

Route Description

SOUTH BRANCH, ROOT RIVER

- 71.3 **Begin canoeable portion of the South Branch, Root River.**
- 70.8 **Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail bridge.**
- 70.1 (L) **Preston Access.** Carry-in landing. This portion of the South Branch through river mile 70.0 is a designated trout stream. County Road 12 bridge. City of Preston.
- 69.7 **County Road 17 bridge.**
- 69.3 **County Road 12 bridge.**
- 68.7 **Powerline crossing.**
- 68.5 (R) **Pooler City Park.** Shorefishing and rest area. Has limited access to the River. Confluence with Camp Creek, a designated trout stream.
- 68.4 **Highways 16/52 bridge.**
- 66.4 **Powerline crossing.**
- 64.7 **Harmony Preston Valley State Trail bridge.**
- 63.4 **Harmony Preston Valley State Trail bridge.** Rest area just off the trail.
- 63.1 (L) **Confluence with Watson Creek.**
- 62.3, 61.7, 61.6 **Bridges from private resort.**
- 61.2 **Root River State Trail bridge.**
- 60.4 **Root River State Trail bridge.**
- 58.8 (L) **Root River State Trail rest area.**
- 58.1 **Ox Trail Road bridge.**
- 56.9 (R) **Confluence with Duschee Creek.** A designated trout stream.
- 56.5 (R) **City Campground watercraft campsite.**
- 56.2 (R) **Lanesboro.** Carry-in access and shorefishing above the dam.
- 56.1 **Lanesboro Dam.** Portage left. Carry-in access on right in city campground. The dam was converted to a hydroelectric plant at the turn of the century. The area is now home to the Lost Lake State Game Refuge.
- 56.0 (R) **Sylvan Park watercraft campsite.** Just off the river on Lanesboro Park Pond.
- 55.9 **Root River State Trail bridge.**
- 55.8 **County Highway 8 bridge.** River level gauge.
- 55.7 **Pedestrian bridge.**
- 55.3 **Highway 250 bridge.**
- 55.2 **Root River State Trail bridge.** Outfitter off river, south of Highway 16.
- 53.2 **Confluence with the main branch of Root River.** Root River State Trail bridge.

Route Description RM 86.5 to 30

R and L represent sides of the river facing downstream.

NORTH BRANCH, ROOT RIVER

- North Branch of the Root River Miles
- 86.5 **County Road 2 bridge.**
- 86.4 (L) **Chatfield carry-in access.** City of Chatfield.
- 86.0 (L) **Confluence with Mill Creek.**
- 85.5 **Powerline crossing.**
- 84.1 **County Road 5 bridge.**
- 83.7 **Township 484/Lost Lane bridge.**
- 82.3 (R) **Confluence with the Middle Branch of the Root River.**
- 81.9 **Township 259/Juniper Road bridge.**
- 78.8 **Highway 52 bridge.**
- 78.7 (L) **Confluence with Day Creek.**
- 78.6 (R) **Parsley Bridge carry-in access.**
- 76.2 (L) **Confluence with Lynch Creek, a designated trout stream.**
- 75.6 (R) **Confluence with Rice Creek, a designated trout stream.**
- 73.6/4 (L) **Pilot Mound Campsites.**
- 70.5 **County Road 11 bridge.**
- 69.0 (L) **Confluence with Trout Run, a designated trout stream.**

- 65.3 (R) **Moen's bridge carry-in access.** County Road 21 bridge.
- 65.1 **River level gauge.**
- 64.7 (L) **Confluence with Money Creek.**
- 61.0 & 60.6 (R) **Whispering Pines Campsites.** Picnic tables and toilets.
- 59.7 (R) **Brightsedale Management Unit, Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest.** At 56.6 Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center Visitor Center. Powerline crossing.
- 58.2 (L) **Confluence with Torkelson Creek, a designated trout stream.**
- 56.1/55.9 (L) **Power Plant Campsites.** DNR facilities with separate landings, picnic tables and toilets.
- 54.5 **Highway 250 bridge.**

