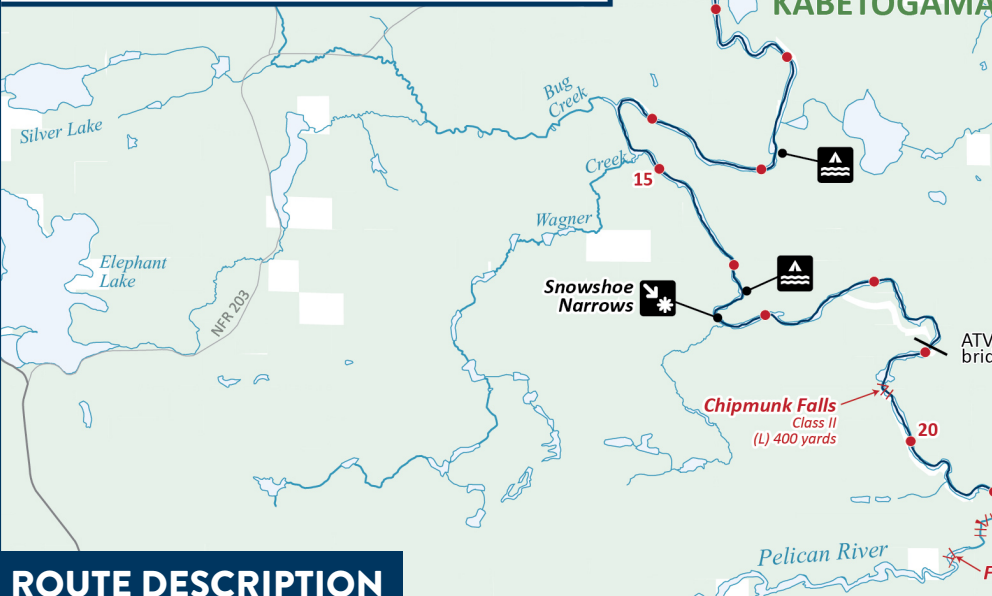
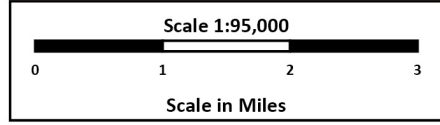


# VERMILION RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL

- Carry-in Access
- Trailer Access
- Rest Area
- Watercraft Campsite
- Toilet
- Point of Interest
- Dam
- Public Lands
- State Units
- River Level Gauge
- Rapids
- River Miles
- Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness



