

**GV  
776  
.18  
159  
2000**

# **Iowa Canoe Guide**



**Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Wallace State Office Building  
900 E. Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034  
<http://www.state.ia.us/parks/canoe/canoegui.htm>**

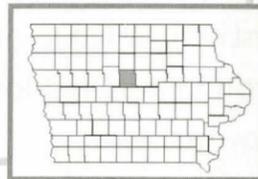


## BOONE RIVER

### Webster City to the Des Moines River

THE BOONE RIVER HAS ITS SOURCE in Hancock County and zigzags nearly 100 miles through Wright and Hamilton counties before emptying into the Des Moines River north of Stratford.

THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES has designated the 26-mile stretch from Webster City to its confluence with the Des Moines River as a Protected Water Area because of its outstanding scenic and natural qualities. Throughout this stretch, the stream bed gradient becomes increasingly steeper and cuts through a deep, heavily-



wooded valley. The frequent riffle-pool areas provide excellent fishing for small-mouth bass and channel catfish. Walleye and northern pike are periodically caught and an occasional flathead catfish is taken from the deep pools associated with outside bends in the river.

SEVERAL MILLS WERE BUILT on the Boone River during the mid-1800s and give this stretch an intriguing historical background. One mill was located near Bever Bridge and was called the Bone's Mill. This mill, built in 1854, had a colorful

history, including its continual battle with ice and flood waters, its important business function, a dash of romance, an unsolved murder and the thunderous explosion which ended its existence.

TUNNEL MILL ACCESS, LOCATED ABOUT 16 miles downstream of Webster City, is at the site of the mill built by Robert Watson in the mid-1800s. The 400-foot tunnel was built to bypass a sweeping horseshoe curve, thus increasing the natural current by a steeper fall to the turbine. Remains of the dam can still be seen on the north side of the ridge.

BELLS MILL PARK IS THE SITE of a mill built in 1853 by Methodist preacher David Eckerson, which found its way to the Bell family. In 1888, flood waters swept away the dam, stopping the wheels of the mill. Mr. and Mrs. Jasper Bell donated the land for the present park as a memorial to pioneers who settled this area.

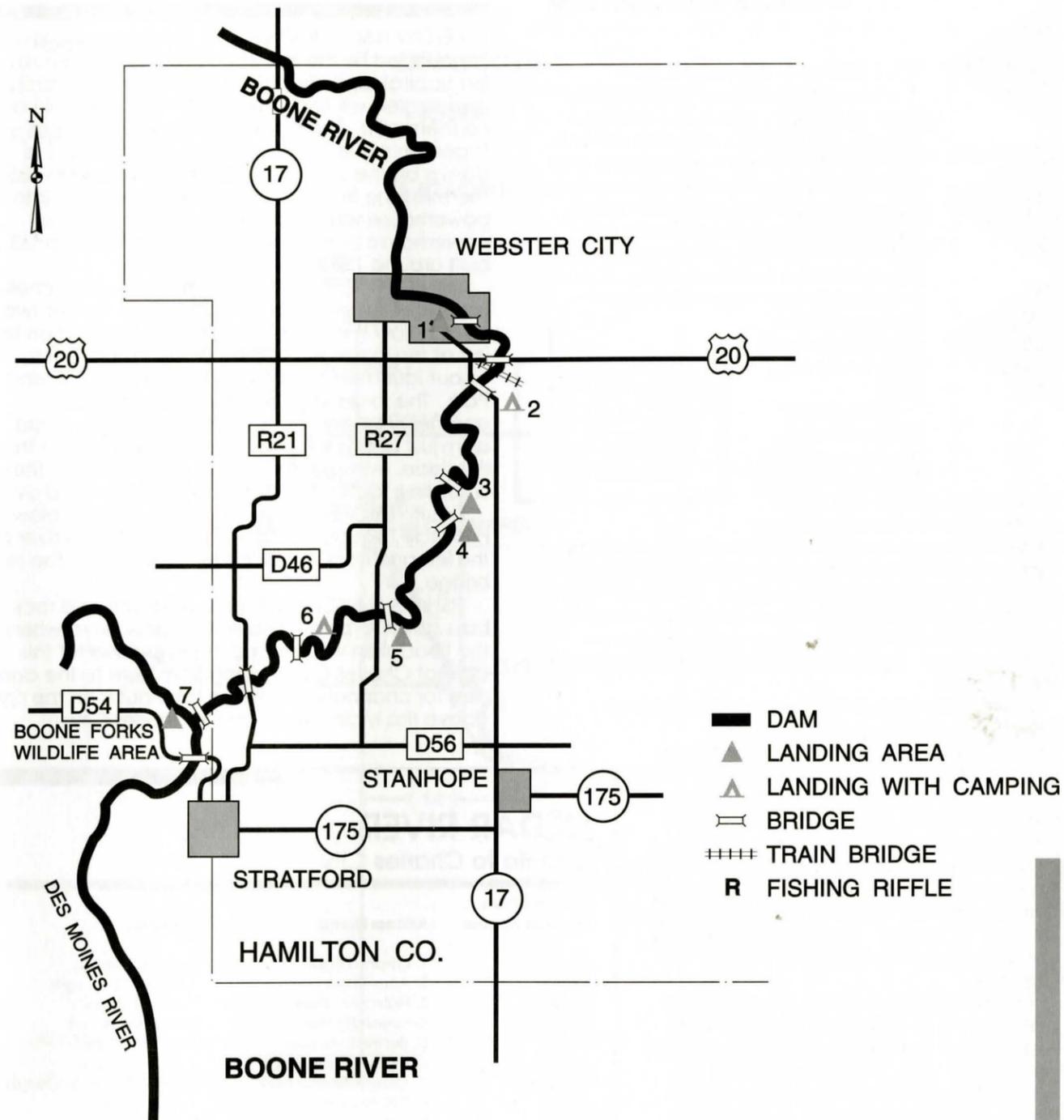
THE SECOND BRIDGE DOWNSTREAM from Bells Mill is Vegors Bridge. High on a scenic hill to the north and west is Vegors Cemetery, a historic spot of early Indian and white burial.

CANOEISTS CAN END THEIR TRIP on the Boone, a short distance above the confluence with the Des Moines River, at the Boone Forks Wildlife Management Area.

## BOONE RIVER

### Webster City to the Des Moines River

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Riverside Park	Webster City
4.6 miles	2. Briggs Woods Park	2 mi S Webster City
3.5 miles	3. Albrights Canoe Access	3 mi S Webster City
2 miles	4. Bever Bridge	4mi S Webster City
7.6 miles	5. Tunnel Mill	7 mi S Webster City
4.9 miles	6. Bells Mill Park	5 mi NE Stratford
5.2 miles	7. Boone Forks Wildlife Area	2 mi N Stratford



## CEDAR RIVER

### Otranto to Charles City

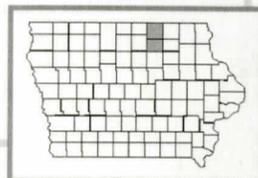
**T**HE CEDAR RIVER FLOWS from Minnesota into Iowa near the little town of Otranto. Here, the stream is already the largest canoeing water in northeast Iowa and it gets bigger and better on its long trip through the state. This portion of the Cedar provides a wonderfully scenic experience as it carves its way through Mitchell and Floyd counties to Charles City. The river is wide and tree-lined in most places and is a relaxing tonic for both body and soul.

**FISHING ON THIS RIVER** segment is excellent. Smallmouth bass,

rock bass, walleye and northern pike are found in the upper portion. Channel catfish are found closer to Charles City. Many of the listed canoe access points also provide good shore fishing access. **THE RIVER HAS NO dangerous rapids**, but users should be aware of occasional fallen trees that can easily flip the unwary canoeist. Portage around the Otranto dam on the left bank.

**FROM OTRANTO**, the stream-bed consists of limestone boulders and rubble. The stream is the narrowest at this point in the trip and riffles occasionally requiring canoeists to walk the canoe. The smallmouth and rock bass fishing in this segment is the finest on the Cedar. Special catch-and-release regulations apply to all smallmouth caught on the river between Otranto and the Highway T26 bridge south of St. Ansgar. Anglers should check current regulations before fishing this segment.

**DOWNSTREAM**, there is an old power dam, just above Highway 105 west of St. Ansgar, that can be run through a breach on the right side. Deer Creek enters the river on the right bank and Turtle Creek on the left bank just below the Highway 105 bridge. The St. Ansgar Dam is about two miles below the bridge and can be portaged on the left bank.



**BELOW HALVORSON PARK**, the river slows as it is impounded by the Interstate Dam at Mitchell. The fish habitat becomes more lake-like in this vicinity and anglers will find largemouth bass, crappie and northern pike. The dam at Mitchell can be portaged on the left bank. The powerhouse at the dam is on the site of an early flour mill built in 1856. The millstone from this old mill has been built into the powerhouse wall, and the keystone of the powerhouse is from the old Paragon Woolen Mill built around 1865.

**THE RIVER SEGMENT** below the dam at Mitchell has excellent smallmouth bass fishing. About two miles below the dam is Iron Springs, located on the left at the base of a heavily timbered bluff. It is about four miles from the springs to Osage Spring Park. The large enclosed spring in the park is another highlight of this segment. The low-head dam just below the park can be portaged on the right side. About three miles below the park, there is a floating footbridge that can be easily lifted over.

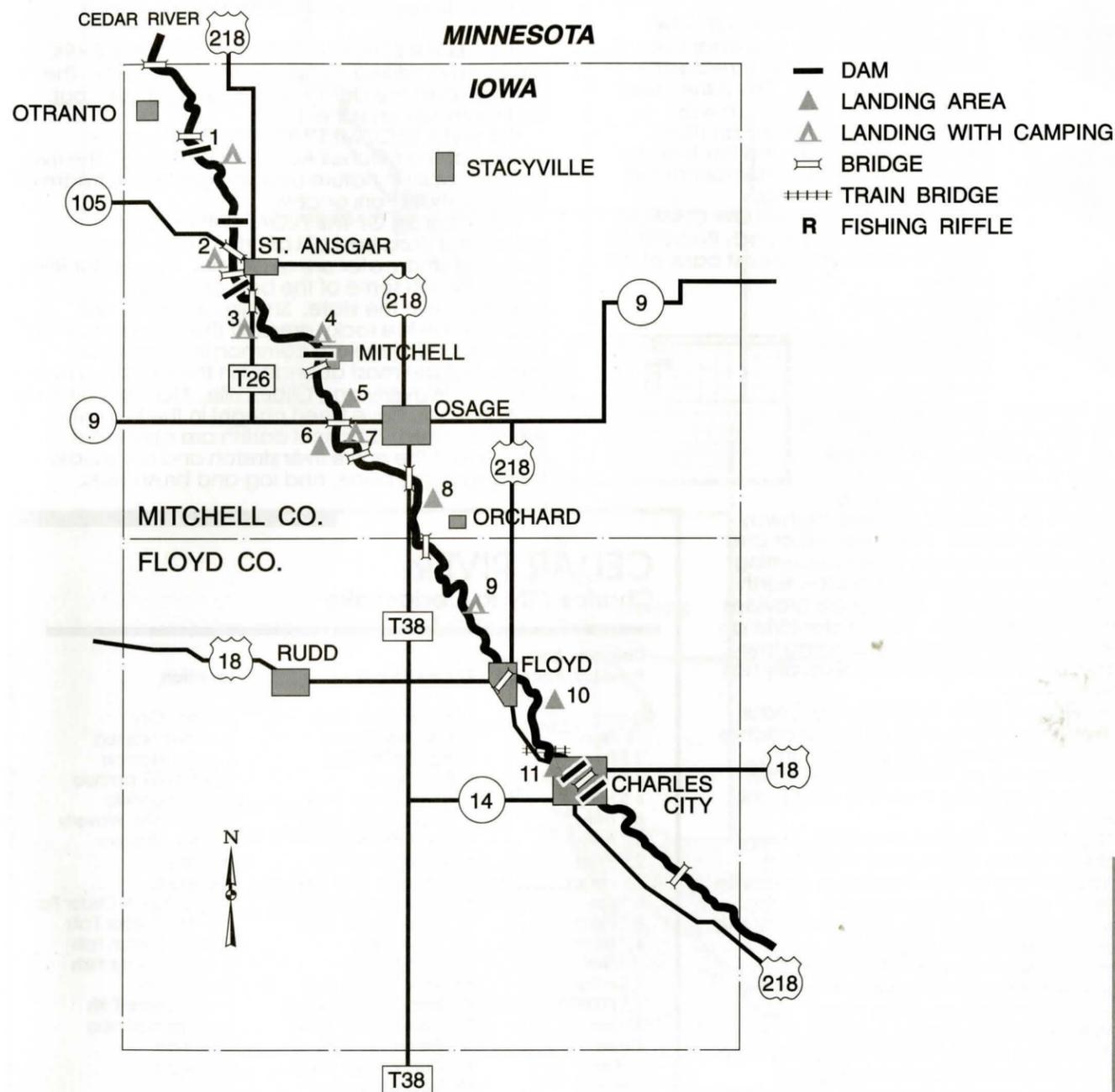
**THE RIVER DEEPENS** and picks up speed below the Highway T38 bridge. Spring Creek joins the river on the left and Rock Creek on the right before the next bridge.

**FISHING IS EXCELLENT** for smallmouth and rock bass down to about two miles below Floyd where the floodplain widens and the river slows for the dam at Charles City. Fishing from here to the dam is best for channel catfish. The take-out is on the right above the Main Street Dam in Charles City.

## CEDAR RIVER

### Otranto to Charles City

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Otranto Park	E edge Otranto
6 miles	2. Acorn Park	1 mi NW St. Ansgar
2 miles	3. Halvorson Park	1 mi S St. Ansgar
5 miles	4. Interstate Park	W edge Mitchell
1 mile	5. Bennett Access	1 mi SE Mitchell
3 miles	6. Highway #9 Bridge	1 mi W. Osage
1 mile	7. Osage Spring Park	1 mi W, 1/2 mi S. Osage
3 miles	8. T38 Access	1 mi S. Osage
9 miles	9. Idlewild Access	2 mi N Floyd
4 miles	10. Rotary Access	2 mi E, 1 mi S, 1 mi W. Floyd
6 miles	11. Cedar River Dock	Charles City



## CEDAR RIVER

### Charles City to LaPorte City

THE CEDAR RIVER WINDS ITS WAY from Charles City to Cedar Lake, a 200-acre impoundment created by the dam at Nashua. This is the lower segment of the river which was named *Moshkwahwakwah* (Red Cedar) by the Sauk and Fox Indians because of the large number of red cedar trees in the area.

THE FIRST ACCESS BELOW CHARLES CITY is the Howard Woods Recreation Area, located on the east bank of the Nashua Impoundment. The dam at Nashua can be portaged on the east bank. Just

past the dam, the Little Cedar River enters on the east side.

AS YOU APPROACH BREMER COUNTY, the Cedar's stream bottom becomes more sandy in nature as it closely parallels Highway 218. The floodplain becomes wider and flatter, with backwater areas becoming more prevalent approaching the North Cedar Park access. This access provides camping and water. The Cedar forks a mile below the access, and during low-water flows, the east channel usually has the best flow.

AT CEDAR BEND ACCESS, the Cedar makes two sharp bends as it approaches the dam at Waverly. To portage this dam, take out on the west bank, cross Highway 3 and put in on the west bank below the dam.

THE CEDAR, BELOW WAVERLY, is very rocky in nature with a short stretch of sandy bottom before it reaches Janesville where it again becomes rocky. As the Cedar approaches the confluence of the West Fork and Shell Rock rivers, it becomes sandy with gravel bars. Indian tribes gathered at Turkey Foot Forks, the area where the three rivers meet.

WASHINGTON UNION ACCESS is located immediately below the junction of the West Fork and Cedar rivers. The Cedar becomes much larger at this point as it flows toward the Cedar Falls/Waterloo area.

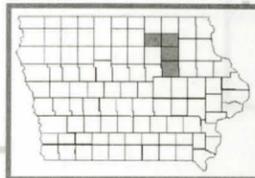
THE DAM AT CEDAR FALLS is best portaged by taking out on the east bank at Island Park, crossing Highway 218 and putting in below the dam in Tourists Park. The Cedar River, through Cedar Falls and

Waterloo, is very rocky in nature as the old names for these towns, Sturgis Falls and Prairie Rapids, indicate.

THE CEDAR BELOW GEORGE WYTH STATE PARK has been modified by flood control projects. The portage past the dam in Waterloo is difficult, but can be made on either bank.

THE RIVER BECOMES MORE NATURAL again starting at the Mitchell Access in Waterloo. The river remains rocky in nature until you get downstream of the Gilbertville Park access.

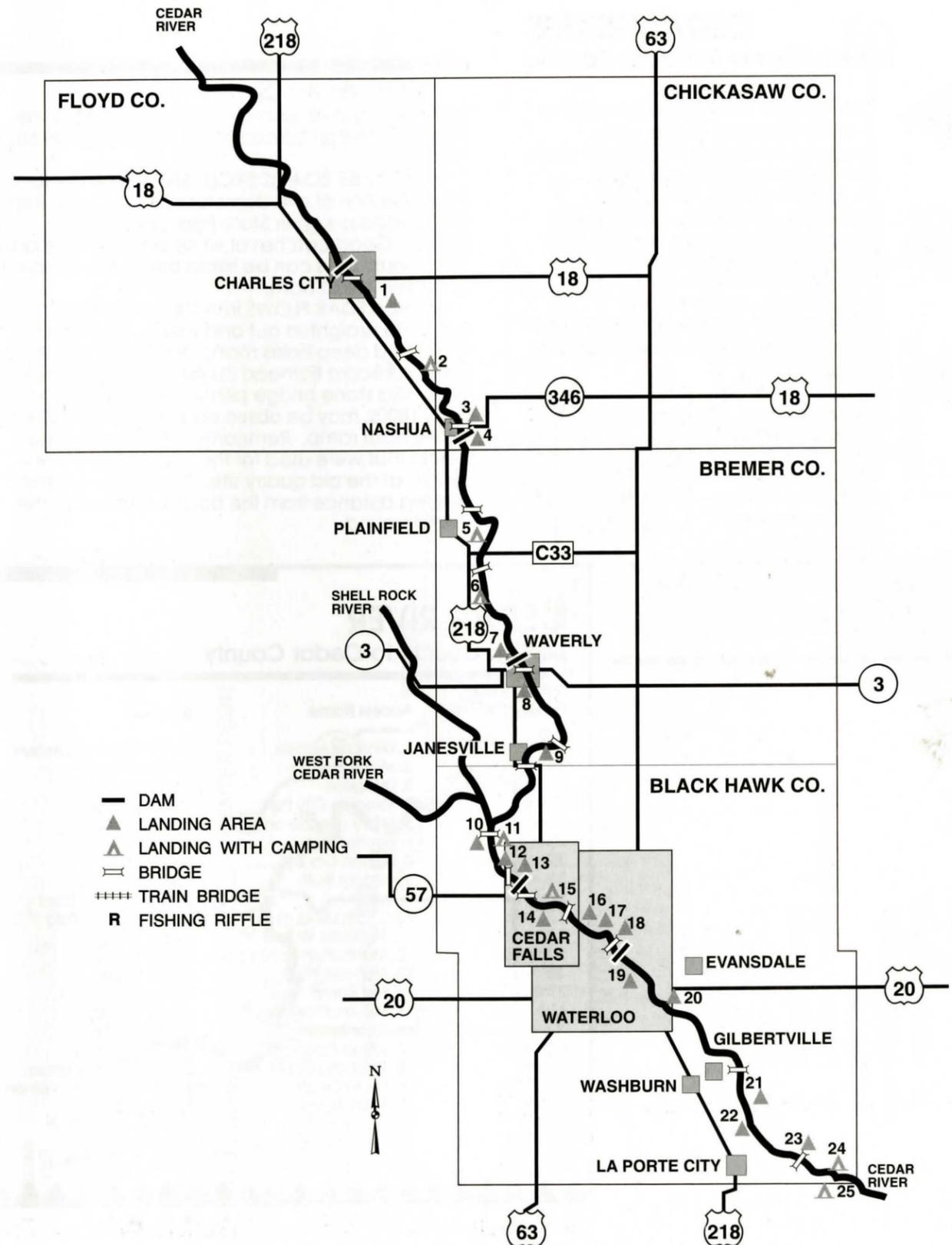
THIS SECTION OF THE FLOAT TRIP ends at McFarlane Park, east of LaPorte City, where camping and water are available. The Cedar River is blessed with some of the best gamefish populations in the state. Smallmouth bass are abundant in the rocky areas of the river and below the dams. Walleye are common in these same areas, but are most abundant in the stretch of river between Waverly and Gilbertville. Northern pike, up to 20 pounds, have been caught in the Waverly-Waterloo area. Channel catfish are abundant throughout the entire river stretch and are usually found in deep pools, and log and brush piles.



## CEDAR RIVER

### Charles City to Cedar Lake

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Brantington Park	Charles City
10 miles	2. Howard Woods	2 mi NW Nashua
2.5 miles	3. Nashua Access	E edge Nashua
6.1 miles	4. Pearl Rock	2-1/2 mi SE Nashua
6.5 miles	5. North Cedar Park	1 mi E Plainfield
8.3 miles	6. Cedar Bend Park	1-1/2 mi NW Waverly
4.2 miles	7. Three Rivers Park	N edge Waverly
2.4 miles	8. Brookwood Park	Waverly
10.1 miles	9. Janesville City Park	Janesville
4 miles	10. Washington Union Access	4 mi N, 2 mi W Cedar Falls
3.9 miles	11. Black Hawk Park	2 mi NW Cedar Falls
4.7 miles	12. Island Park	N edge Cedar Falls
.5 miles	13. Tourists Park	N edge Cedar Falls
1.5 miles	14. Washington Park	Cedar Falls
1.8 miles	15. George Wyth State Park	1 mi E Cedar Falls
3 miles	16. Cedar Bend Park	N edge Waterloo
1 mile	17. Exchange Park	Waterloo
.7 miles	18. Cedar River Park	Waterloo
3 miles	19. Mitchell Access	Waterloo
5.5 miles	20. Case Beer Heights	1/2 mi SE Evansdale
4.5 miles	21. Gilbertville Park	S edge Gilbertville
3.5 miles	22. Cedar River Area	2 mi S Washburn
3.8 miles	23. Brandon Pond Access	2 mi NE LaPorte City
2.6 miles	24. Cedar River Access	2 mi E LaPorte City
1.2 miles	25. McFarlane Park	2-1/2 mi E LaPorte City



## CEDAR RIVER

### Benton County to Cedar County

THE CEDAR RIVER FLOWS through a valley of mixed woods and farmland averaging 1.5 miles in width with sporadic outcroppings of 20- to 30-foot high rock bluffs. Picnicking, canoeing, boating, camping, sight-seeing, hunting and fishing are some of the many recreational activities enjoyed by people who visit the Cedar.

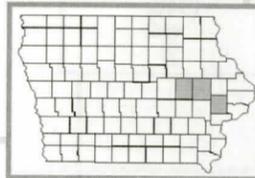
NUMEROUS PUBLIC ACCESS AREAS make the stretch in Benton County especially enjoyable. A rocky stretch of river immediately below the Winegar-Tobin Area in northern Benton County yields good

catches of smallmouth bass, rock bass and walleye. Another favored spot for walleye and smallmouth bass anglers is the area from Benton County to Wildcat

Bluff. During their spawning season in early June, smallmouths can be caught at the mouths of feeder streams.

MOBILITY BY BOAT IS EXCELLENT on the Cedar with the exception of two dams located in Cedar Rapids and Palisades-Kepler State Park below Cedar Rapids. Good catches of white bass, walleye and smallmouth bass can be taken below the remnants of this low-head dam.

