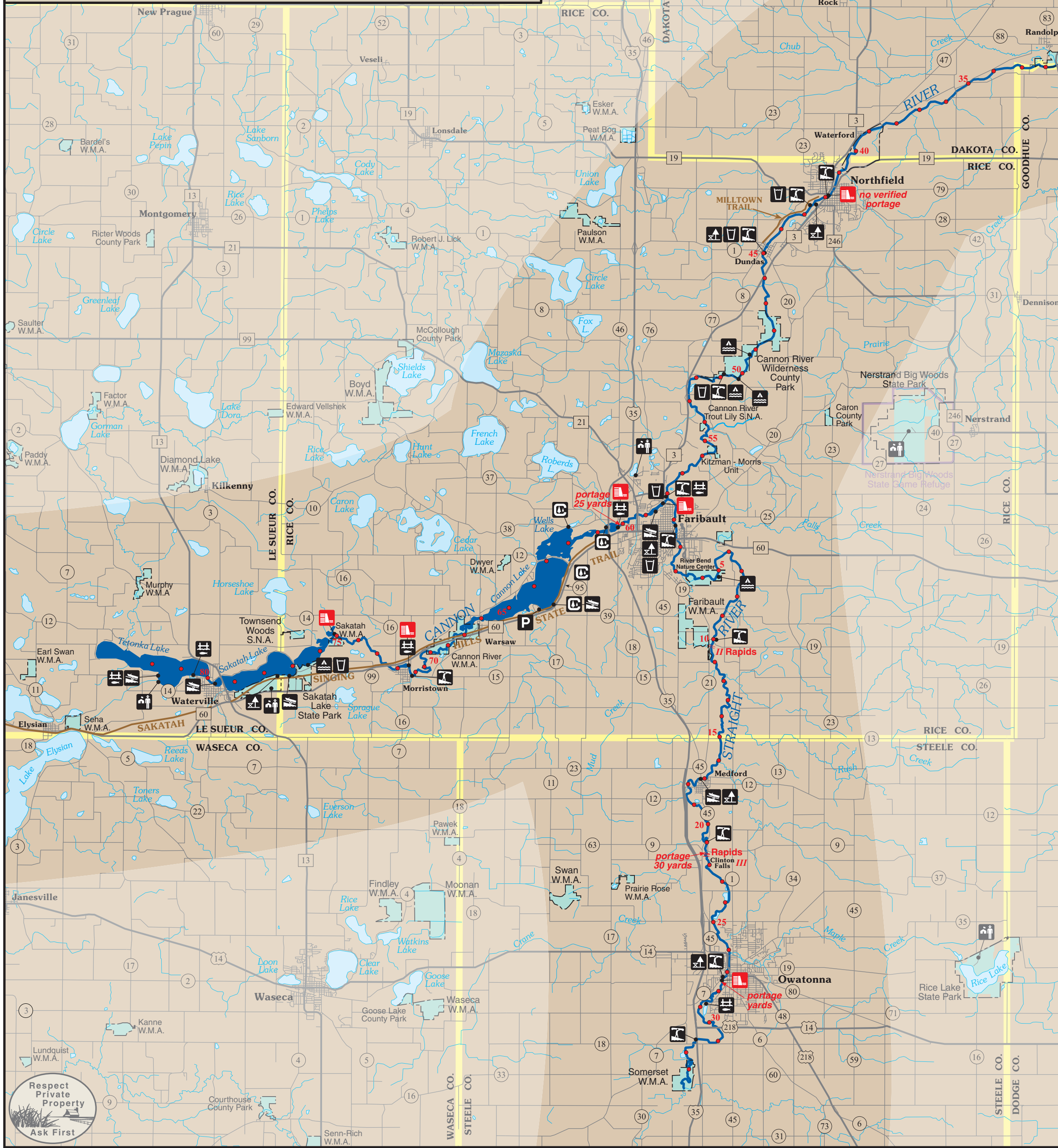


A WATER TRAIL GUIDE TO THE CANNON AND STRAIGHT RIVERS

Carry-in Access	River Mile	Designated Public Lands
Water Access	Rapids	Other Lands
Rest Area	Dam	Public Trails
Watercraft Campsite	Fishing Pier	W.M.A. = Wildlife Management Areas
No Facil. Campsite	Parking	S.N.A. = Scientific & Natural Areas
Campground	Drinking Water	
Private Campground	Outfitter	
County Park	DNR Office	