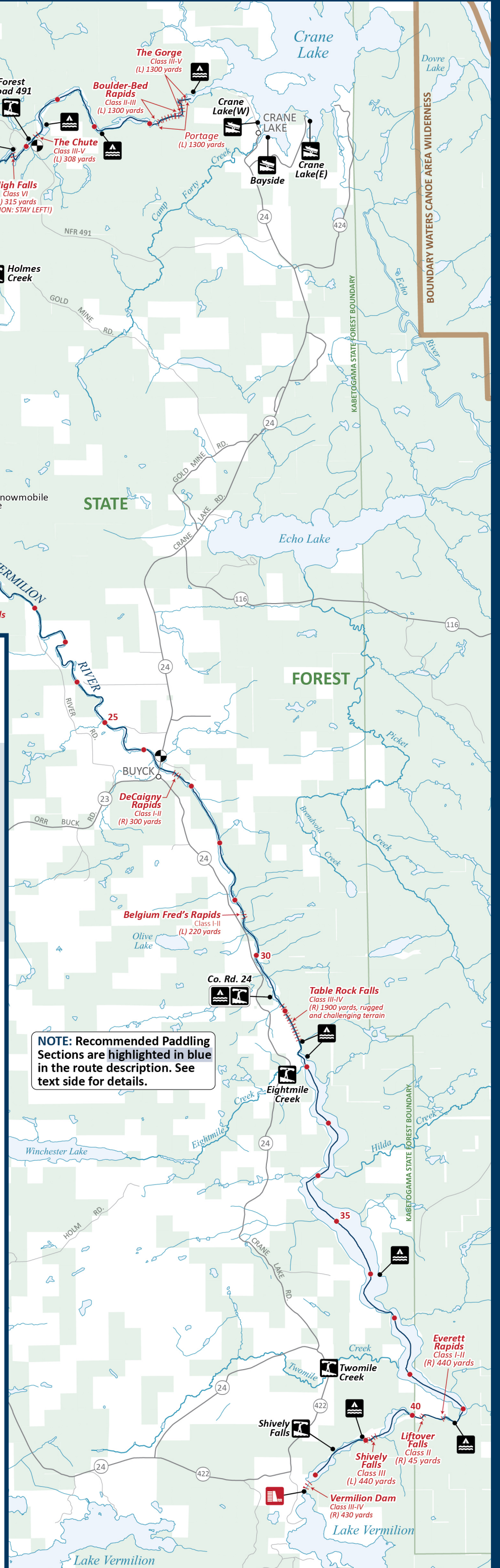
## ROUTE DESCRIPTION

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

Red text indicates caution areas. River flows Northernly.

### RIVER MILE

- 42.3 (R) Vermilion Dam.** Portage right 430 yards, river level gauge (L), 200 feet below dam.
- 41.6 (L) Shively Falls carry-in access.
- 41.0 (L) Watercraft campsite.
- 40.9 (L) Shively Falls, Class III.** Portage left 440 yards Three steep boulder-bed pitches.
- 39.8 (R) Lifter Falls, Class II.** Portage right 45 yards A sheer four-foot drop into a quiet pool. Souse holes form beneath the falls.
- 39.4 (R) Everett Rapids, Class I-II.** Portage right 440 yards A boulder-bed pitch. The river then enters the Chain of Lakes, 7 miles of wide, still water.
- 39.3 (R) Watercraft campsite.
- 37.8 (L) Twomile Creek. The landing at the County Road 422 bridge over the creek provides access to the Vermilion.
- 36.1 (R) Watercraft campsite.
- 34.0 (R) Confluence with Hilda Creek.
- 32.0 (L) Confluence with Eightmile Creek. Eightmile Creek carry-in access is upstream off County Road 24.
- 31.9 (R) Watercraft campsite.
- 31.8 (R) Watercraft campsite.
- 31.8-30.9 (R) Table Rock Falls, Class IV-VI.** Portage right 1900 yards A 20-foot cascade with vertical ledges. The river then runs into a steep, narrow canyon and tumbles through continuous rapids for the next three-quarters of a mile.
- 30.7 (L) County Road 24 carry-in access and watercraft campsite.
- 29.3 (L) Belgium Fred's Rapids, Class I.** Portage left 220 yards A short boulder-bed pitch.
- 26.8 (R) DeCaigny Rapids, Class I.** Portage right 300 yards A boulder-bed pitch.
- 26.4 (R) River level gauge.
- 21.2 (R) Confluence with Pelican Rapids. Paddle 1/2 mile up to see rapids/waterfall.
- 19.5 (L) Chipmunk Falls, Class I.** Portage left 400 yards A boulder-bed pitch.
- 18.9 ATV/Snowmobile Bridge. Ruins from the old railroad bridge can be seen here.
- 17.4 Pilings mark where pine logs were stopped by boom logs and loaded on railroad cars, bound for Virginia.
- 16.5 Snowshoe Narrows. Pine-covered cliffs and hills nearly 100 feet high flank the river. The bluffs recede and rice beds line the next several miles of river.
- 16.4 (R) Watercraft campsite.
- 14.8 (L) Confluence with Wagner Creek.
- 14.3 (L) Confluence with Bug Creek.
- 12.8 (R) Watercraft campsite.
- 9.1 (L) Confluence with Flap Creek.
- 6.6 (R) Confluence with Holmes Creek. Trailer access at Gold Mine Road bridge over the creek. Watercraft access is up Holmes Creek.
- 5.6 (L) Confluence with Dixon Creek.
- 4.4 (L) High Falls.** A long, rocky island marks the beginning of the 315 yards portage left. CAUTION! Take the left channel around the island. The rapids at the downstream end of the island lead to the falls, a 25-foot high, narrow, twisting flume. High Falls, rates Class VI. Vermilion Falls Rest Area (USFS) on left with picnic tables, fire rings, toilets and an observation railing along the falls.
- 3.9 National Forest Road 491 bridge and carry-in access.
- 3.8 (L) The Chute, Class III-V.** Portage left 308 yards. A twisting 10-foot drop over a ledge and large boulders. The current is powerful and crashes into an undercut cliff on the left and an undercut rock on the right near the tail of the rapids.
- 3.6 (R) Watercraft campsite just downstream from The Chute.
- 1.9 (R) Watercraft campsite.
- 0.8-0.4 (L) The "Gorge", Class III-V and Class II-III boulder-bed rapids.** CAUTION! Portage left 1300 yards The Gorge is where the river bends sharply to the left, tumbles over two steep ledges and enters a narrow canyon with sheer 50-foot walls. Quick rescue in the canyon is nearly impossible. The Gorge is perhaps the most unusual and beautiful of the Vermilion's rapids.
- 0.1 Watercraft campsite
- 0 The Vermilion River widens as it joins Crane Lake. Multiple trailer accesses on the south shore of the lake.