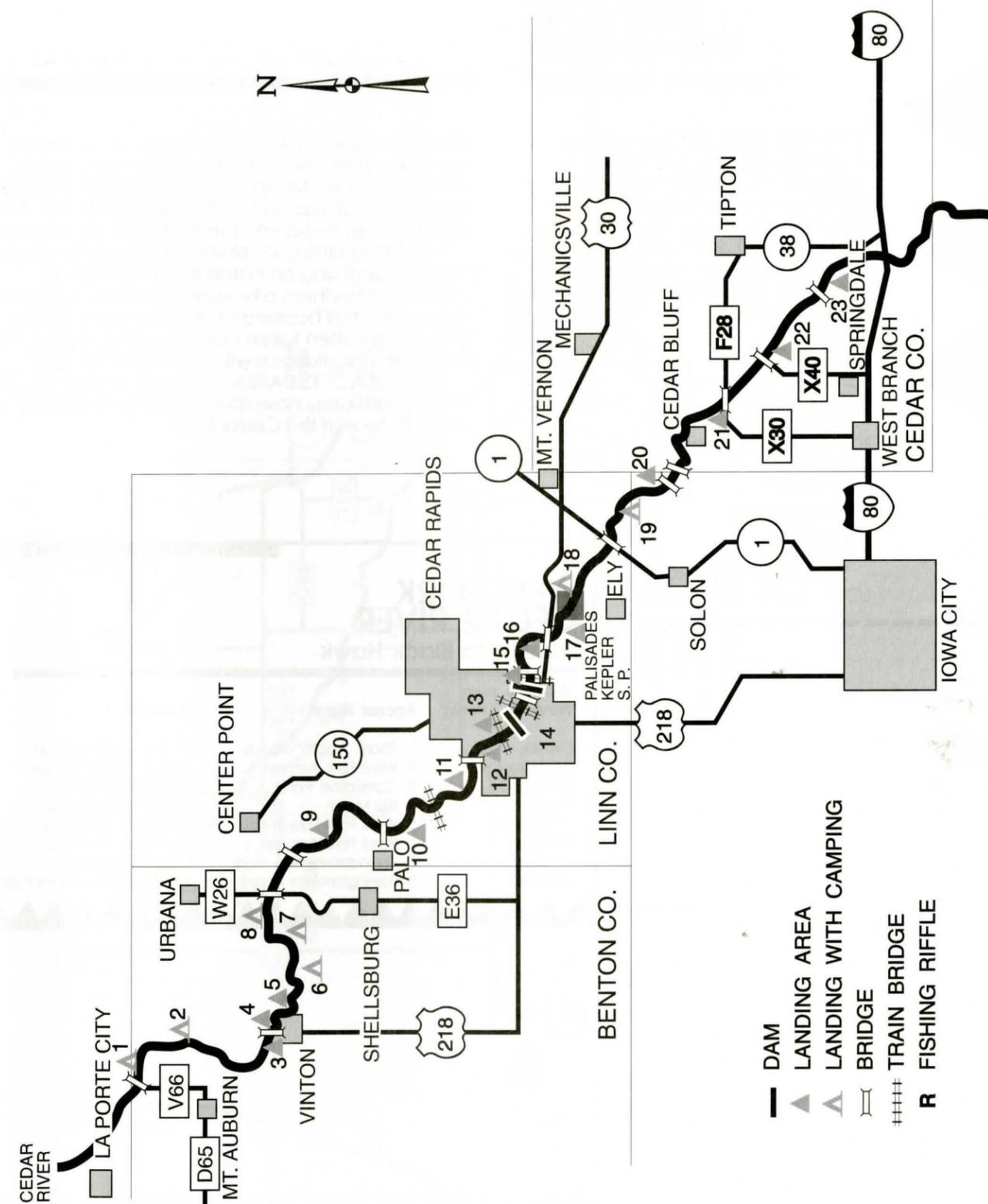
AS THE CEDAR FLOWS into Cedar County, it begins to straighten out and widen. Numerous snags and deep holes make this area a catfishing haven. Record flathead catfish are taken here each year. Old stone bridge pilings, dating back to the early 1800s, may be observed just above the Cedar Valley boat ramp. Remnants of the huge stone blocks that were used for the bridge can be observed at the old quarry site. The quarry is within walking distance from the boat ramp next to the campground.



## CEDAR RIVER

### Benton County to Cedar County

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
1.5 miles	1. Winegar Access	2 mi E, 2 mi N Mt. Auburn
4 miles	2. Minne Estema	6 mi N Vinton
11.3 miles	3. Dudgeon	1 mi N Vinton
.7 mile	4. Riverside City Park	E edge Vinton
.9 mile	5. Milroy (Canoe only)	E edge Vinton
2.6 miles	6. Hoefle-Dulin	2 mi E Vinton
3.7 miles	7. Benton City-Fry	5 mi E Vinton
3.6 miles	8. Wildcat Bluff	2.5 mi S Urbana
5 miles	9. Lewis	2 mi SW Center Point
9.75 miles	10. Chain Lakes	1 mi S, 1/2 mi E Palo
8.25 miles	11. Seminole Valley	Cedar Rapids
2.75 miles	12. Manhattan-Robins Lake	Cedar Rapids
.25 mile	13. Mohawk Park	Cedar Rapids
2 miles	14. First Ramp	Cedar Rapids
4.25 miles	15. Sac and Fox	Cedar Rapids
.1 mile	16. River Road	Cedar Rapids
8.25 miles	17. Upper Palisades	2 mi E, 3 mi N Ely
2 miles	18. Palisades-Kepler St. Park	3-1/2 mi W Mt. Vernon
3.75 miles	19. South Cedar	3 mi SE, 1 mi E Mt. Vernon
5 miles	20. Sutliff Access	5 mi E Solon
9 miles	21. Cedar Bluff	W edge Cedar Bluff
5.8 miles	22. Cedar Valley Park	5 mi N Springdale
6.8 miles	23. Rochester Park	7 mi S, 1 mi W Tipton



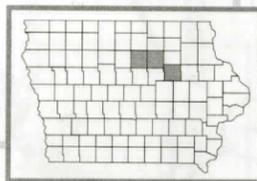
## WEST FORK CEDAR RIVER

Franklin to Black Hawk

THE WEST FORK RISES in northern Franklin County and flows in a southeasterly direction for 42 miles before joining the Cedar River in Black Hawk County. The West Fork joins the Shell Fock near Finchford and flows through a relatively flat floodplain surrounded by a lowland timber greenbelt.

THE WEST FORK IS VISITED by large numbers of waterfowl during the spring and fall migrations due to its close proximity to the Big Marsh Wildlife Area.

THERE ARE NUMEROUS LOG JAMS in the West Fork



that can make it difficult to traverse. A temporary dam is located approximately 1-1/2 miles downstream of the Big Marsh Access. This dam is in place from the first of September through November. It is used to divert water into the Big Marsh Wildlife Area.

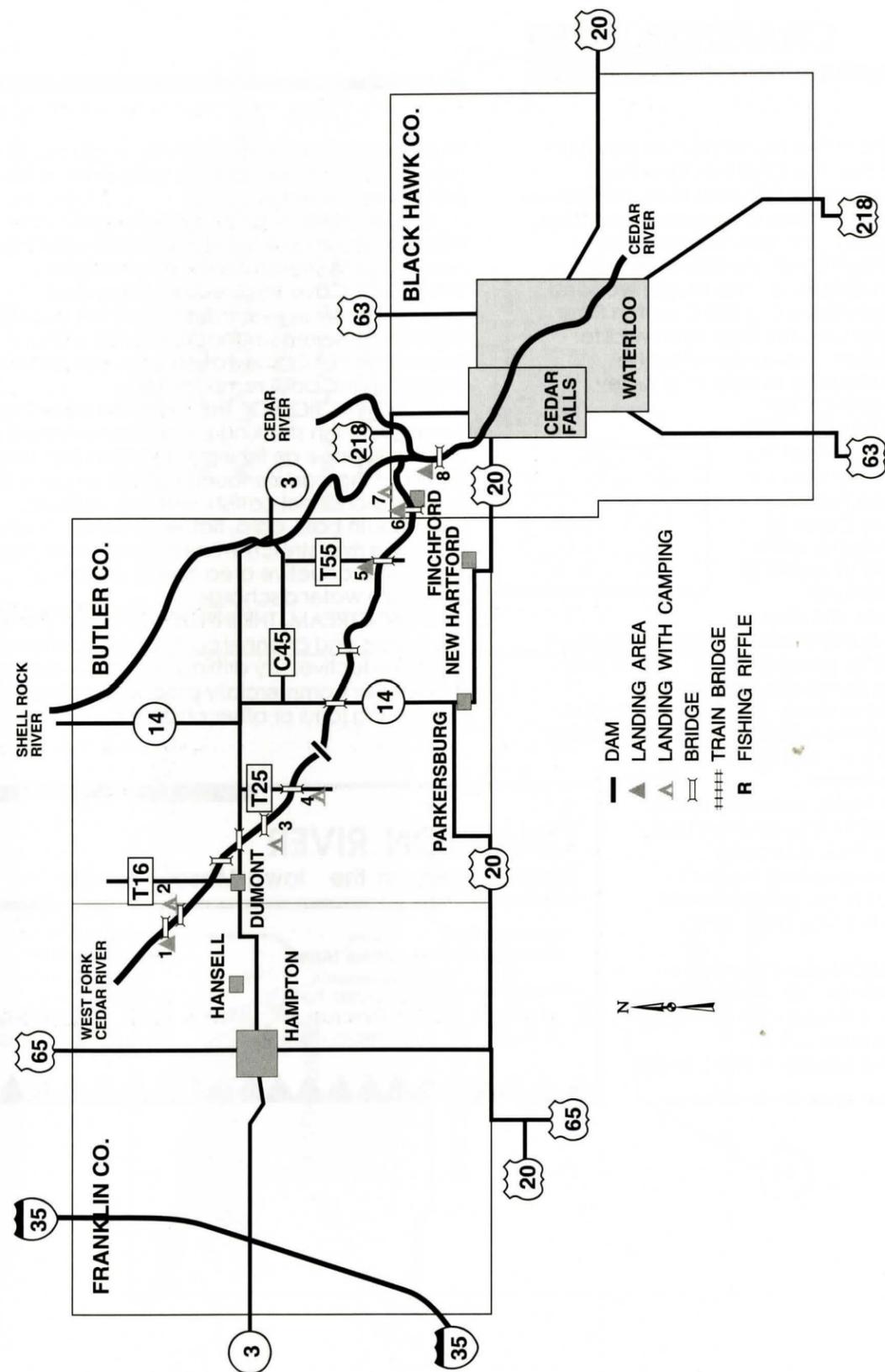
THE NUMEROUS LOG JAMS are havens for channel catfish. Local anglers catch large numbers of catfish and northern pike in or near these log jams and associated backwater areas of the West Fork. Walleye are often taken near, as well as below, the West Fork's confluence with the Shell Rock River.

THE LAST ACCESS AREA is located on the Cedar River immediately downstream of the West Fork's confluence with the Cedar River.

## WEST FORK CEDAR RIVER

Franklin to Black Hawk

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Thorn Apple Woods	4 mi N, 2 mi E Hansell
2.5 miles	2. West Fork Access	3 mi N, 4 mi E Hansell
11.5 miles	3. Considine Park	5 mi SE Dumont
6 miles	4. Big Marsh	5 mi N Parkersburg
14.6 miles	5. West Fork Forest Access	5 mi N New Hartford
7.6 miles	6. West Fork Access	NE edge Finchford
.4 miles	7. Thunderwoman Park	N edge Finchford
5.3 miles	8. Washington Union Access	4 mi N, 2 mi W Cedar Falls



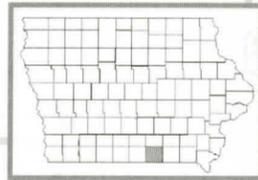
# CHARITON RIVER

Rathbun Lake to the Iowa-Missouri Border

FROM THE TAILWATERS of Rathbun Lake, the Chariton River flows southerly for 143 miles to its confluence with the Missouri River near Keatsville, Missouri. The river winds its way through a mixture of timber, pasture and cropland. The rough, wooded terrain adjoining the Chariton River valley supports important wildlife habitats as evidenced by the abundance of deer and turkey.

ONE OF THE BEST AND SAFEST times to float the Chariton River is when the U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers is discharging water from Rathbun Lake at a rate of 100 to 500 cubic feet per second. At this rate, the river has about a one-quarter-bankful depth and has a moderate current for good floating. Higher river conditions can be floated but are not recommended for novices. You can call the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Rathbun Lake Information Center 24 hours a day at (515) 647-2464 for discharge information.



THE CHARITON RIVER, between Outlet Park below the Rathbun Lake Dam and Sharon Bluffs State Park, is largely unchannelized and provides the best canoeing. Both of these parks provide camping, picnicking and boat ramp facilities.

THE NAME SHARON was brought to Appanoose County by the Mormons who used it in naming a village and township. This was done because of the resemblance of the county to the coastal

plains west of ancient Palestine. A glacial till riffle used to ford the river can be seen in the park during periods of low water.

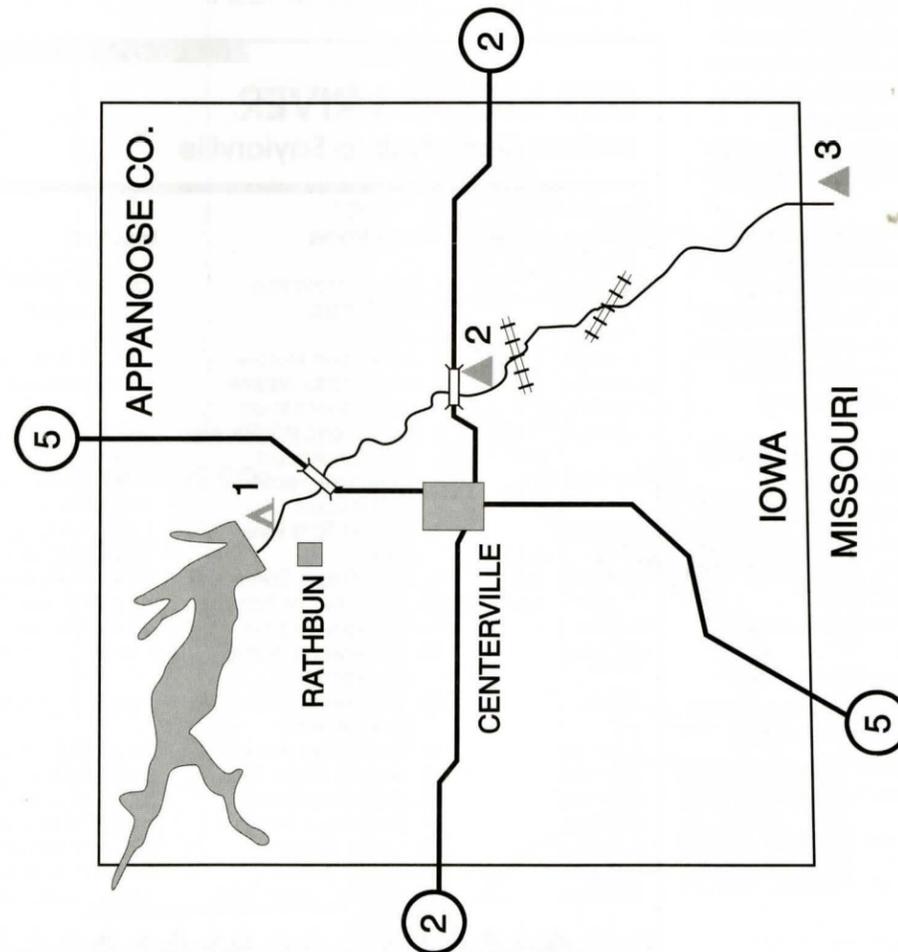
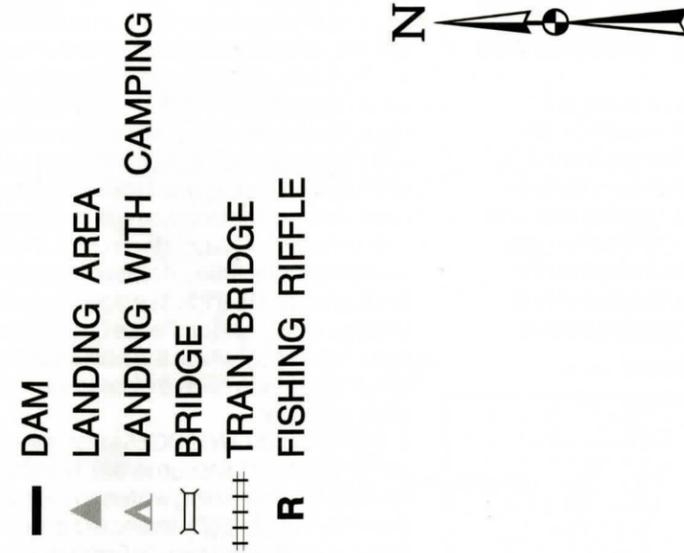
BELOW SHARON BLUFFS, the river follows a channelized course for 12 miles before exiting Iowa. Access to this stretch is limited to bridges. The Rebel's Cove Wildlife Area is located approximately six river miles across the state line in Missouri. This area, managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation, provides primitive camping and boat ramp facilities.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE RATHBUN Reservoir and subsequent fish stocking programs have had a major influence on fishing in the Chariton River. Good fishing can be found for major game fish including channel catfish, walleye, crappie, largemouth bass, carp, flathead catfish and white bass. The river stretch immediately below the dam is the most productive area during periods of favorable water discharge.

DOWNSTREAM, THE INFLUENCE of the dam decreases and channel cat fishing becomes the most productive. Try drifting night crawlers, liver, minnows or commercially prepared baits behind stumps, log jams or other obstacles.

## CHARITON RIVER Rathbun Lake to the Iowa-Missouri Border

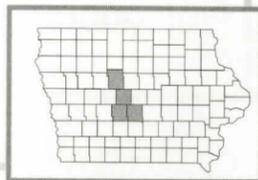
Distance from Previous Landing Access Name		Location
0 miles	1. Outlet Park	Rathbun Dam
18 miles	2. Sharon Bluffs	3 mi E, 1 mi S Centerville
18 miles	3. Rebels Cove	1 mi S of IA/MO border



## DES MOINES RIVER Dolliver State Park to Saylorville

THE DES MOINES RIVER is Iowa's largest interior stream, traversing more than 500 miles across Iowa to the Mississippi River. The stretch above Dolliver State Park in Webster County has limited access, so this portion will begin at Dolliver State Park, north of Lehigh.

DOLLIVER STATE PARK extends along the west bank and is a convenient put-in and stop for canoeists with a shelterhouse and public camping grounds along the river. Of particular interest in this area are Boneyard Hollow and the Copperas Beds. Boneyard Hollow is a



deep ravine with sandstone ledges rising 50 to 75 feet. Legend says that in early days Indians drove buffalo, deer and elk over these cliffs. The Copperas Beds are found in a sandstone bluff 150 feet high. This is an unusual deposit of various mineral substances with many petrified plants exposed. Legend says that Indians used the multi-colored copperas powder for war paint and that early pioneers colored their clothing with these minerals.

THE DAM AT LEHIGH is easily negotiated with access points above and below the dam site. The river below Lehigh meanders lazily through central Iowa, passing by Brushy Creek. This area is not as scenic as the upper stretch, but offers good angling at several spots. The Deception Hollow area is a particularly good area for channel catfish.

IN SOUTHERN WEBSTER COUNTY, the Boone River joins with the Des Moines River. Below the confluence, the river dramatically increases in size and offers areas for boating, canoeing and fishing as well as areas of scenic and historic interest. The Carlson Recreational Area, a few miles downstream, offers camping, picnicking and restroom facilities near the river.

THE FRAZER DAM is the next obstacle in this reach of the river. It is difficult to see and canoeists should be familiar with the area before floating this stretch. Portaging is necessary at the boat ramp above and below Fraser Dam and

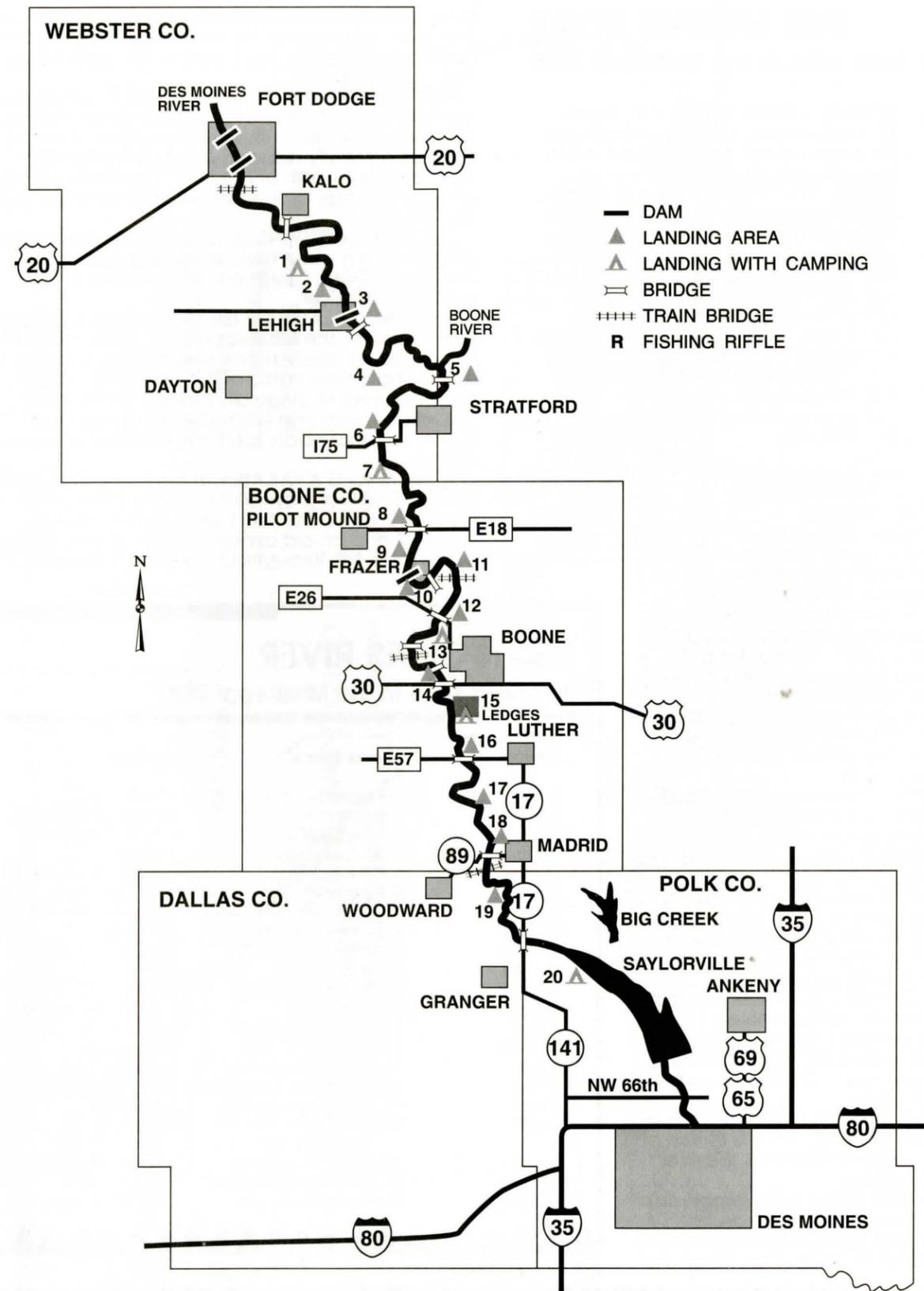
strongly suggested at the Boone Waterworks boat ramps. The stretch between these two dams offers excellent fishing opportunities. There are a number of large pool areas, such as the Big Eddy, which have good habitat for channel catfish, walleye and bass. The dam areas afford excellent fishing opportunities and are particularly noted for flathead catfish.

THE BOONE VIADUCT (High Bridge) is billed as the longest and highest double-track railway bridge in the world and is another area of interest, as well as a good reference point along the river. Completed in 1901, it spans a length of 2,686 feet and stands 185 feet above the river. A few miles below the Highway 30 bridge is Ledges State Park. While at the Ledges, a short hike up Pease Creek will reveal limestone outcroppings for which the park is famous. The Ledges also has picnicking available close to the river and is another good stop-over point.

THE RIVER BELOW LEDGES is not quite as scenic as the upper stretches. It contains numerous "holes" and snags and has some of the best fishing waters available over this stretch of the Des Moines River. Points of reference are the E-57 bridge (Dogwood Ramp) and the Highway 210 and Highway 17 bridges entering the Saylorville Reservoir. Jester Park is located at the north end of the reservoir and is a convenient take-out point.

