

BIG FORK RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL
MAP 2 - Highway 6 to Rainy River

- Carry-in Access

Trailer Access

Point of Interest

Toilet

Rest Area
- Historic Site

Campground

Watercraft Campsite

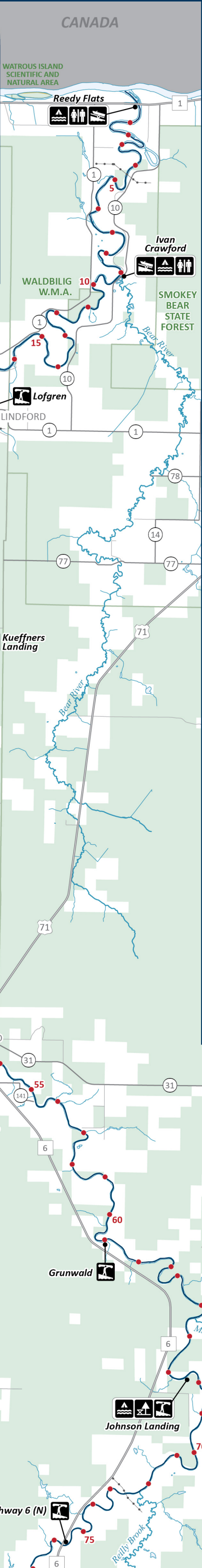
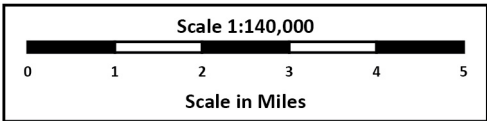
Drinking Water

River Level Gauge
- Public Lands

State Units

Rapids

River Miles



ROUTE DESCRIPTION

- R and L represent sides of the river while facing downstream.
- 0.0 (R) Confluence with Rainy River.
- 0.5 (L) Reedy Flats Landing. Trailer access, toilet and watercraft camping on the upstream side of the Highway 11 bridge.
- 4.5 Power line crossing.
- 9.0 (R) Ivan Crawford Landing trailer access. Just off County Road 10. Confluence with Bear River.
- 10.2-11.7 (L) Waldbilig Wildlife Management Area.
- 19.0 (R) County Road 1 bridge/Lofgren Landing carry-in access. Town of Lindford.
- 21.7 Powerline crossing.
- 30.4 (R) Kueffner's Landing. Carry-in access, toilets and watercraft campsite.
- 34.2 (R) Gowdy Landing carry-in access and watercraft campsite. Hendrickson Landing.
- 39.8-41.3 Class I rapids.
- 43.0 (R) Ben Linn Landing. A grassy clearing with a watercraft campground and carry-in access.
- 45.5 (L) Confluence with Ostby Creek.
- 47.5 (L) Sturgeon River Landing. Carry-in access and watercraft campground, just above the confluence with the Sturgeon River.
- 52.0-8 Rapids, class IV. Half-mile mile portage (L).
- 52.7 (R) Cody Landing trailer access.
- 52.6 (L) Big Falls City Park. Campground, rest area toilet and drinking water.
- 52.8 Railroad bridge with river level gauge.
- 53.0 (L) Big Falls East Landing. Trailer access. The beginning of a half-mile portage around Big Falls, which is a series of four falls dropping 40 feet in a quarter mile, rated Class IV. Cross the river via Highway 71 Bridge. Put in at trailer access west of Highway 71 below the falls on river right.
- 53.8 Location of old CCC Camp.
- 61.0 (L) Grunwald Landing carry-in access.
- 65.2 (R) Confluence with Macaffee Brook.
- 67.5 (L) Johnson Landing. Carry-in access. Rest area near shore and watercraft campsite.
- 68.5 R Confluence with Reilly Creek.
- 72.2 (R) Confluence with Reilly Brook.
- 72.6 Power line crossing.
- 75.8 (L) Highway 6 (N) carry-in access and bridge.