NORTH

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Miles
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Kilometers



Route Descriptions of the Cannon and Straight Rivers

Cannon River Miles

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

- 81.6 (L) Tetonka Lake access.
- 79.8 (L) Sakatah Lake access in Waterville.
- 79.4 State Highway 13 causeway and bridge.
- 79 - (R) Sakatah Lake St. Park. The park has remnants of the "big woods," a forest of elm, oak, walnut and other hardwoods. The park has a campground with drinking water, a picnic area at river mile 77.6 and a boat ramp at mile 77.3. Registration and fee required.
- 76.5 The Narrows, crossed by County Road 99.
- 77.0 Lower Sakatah Lake Dam, about six feet high. No developed portage.
- 75.1 Power line crosses the river.
- 74.9 State Highway 60 bridge and old trestle now used for Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail.
- 72.0 County Road 16 Bridge. Town of Morristown.
- 71.5 Morristown Pond Dam, about eight feet high. County Road 44 Bridge is just downstream. No developed portage.
- 71.0 (L) Carry-in access.
- 67.6 State Highway 60 Bridge and old trestle.
- 67.5 Power line.
- 66.7 The river enters Cannon Lake.
- 66.0 (R) County Road 13 Bridge. Warsaw.
- 64.0 (L) Shager County Park access and rest area on the southeast shore of Cannon Lake along State Highway 70. It has picnic tables, shelter, toilets and swimming beach. Boat access.
- 63.0 (R) Ackman Park carry-in access off County Road 12. The channel into Wells Lake is crossed by the County Road 12 Bridge.
- 60.5 Interstate 35 Bridge and power line.
- 60.2 Kings Mill Dam, about 17 feet high. Portage on left. Faribault city limits.
- 60.1 County Road 11 Bridge.
- 59.3 State Highway 21 Bridge. Hulet Avenue NW Bridge immediately downstream.
- 59.0 Iowa, Chicago and Eastern RR trestle.
- 58.9 North Alexander Park on river left; rest area with water. South Alexander Park on right; rest area, boat ramp, drinking water.
- 58.5 Woolen Mill Dam, about 12 feet high. No developed portage.
- 58.4 Second Avenue NW Bridge.
- 58.3 Two railroad trestles.
- 58.2 Confluence with the Straight River, the Cannon's largest tributary. With a drainage of 443 square miles, it is larger than the Cannon here. Shore fishing pier.
- 58.1 (L) Two Rivers Park, carry-in access.
- 57.0 Chicago, Rock Island and Union Pacific trestle.
- 56.6 Power line.
- 52.7 County Road 29 Bridge.
- 51.2 Cannon River Wilderness Area, a Rice County facility with hiking trails, campsites and other facilities. The river is flanked by wooded bluffs.
- 47.4
- 51.0 (L) Access and campsite; toilets, picnic shelter and tables, fire rings and drinking water.
- 50.5 (R) Campsite.
- 49.6 (L) Campsite.
- 46.0 State Highway 3 Bridge and power line.
- 45.2 (R) Dundas City Park, a rest area and carry in access; picnic shelter, tables, drinking water, fire rings, campground.
- 44.8 County Road 1 Bridge. The river splits around a large island. Town of Dundas, Archibald Mill.
- 44.3 Northfield city limits.
- 44.3 (L) Sechler Park. The city site has a picnic shelter and canoe access. Water also available.
- 42.5 (R) Babcock Park; a city recreation area with privies.
- 42.0 (R) State Highway 3 Bridge. Riverside Park, a city-owned area with an access just above the bridge, water available.
- 41.8 Fifth Street Bridge.
- 41.7 Dam, 10 feet high; no developed portage. Attempts to carry around this dam are complicated by riprap and retaining walls.
- 41.6 Fourth Street Bridge.
- 41.5 State Highway 19 (Second Street) Bridge.
- 38.6 Waterford Bridge.
- 35.5 County Road 59 Bridge.
- 31.9 County Road 83 Bridge, trestle.
- 31.6 State Highway 56 Bridge. River enters Lake Byllesby.
- 30.0 (R) County boat ramp on the south shore of lake.
- 28 Dakota County boat ramp, rest area on the north shore at Lake Byllesby Regional Park.
- 27.3 (L) Lake Byllesby Regional Park campground and picnic area on north shore; drinking water and toilets.
- 27.2 (R) Goodhue County rest area and access on south shore.

