ROUTE DESCRIPTION
River miles 1,145 to 1,056 (89 miles)

(R) and (L) are right and left banks of the river when facing downstream. Red text indicates caution areas.

Continued on Map 3: Mississippi River State Water Trail

1140.6 (R) Jacobson Campground. Trailer access and drinking water.
1138.1 (R) Swan River confluence.
1137.6 (R) Jacobson Wayside Rest.
1137.6 MN Highway 200 bridge.
1128.2 (R) Willow Wood Campsite. River access only. Takeout downstream of campsite. Please be respectful of private property.
1122.9 (R) Pokagama Creek confluence.
1122.2 (L) Mr. Keto. Campsite. River access only. Riffles and rocks may be present during low flow conditions. Please be respectful of private property.
1121.3 (R) Verdon: Carry-in access and campsite.
1118 (L) Two River Springs confluence.
1117.9 Power line crossing.
1113.2 (L) Libby Brook confluence.
1111 (L) Lee Ferry: Carry-in access.
1109.5 (L) Libby Township: Campsite.
1105.5 (L) Sandy Lake Rec. Area: Trailer access, shelters, rest area, picnic area and campground. Managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
1101.4 (L) Scott’s Rapids: Campsite. Access by river only.
1096 (R) Wold’s Ferry Crossing: Trailer access.
1086.5 Co. Hwy 3 bridge.
1086.4 (R) Berglund County Park: Trailer access, campground, shelters, picnic area and drinking water.
1081.9 (L) Maydaye Oxbow.
1080 (L) Clark Logan Oxbow.
1078.5 (R) Willow River: Campsite. Access by river only.
1074.1 (R) Hwy 169: Trailer access. U.S. Hwy 169 bridge downstream.
1067.6 (R) Hassman: Campsite. Access by river only. Takeout is upstream of campsite.
1066.5 (L) Rice River confluence.
1064.4 (R) Aitkin Flood Diversion Channel: Use caution and follow the main channel. No portage.
1062.6 (L) Kimball: Carry-in access.
1062 Power line crossing.
1058 (L) Sissabagamah Creek confluence.
1057.1 (L) Ripple River confluence.
1054.1 Co. Rd 1 bridge.
1053.7 (L) Aitkin Campgrounds: Trailer access, campsgrounds, shelters, rest area.

Continued on Map 5: Mississippi River State Water Trail

Aitkin to Brainerd

MISSISSIPPI RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL
MAP 4 - Jacobson to Aitkin

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ABOUT THE WATER TRAIL

This section of the Mississippi River is influenced by glacial lakes Upham and Aitkin, which once covered most of the area. You'll find a flat landscape with meandering streams and many oxbows (u-shaped sections of abandoned river channel). The still waters of the oxbows are excellent for fish and other wildlife. You will also pass floodplain forests that offer food, shelter and habitat for muskrat, beaver, otters, turtles, herons, hawks, osprey, eagles and more. Much of the shoreline is privately managed for forest or agriculture with few houses due to the river’s tendency to flood.

Hazards include snags, downed trees and a diversion channel dam. At the Rice River confluence, a diversion channel carries water around the town of Aitkin during high flow. There is no portage route around this diversion channel dam.

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. State and national forests do allow dispersed camping. Be sure to check regulations before your trip.
- 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

Sandy Lake Recreation Area to Wold’s Ferry Crossing

- Put-in location: River mile 1,105.5
- Take-out location: River mile 1,096
- Length: 9.5 river miles

A fee is required to launch from the Sandy Lake Recreation Area. You’ll paddle approximately one mile from the launch to reach the Mississippi River. This is an easy section to paddle, with riffles during low water. Fish for catfish, walleye and smallmouth. Stop for a picnic at Scott’s Rapid Campsite if it is unoccupied.

EXPLORE ON SHORE

Sandy Lake Recreation Area

River mile 1,105.5

This recreation area is a part of the US Army Corps of Engineers-Mississippi Headwaters Project. The area offers camping (fee required), boat launches, swimming, picnicking, fishing and hiking. Be sure to visit displays about the river’s past in the museum at the north side of the dam. You’ll have to paddle approximately one mile up the Sandy River to reach the recreation area from the Mississippi River.

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.

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.

PROTECT THE RIVER

Your experience on the river depends on a healthy environment. As you explore the beauty of this waterway, do your best to protect it.

More Information

- mndnr.gov/watertrail
- River level reporting
- River conditions reporting
- Interactive water trail map
- Recommended routes
- River rapids definitions
- Virtual tours
- Search for outfitters at exploreminnesota.com

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