### Route Description of the Vermilion River

**NOTE:** (R) and (L) represent right and left banks of the river when facing downstream.

#### RIVER MILE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mileage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>Portage left, 3900 yds. Beginning of the &quot;Goose&quot; and R.M. 0.9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>Class II-III boulder-bed rapids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.99.5</td>
<td>The Gooseneck: The river bends sharply to the left, tumbling over two steep ledges and enters a narrow canyon with sheer 50-foot walls. Quick rescue in the canyon is nearly impossible. Class III-V. The Gooseneck is perhaps the most unusual and beautiful of the Vermilion’s rapids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Bourassa’s Post, an historic site and rest area, on left. The area is named for René Bourassa, a fur trader who built a trading post near the mouth of the river in 1736.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>The Vermilion widens as it joins Crane Lake. There is a trailer access on the southeast shore of the lake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>No. 1 Flap Falls, Class III. Portage right, 15 yds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Co. Rd. 24 bridge over Pelican. Trail access at river left, but the landing at the County Road 24 bridge over the creek right also provides access to the Vermilion. DNR watercraft campsites on right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>No. 2 Flap Falls, Class III. Portage left, 640 yds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Watercraft campsite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Lake Vermilion Dam bridge. Portage right, 400 yds. USGS river level gauge on left, 200 feet below dam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Watercraft campsite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Shoelfull Falls, three steep boulder-bed pitches. Class III. Portage left, 440 yds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Lower Shoelfull Falls, a short nine-foot drop into a space pool. Several holes form beneath the falls. Class II. Portage right, 45 yds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Everett Rapids, a Class II boulder-bed pitch. Portage right, 150 yds. The river then enters the Chute of Lakes, seven miles of wide, still water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>Undeveloped campsite with fire ring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>The Chute of Lakes. Portage left, 990 yds. level gauge on right.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Diagram

- **Carry-in Access**
- **Trailer Access**
- **Rapids**
- **Watercraft Campsite**
- **Carry-in Access**
- **Level Gauge**
- **Outflank**
- **Designated Public Land**

- **A STATE WATER TRAIL GUIDE TO THE VERMILION RIVER**

### Map

- The Vermilion river map includes markers for various locations such as Carry-in Access, Trailer Access, Rapids, Watercraft Campsite, and Carry-in Access. The river runs through several natural features and landmarks, providing a detailed view of the river's course and its surroundings. 

### Notes

- The map highlights the Vermilion’s unique features, including its natural beauty, historical sites, and geological formations.

### Additional Information

- The Vermilion river is a popular destination for water sports enthusiasts, offering a variety of rapids and calm sections for different skill levels. 

- The river is known for its scenic beauty, with waterfalls, islands, and forested areas offering a serene environment for those who wish to experience the river’s natural wonders.

- Safety precautions are important when navigating the Vermilion, given its varying levels of difficulty and the presence of substantial hazards. 

- Visitors are encouraged to heed the guidelines provided by local authorities and watercraft operators to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience on the river.

- The map and route description are intended for use by experienced water enthusiasts and should not be used for inexperienced or unprepared individuals.
The Vermilion River

The Vermilion River, developed as a principal star trade route by the French in the 1700s, was part of a system that linked Canada, Lake Superior and the Mississippi River valley. The area was the scene of fierce competition between British and American fur companies. Posts were established on Vermilion and Crane Lake.

News of gold in 1865 spurred some of the best-known persons in state politics and business to organize companies such as the Mutual Protection Gold Mining Company of Minnesota, the Vermilion Falls Gold Mining Company and the Minnesota Gold Mining Company, of which Henry H. Sibley was president.

Gold seekers staked out claims, sunk shafts and tunneled into hillsides in a nearly fruitless search for gold-laden veins of quartz. Iron mining, a more productive venture, began in the 1880s. The last shipment of iron ore was mined in 1967.

Logging prospered in the early 1900s. The Virginia and Rainy Lake Company, touted as “the largest, most modern and complete lumber plant in the world,” was established at Virginia in 1908. The mill covered one square mile and at its peak produced 300 million board feet of lumber in a year as 3,000 men worked year-round cutting timber. Company railroads reached to the Canadian border. The company saved its last log in 1929.

The bedrock of the Vermilion watershed consists of a variety of lower Precambrian igneous and metamorphic rocks, including biotite schist and granite. Glacial drift is thin. Outcrops are common. Since the Vermilion receives much of its flow from Vermilion Lake, the river rises and falls slowly, usually remaining canoeable well into autumn.

The middle and lower rapids of the Vermilion may be runnable below four feet of heavy rains have swollen the river’s tributaries. Quiet sections of the river are runnable well below four feet. A gauge is maintained on the Highway 24 bridge at river mile 24.4.

Wildlife

Timber wolves, moose, black bears, beavers, otters, bald eagles and osprey are occasionally sighted. White-tailed deer are common.

Fishing

Smallmouth bass, walleyes, northern pike and rock bass are common. Muskies and crappies have been reported. Water quality is good for all recreation, although not drinkable without treatment.

Planning A Safe River Trip

A successful river trip is safe. To enjoy a safe journey, you should be prepared by doing the following:

- Wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device that states law requires be on board the boat for each person.
- Bring a first aid kit that includes waterproof matches.
- Bring an extra paddle in your canoe.
- Be careful of obstructions in the river, such as overhanging and dead trees in the water.
- You must pack out all trash.
- Leave only footprints; take only photographs!

Water levels can speed or slow you down. You can get information about water levels from the regional DNR office, or check the DNR website, or the DNR Information Center. Remember that much of the shorelands are privately owned. Respect and protect the water and shorelands.

Canoeing on Large Rivers

The wide variety of waters can provide an equally wide variety of hazards to canoeists. Although the Vermilion is often very placid, the current can be quick and powerful when the river is near or at flood stage. But most dangers can be anticipated and avoided. Start your trip with the proper safety equipment. Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices (PFDs) should be worn at all times.

The wind can often be deceiving. Waves on open stretches can easily flip or flip an open canoe. Hypothermia, a rapid loss of body heat, has killed many people who have swamped or tipped.

Sustainable Ecosystems

Outdoor recreation is dependent on a healthy and attractive natural environment. Sustainable outdoor recreation enables people to enjoy the outdoors without negative impacts on the environment.

Communities working together can improve water resources by promoting environmentally sensitive land use practices along rivers and throughout watersheds. Natural shoreline buffers improve water quality by filtering out pollutants and sediments. Healthy and diverse native shoreline plant communities are attractive and provide important shoreline habitat for birds and wildlife.

• Bring drinking water. It is only available at a limited number of rest areas. Drinking river water is not recommended, but if you do it must be treated.
• Respect private property. Stay 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.

Rating Whitewater

Rivers and rapids are rated according to the International Scale of River Difficulty. Ratings are estimates based on observations at low or moderate water levels or on secondhand reports.

CLASS I Easy rapids with small waves and few obstacles.
CLASS II Rapids with waves up to three feet high. Some maneuvering is required.
CLASS III Difficult rapids with high, irregular waves capable of swamping an open canoe. Narrow chutes may require extensive maneuvering. Usually considered the limit for an experienced paddler in an open canoe.
CLASS IV Long, turbulent rapids with high, irregular waves, constricted passages, and blind drops. Decked canoes and kayaks only; open canoes should be portaged.
CLASS V Long, violent rapids with complex routes and steep drops or waterfalls. Hazard to life in the event of a mishap. Runnable only by experts in decked boats.
CLASS VI Cannot be attempted without great risk to life.

Rest Areas and Camping Sites

• Public rest areas are available along the route to rest, picnic and explore.
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