- 27.0 Lake Byllesby Dam. There is a primitive, very steep and difficult portage around this 60-foot-high structure on river right.
- 26.8 State Highway 20 Bridge.
- 25.5 (R) Hannah's Bend Park and fairground; access, toilets and picnic shelter and tables, drinking water. The site is managed by Cannon Falls.
- 25.0 (R) Riverside Park, a city site, is on the right, just downstream is the Little Cannon River. Toilets, water and carry-in access.
- 24.8 Third Street Bridge.
- 22.2 (L) Pine Creek.
- 18.1 (L) Trout Brook. Carry-in access. Toilet. Meisville Ravine Co. Park, Dakota Co.
- 17.2 Power line crosses the river.
- 16.0 River splits around a large island.
- 13.1 County Road 7 Bridge, outfitter at Welch.
- 8.0 A long backwater splits from the river. The main channel is the left fork.
- 6.8 (L) Carry-in access. U.S. Highway 61 Bridge.
- 6.0 Cannon Bottom Road Bridge. This site is the last takeout before the Mississippi River. (not a developed access)
- 2.5 Canadian Pacific RR trestle.
- 0.0 Confluence with the Vermillion River, Mississippi is 1/2 mi downstream.

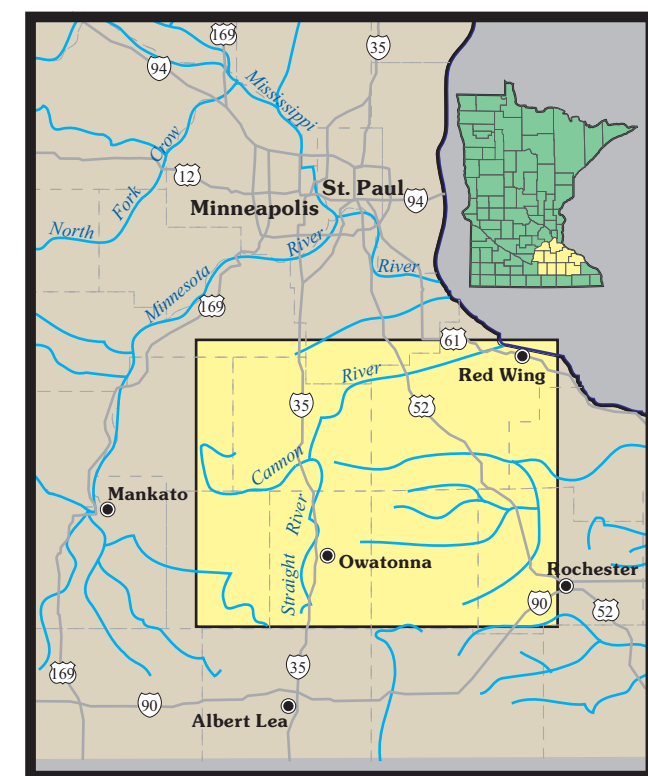
Straight River Miles

- 32.1 (R) Co. Rd. 18 bridge, carry-in access in private campground.
- 31.9 Interstate Hwy 35 bridge.
- 31.2 RR trestle.
- 30.5 Hwy 14 bridge. Start of Kaplan woods city park, down stream
- 29.9 RR trestle.
- 29.7 Golf course bridge.
- 28.0 City of Owatonna.
- 27.4 (R) Morehouse Park. Access.
- 27.3 Dam, Portage on right.
- 27.2 RR trestle and Bridge street bridge.
- 26.9 Rose street bridge. River level gauge on abutment.
- 26.7 RR trestle.
- 26.5 North street bridge.
- 26.4 (R) Confluence with Maple Creek.
- 24.9 Co. Rd. 34 bridge (26th St. NW).
- 23.5 Township road bridge.
- 22.7 RR trestle.
- 21.5 Clinton Falls, class II-III rapids. Portage on left. Co. Rd. 99 bridge down stream.
- 21.0 (R) Co. Rd. 45, carry-in access.
- 20.6 (L) Confluence with Crane Creek.
- 18.1 County Road 12 bridge.
- 17.2 (R) City of Medford, access in city park. Toilets and water available.
- 17.1 County Road 45 bridge.
- 16.6 Iowa, Chicago & Eastern RR trestle.
- 15.1 270 St. E bridge.
- 13.4 (R) Confluence with Rush Creek.
- 11.1 (L) Confluence with Mud Creek.
- 10.2 Class I-II rapids from old Walcot Mill dam.
- 10.0 (R) Co. Rd. 19 bridge, carry in access river right.
- 8.7 227 St. E bridge.
- 7.8 220 St. E bridge.
- 6.9 Large glacial boulder in center of river. (Size of small garage)
- 5.8 (R) Confluence with Falls Creek.
- 4.5 (R) Campsites. River Bend Nature Center.
- 4.4 RR trestle.
- 3.8 Old bridge.
- 2.2 RR trestle, walking bridge down stream.
- 2.0 Teepee Tonka park, city of Faribault, carry-in access
- 1.8 Bridge to park, Hwy 60 bridge down stream.
- 1.6 2nd and 3rd street bridges.
- 1.1 (L) RR trestle, carry in access.
- 0.4 14th St. bridge.
- 0.0 Confluence with Cannon River.