MAIN BRANCH, ROOT RIVER

- 53.2 **Root River State Trail bridge.**
- 53.2 (R) **Confluence with South Branch of the Root River.**
- 52.7 **Powerline crossing.**
- 52.5 (R) **Highway 16 access.** Carry-in access with toilet.
- 50.1 **County Road 36 bridge.** City of Whalan.
- 49.9 (R) **Gribben Valley Management Unit, Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest.** Outfitter located river left.
- 49.9 **CAUTION: Underwater hazard.** Old bridge debris.
- 49.4(R) **Confluence with Gribben Creek, a designated trout stream.**
- 49.5(L) **Whalan carry-in access.** Note: parking is 500' away.
- 48.0(L) **Confluence with Lobland Valley Creek.**
- 46.4(R) **Confluence with Diamond Creek.**

- 44.9(L) **Confluence with Raaen Creek.**
- 44.8(R) **Raaen Creek watercraft campsites.** Two sites with picnic tables and a toilet in a wooded, river bottom setting.
- 42.6 **Confluence with Big Springs Creek, a designated trout stream.**
- 42.0 **Former township road bridge.**
- 39.2 **Submerged dam.** Use caution when navigating over this structure.
- 39.0 **Outfitter off river.**
- 38.9 (R) **Peterson carry-in access.** Toilet. County Road 25 bridge. City of Peterson.
- 38.0 (L) **North Peterson Management Unit, Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest.**
- 36.7 **Highway 16 bridge.**
- 33.9 **Submerged dam.** Use caution when navigating over this structure.
- 33.8 (L) **Rushford carry-in access.**
- 33.5 **State Highway 16 bridge.**
- 33.4 (L) **City of Rushford.**
- 33.2 (L) **Confluence with Rush Creek, a designated trout stream.**
- 32.3 **Outfitter off river.**
- 29.7 (R) **Confluence with Ferndale Creek.**

END OF MAP 1 - CONTINUE ON TO MAP 2, RUSHFORD TO MISSISSIPPI RIVER

ROOT RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL



MAP 1 - CHATFIELD TO RUSHFORD



m MINNESOTA
STATE PARKS AND TRAILS

ABOUT THE ROOT RIVER WATER TRAIL

The Root River maintains a timelessness as it represents some of the finest scenic and historic qualities which characterize southeastern Minnesota. Formed of two branches in the west, the North and the Middle, the Root River winds past towering bluffs topped with oak and hickory. Joined above Whalan by the South Branch, a tributary which flows from Mystery Cave, the river continues its way past bluffs and outcrops until Rushford.

Though the watershed has many spring-fed, clear water tributaries, including the South Branch, the Root River is somewhat cloudy due to erosive soil types in the watershed. The Root River's superlative scenery and characteristics make it suitable for many types of recreation.

Several towns along the Root River offer historic sites, services and hospitality to river users. Other pastime favorites along the river are bird watching, nature observation, bicycling along the Root River State Trail, and fishing.



An old power station is a fun sight along the river.

CONTACTS

DNR CENTRAL REGION HEADQUARTERS
1200 Warner Rd.
St. Paul, MN 55106
651-259-5800

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.

MEDICAL



OLMSTED MEDICAL CENTER
1650 Fourth Street SE
Rochester, MN 55904
507-529-6600

MAYO CLINIC HEALTH SYSTEM
1000 1st Dr NW
Austin, MN 55912
507-433-7351

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 911

AREA OVERVIEW



RECOMMENDED DAY TRIP

Moen's Bridge to Whalan

- Put-in location: River mile **65.3**
- Take-out location: River mile **49.5**
- Length: **15.8** river miles

This stretch takes you through state forest, passes by the Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center and finishes off in the quaint town of Whalan.

Parsley Bridge to Moen's Bridge

- Put-in location: River mile **78.6**
- Take-out location: River mile **65.3**
- Length: **13.3** river miles

This beautiful, easy stretch takes you through a mix of forest and pasture land.

EXPLORE ON SHORE

Towns along the way

Chatfield, Preston, Lanesboro, Whalan, Peterson and Rushford all have great amenities, including food stops, shopping boutiques, overnight lodging and museums. Preston is also home to the National Trout Center.

Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center

Eagle Bluff offers a wide variety of recreation opportunities, with 9 miles of hiking trails, a visitor center, numerous geocaches and bird habitat "hot spots".

<https://eaglebluffmn.org/>

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.