## DES MOINES RIVER Dolliver State Park to Saylorville

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Dolliver State Park	1.5 mi W, 1 mi N Lehigh
2.2 miles	2. Foster Park	.5 mi N Lehigh
.5 mile	3. Lehigh	Lehigh
3.1 miles	4. Deception Hollow	2 mi S, 1.5 mi E Lehigh
8.8 miles	5. Boone Forks Wildlife Area (on Boone River)	2 mi N Stratford
7.2 miles	6. Boone Forks Wildlife Area Junction Access	1 mi S, 3.5 mi E, .5 mi N Dayton
3.2 miles	7. Carlson Recreation Area Access	1 mi S, 3.5 mi E, 2.5 mi S Dayton
4.8 miles	8. Norton's Ford River Access	1 mi E, 1.5 mi N, .25 mi E Pilot Mound
4.5 miles	9. North Frazer Ramp	.25 mi S, .75 mi W Frazer
.2 mile	10. South Frazer Ramp	.25 mi S Frazer
2 miles	11. Big Eddy Access	.75 mi E Frazer
4.4 miles	12. Waterworks Ramp (upstream)	1 mi W, 1 mi N Boone
.2 mile	13. Waterworks Ramp (downstream)	1 mi W, 1 mi N Boone
6.4 miles	14. River Bend Ramp	1.5 mi W Boone
5.4 miles	15. Ledges State Park	5 mi S Boone
2.2 miles	16. Dogwood Ramp	3.5 mi W Luther
2.7 miles	17. Sportsmen Ramp	4 mi W, 2 mi S Luther
5.8 miles	18. Laurie Ramp	2 mi W Madrid
2.4 miles	19. Sub-1 Ramp	3.5 mi E Woodward
7.6 miles	20. Lewis A. Jester Park	1.5 mi E, 1 mi N, .75 mi E Granger



## DES MOINES RIVER

### Red Rock Lake to the Mississippi River

IOWA'S LARGEST INTERIOR RIVER, the Des Moines River, is blessed with abundant recreational opportunities, scenic landscape and early Iowa history. From the tailwaters of the Red Rock Reservoir to the Mississippi River, 143 stream miles of lazily meandering water flow through land which varies from flat agricultural bottomland to high bluff sandstone outcroppings. Today, the Des Moines River offers picnicking, boating and good fishing. In the past, the river has experienced the churning paddle of steamboats and the thunder of cannons during the Civil War.

IT IS

#### RECOMMENDED

that county maps be obtained for each area. Pleasure boating is usually difficult by July due to low water, but the river maintains sufficient water depth throughout the year for small outboard boats and canoes. Water flow in the river depends largely on discharge from Red Rock Dam. Contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Red Rock or the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for up-to-date information on water levels. Care will be necessary during low-water periods to avoid sandbars and rocks.

THE FIRST STRETCH of river runs from the Red Rock Reservoir tailwater area to Eddyville. With gently rolling topography, this 31-mile stretch is the most meandering of the 143 stream miles.

THE TAILWATER AND EVELAND accesses provide good places to camp and picnic. All boat ramps are adequate except the one at Eddyville, which is usable only at high water.

CHANNEL CAT AND FLATHEAD catfishing are good from the tailwater area to Eddyville. Northern pike, walleye, crappie and white bass fishing are found at the tailwater area. Drum and carp can also be found here.

THE SECOND STRETCH IS 32 STREAM miles from Eddyville to Eldon. With a terrain of small bluffs and outcroppings, the river begins to straighten.

BACKUP WATER FROM the hydroelectric dam in Ottumwa provides pleasure boating through the summer months from above the dam to Chillicothe. When the

dam gates are open, boaters must be cautious near the dam. It is possible for travelers with light boats to portage around the south end of the dam without too much difficulty.

BOATERS, ESPECIALLY INEXPERIENCED canoeists, must be very cautious when shooting the rapids at the Bonaparte Dam. This dam has been washed out and presently appears as a substantial riffle extending the width of the river. Canoeists may take an easy portage around the south end of the dam if they prefer.

CHANNEL CATFISHING IS STILL GOOD. Paddlefish snagging and white bass fishing are good at the Bonaparte Dam. Sturgeon are common in this section of the river.

THE LOWEST REACH OF THE Des Moines River is from Farmington to the Mississippi River. River towns of Croton, Iowa, and Athens, Missouri, are the sites of the northernmost battle of the Civil War. In 1861, cannons were strategically placed on the bluffs of the Missouri side and fired across the river into Croton. Cannonballs are still imbedded in some homes.

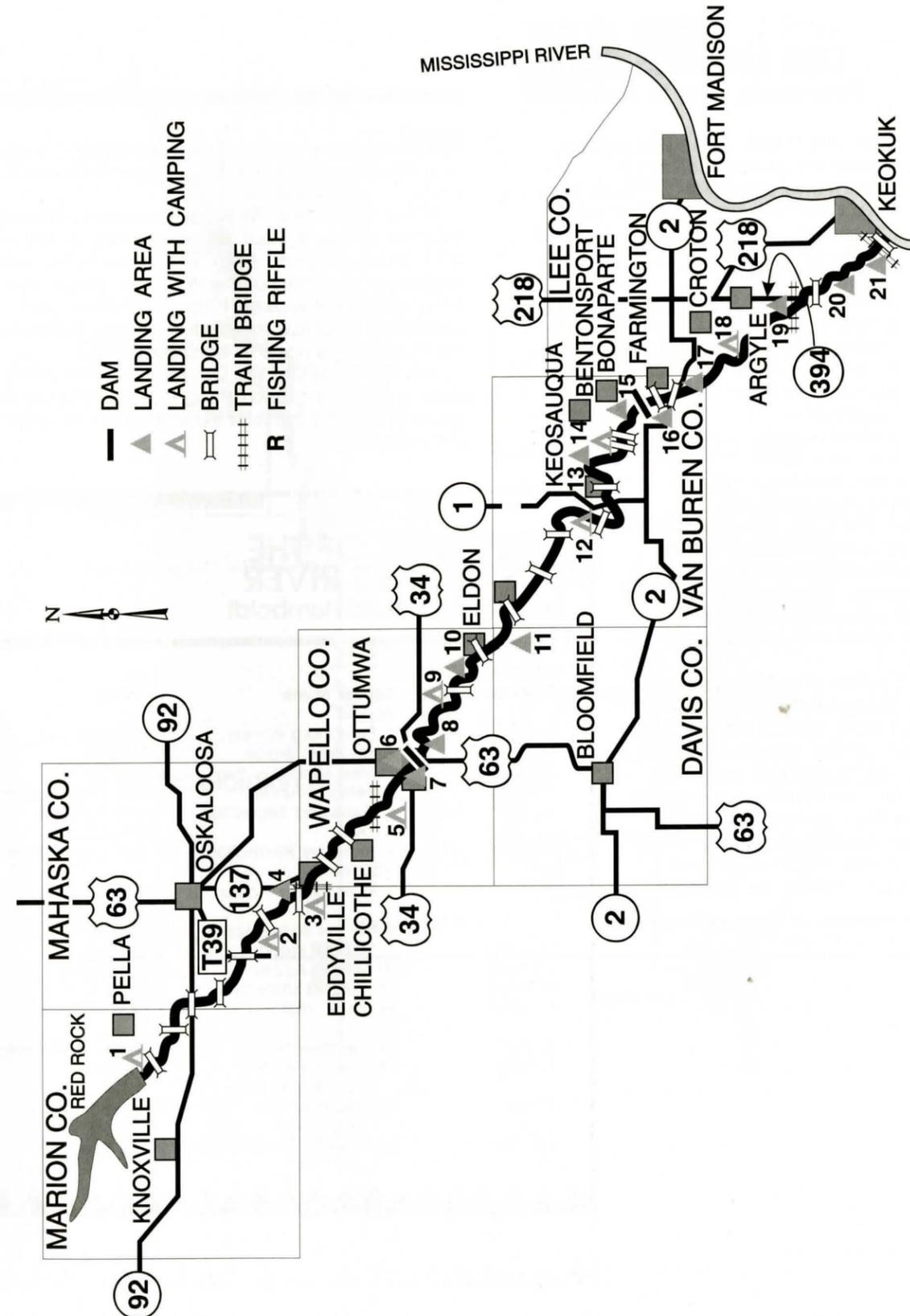
PICNICKING IS AVAILABLE at Red Wing Park and Croton Civil War Memorial Park. Red Wing Park is located south of the river between the present channel and an old oxbow. Channel and flathead catfishing is fair throughout this stretch of river.



## DES MOINES RIVER

### Red Rock Lake to the Mississippi River

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Red Rock Tailwater Area	4 mi SW Pella
20 miles	2. Eveland Access	6 mi SW Oskaloosa
9 miles	3. Hardfish Access	1 mi W Eddyville
1 mile	4. Eddyville Ramp	Eddyville
14 miles	5. Rock Bluff Park	4 mi W Ottumwa
3 miles	6. Blackhawk River Access	North Ottumwa
0 mile	7. Blackhawk Road Access	Across river from #6
1.5 miles	8. Coliseum Ramp	Ottumwa
6.3 miles	9. Cliffland Access	6 mi E Ottumwa
11 miles	10. Eldon Ramp	Eldon
4.5 miles	11. Shidepoke Access	Selma
15 miles	12. Austin Park	4 mi NE Keosauqua
6 miles	13. Keosauqua Ramp	Keosauqua
8.5 miles	14. Bentonsport Park	Bentonsport
4 miles	15. Bonaparte Ramp	Bonaparte
4 miles	16. Des Moines River Access	3 mi SE Bonaparte
2 miles	17. Farmington Access	Farmington
5 miles	18. Croton Civil War Memorial Park	Croton
5 miles	19. Turkey Run Access	3-1/2 mi SE Croton
8.5 miles	20. St. Francisville Access	4 mi S Argyle
11.5 miles	21. Red Wing Access	1-1/2 mi W Keokuk

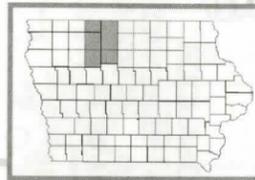


## WEST FORK DES MOINES RIVER

Petersburg, MN, to Humboldt

THE WEST FORK of the Des Moines River varies considerably in recreational potential as it flows from Iowa's northern border in Emmet County to its confluence with the East Fork in Humboldt County.

THE WEST FORK DISPLAYS many different characteristics on its southward journey. The river begins as a natural stream with wooded bluffs and cut



banks and takes on a ditch-like appearance in the lower one-half of Palo Alto and Pocahontas counties. It then returns to a natural meandering stream in Humboldt County. This diversity in habitat can affect the canoeing experience, fishing opportunities and aesthetics for the river traveler.

CHANNEL CATFISH IS THE predominant sport species throughout the West Fork. Snags and cut-bank habitat in Emmet, the upper one-half of Palo Alto County and Humboldt County, are home to catfish. Walleye can be found throughout the river; however, the most productive angling is near dams, rock riffles and the deep holes located in the upper and lower sections of the river. Below the

Humboldt Dam, northern pike are available as well as a healthy population of scrappy smallmouth bass.

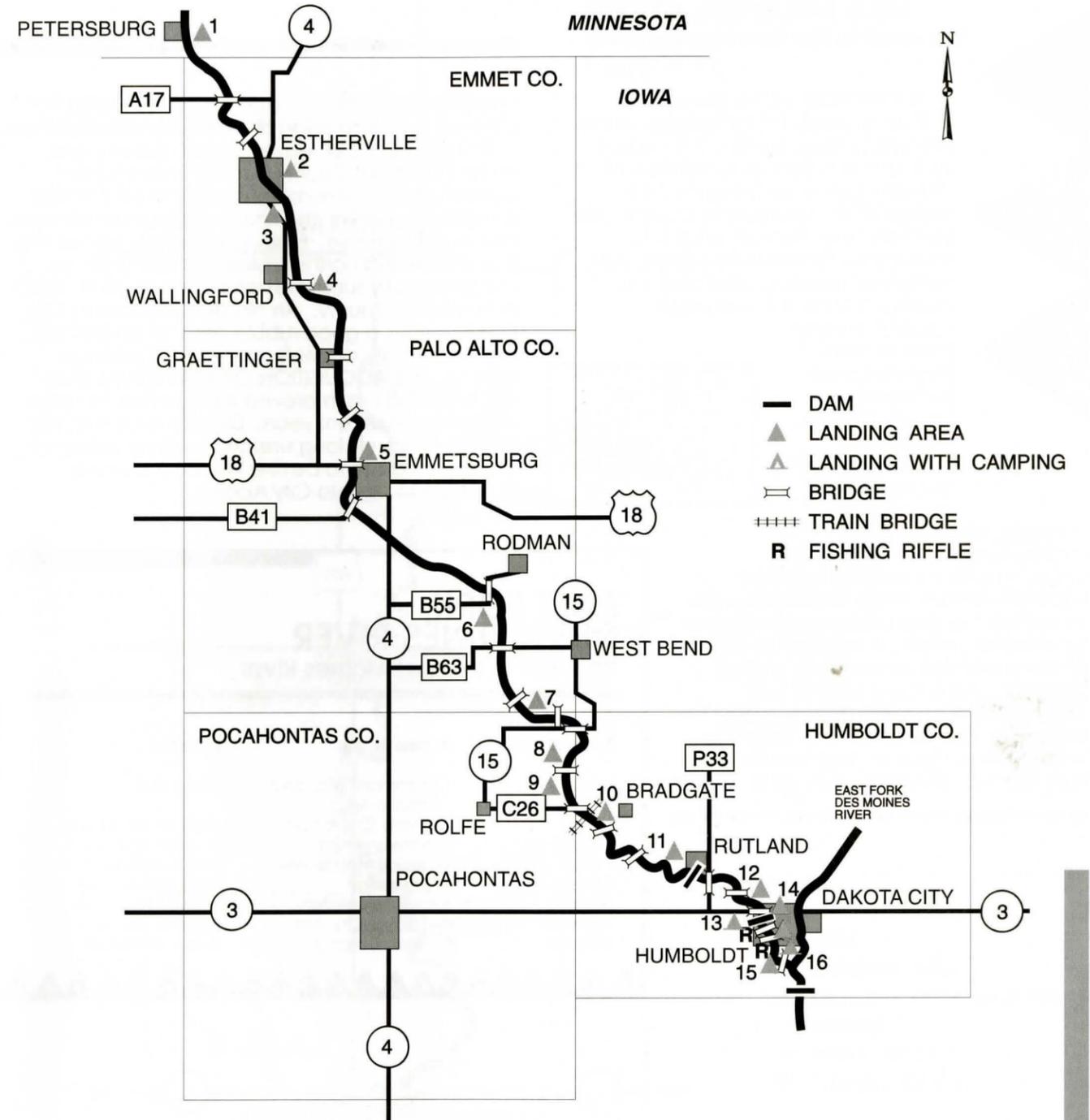
SOME CANOEING SKILLS are needed to navigate the river efficiently, but due to the lack of fast water, skill can be minimal. Rock riffle areas in the upper and lower one-third of the West Fork may have to be portaged or walked through in low-water conditions and two major dams in the Rutland and Humboldt area have to be portaged.

THE WEST FORK of the Des Moines River offers very diverse canoeing and fishing opportunities to be experienced by the river traveler in a relatively short period of time.

## WEST FORK OF THE DES MOINES RIVER

Petersburg, MN, to Humboldt

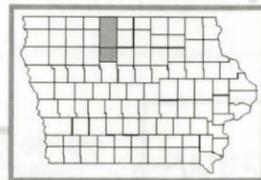
Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Petersburg Access	Petersburg, MN
15 miles	2. 4th Street Bridge	Estherville
.5 mile	3. Mike Mickelson Park	Estherville
9.5 miles	4. Peterson Access	1/4 mi E Wallingford
16 miles	5. Basswood Recreation Area	1 mi N, 1/2 mi W Emmetsburg
10 miles	6. Mulrone Recreation Area	1 mi S, 2 mi W Rodman
8 miles	7. River Runner Acces	1-1/2 mi S, 3-1/2 mi W West Bend
---	8. Hamms Bridge Access	2 mi N Rolfe
11.5 miles	9. Stearn's Woods	4 mi E Rolfe
1.2 miles	10. Willows Access	SW edge Bradgate
9.9 miles	11. Rutland Utility Dam	S edge Rutland
4.1 miles	12. Izaak Walton Club	1 mi W Humboldt
.5 mile	13. Joe Sheldon Park	1-1/2 mi W Humboldt
1.4 miles	14. Des Moines River Boating Access	Humboldt
.2 mile	15. Humboldt Fish Hatchery	Humboldt
4.8 miles	16. Frank A. Gotch Park	2 mi S Humboldt



## EAST FORK DES MOINES RIVER

### Bancroft to the Des Moines River

THE EAST FORK of the Des Moines River originates in Tuttle Lake on the Minnesota-Iowa border. It flows in a southerly direction for a distance of 120 miles before entering the Des Moines River in Humboldt County. The East Fork flows through a light- to moderately timbered floodplain with numerous heavily-grazed pastures encroaching to the river edge, resulting in some bank erosion. Beginning near Bancroft in Kossuth County, the stream contains numerous log jams requiring short



portages, timbered areas forming long canopies and an occasional fence crossing the river. Within this stretch, snags and deep pools on outside bends provide excellent cover for channel catfish. In addition to catfish, northern pike are available to anglers. Canoeists should be aware of two constructed fishing riffles that may be tricky to navigate depending upon the water level of the river. Both are located near Algona, one about five miles

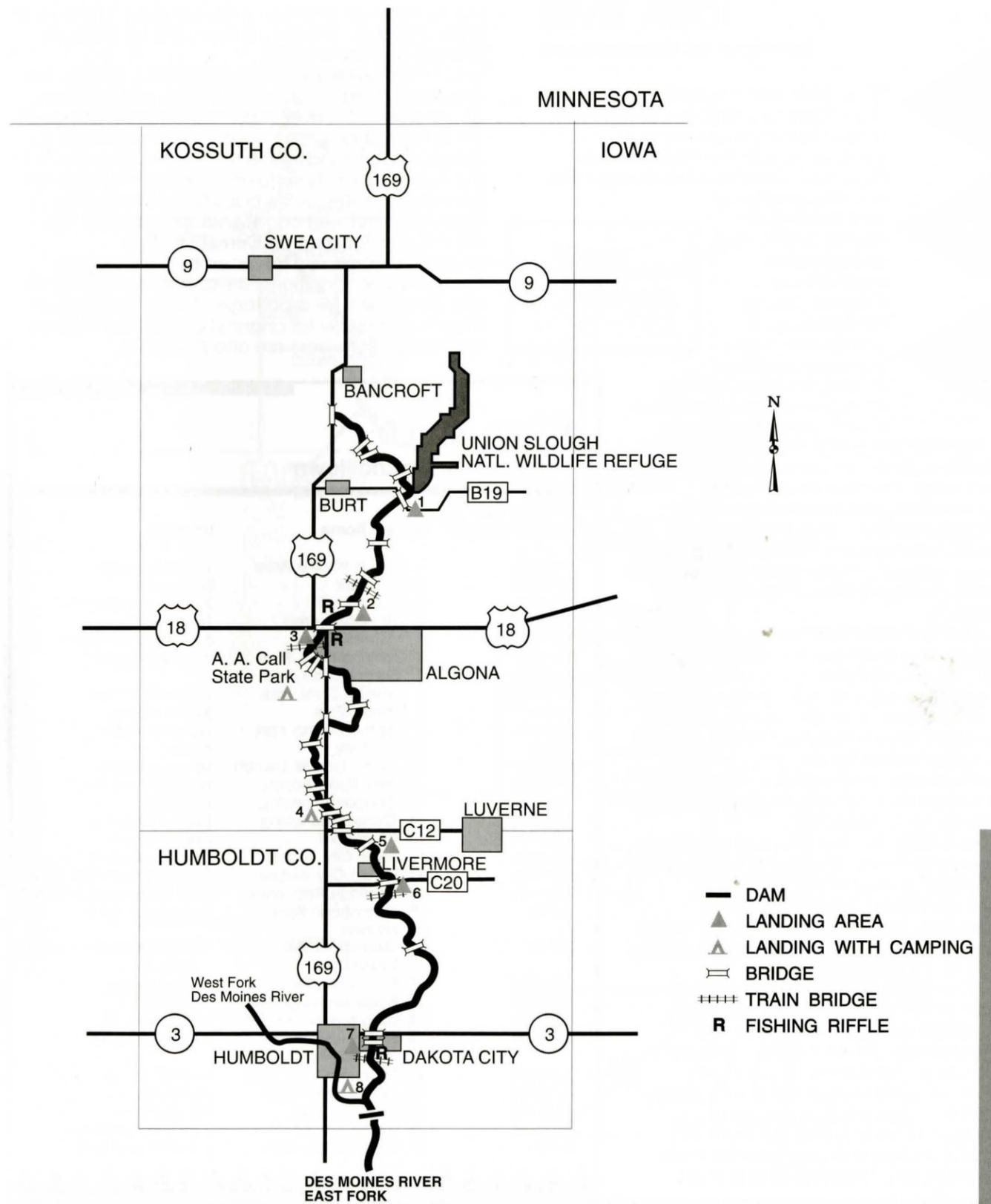
upstream at the Plum Creek Dam access and the other on the north edge of town near Veterans Park.

AS THE EAST FORK leaves Kossuth County and enters Humboldt County, it takes on a different appearance. The numerous log jams and fences are gone; however, the timber canopy remains and riffle areas increase. Fishing enthusiasts will not only find catfish and northern pike, but also walleyes using the rocky substrates and deep pools available in Humboldt County. An old dam at Dakota City Park provides a good rubble area for anglers and fast water that canoeists may want to portage around. THE ACQUISITION OF ADDITIONAL public access points has improved the East Fork for recreational use in recent years. Despite this effort, there are two relatively long stretches with no public access -- Algona to Devine Wildlife Area and Livermore to Dakota City Access.

## EAST FORK DES MOINES RIVER

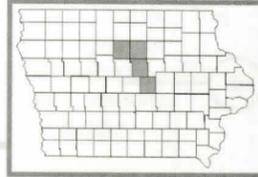
### Bancroft to the Des Moines River

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Patterson Rec. and Wildlife Area	2 mi E Burt
6 miles	2. Plumb Creek Dam	2-1/2 mi NE Algona
2 miles	3. Veterans Park	N edge Algona
9 miles	4. Devine Wildlife Area	8 mi S. Algona
8.2 miles	5. Old Bridge	1-1/2 N Livermore
2.2 miles	6. Livermore Bridge	1/2 mi E Livermore
16.8 miles	7. Dakota City Park	Dakota City
3.6 miles	8. Frank Gotch State Park	2 mi S Humboldt



## IOWA RIVER Belmond to Marshalltown

THE IOWA RIVER FLOWS 329 miles in a southeasterly direction from Crystal Lake in Hancock County to its confluence with the Mississippi River. This article tracks the river through four counties beginning near Belmond in Wright County and ending below Marshalltown in Marshall County. Public access is excellent throughout these counties, making this stretch of the Iowa one of the most attractive for recreational users.



THE BOTTOM SUBSTRATES in Wright and Franklin counties are predominately mud and sand. Flooded sloughs and backwaters provide good spawning areas for northern pike, the dominant sportfish throughout this stretch. Large snags formed by fallen trees are common and provide additional habitat for sportfish.

AS THE RIVER FLOWS into Hardin County, the bottom substrate changes from mud and sand to rock and gravel. The rocky substrate found below Alden and throughout Hardin County provides excellent smallmouth bass fishing, as well as opportunities for channel catfish, northern pike and walleye. A spring run of white bass occurs throughout Marshall County up to Iowa Falls.

AS A RESULT of the efforts of the Hardin County Conservation Board, a greenbelt exists along most of the Iowa River through Hardin County, providing abundant accesses to the river as well as picnicking facilities, hunting areas, hiking trails and camping areas.

