



ABOUT THE WATER TRAIL

This section of the river offers easy paddling, great fishing and many places to stop. The Mississippi River above Brainerd is often used by pleasure boaters and high powered fishing boats. The good water quality supports game fish such as walleye, northern, muskie, bass and panfish.

Near Brainerd, the river enters a defined valley. You'll notice a change from lowland hardwoods and tamaracks to red pine and mixed hardwood. The river also passes through French Rapids, a narrow channel with 100-foot banks. Just below this you'll find Rice Lake, an impoundment created by the Potlach Dam.

Hazards include dams. Be aware of their locations and know which side to portage.



A designated campsite at Crow Wing State Forest.



CONTACTS

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

DNR REGION 2 HEADQUARTERS
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
(218) 328-8980

CROW WING STATE PARK
3124 State Park Road
Brainerd, MN 56401
(218) 825-3075
mndnr.gov/crowwing

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.
- 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.

MEDICAL



RIVERWOOD HEALTHCARE CENTER
200 Bunker Hill Dr.
Aitkin, MN 56431
218-927-2121

CUYUNA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
320 E Main St.
Crosby, MN 56441
(218) 546-7000

ESSENTIA HEALTH ST. JOSEPH'S MEDICAL CENTER
523 N 3rd St.
Brainerd, MN 56401
(218) 829-2861

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 911

RECOMMENDED DAY TRIP

Highway 6 to Trommald

- Put-in location: River mile **1,030**
- Take-out location: River mile **1,018.3**
- Length: **11.7** river miles

Wind through hardwood forests on this wide section of the Mississippi River. The Pine River Water Trail will intersect the Mississippi midway through your paddle. This is an easy route with no rapids, though the current can be quite strong after a rain event. This trip typically takes about 4 hours of paddling. Boat ramps and ample parking can be found at both the put-in and take-out locations. The put-in and take-out are 9 miles apart by road.

EXPLORE ON SHORE

Crow Wing State Park River mile 997

Explore the park for hiking trails and historic sites along the river. You'll find a boat ramp one mile upstream from the confluence of the Mississippi and Crow Wing rivers. Camping (by reservation) is also available at the park.
mndnr.gov/crowwing

Paul Bunyan State Trail River mile 997

This trail travels over a hundred miles from Crow Wing State Park to Lake Bemidji State Park. It is the longest of Minnesota's state trails and the longest continuously paved rail-trail in the country.
mndnr.gov/paulbunyan

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.

MAP AREA OVERVIEW

