



# MISSISSIPPI RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL



## MAP 10 - MINNEAPOLIS TO HASTINGS



**m** MINNESOTA  
STATE PARKS AND TRAILS

## ABOUT THE WATER TRAIL

This stretch of the river begins in the heart of the Twin Cities. The valley widens where the Minnesota River flows into the Mississippi. Spectacular bluffs line both sides of the river and sometimes rise more than 150 feet above it. The river's width ranges from one-tenth mile below Fort Snelling to two miles at Spring Lake. During fall and spring, the river is used by numerous migrating birds. Amid barge traffic and development, Pig's Eye Lake supports rookeries of egrets, great blue herons and black-crowned night herons. These birds can often be spotted in the shallow water or perched in trees.

Hazards include dams, snags, sweeps and boulders. Know which side to portage or lock through. Stay close to shore as you prepare to get out or enter a lock. Do not cross the river directly above dams. The current in this segment can be deceptively swift. Use caution when approaching shore. Motorboats and barges create large wakes that can swamp unsuspecting paddlers. The water is undrinkable due to sewage and industrial pollution. Eating fish caught along this section of the river is not recommended.



Explore scenic backwaters along this segment.

## 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.
- Stay off private property. Stop only at designated sites.
- Use designated toilet facilities or bury human waste away from the river.
- Follow the rules for firewood. Many areas do not allow collecting of dead wood.

## BARGE TRAFFIC SAFETY

- Avoid moving barges. They have blind areas directly in front and sides of barge.
- Stay clear of the stern of barges. They may suddenly turn on a burst of power and overturn small boats.
- Turn your bow into the wake of barges and boats.
- The sides of the navigation channel are marked with red (left) and green (right) buoys. Where possible, stay outside the channel.

## RECOMMENDED DAY TRIP

### Hidden Falls to Harriet Island

- Put-in location: 846.6
- Take-out location: 840.1
- Length: 6.5

View the Ford Dam as you look upriver from the Hidden Falls put-in site. You'll paddle past the Highway 5 Bridge with Historic Fort Snelling in the distance. This segment will also take you along Fort Snelling State Park. See the changing water color as you pass by the confluence of the Mississippi River and Minnesota River. Downtown St. Paul will come into view before your takeout at Harriet Island.

## EXPLORE ON SHORE

### Fort Snelling State Park River mile 845

Located in the heart of the Twin Cities, this park offers hiking and biking trails that link to an extensive regional trail system. You'll also find boat launches, a picnic area, restrooms and a swim beach close to where the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers meet within the park. Interpretive exhibits at the visitor center offer an introduction to the history and resources of the area. This is a day-use only park, there is no camping.

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

## 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)

## 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 REGION 3 HEADQUARTERS

St. Paul, MN 55106  
(651) 259-5748

### FORT SNELLING STATE PARK

101 Snelling Lake Road  
St. Paul, MN 55111  
(612) 279-3550

### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

111 E. Kellogg Blvd., Suite 105  
Saint Paul, MN 55101  
(651) 293-0200

### U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

St. Paul, MN  
(651) 290-5807

## MEDICAL

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.