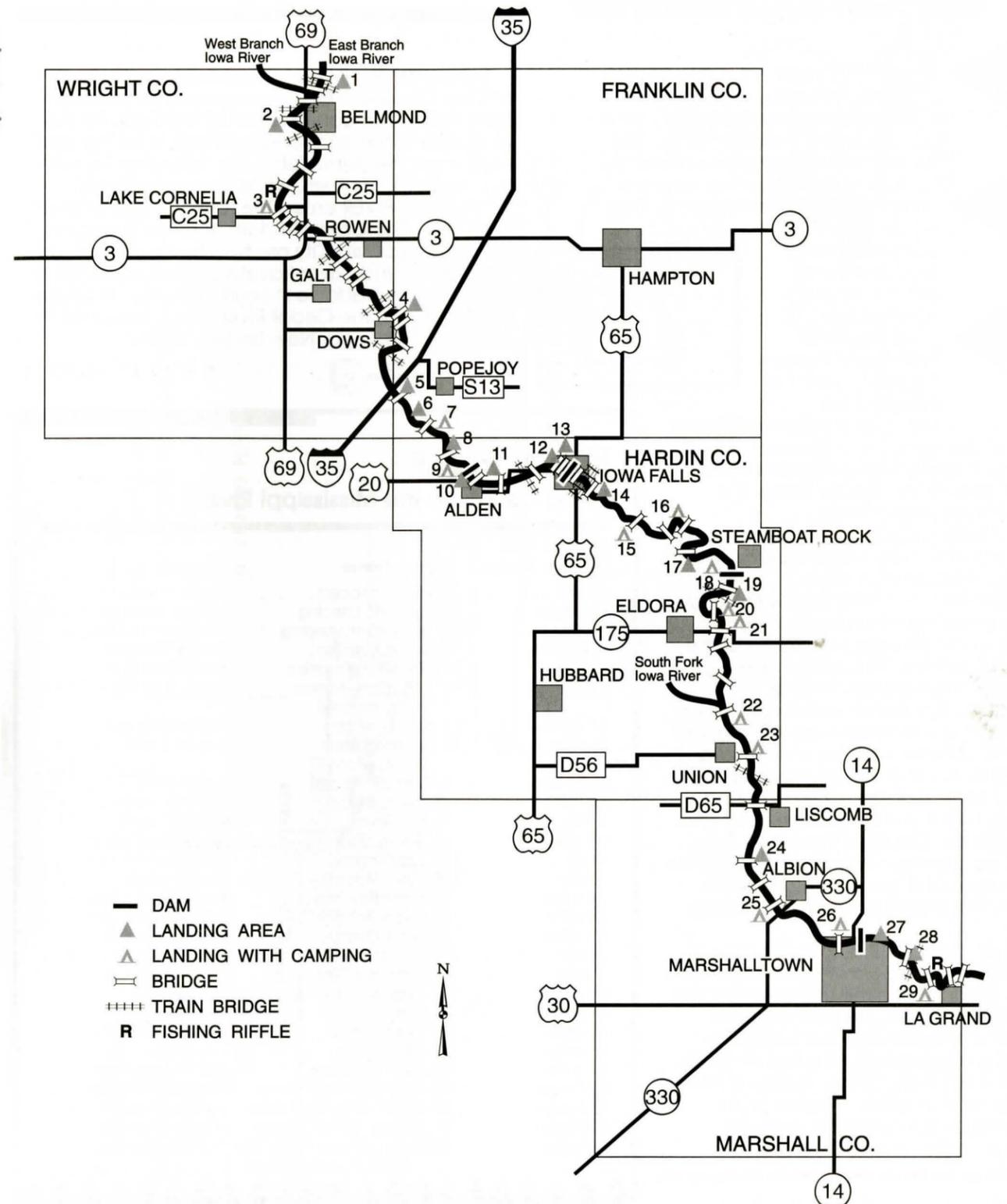
LOW-HEAD DAMS ARE LOCATED at both Alden and Iowa Falls. At Alden, canoeists can take out at Ilco Park immediately above the dam and put in just below the dam or at the Alden Canoe Launch about a half-mile downstream. In Iowa Falls, take out at Dougan's Landing and put back in approximately one and one-half miles downstream. The dam at Iowa Falls

backs water up over two miles creating a fairly large impoundment. This area is also used by pleasure boaters and water skiers.

STARTING AT THE HARDIN/MARSHALL County line and ending near Marshalltown, the river has been channelized. The river was straightened in the early 1900s in an attempt to provide better drainage of adjacent farm lands. Due to the dredging, much of the habitat diversity within the stream has been lost. Bottom substrates switch back to predominately mud and sand with occasional rocky areas. The old mill dam located on Center Street in Marshalltown can be traversed by canoe under normal water conditions. If water levels are high or low, it may require a portage. Fishing in Marshall County is primarily for channel catfish, but walleye and smallmouth bass are also available.

## IOWA RIVER Belmond to Marshalltown

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Sullivan Wildlife Area	2 mi N Belmond
2.9 miles	2. River Park	Belmond
6.6 miles	3. Pikes Timber	2 mi E Lake Cornelia
14.5 miles	4. Toff Wildlife Area	1/2 mi NE Dows
5.9 miles	5. Whitetail Flats	3-1/2 mi S, 1 mi E Dows
2.6 miles	6. Oakland-Iowa River Conservation Area	3 mi SW Popejoy
3.3 miles	7. Popejoy Cons. Park	1-1/2 mi SW Popejoy
4 miles	8. Bigelow Park	3 mi N Alden
2.7 miles	9. Bessman-Kemp Park	1/2 mi W Alden
.6 mile	10. Ilco Park	Alden
.7 mile	11. Alden Canoe Launch	NE edge Alden
5.5 miles	12. River Road Access	W edge Iowa Falls
1 mile	13. Dougan's Landing	Iowa Falls
1.6 miles	14. Canoe Launching	E edge Iowa Falls
4.8 miles	15. Cross' Ford	6 mi SE Iowa Falls
4.4 miles	16. Eagle City Access	7 mi SE Iowa Falls
5.2 miles	17. Hardin City Access	5 mi NW Steamboat Rock
7.8 miles	18. Pineridge Rec. Area	.5 mi W Steamboat Rock
.5 mile	19. Steamboat Rock Launch	Steamboat Rock
.5 mile	20. Steamboat Rock-Tower Rock	1/2 mi S Steamboat Rock
4.8 miles	21. Pine Lake State Park	E edge Eldora
8.8 miles	22. Bates Memorial Park	1 mi NE Union
1.7 miles	23. Long Memorial Park	1 mi E Union
8.2 miles	24. Forest Reserve and Access Area	4 mi SW Liscomb
5.9 miles	25. Timmons Grove Park	1 mi SW Albion
6.1 miles	26. Center Street Dam	Marshalltown
1.1 miles	27. Riverview Park	Marshalltown
4.2 miles	28. Furrow Access	2 mi E Marshalltown
4 miles	29. Three Bridges Park	2 mi NW LeGrand

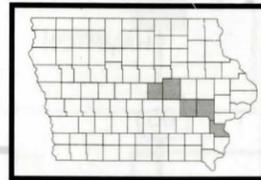


## IOWA RIVER

### Tama County to the Mississippi River

THIS STRETCH OF THE IOWA RIVER is characterized by a mixture of wooded areas and farmland with an occasional rock outcropping. The Iowa River has been channelized in Tama and Iowa counties where it enters the Coralville Reservoir. The bottom substrate is predominately mud and sand with numerous downed trees.

AS THE RIVER FLOWS into Tama County, a point of interest is the



Mesquakie Indian settlement

located downstream of Montour. This is the only major Indian settlement in Iowa. Otter Creek Marsh, below Tama, is a state-owned wildlife area.

THE AMANA SOCIETY owns 23,000 acres adjacent to the Iowa River below Iowa County. The society's dam, approximately five miles below Marengo, diverts water from the river to a canal system which links several villages of the Amana Colonies. The dam makes upstream or downstream travel impossible. The remains of an old Indian fishing pier are located near Amana, but can only be seen at times of low water.

FISHING ALONG THIS first stretch can be exceptional. Walleye, white bass and crappie make annual spring runs up the river from the Coralville Reservoir. The area from Montour to Marshalltown in the rocky areas and springs is usually best. Also, try the creeks for northerns in early spring.

AS THE RIVER ENTERS Johnson County, canoeists enter the Hawkeye Wildlife Area which is located on the upper end of the Coralville Reservoir, just past the I-380 bridge. Coralville Lake is a 5,300-acre flood control reservoir. It is known for its scenic rock bluffs, fishing, camping, skiing and recreation areas. Anglers enjoy catching largemouth bass, crappie, walleye, catfish and white bass.

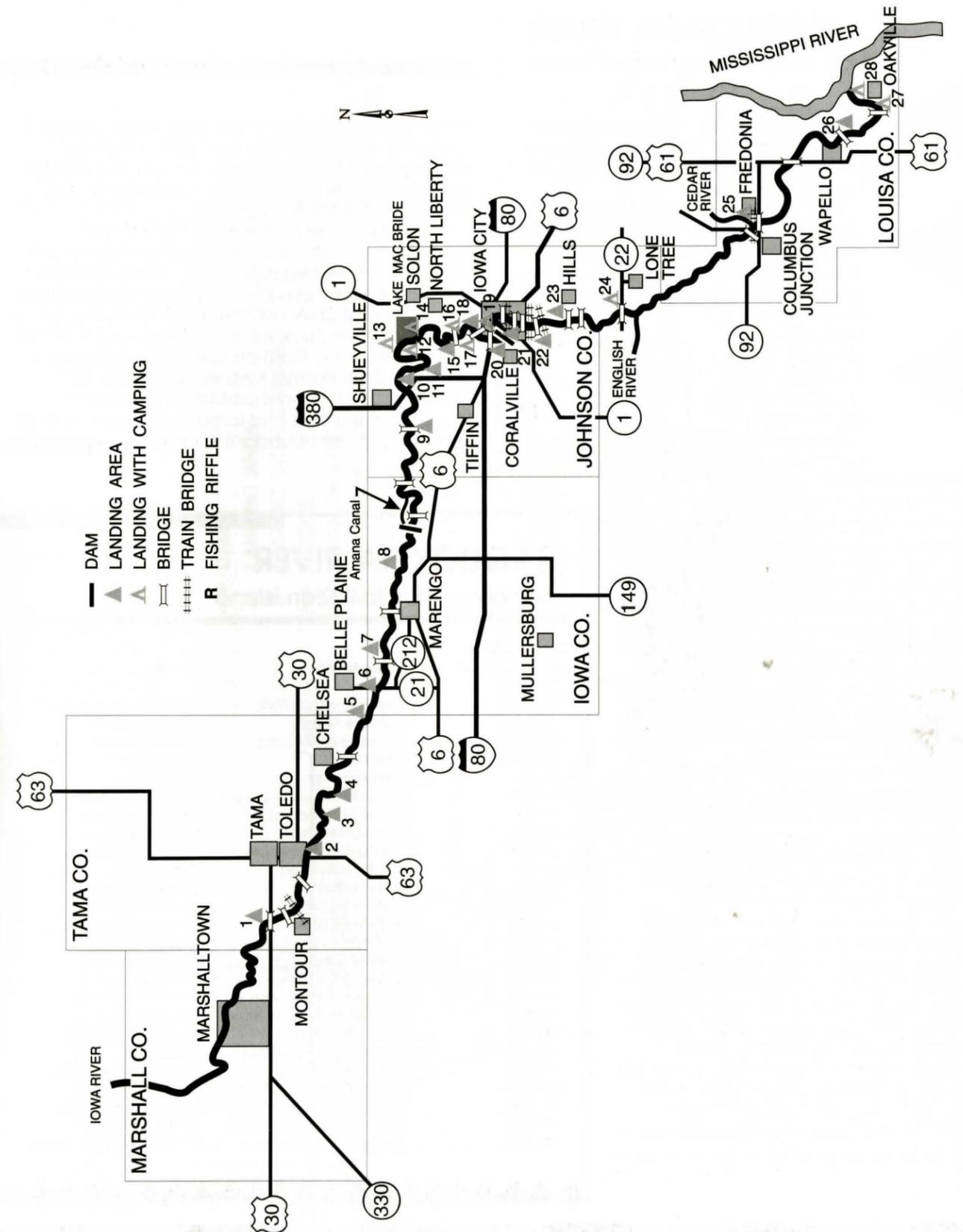
THE CORALVILLE DAM is located four miles north of Iowa City and is the headquarters for reservoir operations. You can take out at the ramp on the west side of the dam and put back in on the east side below the dam. Fish in the tailwaters for walleye, crappie, northern, white bass and catfish.

THE IOWA RIVER enters the towns of Coralville and Iowa City. The Coralville dam and the Burlington street dam in Iowa City are two low-head dams to portage around. River travel is unobstructed the rest of the way to Fredonia in Louisa County. In Louisa County, it joins the Cedar River which flows into the Mississippi River near New Boston, Illinois.

## IOWA RIVER

### Tama County to the Mississippi River

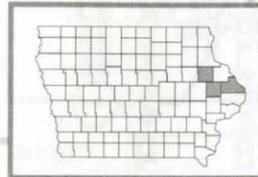
Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
4 miles	1. McCoy Access	2 mi N Montour
14.7 miles	2. Manatts Landing	S edge Tama on Hwy 63
9 miles	3. Long Point Landing	4.5 mi NW of Chelsea
17.8 miles	4. Duffus Landing	2 mi W Chelsea
12.8	5. Belle Plaine Access	4 mi S Belle Plaine
2 miles	6. Randolph Access	3 mi S, 2 mi E Belle Plaine
	(Canoe only)	
2.7 miles	7. Koszta Access	1 mi N Millersburg
15 miles	8. Big Bend Area	1 mi N, 2 mi E Marengo
	(Canoe only)	
34.5 miles	9. O'Road Access	6 mi W Tiffin
5.3 miles	10. Curtis Bridge	5 mi NW North Liberty
1 mile	11. Mid River	4 mi NW North Liberty
4.7 miles	12. Sandy Beach	3 mi SE Shueyville
1 mile	13. Jolly Rogers	4 mi N North Liberty
.9 mile	14. Lake Macbride St. Park	4 mi W Solon
3.6 miles	15. Mehaffey Bridge	4 mi NE North Liberty
1.9 miles	16. Sugar Bottom	4 mi NE North Liberty
2.9 miles	17. West Overlook	4 mi N Iowa City
.5 mile	18. GS Marine	4 mi N Iowa City
.5 mile	19. Tailwater East	4 mi N Iowa City
4.5 miles	20. Edgewood Park	NE Coralville
3 miles	21. City Park	Iowa City
2.5 miles	22. Sturgis Ferry	S edge Iowa City
9.3 miles	23. Hills Access	1 mi E Hills
8.7 miles	24. River Junction	6 mi W Lone Tree
22.9 miles	25. River Fork Boat Ramp	W edge Fredonia
13.6 miles	26. Fred T. Schwob Access	S edge Wapello
10.2 miles	27. Cappy Russell Access	N edge Oakville
6.3 miles	28. Ferry Landing Public Use Area (Mississippi River)	3 mi NE Oakville



## MAQUOKETA RIVER Strawberry Point to Green Island

THE MAQUOKETA RIVER ORIGINATES in southeastern Fayette County and travels 140 miles to its confluence with the Mississippi River.

FOR THE CANOEISTS WHO DESIRE a colorful and leisurely weekend, the Maquoketa River awaits with one of the most scenic canoe trails found in Iowa. The winding bluffs of the Maquoketa River provide a pleasing background, and the river is alive with brilliant autumn colors in the fall.



THE CANOE TRAIL BEGINS just below the dam in Backbone State Park. Camping, water and restrooms are available at this departure point. The stretch between Backbone and Manchester has some shallow riffle areas that, during low water stages, can require getting out of your canoe for short stretches. There are three property lines in this stretch where fences cross the river requiring canoeists to bend over to navigate under them. The dams north of Manchester and in Manchester are best portaged on the west banks.

THE RIVER BELOW THE BAILEY'S FORD ACCESS begins to become impounded by the dam at Delhi and floating to the dam requires extra time. Weekends and holidays are high-traffic situations, so be cautious. If you are mainly interested in canoeing a river environment, it is recommended you take out at Bailey's Ford and begin a new float trip starting at the Maquoketa River Access near Delhi. The dam at Delhi has a vehicle access road to a boat ramp on the north side of the dam. The dam at Hopkinton can be portaged on the west bank. At the Monticello dam, it is necessary to make a portage of 100 yards on the west bank.

PICTURED ROCKS PARK, LOCATED DOWNSTREAM, is a very picturesque area

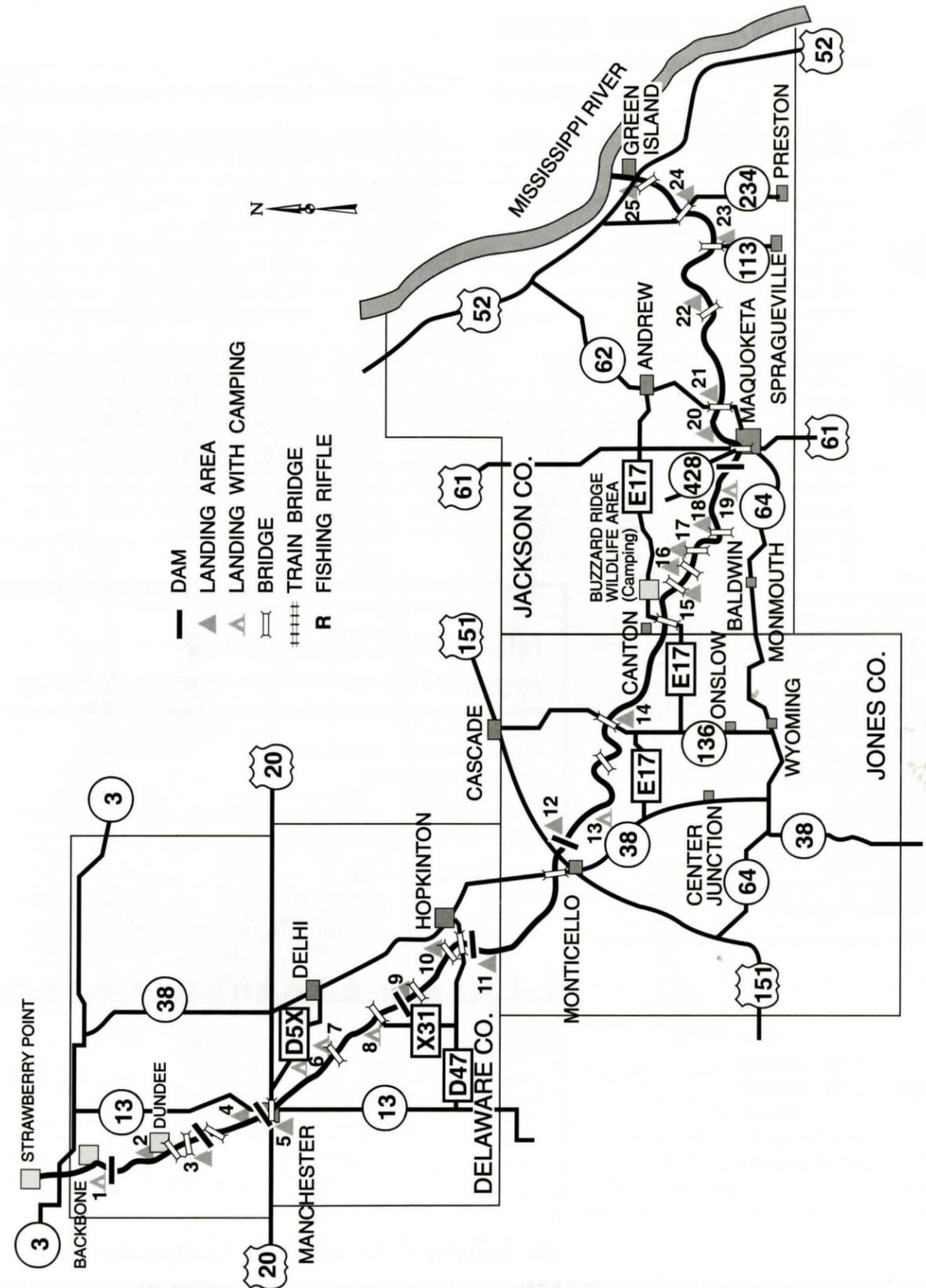
of the river. Camping, water and restrooms are available at this site. The next dam is located downstream of the Joinerville Access and can be portaged on the south bank. Camping is also available at the Joinerville Access.

THE RIVER DOWNSTREAM OF THE CITY of Maquoketa begins to widen and slow down as it approaches the Mississippi River. The last take out before the Mississippi is the Highway 52 Access area.

EXCELLENT SMALLMOUTH BASS ANGLING can be found between Backbone State Park and Pictured Rocks State Park. Northern pike and walleye are common from Bailey's Ford Access to the Retz Wildlife Area. Channel catfish can be found throughout the river and largemouth bass, bluegill and crappie are abundant in the impoundments on the river.

## MAQUOKETA RIVER Strawberry Point to Green Island

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Backbone State Park	5 mi S Strawberry Point
1.8 miles	2. Dundee Access	Wedge Dundee
2 miles	3. Lindsey Bridge Access	2 mi S of Dundee
9.3 miles	4. Terrill Park	Manchester
.5 mile	5. East River Park	Manchester
2.6 miles	6. Pin Oak Park	2 mi SE Manchester
1.6 miles	7. Bailey's Ford Access	4 mi SE Manchester
3.8 miles	8. Turtle Creek Park	8 mi SE Manchester
3.6 miles	9. Maquoketa River Access	1-1/2 mi S Delhi
2.4 miles	10. Retz Wildlife Area	2 mi SE Delhi
6.4 miles	11. Dunlap Park	Wedge Hopkinton
9.5 miles	12. Mon-Maq Dam	1 mi NE Monticello
7.5 miles	13. Pictured Rocks	4 mi SE Monticello
11.5 miles	14. Highway 136 Access	7 mi S Cascade
14.6 miles	15. Millertown Bridge	3 mi NE Monmouth
2.5 miles	16. Royertown Canoe Access	3 mi N Baldwin
2 miles	17. Chenelworth Canoe Access	4 mi NE Baldwin
1.7 miles	18. Morehead Canoe Access	3 mi NE Baldwin
3.2 miles	19. Joinerville Park	6 mi NW Maquoketa
6 miles	20. Maquoketa City Access	Maquoketa
3.1 miles	21. Bridgeport Canoe Access	1-1/2 mi N Spragueville
8 miles	22. Iron Bridge Canoe Access	5 mi SE Andrew
8.1 miles	23. Spragueville Access	1/2 mi N Spragueville
4 miles	24. Damon Bridge Canoe Acc.	5 mi N Preston
4.5 miles	25. Highway 52 Access	1-1/2 mi NW Green Island



## NISHNABOTNA RIVER

Avoca (West) and Atlantic (East)  
to Hamburg

**A** GLANCE AT A MAP of southwest Iowa reveals two streams snaking southward, nearly paralleling one another for 20 miles, until merging north of the Iowa-Missouri boundary. These are the East and West forks of the Nishnabotna River. They make up the third largest tributary of the Missouri River in Iowa.

**BOTH THE EAST AND WEST** Nishnabotnas originate in Carroll County, but not until two tiers of counties south do the streams become sufficient in flow to provide canoeing or fishing under normal



Nishnabotna River is provided by channel catfish and carp. Wading or floating stretches of the river are popular and productive methods of fishing the Nishnabotna. Drifting bait through the deeper holes and troughs is also productive.

**UNFORTUNATELY, EASY ACCESS** to the East and West Nishnabotna is lacking in many areas. Public ownership is scarce along the river, leaving the alternative of entering or exiting the streams at bridges.

**A FLOAT TRIP DOWN** the Nishnabotna lacks the spectacular scenery offered on some northern Iowa streams. Instead, it is a rather leisurely journey, requiring some degree of skill to follow the main channel of the river as it weaves its way through a series of sandbars typical of this stream. The Nishnabotna exits the state just below the city of Hamburg and empties into the Missouri River another 10 miles downstream.