CONTINUED ON BIG FORK MAP 1

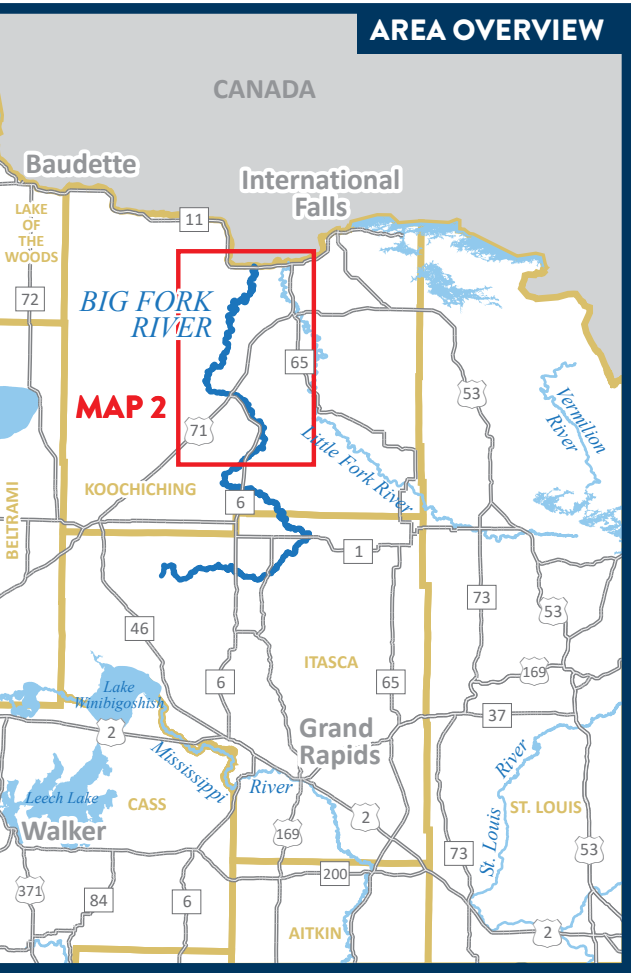
BIG FORK RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL



MAP 2 - HIGHWAY 6 TO RAINY RIVER



m MINNESOTA
STATE PARKS AND TRAILS



ABOUT THE WATER TRAIL

The Big Fork River flows north to the Rainy River. Along its path, scattered small farms break up a forest of pine, spruce, fir, cedar, aspen and birch. The towns of Bigfork and Big Falls are the only areas where you will encounter more development. Anglers will find excellent fishing for walleye, northern pike and muskie.

Most of the watershed was once covered by glacial Lake Agassiz. While most of the landscape is flat, the Big Fork drops 243 feet (1.5 feet per mile) from Dora Lake to the Rainy River. The river's water level usually peaks in late April and falls during the summer when the rapids may be impassable. Heavy summer or autumn rains can raise the river to runnable levels. Some rapids will be too rocky to run if the gauge at the Highway 38 bridge in Bigfork is below 4 feet.

Most of the rapids on the Big Fork River are Class I-II. Two stretches are more difficult and require great caution: Little American Falls (Class III-IV) and Big Falls (Class IV-VI). These falls must be portaged by all but the most experienced paddlers. All rapids can be bypassed, though brush may make some portages difficult.



Know the location of the rapids along your route.

CONTACTS

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

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

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.
- 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.
- Follow the rules for firewood. State forests allow you to gather dead wood for a fire, but state parks do not.

RECOMMENDED DAY TRIP

Johnson Landing to City of Big Falls

- Put-in location: Johnson Landing (carry-in)
River mile **67.5**
- Take-out location: Big Falls East Landing (trailer)
River mile **53.0**
- Length: **14.5** river miles

Follow the river's lazy twists and turns past wooded shoreline. You'll see a few farms and houses as you get closer to the city. Watch for bald eagles, herons and cranes along the way. The take-out is on river left before the Big Falls.

Plan for a full day's trip and expect to be on the river about 8 hours. For a shorter route, start or end at the Grunwald Landing.

EXPLORE ON SHORE

Pine Island and Koochiching State Forests

Massive stands of old-growth pine grow in these forests. Pine Island is the largest of Minnesota's 59 state forests. You'll find opportunities for boating, camping, hiking, snowshoeing, skiing and much more. mndnr.gov/stateforests

Myrtle Lake Peatland Scientific and Natural Area (SNA)

Established in 1991, this pristine SNA is also a National Natural Landmark. Bird watching, hiking and snowshoeing are allowed within this unique landscape.

mndnr.gov/sna

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

MEDICAL



RAINY LAKE MEDICAL CENTER
1400 US-71
International Falls, MN 56649
218-283-4481

BIG FORK VALLEY HOSPITAL
258 Pine Tree Dr.
Bigfork, MN 56628
218-743-3177

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 911

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.