Cannon River and Straight River

A Water Trail Guide



Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is available to all individuals regardless of race, color, creed or religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Discrimination inquiries should be sent to the MNDNR, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4031; or the Equal Opportunity Office, Department of the Interior, Washington D.C., 20240.

This information is available in alternative format upon request.

DNR Parks and Trails Regional Unit

1200 Warner Road
St. Paul, MN 55106
651-772-7935

Online water trail information and maps can be found at www.mndnr.gov/watertrails

DNR Information Center

The DNR's Information Center is available to provide free publications of facilities and services as well as answers questions pertaining to DNR recreational opportunities in Minnesota.



The DNR Information Center
500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4040
651-296-6157 (Metro Area)
1-888-MINNDNR (646-6367 MN Toll-Free)
TTY: 651-296-5484 (Metro Area)
TTY: 1-800-657-3929 (MN Toll-Free)
www.mndnr.gov

ADOPT-A-RIVER You can make a difference by joining the DNR Trails and Waterways Adopt-a-River Program. Be a clean up volunteer for a portion of your favorite recreation area. Call the DNR Information Center for a brochure.

Cover Photo: Riverbend Nature Center
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A WATER TRAIL GUIDE TO THE CANNON AND STRAIGHT RIVERS



Bounded by rolling hills, bluffs, farmland and woods, the Cannon enters a remnant of the Big Woods ecosystem. Downstream, the river enters a broad picturesque gorge with bluffs up to 300 feet above the valley floor.

THE CANNON RIVER

By A.D. 1000 the mouth of the Cannon River was a major center for the Mississippian culture; the Indians frequently hid their canoes near the river's mouth, so when the French fur traders arrived they called this stream La Riviere Aux Canots, "the river of canoes." Although the name was later mispronounced by English-speaking settlers, the French description remains appropriate, for the Cannon still draws many canoeists to its waters.



In the early 1850s, flour and saw mills began operating in the Cannon River Valley. By 1877, there were 15 mills along the 19 mile stretch of river between Faribault and Northfield. At Dundas, travelers can still see the aging limestone walls of the Archibald Mill, which was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.



West of Faribault, the Cannon River winds quietly through farmland dotted with lakes and marshes. Below Faribault the river twists and turns, at times wide and quiet, at times narrow and fast. From Faribault to its mouth, the Cannon falls 280 feet, an average of 4.8 feet per mile. Above Faribault the river has less gradient. There are a few rapids but none are difficult. Several dams must be portaged and downed trees and snags can be hazardous in high water.

The Cannon River is one of six designated Wild and Scenic Rivers in the state. Bounded by rolling hills, bluffs, farmland and woods in its upper reaches, the Cannon enters a remnant of the Big Woods ecosystem downstream of Faribault, in Rice County's Cannon River Wilderness Area. Below Cannon Falls the river enters a broad picturesque gorge with bluffs that rise up to 300 feet above the valley floor. The Cannon's waters harbor walleye, catfish, northern pike, smallmouth bass, and a few species rough fish.

The Cannon River is underlaid with a variety of sedimentary rocks. The most common outcrops near the river are St. Peter sandstone, Prairie du Chein group of dolomites and sandstone, and near the river's mouth,

Jordan sandstone and St. Lawrence and Franconia formations.