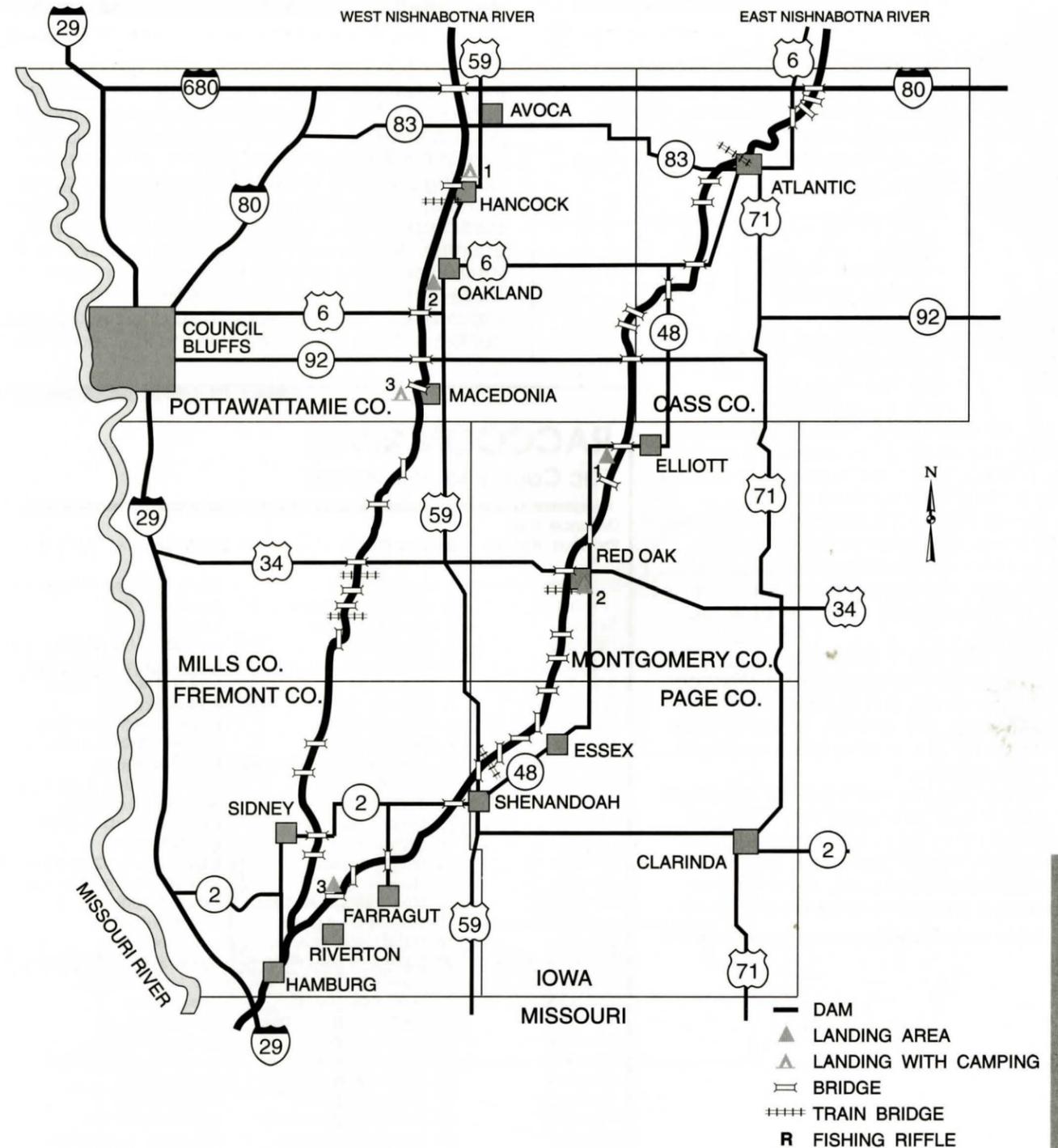
conditions.

**MUCH OF THE NISHNABOTNA'S** character and fish habitat were stripped away in the early 1900s when the river was channelized under the guise of flood control. With the passage of time, the streams have returned to a meandering state in some areas. The best fishing habitat is generally found along the outside of the more severe bends and around log jams.

**ALTHOUGH THE TWO STREAMS** are quite similar in appearance, the west arm is somewhat larger. It drains a larger area and is supplemented by larger feeder streams. The principal fishing in the

### NISHNABOTNA RIVER Avoca (West) and Atlantic (East) to Hamburg

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
<b>East Nishnabotna River</b>		
0 miles	1. Elliott Boat Ramp	.5 mi W Elliott
12 miles	2. Red Oak Boat Ramp	W edge Red Oak
33 miles	3. Riverton Boat Ramp	.5 mi W Riverton
<b>West Nishnabotna River</b>		
0 miles	1. Botna Bend Park	W edge Hancock
6 miles	2. Chataqua Park	Oakland
5 miles	3. Old Town Park	1 mi. W Macedonia



## RACCOON RIVER Sac County to Des Moines

THE RACCOON RIVER, FROM THE northern part of Sac County to Des Moines, offers canoeists the leisurely get-away-from-it-all atmosphere of a slowly meandering prairie stream and good angling as well.

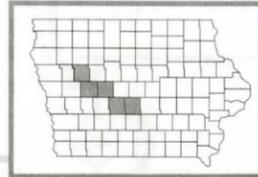
THE UPPER HALF OF THE RACCOON RIVER is characterized by shallow, braided chutes comprised of sandbars, snags and pools. During normal

water levels, this stretch is easily floatable. During low water levels, canoeists may have to put their craft through the shallow riffle areas. The lower half of the Raccoon River is a slower, wider stream with fewer sandbars and deeper pools. Except for occasional rock fishing riffles, which may require portages, the lower half of the Raccoon River can be easily navigated.

THERE ARE MORE THAN 30 publicly-owned accesses on the Raccoon River beginning north of Sac City and continuing to Des Moines. Many of these accesses have camping areas and boat ramps available.

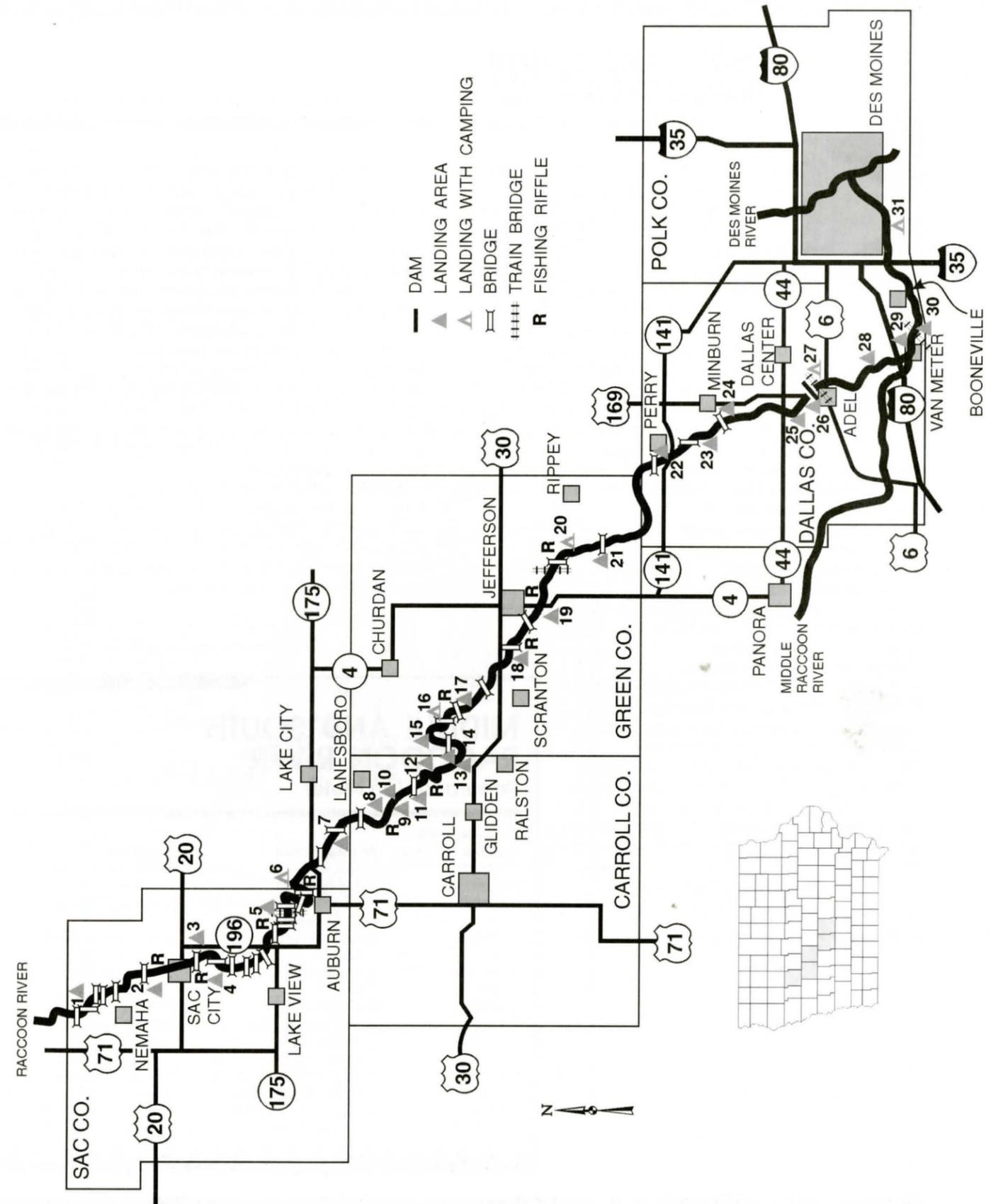
THE RACCOON RIVER OFFERS the angler a great selection of sport fish. Channel catfish is the most widely distributed and commonly caught sport fish. These fish inhabit the deeper pools, log jams and cut-banks present in the entire stretch of

the Raccoon River. Flathead catfish are common in the river and present an opportunity for catching trophy-sized fish. Flatheads weighing more than 40 pounds have been taken from deep pools and log jams in the Raccoon River. Due to an aggressive stocking program, walleye are available in good numbers in the upper portion of the Raccoon River, particularly in Sac, Calhoun, Carroll and Greene counties. Smallmouth bass are also available in the same area of the river but in very low numbers. These classic sport fish should be limited to catch-and-release angling. Carp and suckers round out the angling opportunities in the Raccoon River.



## RACCOON RIVER Sac County to Des Moines

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Vogel Access	3 mi E, 2-1/2 mi N Nemaha
11 miles	2. McDonald Access	2 mi N Sac City
5 miles	3. Sac City Access	1 mi N Sac City
1.9 miles	4. Hagge Park	1-1/2 mi S, 1/2 mi E Sac City
13.6 miles	5. White Horse Access	1/2 mi S, 1 mi E Lake View
2.8 miles	6. Grant Park	1 mi N, 1/4 mi E Auburn
8.6 miles	7. Rainbow Bend	2 mi S Lake City
1.3 miles	8. Hobbs Access	1 mi E, 1 mi S Lanesboro
.8 miles	9. Carroll Access	1-1/2 mi S, 3/4 mi W Lanesboro
3 miles	10. North Raccoon Access	2 mi S Lanesboro
1.1 miles	11. Merritt Access	1/4 mi E, 1/2 mi S Lanesboro
2.5 miles	12. Buttrick's Bluff	4-1/4 mi S Lanesboro
1.6 miles	13. Bennet Access	4 mi E, 2-1/4 mi N Glidden
3.7 miles	14. Richey Access	3 mi N Ralston
2.8 miles	15. Wright Access	4-1/2 mi N, 1-1/2 mi E Ralston
3.7 miles	16. Hyde Park	1 mi W, 5-1/2 mi N Scranton
5.4 miles	17. Brown Bridge Access	3 mi N Scranton
5 miles	18. McMahon Access	5 mi W Jefferson
8.5 miles	19. Henderson Park	1 mi S Jefferson
7 miles	20. Squirrel Hollow Park	3 mi E, 5 mi S Jefferson
4 miles	21. Adkins Bridge Access	5 mi SW of Rippey
17.7 miles	22. Perry Boat Ramp	1 mi W Perry
3.7 miles	23. Spring Valley Access	3 mi S Perry
4.8 miles	24. Snyder Access	3 mi SW Minburn
4.3 miles	25. Highway 44 Access	4 mi W Dallas Center
5.3 miles	26. Kinnick-Feller Park	N edge Adel
.2 miles	27. Adel Island Park	N edge Adel
7.5 miles	28. Puckerbrush Access	2 mi N Van Meter
2.2 miles	29. Two Rivers Access	NW edge Van Meter
5 miles	30. Booneville Access	W edge Booneville
15.5 miles	31. Walnut Woods State Park	W edge Des Moines



## MIDDLE AND SOUTH RACCOON RIVER

Panora to Van Meter

THE MIDDLE AND SOUTH RACCOON rivers are major tributaries of the Raccoon River. The rivers are located along the south terminus of the Wisconsin glacier and boast an abundance of sand, gravel and boulders. The Middle Raccoon River, from Lenon Mill to Redfield, is part of Iowa's Protected Waters Area. It has a number of good access sites and offers canoeists a leisurely get-away-from-it-all atmosphere. The upper reach of the Middle Raccoon is bordered by majestic timber and prairie stream settings and is the most

heavily canoed portion of the river. This reach of the river is also the most "challenging" to canoeists because of numerous riffles and pools, along with some mid-stream boulders and larger snags. Numerous small sandbars along the river provide excellent areas for rest and relaxation.



THE LENON MILL to the Redfield Dam portion of the river is one of central Iowa's premier smallmouth bass stream fisheries, and is home to walleye and channel catfish. Snags located in the bend areas, mid-water boulders and pool areas are the best places to try fishing in this stretch. This area is a designated catch-and-immediate-release area for all black bass, with standard regulations applied to other fish species.

THE ONLY MAJOR OBSTRUCTION to canoeists throughout the entire stretch is

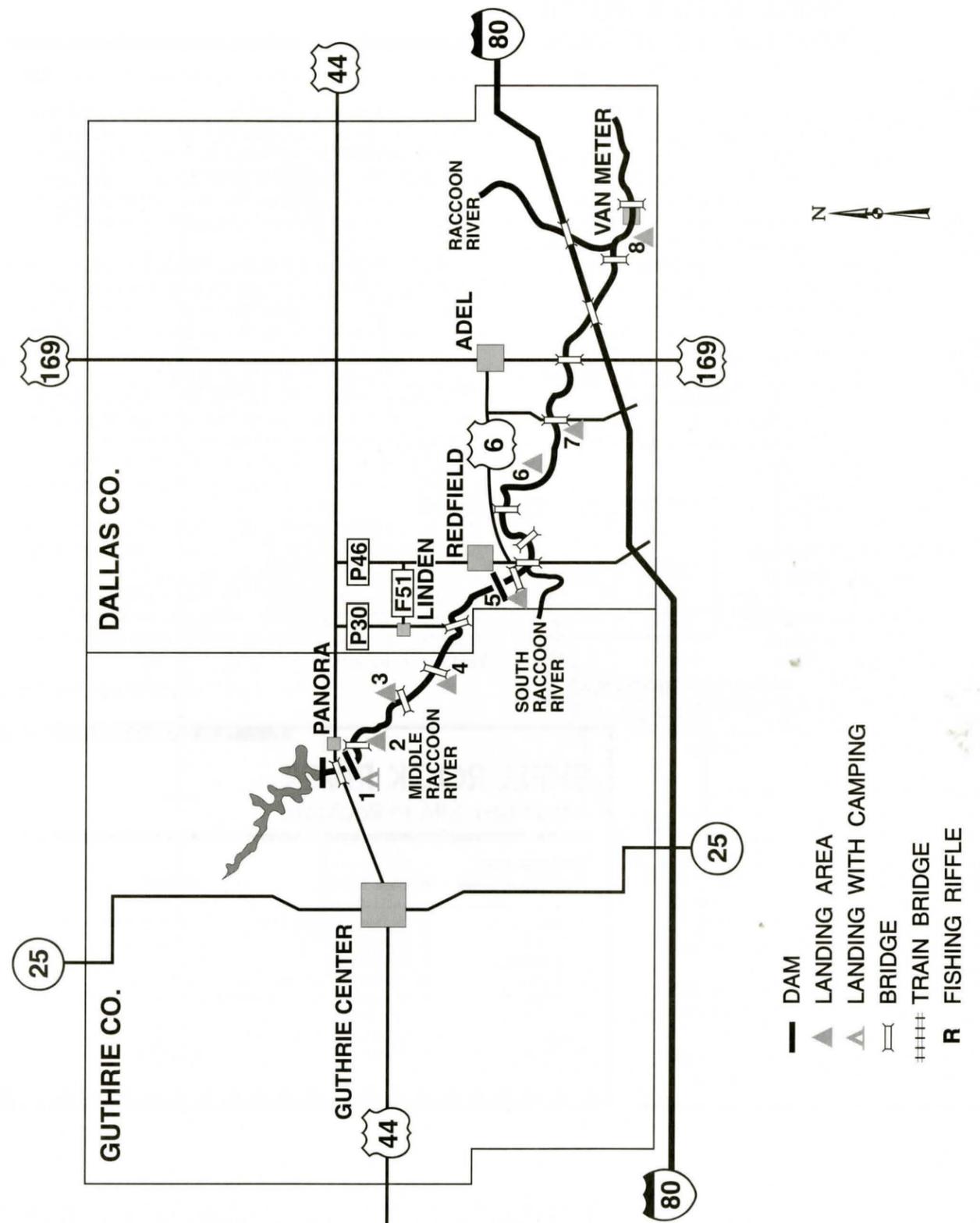
the low-head dam at Redfield. The river below Redfield has an abundance of boulders and, combined with upland and timber areas, provides a scenic and leisurely trip. The Hanging Rock area—a massive outcrop of sandstone—is located near Redfield and has been used as a major landmark for many years. The area just downstream of Hanging Rock was a ford used by wagon trains heading west during the mid-1800s. The confluence of the South and Middle Raccoon rivers is less than a mile downstream. Although the Redfield to Van Meter portion of the river has no permanent obstructions for canoeists, there are several large snag areas that should be noted. One such snag is in the area at the confluence of the South and North Raccoon rivers. This area has large snags with very swift currents flowing into them.

FISHING, PARTICULARLY FOR channel catfish, is a favorite activity along the lower stretch. Walleye and flathead catfish are also found in this area. Anglers would be well-advised to try a variety of lures and tackle. As in most rivers, areas of snags and larger "holes" are the best.

## MIDDLE AND SOUTH RACCOON RIVER

Panora to Van Meter

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Lenon Mills	Panora
2.1 miles	2. Middle Raccoon River PWA-Trent Tract	1-1/2 mi S Panora
3.2 miles	3. Middle Raccoon River Access	2 mi E, 3 mi S Panora
2.4 miles	4. Marlowe Ray Wildlife Area	5 mi S, 1/2 mi E, 1 mi N Panora
8.8 miles	5. Redfield Dam	E edge Redfield
7.2 miles	6. Pleasant Valley Wildlife Area	4 mi W, 2 mi S Adel
4.4 miles	7. Earlham Bridge Access	3 mi W, 3 mi S Adel
8.4 miles	8. Two Rivers Access	N edge Van Meter



## SHELL ROCK RIVER

Albert Lea, MN, to Rockford

THE SHELL ROCK RIVER HAS ITS SOURCE at Albert Lea Lake in Albert Lea, Minnesota. It ends where it joins the West Fork of the Cedar River about five miles above Cedar Falls. Its entire length of about 100 river miles is navigable by canoe, with a little wading now and then to pass shallow riffles if the water is low. The bottom varies from sand to limestone rubble and for miles on end the banks are open park-like meadows.

FROM ALBERT LEA TO THE HIGHWAY 65 bridge, 2-1/4 miles south of Northwood, the river passes through flat marsh and meadow land. The current is not

strong and the water depth averages between one and two feet.

THE CHARACTER OF the river slowly changes. Low walls of limestone rise out of the ground on either side, and by the time you reach Plymouth, the river is flowing in its own little canyon. The section of the river bed is rock. The current speeds up here, with many riffles and chutes. The Shell Rock is one of the most delightful streams in Iowa to canoe.

JUST ABOVE ROCK FALLS ARE THE REMAINS of a mill dam that was built over the four-foot falls that gave the town its name; it originally was called Shell Rock Falls. The mill dam was once 20 feet high, one of the highest in Iowa. Now it has been reduced to rubble and can be negotiated by canoe unless the water is too low.

ROCK FALLS WAS SETTLED by the Elijah Wilfong family from Indiana who arrived here in 1853 with two teams of oxen and a team of horses. When the lead wagon overturned while fording the river, the

Wilfongs pitched camp. They liked it so well they built a log cabin and later constructed the mill.

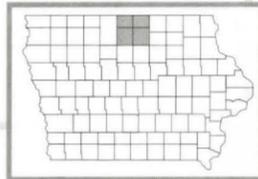
WILKINSON PIONEER PARK IS A GOOD place to put in for a trip down the Shell Rock. It is located on the right bank just below the Rock Falls Bridge. The park contains a covered bridge that was built in 1969.

AN AFTERNOON'S PADDLE BRINGS YOU to Nora Springs, past the Shell Rock River greenbelt. There is a rather difficult portage around the dam; use the left bank, at the far side of the lake. Carry your canoe across the park and put in below the rapids that have formed below the dam.

BELOW NORA SPRINGS, THE RIVER valley begins to broaden as the hills get higher, though there are still plenty of limestone outcroppings. About half way to Rockford, the rocks sink back into the ground and the river takes a similar character to the one it had above Plymouth.

AT ROCKFORD, THE OLD FLOURING MILL stands on the left bank by the dam. A pretty little park on the right makes a good spot to take out.

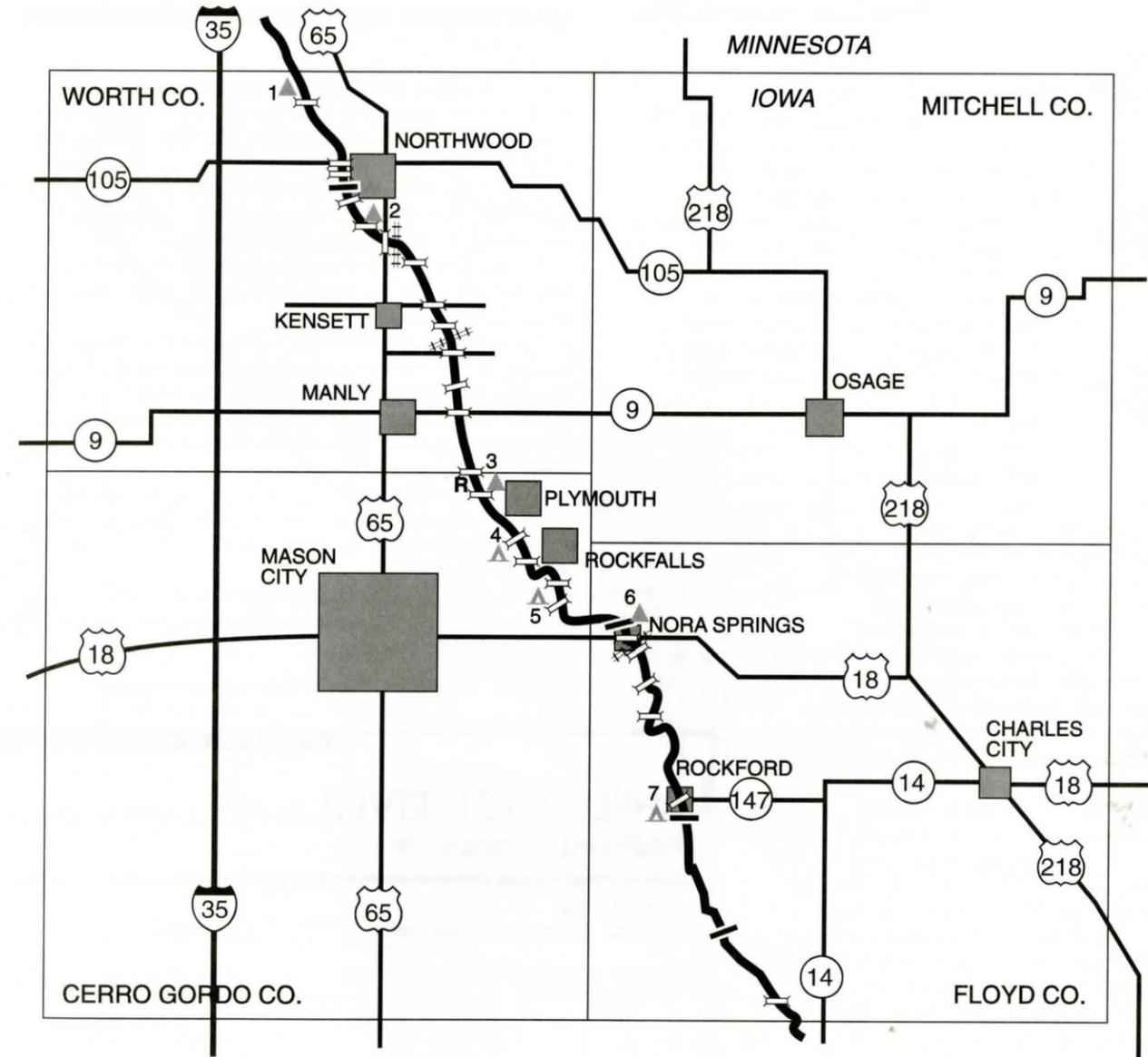
NORTHERN PIKE OFFER THE BEST opportunity for anglers in Worth County, while below Rock Falls, smallmouth bass, channel catfish and rock bass are frequently taken.



