

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

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

RIVER MILE

- 42.3** Vermilion Dam. Portage (R), 430 yds., river level gauge (L), 200 feet below dam.
- 41.6 (L)** Shively Falls carry-in access.
- 41.0 (L)** Watercraft campsite.
- 40.9** Shively Falls. Three steep boulder-bed pitches. Class III. Portage (L) 440 yds.
- 39.8** Lifter Falls. A sheer four-foot drop into a quiet pool. Souse holes form beneath the falls. Class II. Portage (R) 45 yds.
- 39.4** Everett Rapids. A Class I-II boulder-bed pitch. Portage (R) 440 yds. 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.
- 32.0 (L)** County Road 24 carry-in access.
- 32.0 (R)** Watercraft campsite.
- 31.-8-30.9** Table Rock Falls. Portage (R) 1900 yds. A 20-foot cascade with vertical ledges. Class IV-VI. The river then runs into a steep, narrow canyon and tumbles through continuous rapids for the next three-quarters of a mile. Class III-IV.
- 31.8 (R)** Watercraft campsite.
- 30.7 (L)** County Road 24. Watercraft campsite and carry-in access.
- 29.3** Belguim Fred's Rapids. A short, Class I boulder-bed pitch. Portage (L) 220 yds.
- 26.8** DeCaigny Rapids. A Class I boulder-bed pitch. Portage (R) 300 yds.
- 26.4** County Road 24 bridge at Buyck. Trailer access (R), above bridge. River level gauge (R).
- 21.2 (R)** Confluence with Pelican Rapids. Paddle 1/2 mile up to see rapids/waterfall.
- 19.5** Chipmunk Falls. A Class II boulder-bed pitch. Portage (L) 400 yds.
- 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.
- 16.2 (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** A long, rocky island marks the beginning of the 315 yd. portage (L) High Falls. **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. USFS area on left with picnic tables, fire rings, toilets and an observation railing along the falls.
- 3.9** National Forest Road 491 bridge. Carry-in access and rest area (L), above bridge.
- 3.8** The Chute. Portage (L) 308 yds. 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. Class III-V.
- 3.6 (R)** Watercraft campsite just downstream from The Chute.
- 1.9 (R)** Watercraft campsite.
- 0.8** Beginning of the "Gorge". See R.M. 0.4. Portage (L) 1300 yds.
- 0.9-0.5** Class II-III boulder-bed rapids.
- 0.4** The Gorge. 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. Class III-V. The Gorge is perhaps the most unusual and beautiful of the Vermilion's rapids. Expert paddlers only.
- 0.1** Watercraft campsite
- 0** The Vermilion widens as it joins Crane Lake. Trailer access on the southwest shore of the lake.

VERMILION RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL



m MINNESOTA
STATE PARKS AND TRAILS

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 lakes and the town of Buyck. With few accesses and numerous rapids, this river is best for experienced paddlers.

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 middle and lower rapids may be runnable below four feet if heavy rains have swollen the river's tributaries. Quiet sections of the river are runnable 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 NORTHEAST HEADQUARTERS
1201 East Highway 2
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218-328-8780

DNR INFORMATION CENTER
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040
888-646-6367
info.dnr@state.mn.us

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.
- 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 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. Plan to pack out your trash.
- 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

ELY BLOOMENSON COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
328 W Conan Street
Ely, MN 55731
218-365-3271

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 access near river mile **37.8**
- Take-out location: Eightmile Creek 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.

EXPLORE ON SHORE

Kabetogama State Forest

The river is nearly completely encompassed within this forest. You'll find several hiking trails, fishing spots, bird watching, picnic areas and camping opportunities. Check regulations for dispersed camping options.

mndnr.gov/kabetogama

Superior National Forest

Established in 1909, this forest is known for its boreal ecosystem, numerous clean lakes, and a colorful cultural history. Popular recreational activities include fishing, hunting, camping, canoeing, swimming and hiking. Check regulations for dispersed camping options.

fs.usda.gov/superior

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

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

More Information

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

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