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

# VERMILION RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL



**m** DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## ABOUT THE WATER TRAIL

The Vermilion River flows 42 miles north from Lake Vermilion to Crane Lake. Surrounded by the Kabetogama State Forest, the river winds along forests of pine, spruce, fir, aspen and birch. Much of the river appears wild, sometimes passing exposed bedrock and tall bluffs. The most developed areas are resorts and cabins at Vermilion and Crane Lake and the community of Buyck. With portages around the rapids and dependable paddling conditions throughout the summer, this river has something for paddlers of all experience levels.

The Vermilion River gets much of its flow from Vermilion Lake, so it rises and falls slowly. It is usually canoeable well into autumn. Most rapids are runnable if the U.S. Geological Survey gauge below the Vermilion Dam reads above four feet. The upper and middle rapids may be runnable below four feet if heavy rains have swollen the river's tributaries. Quiet sections of the river can be paddled below four feet.

Hazards include a dam and Class I-VI rapids. Know where portage locations are. Some of the portages are long, but all are well worn.



Much of this river is surrounded by forest.

## CONTACTS

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

**DNR NORTHEAST HEADQUARTERS**  
1201 East Highway 2  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744  
218-328-8780

**DNR PARKS & TRAILS TOWER AREA OFFICE**  
650 Hwy 169  
Tower, MN 55790  
Call 218-300-7841 for river questions or to report conditions and water levels.

**SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST**  
8901 Grand Ave. Place  
Duluth, MN 55808  
218-626-4300

## 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.
- 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 or on public land where dispersed camping is allowed. State, county and national forests allow dispersed camping, be sure to check regulations before your trip.
- 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.



## MEDICAL

**COOK HOSPITAL**  
10 SE Fifth Street  
Cook, MN 55723  
218-666-5945

**ESSENTIA HEALTH: VIRGINIA**  
901 9th St N Second Floor,  
Virginia, MN 55792  
218-741-3340

**IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 911**



## RECOMMENDED DAY TRIP

There are many trip options. Certain sections of this river should only be attempted by experienced paddlers.

- Put-in location: Twomile Creek Carry-in access  
Near river mile **37.8**
- Take-out location: Eightmile Creek Carry-in Access  
Near river mile **32.0**
- Length: **about 7** river miles

Enjoy a wide, easy stretch of river with no rapids. You'll be surrounded by forests and boglands. Start by paddling downstream on Twomile Creek, then go six miles downriver on the Vermilion River. To reach the takeout, paddle up Eightmile Creek (river left). Those looking for rapids can find them by extending this route up or downriver.

## 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)

## 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.