## SHELL ROCK RIVER

Albert Lea, MN, to Rockford

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Ochee Yahola Park	4 mi NW Northwood
4.7 miles	2. Swensrud Park	Northwood
16.9 miles	3. Strand Park	N edge Plymouth
5.4 miles	4. Wilkinson Pioneer Park	Rock Falls
5.7 miles	5. Shellrock River Greenbelt and Preserve	1 mi NW Nora Springs
1 mile	6. Nora Springs Mill Dam Pk	Nora Springs
10.1 miles	7. Wyatt Park	Rockford



- DAM
- ▲ LANDING AREA
- ▲ LANDING WITH CAMPING
- ≡ BRIDGE
- ++++ TRAIN BRIDGE
- R FISHING RIFFLE



## SHELL ROCK RIVER Rockford to Janesville

THE SHELL ROCK BEGINS a transformation below Rockford. The Winnebago River flows into the Shell Rock one mile below the Rockford dam, doubling the size of the river. The narrow, coarse rock river bottom is interspersed with sand, mud and gravel.

UPON REACHING THE DAM at Marble Rock, take out on the east bank and put back in on the west bank below the dam. Old bridge pilings are located mid-stream, just below the water surface past the

dam. The river to Greene is broad and slow with a small impoundment being formed by the old electric dam at Greene.

AT GREENE, TAKE OUT for the dam portage on the east side of the impoundment at Perrin Park. A portage of four city blocks, crossing Highway 14, takes you to Greene Recreational Park just below the dam. Water and camping can be found at this access.

BELOW GREENE, THE RIVER becomes narrow with numerous sandbars, bends and riffles. As you approach the Camp Comfort Access, the river runs through wooded, high banks with increased stream velocities. The remnants of a rock boulder dam are located at the Camp Comfort Access. Take out above the dam on the south side and put back in below the dam on the south side. Camping is available at this access.

A SMALL LOW-HEAD DAM IS located near Heery Woods Park and can easily be portaged on the east bank. The river becomes fast with a coarse rock bottom becoming more prevalent again.

THE LAST DAM ON THE SHELL ROCK is located in the city of Shell Rock. The

take-out point at this dam is on the east bank a few feet above what is left of an old mill dam. The old, five-story mill is one of the few wooden frame mills still in existence.

THE RIVER BELOW SHELL ROCK has a coarse rock substrate. The Shell Rock ends its journey east of Finchford where it joins the West Fork Cedar River. It is a short float from this point to Falls Access located immediately below the confluence of the West Fork and Cedar rivers.

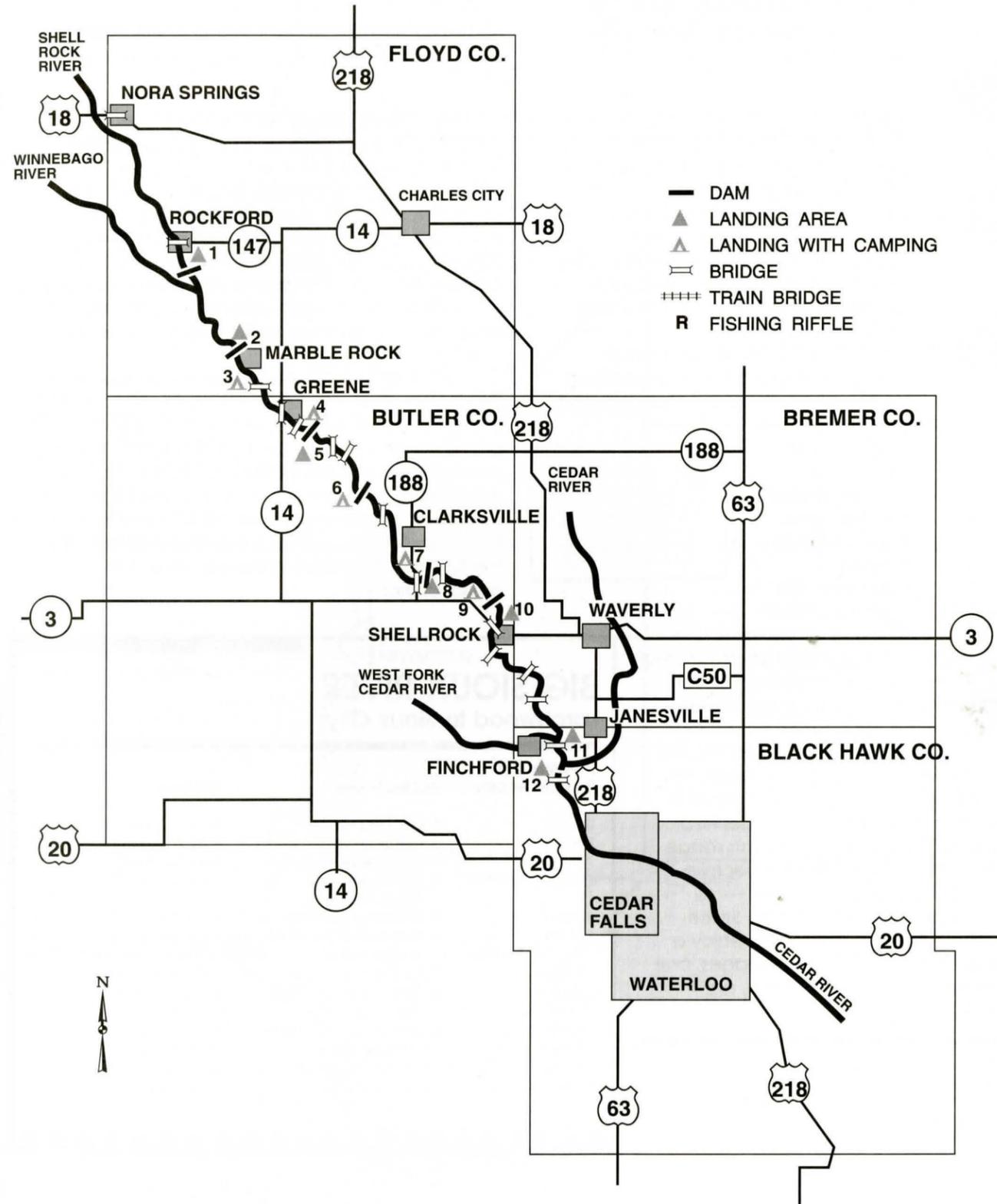
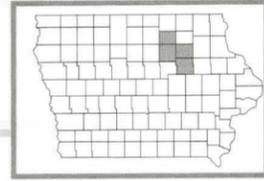
THE ROCKY STREAM BOTTOM found throughout much of the Shell Rock provides excellent habitat for several species of gamefish. Smallmouth bass are numerous in the rocky stretches of the river. Walleye are common and are often caught in large numbers below the dams in the spring.

NORTHERN PIKE ARE COMMON from Greene to the river's confluence with the West Fork. The largest concentrations of northern are found near the city of Shell Rock.

CHANNEL CATFISH ARE ABUNDANT in the deep pools of the river and in numerous log jams throughout the river's course.

### SHELL ROCK RIVER Rockford to Janesville

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Rockford Park	Rockford
10 miles	2. Marble Rock Access	W edge Marble Rock
2.6 miles	3. Gates Bridge	2 mi SE Marble Rock
5 miles	4. Perrin Park	Greene
.5 mile	5. Greene Recreational Park	Greene
5.4 miles	6. Camp Comfort	4 mi SE Greene
10.5 miles	7. Heery Woods State Park	SW edge Clarksville
.5 mile	8. Butler County HQ	.5 mi S Clarksville
8.1 miles	9. Shell Rock Park	N edge Shell Rock
1 mile	10. Shell Rock City Park	S edge Shell Rock
9.1 miles	11. Shell Rock Access	2 mi W Janesville
3 miles	12. Washington-Union Access	3 mi SW Janesville

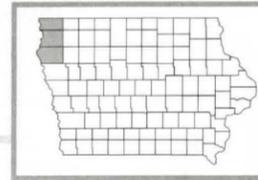


## BIG SIOUX RIVER

### Larchwood to Sioux City

WHERE CAN ONE FLOAT a remote river—past cactus-covered rock and ledges more than a billion years old, over frontier stagecoach crossings, sites of massive Sioux encampments, a pioneer grist mill, mill dam and mill pond—through waters once scoured for pearls and gold? On extreme northwestern Iowa's Big Sioux River, of course.

THE BIG SIOUX RIVER starts its journey southward from northeastern South Dakota through broad hills and wide valleys. South of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where the river forms the Iowa-South Dakota boundary, the



valley deepens and becomes narrower. Pasture and range land predominate with cultivated land restricted to upland areas. The upland varies from gentle slopes to hilly and broken terrain. From Hawarden, Iowa to the confluence with the Missouri River near Sioux City, the valley broadens, forming level farmland with a backdrop of hills. The channel in this river reach exhibits the well-defined meanders of age. River gradients range from two feet to one-half foot per mile, creating a fairly sluggish stream—especially in the lower reaches. Some canoeing skills are necessary to enjoy a Big Sioux River trip and two portages, one at Klondike and one at Canton, are required.

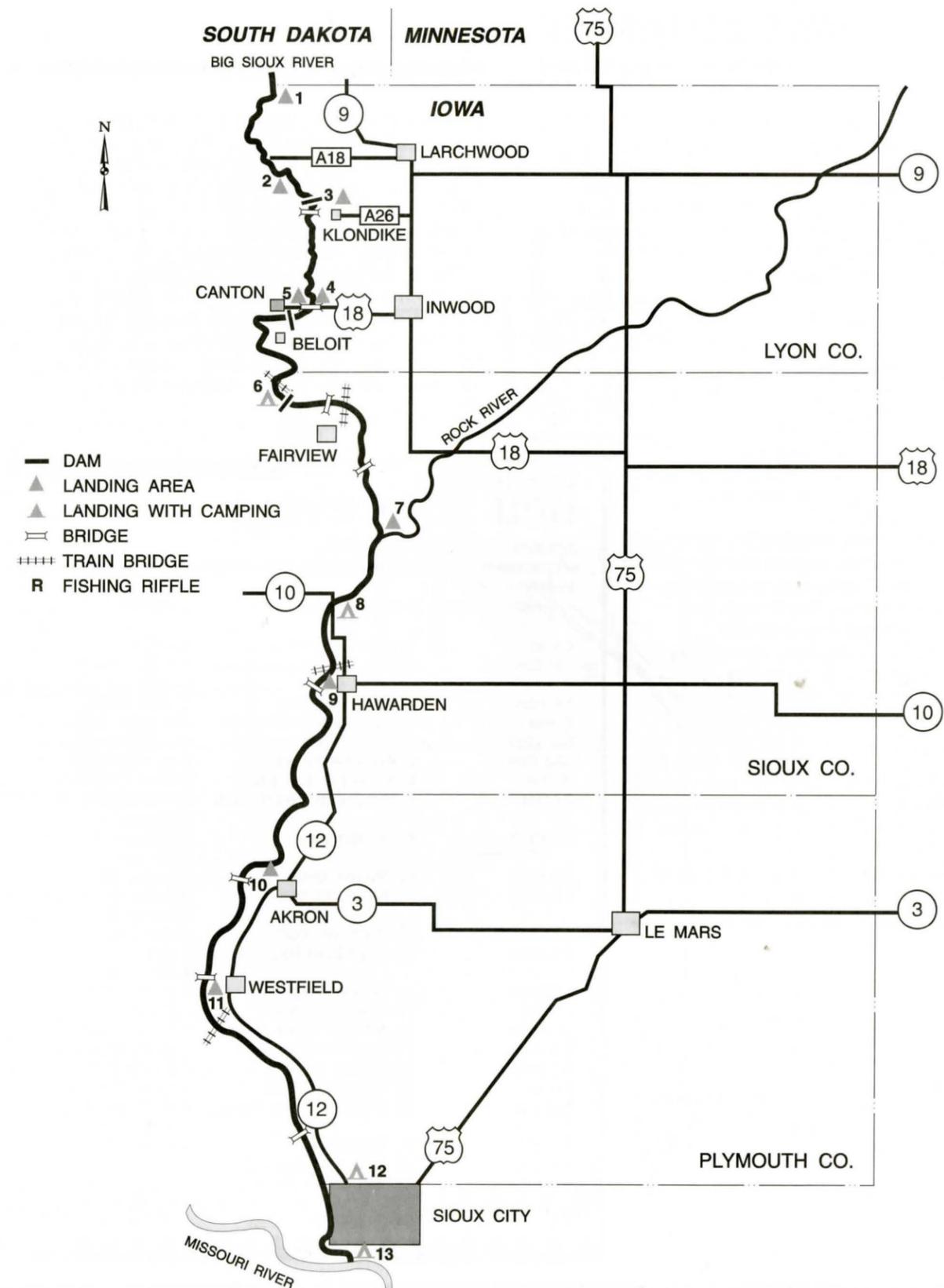
HISTORIANS HAVE RECORDED that early settlers described the Big Sioux as a clean, clear water stream. However, like many Iowa streams, it has undergone rapid changes as a result of human influence. Stream habitat and water quality have taken the brunt of civilization's blow. However, in recent years, through the continuing efforts of concerned citizens and governmental agencies, the problem of point source pollution has been greatly reduced. The result—substantially better water quality.

A VARIETY OF ANGLING opportunities exist for the Big Sioux River traveler. Channel catfish is "king of the river" with walleye and northern pike providing some excitement, particularly in the upper reaches of river that border Sioux and Lyon counties. A flathead catfish and an occasional sauger may surprise an angler in the lower sections of river below Klondike. Smallmouth bass have been stocked in the Big Sioux to enhance the variety of fishing opportunities.

## BIG SIOUX RIVER

### Larchwood to Sioux City

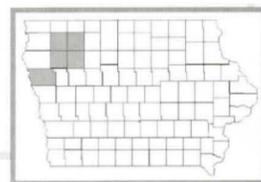
Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Gitchie Manitou	8 mi W, 3 mi N Larchwood
8 miles	2. Hidden Bridge Area	6 mi W, 1 mi S Larchwood
7 miles	3. Klondike River Access	6 mi N, 5 mi W Inwood
8 miles	4. Big Sioux Wildlife Area (Hwy. 18 Bridge)	7 mi W Inwood
4 miles	5. Canton, South Dakota	1 mi E, 1 mi S Canton, SD
9 miles	6. Newton Hills State Park Bridge (A50)	1 mi W Beloit
18 miles	7. Rock-Sioux Access	7 mi N Hawarden
3 miles	8. Oak Grove State Park	6 mi N Hawarden
7 miles	9. Carr's Landing	Hawarden
19 miles	10. Big Sioux Park Access	1 mi N Akron
18 miles	11. Millsite Access	1 mi W Westfield
32 miles	12. Stone State Park	NW edge Sioux City
5 miles	13. Riverside Park (Sioux City Access)	N edge Sioux City



## LITTLE SIOUX RIVER Spencer to Smithland

THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT MAKE A STREAM attractive to the canoeist. Among them are good fishing and interesting local history. In both of these respects, the Little Sioux, from Spencer to Smithland, is outstanding.

IT IS ONE OF THE TOP-NOTCH catfishing streams in the state, with all the characteristics of a catfish-lover's paradise. However, walleye and northern pike are concentrated at collection



spots like dams and rock riffles during spring movements.

THE STORY OF HUMAN HABITATION in the Little Sioux's valleys goes back to the distant past and is only now becoming perfectly known. In the time of the early French traders, the river was important in the fur trade and was the route of the plains Indians to the pipestone quarries of Minnesota. Archaeologists have established the existence of the so-called Mill Creek Indian Culture in the valley more than 700 years ago in 1200 A.D. Recent discoveries indicate that humans inhabited the valley long before that — perhaps 4,000 years ago.

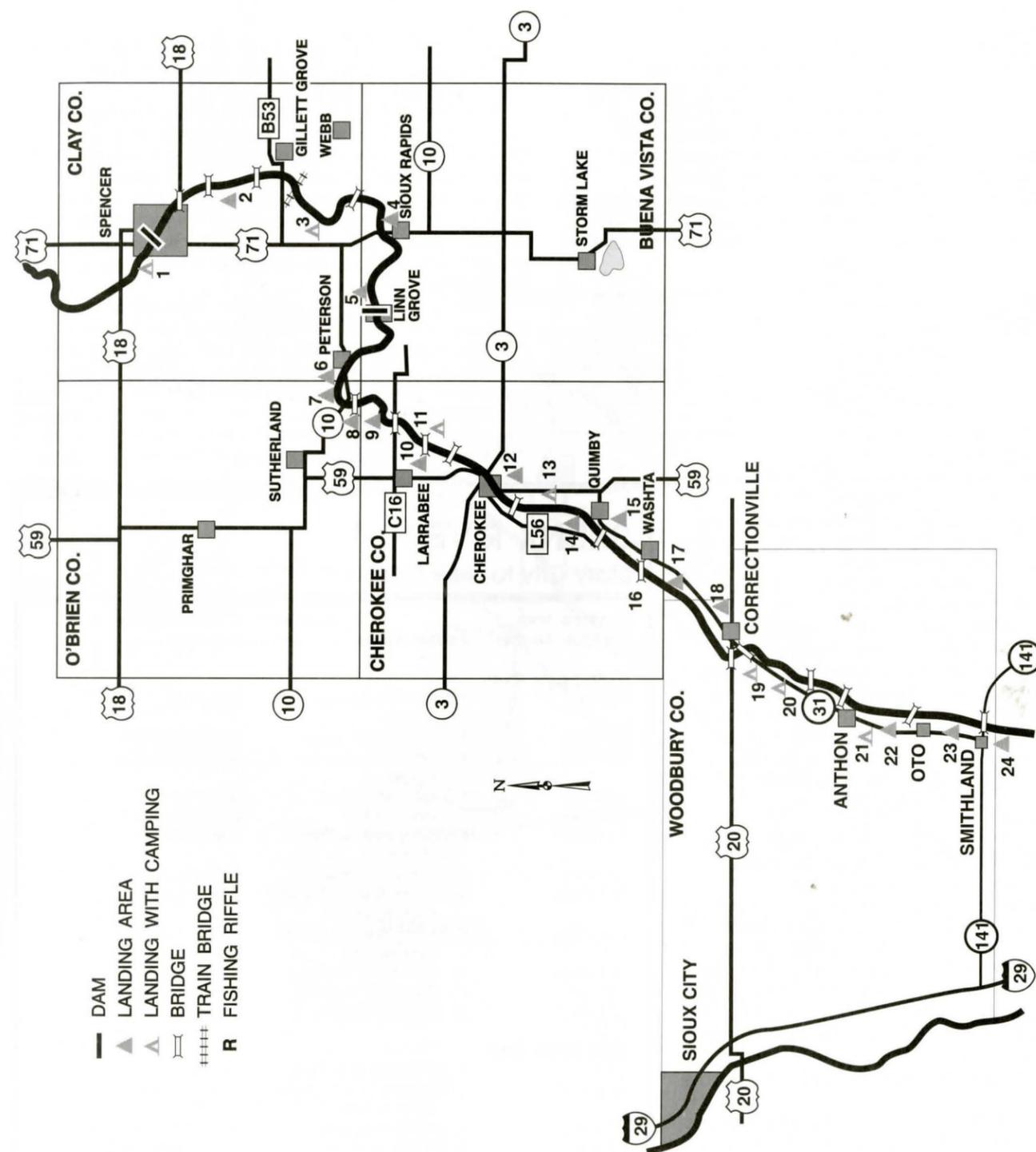
THE LITTLE SIOUX VALLEY is also one of geological interest. Marked at

different points are the western limits of three glacial advances of the Wisconsin, the last major glacial period. Pilot Rock, a huge boulder deposited by one of these great ice sheets, is three miles south of Cherokee. This rock has been a trail marker for prairie travelers since prehistoric times and has given the Little Sioux the name of Woven Rock River.

THE RIVER ITSELF IS A TYPICAL prairie stream, sharply meandering, with a sand, mud and gravel bottom and high mud banks throughout most of its course. The rate of fall averages only about two feet per mile, and the current is quite slow. The stream seldom exceeds 100 feet in width.

### Canoeing the LITTLE SIOUX RIVER Spencer to Smithland

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. West Leach Park	Spencer
12 miles	2. Little Sioux Wildlife Area	1 mi W, 2 mi N Gillett Grove
10 miles	3. Kindlespire Park	5 mi W Webb
7 miles	4. Sioux Rapids City Park	NW edge Sioux Rapids
8.5 miles	5. Linn Grove Dam Park	N edge Linn Grove
12.5 miles	6. Riverside Access	1 mi W Peterson
3 miles	7. Burned Out Bridge	5 mi W, 1 mi N Peterson
2 miles	8. Old Dutch Fred Access	5 mi W, 1 mi S, 1/2 mi E Peterson
6.2 miles	9. Soo Access	4 mi E and 3/4 mi N Larabee
2.1 miles	10. Nelson Area	4 mi E Larabee
1.2 miles	11. Martin Access	4 mi E and 3/4 mi S Larabee
11.1 miles	12. Westcott Park	S side Cherokee
9.4 miles	13. Silver Sioux Rec. Area	6 mi S, 2 mi W, 3/4 mi N Cherokee
1.3 miles	14. Pearse Area	2 mi NE Quimby
3 miles	15. Quimby Bridge	1/2 mi N Quimby
8.8 miles	16. Ranney Knob	1/2 mi W Washta
2.5 miles	17. Washta Area	1 mi S Washta
5.6 miles	18. Walling Access	1/8 mi N Correctionville
2 miles	19. Copeland Park	1 mi W Correctionville
2.9 miles	20. Little Sioux Park Access	1 mi W and 1-1/2 mi S Correctionville
8.2 miles	21. Stahl Park	Anthon
3.4 miles	22. County Bridge Access	1-3/4 S Anthon
9 miles	23. Inkpadata Access	1-1/2 N and 1 E Smithland
2.5 miles	24. Smithland Access	1/4 E Smithland

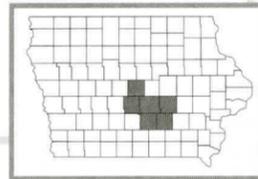


## SKUNK RIVER

### Story City to New Sharon

THE SKUNK RIVER carves a wide-water course as it flows southeasterly across Iowa. Beginning in north-central Hamilton County, it picks up runoff from portions of 19 counties before emptying into the Mississippi River in Lee County.

THE STREAM OFFERS a wide variety of recreational opportunities along its 361-mile course. Its 4,355-square-mile drainage places it fourth among the 38 major drainages in Iowa, so the potential for outdoor activity is significant.



The North Skunk, South Skunk and Cedar Creek are three principal tributaries of the Skunk River.

PICNICKING, CANOEING, BOATING, sightseeing, hunting and fishing are the major recreational activities enjoyed by people who visit the Skunk River. The river offers a great place to relax and enjoy the basin's natural beauty. A trip to any portion of the Skunk River system can send visitors back with renewed enthusiasm. There are numerous access points along the Skunk River system offering visitors a wide choice of canoeing experiences. The basin of the Skunk River contains many stands of timber along the steep upland, while agricultural lands dominate the flat upper plains and lower floodplain.

THE UPPER REACH OF THE South Skunk River between Story City and Ames is perhaps the most heavily used by canoeists as the river winds down through a greenbelt. A number of accesses provide canoeists with a variety of trip options, from just a few hours per trip to an all-day affair. There is one fishing riffle at Soper's Mill which is easily negotiated and two dams at Ames. The upper reach has a limited fishery, but opportunities are there for anglers seeking smallmouth bass and channel catfish.

THE LOWER STRETCH of the South Skunk River is wider and slower. There are also fewer access points along this stretch of the river until the river winds through Mahaska County, near Oskaloosa. This

stretch of river offers canoeists a larger river experience, with slower, shallower sections and snags and sandbars throughout.

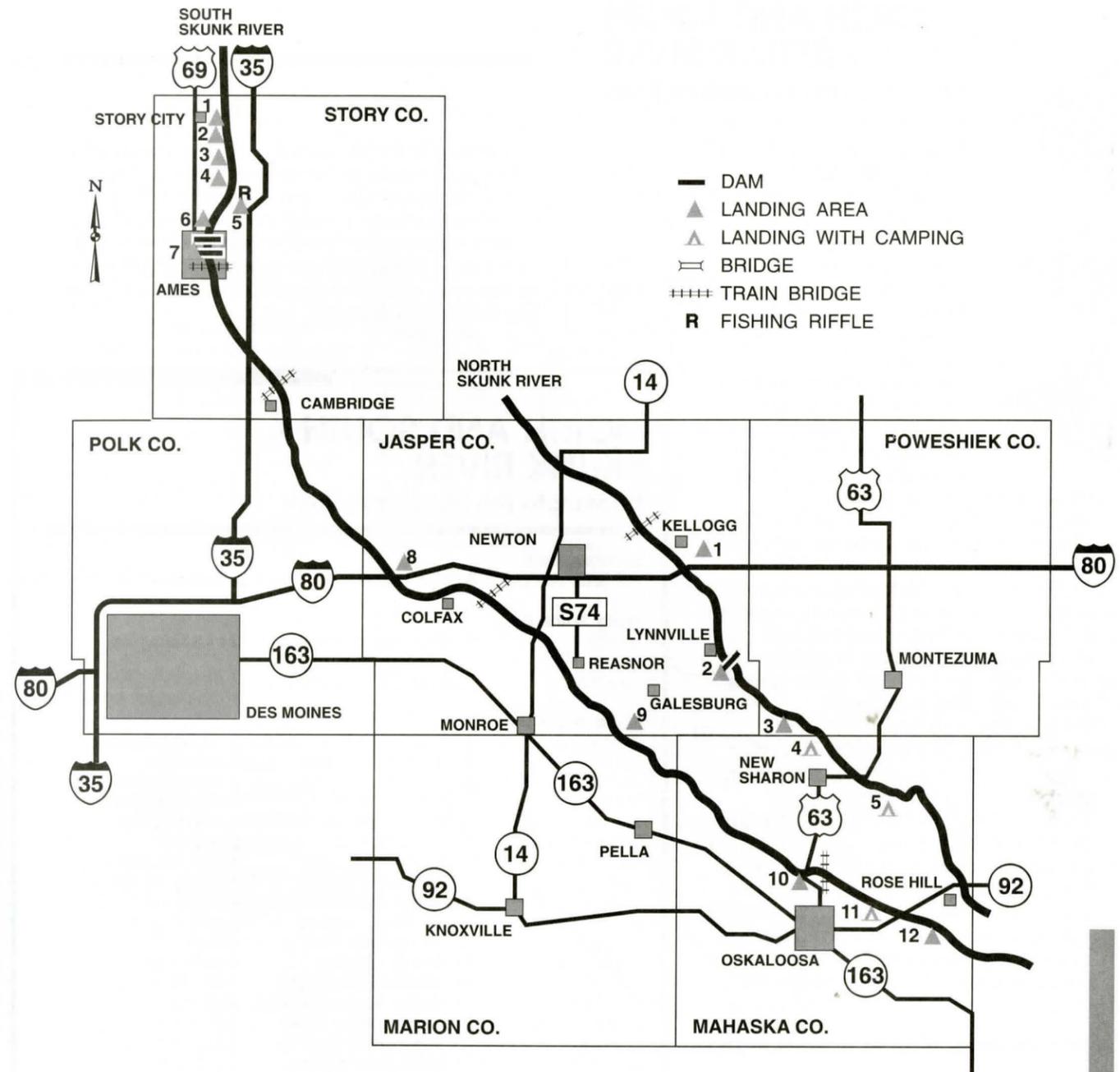
A SECOND MAJOR TRIBUTARY is the North Skunk River. The stretch above Kellogg is seldom used due to its size. The area from Kellogg to the Wagaman Mill at Lynnville is an enjoyable cruise along a smaller stream environment. Similarly, there are several access points in southern Poweshiek and Mahaska counties along the North Skunk River, and this section provides an alternative to the larger South Skunk River.

FISHING IS A MAJOR attraction throughout the Skunk River. The river offers habitat for channel catfish, flathead catfish, bullhead, carp, crappie, sunfish and bass, among others. The angler should be prepared with a variety of bait and tackle. Numerous snags, particularly in the lower reaches of the river, are prime habitat for many species as are the riffle-pool areas in the upper stretch of the river.

## SKUNK RIVER

### Story City to New Sharon

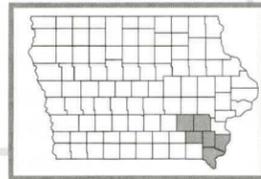
Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
<b>South Skunk River</b>		
0 miles	1. Story City Canoe Access	Story City
3.6 miles	2. Lekwa Canoe Access	1 mi S Story City
3.3 miles	3. Anderson's Canoe Access	4 mi S Story City
3.4 miles	4. Sopers Mill Area	3 mi N, 3 mi E Ames
1.3 miles	5. Peterson's Pits	2 mi N, 2 mi E Ames
3.4 miles	6. Sleepy Hollow River Access	1 mi N Ames
3.2 miles	7. River Valley Park	13th St., Ames
32.4 miles	8. Oswald Bridge, Skunk River Access	3 mi W Colfax
27.7 miles	9. Beyer's Bridge, Skunk River Access	1 mi S, 1 mi W, 1/2 mi S Galesburg
25.3 miles	10. City Water Works	3 mi N Oskaloosa
3.6 miles	11. Glendale Access	4 mi NE Oskaloosa
8.1 miles	12. Rose Hill Access	1-1/2 mi S Rose Hill
<b>North Skunk River</b>		
0 miles	1. Holmdahl City Park	Kellogg
13.2 miles	2. Wagaman Mill, Skunk River Access	N edge Lynnville
8.1 miles	3. Millgrove Access	7 mi NW New Sharon
2.4 miles	4. Robertson Access	3 mi N New Sharon
9 miles	5. Union Mill Access	4 mi E, 1-1/2 mi S New Sharon



## NORTH AND SOUTH SKUNK RIVER

### Keokuk to the Mississippi River

THE SKUNK RIVER BEGINS to take on the character of one of Iowa's largest rivers as it flows through Keokuk County where the smaller North Skunk River joins the South Skunk River. The river meanders freely for most of its 100 miles through farmland and wooded



THE SKUNK RIVER, as any river, should be enjoyed with caution and great respect. Be cautious of the river in times of high water. The river can rise as much as five feet or more in a few hours during or after a heavy rain. The strong currents and debris can cause a very dangerous situation. Be respectful of the river, others who use it and the people who live along its shores.

areas into the Mississippi River.

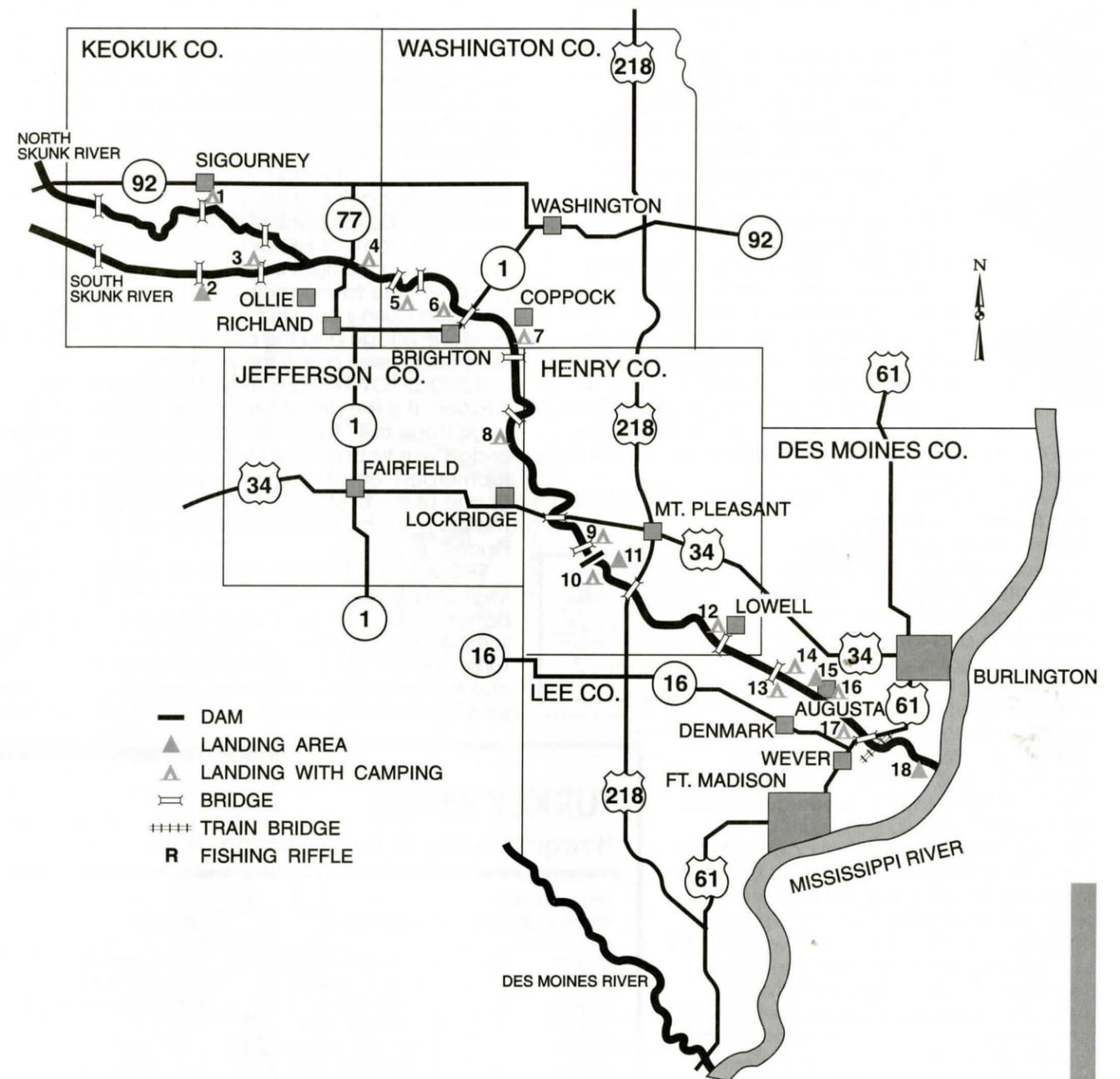
THE SHORELINE OF NEARLY every stretch and bend of the river is littered with fallen trees, creating excellent habitat for a variety of species. Many flathead catfish, weighing more than 50 pounds, are taken each year and channel catfish and carp are in abundance. Other less common species that are of interest to the angler are bullheads and walleyes.

OAKLAND MILLS DAM, a popular recreation area four miles southwest of Mt. Pleasant, is a relaxing place to visit. Camping is provided by the Henry County Conservation Board. Restaurant facilities and a store are located right on the river. The dam is a natural place for fish to congregate, and the tailwaters area provides excellent fishing for carp, catfish and walleye. Often, anglers can be seen fishing from boats, the shore, the dam or wading in the riffles below the dam.

## NORTH AND SOUTH SKUNK RIVER

### Keokuk to the Mississippi River

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
<b>North Skunk River</b>		
0 miles	1. Checawqua River Access (North Skunk)	2 mi S Sigourney
23.6 miles	4. Skunk River Access	4 mi N Richland
<b>South Skunk River</b>		
0 miles	2. South Skunk River Access	6-1/2 mi S Sigourney
6.6 miles	3. Manhattan Bridge	3 mi N Ollie
13.1 miles	4. Skunk River Access	4 mi N Richland
9.4 miles	5. McKain Access	6 mi NW Brighton
8 miles	6. Brighton Access	1 mi N Brighton
7.9 miles	7. Coppock Access	Coppock
10.5 miles	8. MacCoon Access	4 mi N Lockridge
16.2 miles	9. Waterworks Access	4 mi SW Mt. Pleasant
.5 mile	10. Oakland Mills Access	4 mi SW Mt. Pleasant
1.5 miles	11. Faulkner's Access	1 mi E Oakland Mills
14.3 miles	12. Stephenson Park	Lowell
5 miles	13. Gray's Landing	4 mi NW Denmark
4.8 miles	14. Upper Skunk River Access	1 mi NW Augusta
1.9 miles	15. Welter Recreation Park	Augusta
.5 mile	16. Lower Skunk River Access	1/2 mi E Augusta
3.5 miles	17. Indian Path Park	1-1/2 mi NE Wever
3.3 miles	18. Skunk River Access	5 mi NE Wever



## TURKEY RIVER

### Howard County to the Mississippi River

THE TURKEY RIVER IS a large stream flowing through Howard, Winneshiek, Fayette and Clayton counties. It flows into the Mississippi River just below Guttenberg in northeast Iowa. Most of the stream has a wide, well-worn valley with long, scenic vistas from most high points along the stream.

THE UPPER SEGMENTS of the Turkey in Howard and Fayette counties flow through relatively flat terrain, typical of a prairie stream. As the river picks up volume in eastern Fayette County, it becomes faster and bound into a distinct valley with bordering limestone bluffs. In the section below Elkport,

the valley widens and the current slows as the river nears its junction with the big river.

FISHING ON THE TURKEY is good at most locations.

Look for areas with hard, stable bottom types avoiding the heavily silt- and sand-laden segments downstream. Above Elkader, angling is limited to smallmouth and rock bass.

Trout are occasionally taken in the upper section from the mouth of tributary coldwater streams or below the Big Springs Trout Rearing Station.

Below Elkader, anglers will find channel catfish.

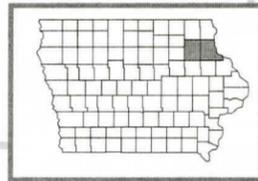
THE TURKEY HAS NO dangerous rapids, but canoeists should be aware of occasional fallen trees that can easily flip the unwary paddler. The Turkey River is a non-meandered stream above Elkader which means the river bottom is private property. Occasionally, landowners need to control livestock on both sides of the river and may install fences across the path of your canoe. You must respect the landowners' property and negotiate the fences with care.

THE TRIP FROM GOULDSBURG Park north of Hawkeye to Eldorado is a very pleasant float on the Little Turkey River, a major tributary to the Turkey. This stream is smaller in size but offers excellent smallmouth and rock bass fishing. Canoeing this part of the upper river may be difficult in late summer or other low water periods.

FROM ELDORADO TO ELKPORT, the river is larger and has a more developed valley. The flow is faster and more reliable throughout the summer. The Big Springs Trout Rearing Station is located in this segment and makes an enjoyable stop. There is one dam in Clermont and two in Elkader that are not navigable. The dam in Clermont has a take-out on the right bank in a city park, and a downstream access on the left bank about two blocks below the dam. The dams at Elkader should both be portaged on the right bank noting the route takes you down the town's main street which may be crowded during busy traffic periods. The old stone keystone bridge and the county courthouse are points of interest along the portage.

THE OLD TOWN OF MOTOR IS located below Elkader. It is the site of an old iron bridge and a large stone mill. The town has disappeared and the bridge was washed out in a flood (be alert for submerged remains), but the stone building survives as one of the best examples of rustic mills in Iowa. This old mill is on the National Register of Historic Places.

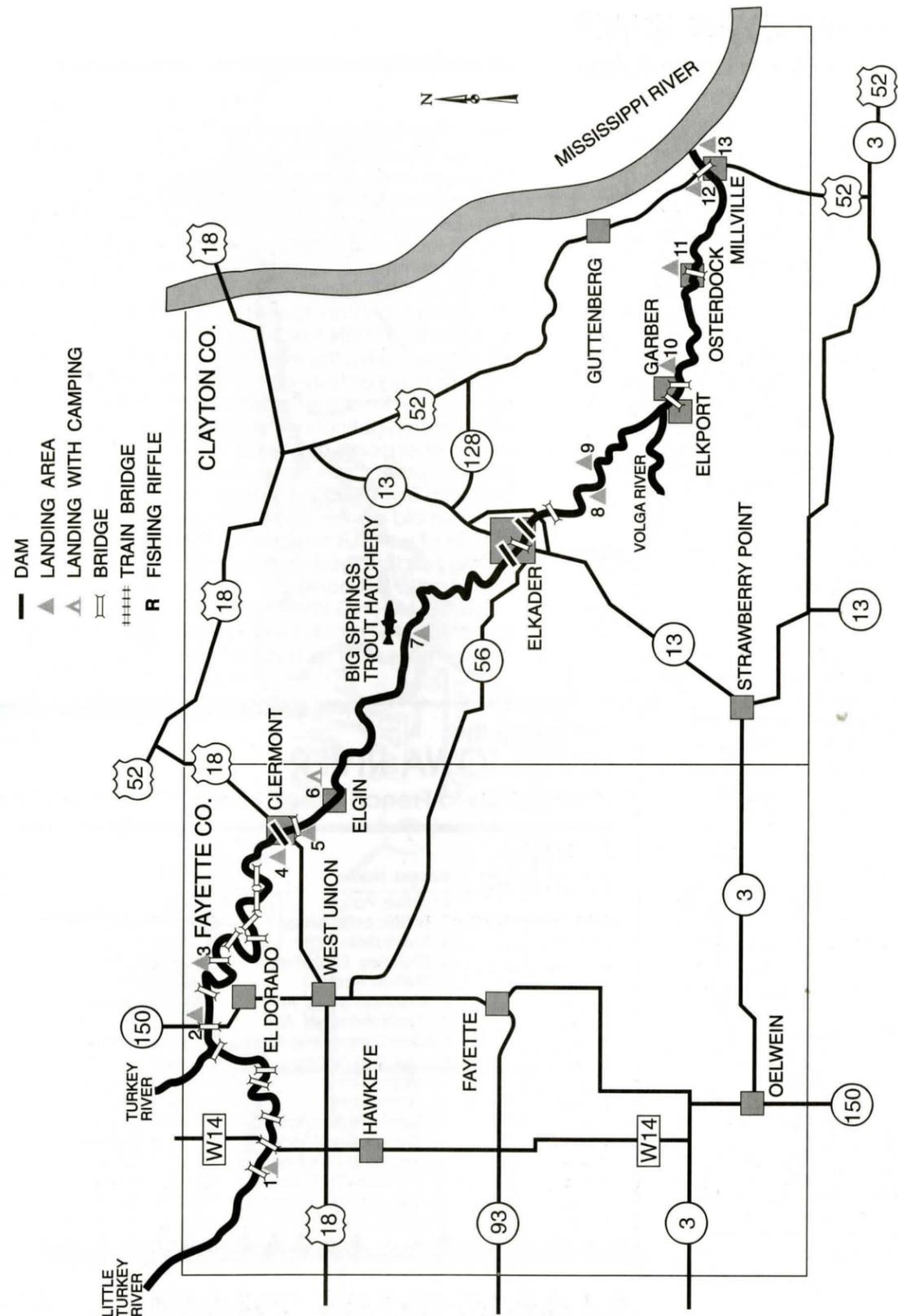
FROM GARBER TO THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, the Turkey River changes to a much slower, wider stream. The bottom accumulates greater amounts of silt and sand and the current slows to a crawl in spots. The Turkey River Access is on the right bank about one-half mile below the point where the Turkey River joins the Mississippi River.



## TURKEY RIVER

### Howard County to the Mississippi River

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Gouldsburg Park	5 mi N Hawkeye
11 miles	2. Eldorado Bridge	W edge Eldorado
6 miles	3. W42 Bridge	5 mi E Eldorado
14 miles	4. Clermont Park	Clermont
2 miles	5. Turkey River Acc. (W51)	1 mi S Clermont
2 miles	6. Gilbertson Park	E edge Elgin
11 miles	7. Frieden Park	6 mi NW Elkader
6 miles	8. Turkey River Park	1 mi S Elkader
5 miles	9. Motor Mill Access	5 mi SE Elkader
12 miles	10. Garber Bridge	S edge Garber
7 miles	11. Osterdock Bridge	Osterdock
6 miles	12. Millville Bridge	Millville
5 miles	13. Turkey River Access	4 mi E Millville on Mississippi River



## UPPER IOWA RIVER

### Lime Springs to French Creek Bridge

THE UPPER IOWA RIVER flows nearly parallel to the Iowa-Minnesota border through Howard, Winneshiek and Allamakee counties in the northeast corner of our state. It is one of the most scenic rivers in the country and the high spot of Iowa canoeing and tubing. The river varies from an open prairie setting in its upper reaches to a narrow, winding stream with 400-foot vertical bluffs further down. The Upper Iowa has many coldwater trout streams as tributaries and several scenic springs that flow directly into it.

FISHING ON THE UPPER IOWA is excellent. Anglers will find smallmouth bass, rock bass

and an occasional trout throughout the entire river segment. Channel catfish, walleye, sauger and northern pike also populate the lower river. Many of the public canoe access points noted here provide fishing access as well.

Anglers should note that heavy canoe and tube activity can affect fishing success, particularly for smallmouth bass. Anglers will have better success on the lower river below Decorah during heavy-use periods such as summer weekends.

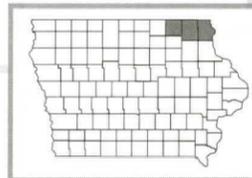
THE RIVER HAS NO dangerous rapids, but users should be aware of occasional fallen trees that can easily flip the unwary canoeist. The river is classified as a non-meandered stream through all but the last nine miles of its course. This means the river bottom is private property through a majority of its run. Many landowners need to control their livestock on both sides of the river and may install fences across the path of your canoe. Respect the landowners' property and negotiate their fences with care.

FROM LIME SPRINGS to Florenceville, the river is a typical prairie stream with low cut-banks and an indistinct valley. The

river valley becomes more distinct and formed toward Kendallville where the current begins to pick up speed and volume, and the scenery becomes more typical of the Upper Iowa. Within this segment from Kendallville to Bluffton, the rock formation known locally as "chimney rock" is located. Just below town is a unique balsam fir stand. Canoeing any part of this upper river may be difficult later in the summer or other low-water periods.

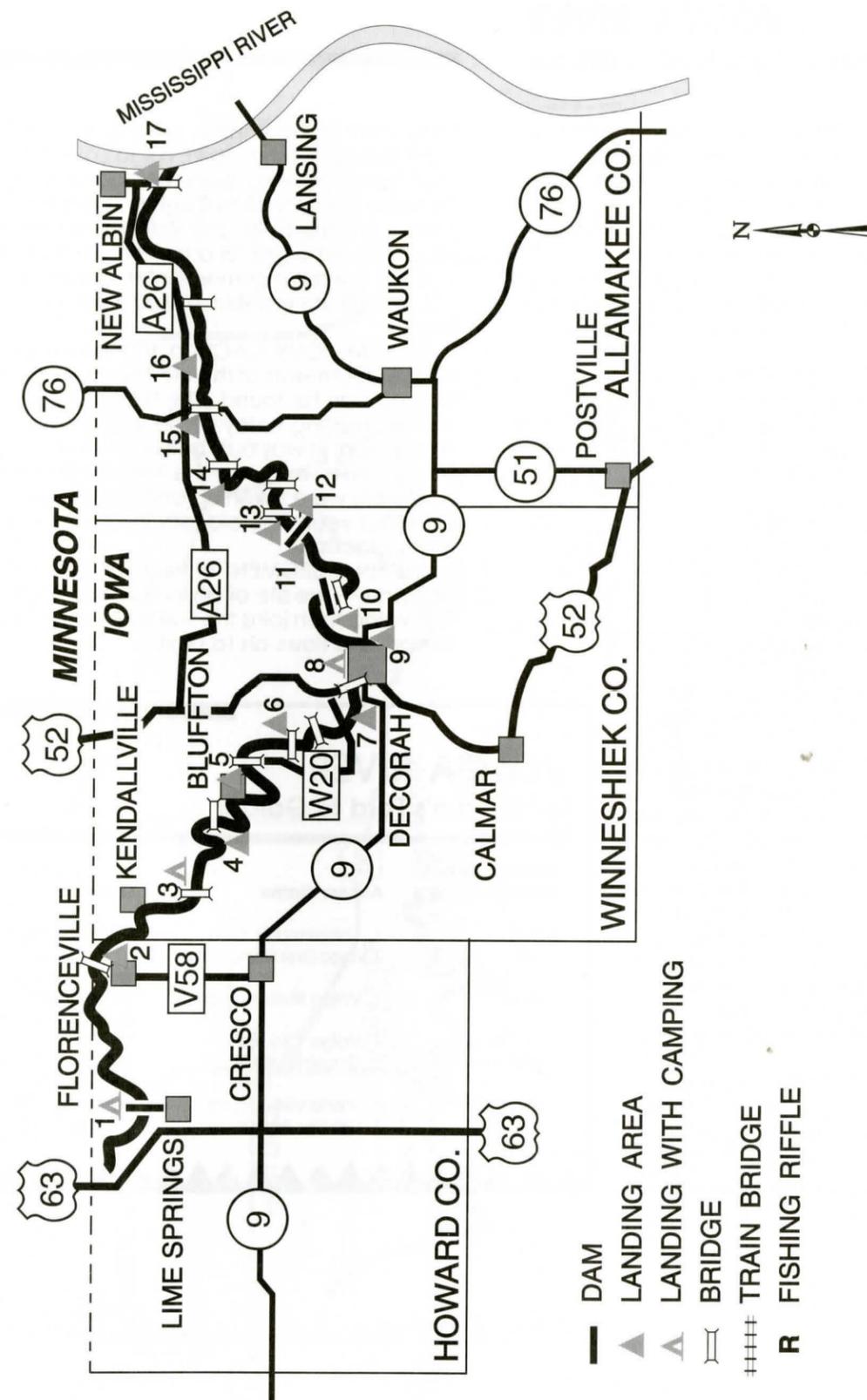
FROM BLUFFTON THROUGH Decorah, to the upper and lower dams, the river valley widens and has more farming activity along its banks. This segment contains Malanaphy and Dunning springs, worthwhile highlights within walking distance of the river. Other points of interest in the Decorah vicinity include Luther College, several museums and the Decorah Trout Rearing Station. The section ends with two old power dams, the upper and the lower, neither of which is navigable. The upper dam should be portaged on the right bank and the lower dam on the left bank.

THE REMAINING RIVER SECTION runs from the lower dam to French Creek Bridge. It contains the most remote settings and best fishing on the river.



### Canoeing the UPPER IOWA RIVER Lime Springs to French Creek Bridge

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Lidtke Park	N edge Lime Springs
13 miles	2. Florenceville Bridge	S edge Florenceville
11 miles	3. Kendallville Park	N edge Kendallville
11 miles	4. Chimney Rock Park	2.5 mi N Bluffton
4 miles	5. Bluffton Access	.5 mi E Bluffton
8 miles	6. Malanaphy Sp. Acc.	3 mi NW Decorah
5 miles	7. Chattahoochie Acc.	W edge Decorah
1 mile	8. Baker/Campground Acc.	SW edge Decorah
3 miles	9. Trout Run Access	SE edge Decorah
8 miles	10. Upper Dam	6 mi NE Decorah
4 miles	11. Lower Dam	10 mi NE Decorah
1 mile	12. Lundy Bridge Acc.	10 mi NE Decorah
4 miles	13. Canoe Creek Acc.	11 mi NE Decorah
10 miles	14. Iverson Bridge Acc.	11 mi NW Waukon
5 miles	15. Highway 76 Access	10 mi N Waukon
3 miles	16. Upper Iowa Access	9 mi SW New Albin
12 miles	17. Black Hawk Point	1.5 mi S New Albin



## VOLGA RIVER

### Langeman's Ford to Garber

THE VOLGA RIVER is a tributary of the Turkey River. It rises in Fayette County and joins the larger stream at Elkport in Clayton County. The Volga is a beautiful little stream, flowing through a deep, narrow valley bounded by high rolling hills and steep rock bluffs. In many places, the rugged scenery rivals that of the Upper Iowa.

BECAUSE THE VOLGA is a small stream, the water level can fluctuate rapidly. Be alert for sudden storms that may cause unexpected rises in river levels.

Paddlers should

also be aware of low water conditions occurring in late summer, particularly in the upper reaches of the river.

FISHING THE VOLGA is typical of other northeastern Iowa streams — smallmouth and rock bass in the upper sections with channel catfish further downstream.

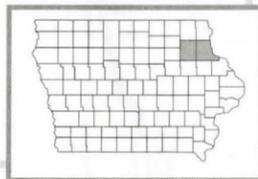
THE RIVER HAS NO dangerous rapids or dams to portage, but users should be aware of occasional fallen trees that can easily flip the unwary canoeist. The river is also classified as a non-meandered stream throughout its course. This means the river bottom is private property. Landowners occasionally need to control their livestock on both sides of the river and may install fences across the path of your canoe or tube. Respect the landowners' property and negotiate their fences with care.

THE UPPER RIVER SEGMENT starts just east of Fayette at Langeman's Ford. The river curves north and west into the expansive Volga Lake Recreation Area.

Here you'll find camping, equestrian trails, hiking, sight-seeing and fishing in Volga Lake. The river then turns eastward toward Wadena, Volga and the Osborne Conservation Center. The latter is a highlight of any trip down the Volga and extra time should be set aside for a tour of the animal exhibit and the Iowa Welcome Center. Downstream, an old sawmill site is visible in Mederville on the right bank.

AT NUMEROUS PLACES along the lower river, bridge abutments of the old Milwaukee-Turkey railroad can be found. This branch ran up the narrow, twisting valley of the Volga from Garber to West Union. It was built between 1878 and 1882. The last train went over the line on February 2, 1938. The tracks were taken up and the bridges removed later that year. The old roadbed is still visible in many places.

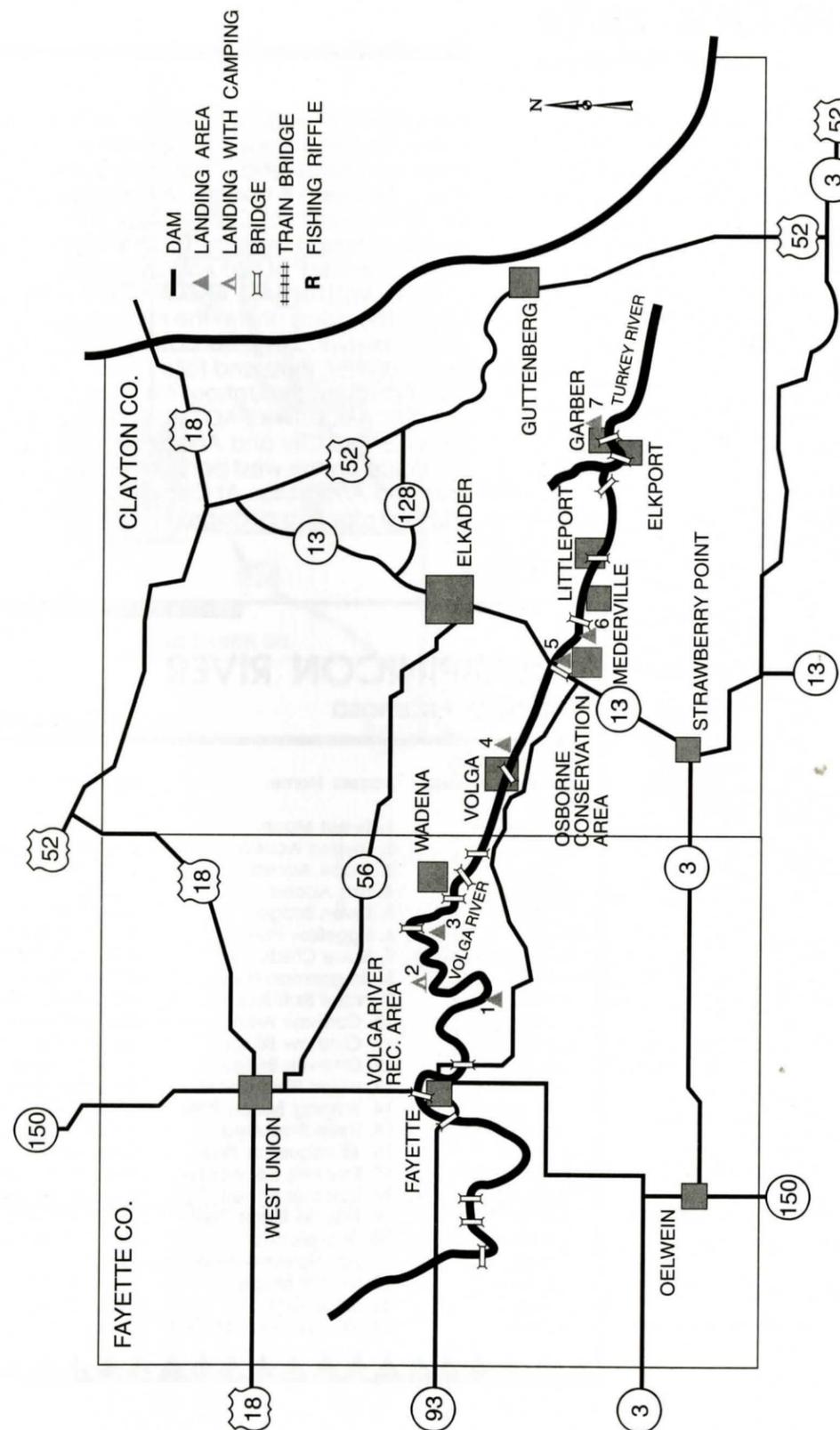
THE FINAL SEGMENT of the river flows through Littleport — the site of an Indian meeting ground. The Volga then joins the Turkey River just above Elkport and flows on to Garber.



## VOLGA RIVER

### Langeman's Ford to Garber

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Langeman's Ford	1.5 mi E Fayette
5 miles	2. Volga River Campground	Volga River Recreation Area
2 miles	3. Volga River Access	Volga River Recreation Area
16 miles	4. Volga City Park	Volga
8 miles	5. Osborne Access	Osborne Conservation Cntr.
4 miles	6. Mederville Access	Mederville
14 miles	7. Garber Bridge	S edge Garber

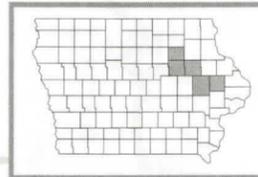


## WAPSIPINICON RIVER

### Tripoli to Anamosa

THE WAPSIPINICON RIVER BEGINS its trek in Mower County, Minnesota and empties into the Mississippi River 255 miles later near Clinton, Iowa. The stretch of river that flows through Mitchell, Howard and Chickasaw counties is too small to support large populations of gamefish or float a canoe during normal water levels.

FROM TRIPOLI TO INDEPENDENCE, the "Wapsi" winds its way through a flat valley with many ponds, marshes and backwater areas along its path.



Some of the last major stands of river birch in Iowa line its banks, making this a scenic stretch of river to canoe. This entire stretch of river has been designated a Protected Water Area by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources because of its outstanding scenic and natural qualities. During the spring and fall, large numbers of waterfowl can be seen in this area due to its proximity to the Sweet Marsh Wildlife area near Tripoli and the extensive backwater areas.

NORTHERN PIKE ARE COMMON in the backwater areas of this river stretch. Channel catfish are very abundant and can be caught near the numerous log jams and trees that have fallen into the river. Smallmouth bass are also common in the rock riffle areas of the Wapsi.

THERE ARE TWO DAMS located on this stretch of the river, one at Littleton and the other at Independence. At Littleton, a portage can be made on the east bank of the river across county blacktop D16 to get below the dam. Due to the lack of a reasonable portage site, it is recommended that float trips are planned to end above Independence or start below Independence.

THE WAPSI, BELOW INDEPENDENCE,

flows slowly through a rough, heavily timbered valley. Its streambed is sandy with a few rocky riffle areas and deep pools. The most scenic stretch of river is between Waubeek, Anamosa and Pinicon Ridge Park north of Central City. Watch for the house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright operated by the Department of Natural Resources.

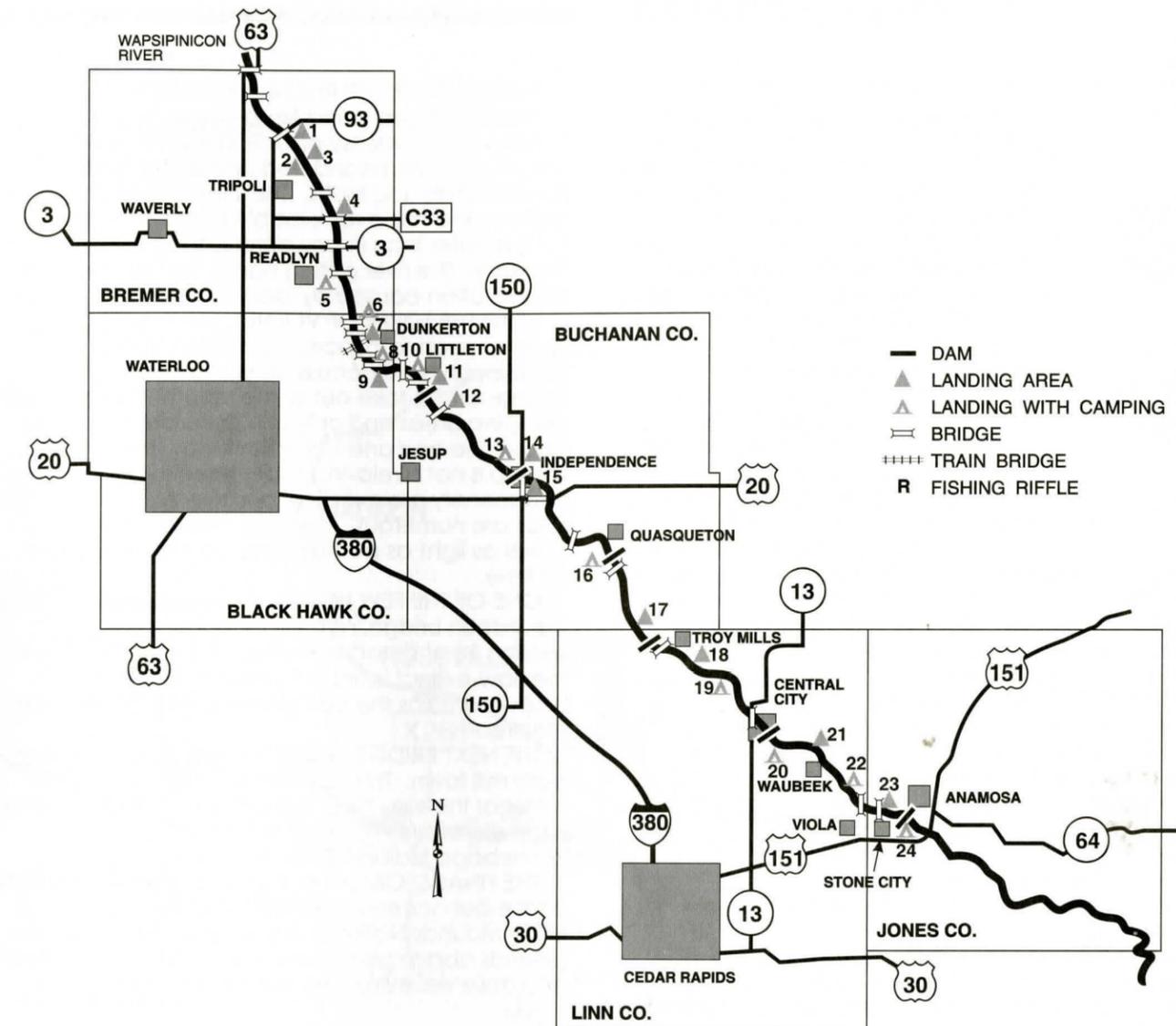
SMALLMOUTH BASS AND WALLEYE are common below the dams and in the rocky areas of this stretch of river. Channel catfish are common in the numerous log jams and fallen trees. Northern pike are also found throughout this stretch of river.

THERE ARE LOW-HEAD DAMS at Quasqueton, Troy Mills, Central City and Anamosa. Portages should be made on the west banks at Quasqueton, Troy Mills and Anamosa. At Central City, the east bank is the best place to portage.

## WAPSIPINICON RIVER

### Tripoli to Anamosa

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Sweet Marsh	2 mi NE Tripoli
.6 mile	2. Snyders Access	1 mi NE Tripoli
2.5 miles	3. Wapsi Access	1-1/2 mi E Tripoli
4.5 miles	4. Hay Access	4 mi SE Tripoli
11.5 miles	5. Seven Bridges	6 mi SE Readlyn
3 miles	6. Siggelkov Park	5 mi N Dunkerton
2 miles	7. Bruce Childs Area	4-1/2 mi NE Dunkerton
5 miles	8. Bruggeman Park	3-1/2 mi NE Dunkerton
4 miles	9. Wapsi Bluff Access	3-1/2 mi SE Dunkerton
3 miles	10. Cutshaw Area	2 mi NW Littleton
.5 mile	11. Cutshaw Bridge	4 mi N Jesup
5.5 miles	12. Otterville Bridge	5-1/2 mi NW Independence
3.5 miles	13. Wapsi River Access	1/2 mi N Independence
1.7 miles	14. Bathing Beach Park	Independence
2.5 miles	15. Three Elms Area	1 mi SE Independence
11 miles	16. Quasqueton Park	Quasqueton
8.5 miles	17. Troy Mills Co. Access	4 mi NW Troy Mills
5 miles	18. Troy Mills Access	E edge Troy Mills
8 miles	19. Pinicon Ridge Park	1 mi NW Central City
2.5 miles	20. Wapicada	1 mi S Central City
4 miles	21. Jay Sigmund Area	Waubeek
2.5 miles	22. Matsell Bridge	1/2 mi N Viola
2.5 miles	23. Stone City	Stone City
4.2 miles	24. Wapsipinicon St. Park	S edge Anamosa



## YELLOW RIVER

### Volney Bridge to Highway 76 Access

THE YELLOW RIVER is a small-stream tributary to the Mississippi River in Allamakee County. It is a short float trip offering beautiful rolling hills and steep bluffs for scenery, plus a rewarding look at some northeast Iowa history.

IN PREHISTORIC TIMES, INDIANS built burial mounds along the river to honor their dead. A very large concentration of mounds is found at the Effigy Mounds National Monument located at the mouth of the Yellow. French traders referred to the river by name as far back as the early 1700s. The first water mill in the

state was built along the river in the 1830s by Lt. Jefferson Davis, future President of the Confederacy. It was used to saw lumber for nearby Fort Crawford. Many businesses and towns flourished on the Yellow River, then disappeared. Canoeists may have a difficult time imagining the remote river valley as one of the "liveliest industrial vicinities west of the Mississippi."

SINCE THE YELLOW RIVER is a small stream, the water level can fluctuate rapidly. Users should be alert for sudden storms that may cause unexpected rises in water levels. Paddlers should also be aware of low water conditions, making travel difficult in late summer — particularly in the upper reaches of the river.

THE RIVER HAS NO dangerous rapids or dams to portage, but users should be aware of occasional fallen trees that can flip the unwary canoeist. The river is classified as a non-meandered stream throughout its course. This means the river bottom is private property. Landowners occasionally need to control their livestock on both sides of the river and may install fences across the path of your canoe or tube. Respect the landowners' property and negotiate their fences with care.

FISHING THE YELLOW RIVER is similar to fishing other northeastern Iowa streams. Smallmouth and rock bass can be found in the upper sections with channel catfish and other Mississippi River species found near the river's mouth.

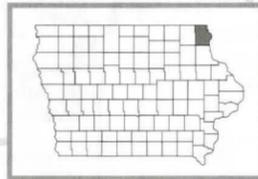
THE YELLOW RIVER RISES in southeastern Winneshiek County and flows across Allamakee County to the Mississippi. The stream valley is narrow, sharply meandered and bordered by timbered hills and bluffs. The stream itself is narrow, shallow and has a rock-rubble bottom. The rate of fall is greater than in any other canoeable stream in the state. The river gets its name "yellow" from the discoloration caused by local clay.

NEAR THE TOWN OF VOLNEY, the river becomes large enough to canoe. This stretch to the Mississippi has no access other than county road bridges and a take-out at the mouth. There are no camping areas and only one state-owned parcel about one and one-half miles below the bridge. The trip is not a relaxing experience, but the fishing and scenery are excellent and worth the effort. The riffles are numerous, requiring frequent walks. Travel as light as possible and don't short yourself on time.

ONE OF THE FEW ROAD crossings along the river is the Sixteen bridge, named for its location at Section 16 of Linton township. This is also the site of the now-extinct town of Buckland. The segment below contains the best smallmouth bass water on the stream.

THE NEXT BRIDGE MARKS the site of Ion, another early mill town. This segment contains the fastest water of the trip. Near the bottom of this fast water is the site of the old Davis Mill as well as the Winnebago Indian Mission School site.

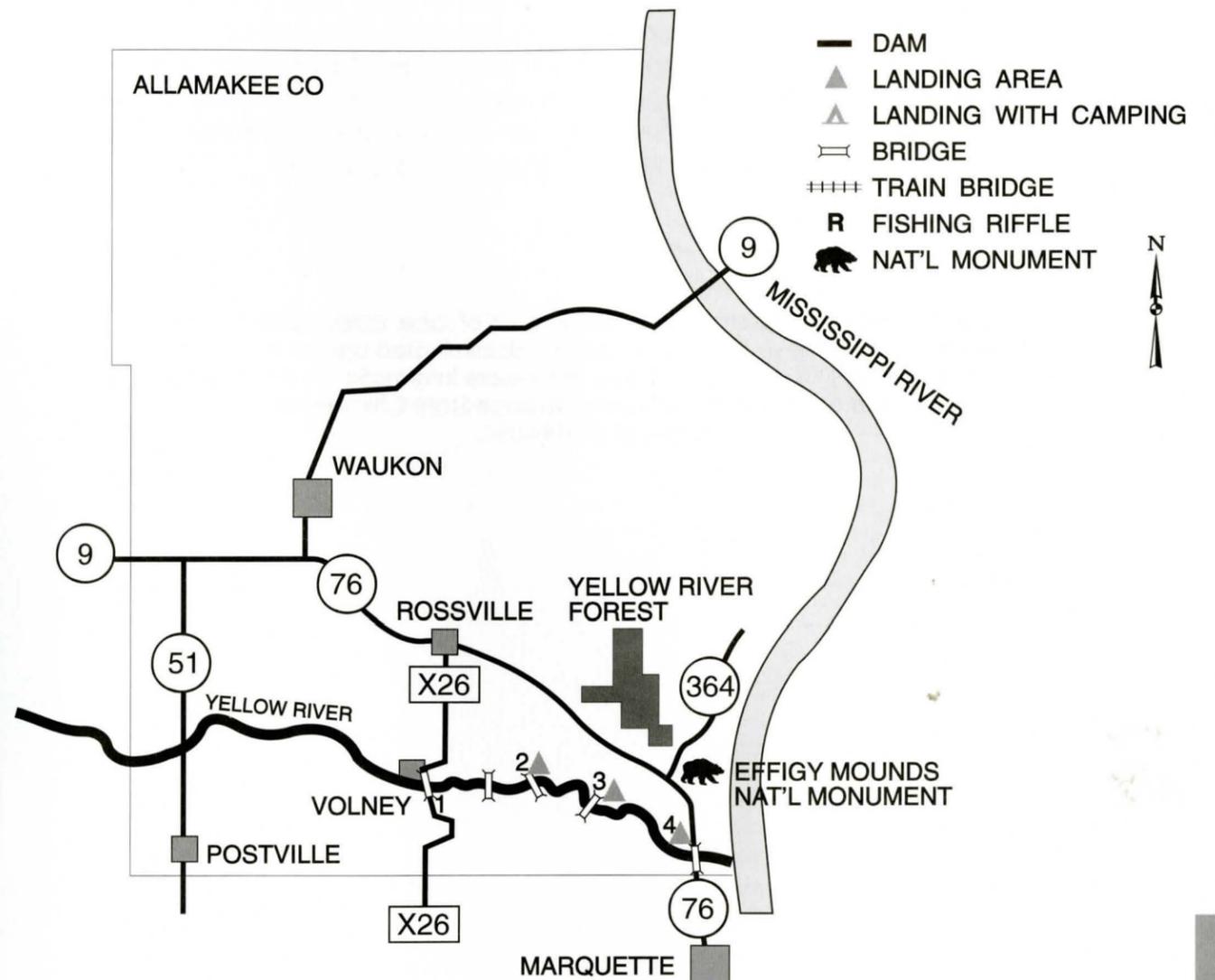
THE FINAL SEGMENT of the lower river leads you to a take-out access on the left, near the entrance to Effigy Mounds National Monument. This attraction extends above and below the mouth of the Yellow and deserves extra time to explore and enjoy.



## YELLOW RIVER

### Volney Bridge to Highway 76 Access

Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Volney Bridge	1 mi SW Volney
4 miles	2. Sixteen Bridge	3 mi E Volney
6 miles	3. Ion Bridge	9 mi E Volney
9 miles	4. Highway 76 Access	5 mi N Marquette



---

**CAUTION — LOWHEAD DAMS:** Lowhead dams are found on several of the float trips listed. The dams may vary in height from about one foot to several feet. Their only purpose is to provide a minimum upstream water level for water inlets or other purposes. Because the drop over a lowhead dam can be small, many paddlers and other boaters assume they can go over the dam with no danger. The upstream water circulation at the base of the dam tends to trap a boat against the face of the dam and hold it there. This circulation can be strong enough to pull a person in a life jacket under water. Locate any lowhead dams in your area of travel and stay away from them.

Federal regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility as described above, or for more information, write: Director, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0034.



Printed on Recycled paper



l.  
o  
e  
y  
e  
d

TM



STATE LIBRARY OF IOWA



3 1723 02058 0411