Stream flow usually peaks in early April, however, very heavy rains can cause high water or flooding anytime during the canoeing season. Because there are few rapids to cause problems in low water, the level is usually sufficient for canoeing except during very dry periods.

River water is good for all recreation, but it is not drinkable without treatment. Ask the DNR Information Center or the Department of Health for the most recent issue of the fish consumption advisory.

The following U.S. Geological Survey quadrangles cover the Cannon (all are 7.5 minute): Waterville, Morristown, Shieldville, Faribault, Cannon City, Northfield, Dennison, Randolph, Cannon Falls, Miesville, Welch, Red Wing.

THE CANNON RIVER WATERSHED

Southern Minnesota comes together in a 1,460-square-mile area called the Cannon River Watershed. It lies between the Twin Cities metro area and rural southern Minnesota. Biologists call it a "transition zone". Its a mix of eastern hardwood forests (the big woods), tallgrass prairies, recently glaciated lands, and the driftless (unglaciated) area along the Mississippi River.

Surface water unites the varied landscape, flowing into tributaries like the Straight River, which joins the Cannon River and eventually the Mississippi River. Glaciers covered the land along the upper Straight and Cannon Rivers 10,000 years ago, creating the lakes and marshes of the upper Cannon River and leaving behind large glacial erratics (occasional rocks) which can still be seen in farm fields and along the Cannon and Straight rivers.

Compared to other parts of the corn belt region, the Cannon River Watershed has a rich diversity of flora and fauna. Minnesota's dwarf trout lily is a federally endangered species that is found only along the Cannon, Straight and Zumbro rivers and their tributaries. Because it is found only in this small area the dwarf trout lily is considered a Minnesota "endemic"-i.e. a species that grows in Minnesota and nowhere else on earth. Other rare plants include the glade mallow



(found in flood-plain forests), prairie bush clover and kitten-tails (found on bluff prairies). Among the rare wildlife species found in the watershed are the blanding's turtle, wood turtle, red-shouldered hawk, and prairie vole. The river valleys and adjacent bluffs tend to harbor concentrations of natural communities where these rare species can maintain a foothold.

Other wildlife found in the watershed, typical of southeastern Minnesota, include deer, beaver, otter, raccoon, red fox, gray fox and coyote. Songbirds and waterfowl are especially plentiful during spring and fall migrations. Bald eagles and osprey can be observed fishing along the rivers.

Resource protection efforts in the Cannon River Watershed are coordinated by the Cannon River Watershed Partnership, a non-profit organization founded in 1990 to protect and improve the surface and groundwater resources, and the natural systems of the watershed. That mission is carried out through landowner assistance, educational programs, volunteer coordination and the facilitation of small-watershed groups. The partnership sponsors an annual river clean-up, and participates in the DNR Adopt-a-River program. Call 507-332-0488 for more information.



THE STRAIGHT RIVER

Straight may seem an inappropriate name for this twisting, turning stream. The river's name is actually a loose translation of "Owatonna," a Dakota Indian word meaning morally strong or honest.

Flowing through the farmland of southeastern Minnesota, the Straight meanders north from Owatonna to Faribault, where it joins the Cannon River. Away from these cities and the small rural communities situated on its banks, the Straight is a narrow, intimate stream. Fields, pastures and farm buildings are screened from the river by a narrow strip of trees on either bank. The trees, predominantly elm, willow, aspen, and maple, reach out over the stream, forming a leafy canopy.

The Straight varies from 30 to 80 feet wide and from 1 to 4 feet deep. There are numerous areas of mild rapids and fast water, with rocks and narrow stream channels making canoeing a challenge. There is one area of difficult rapids on the Straight, located at Clinton Falls that should be portaged. Canoeing on the Straight is best during the spring and early summer; by July the river may be too low for enjoyable river travel.



This area was once the trapping ground of Indians and fur traders. Faribault was named for its founder, fur trader Alexander Faribault, who established a trading post there in 1828.

In the 1820s, Minnesota was dotted with fur trading posts, most controlled by the American Fur Company. Their business was considerable. In a single year

Faribault's trade included 1,100 mink pelts, 2,050 pounds of deer hide and 39,080 muskrat pelts.

During the 19th century, the Straight River area was an important milling center. Now remnants of 2 mills can be seen. The Clinton Mills, in Clinton Falls ground floor and feed for eight counties. The original mill was destroyed by fire in 1896. The Walcott Mills (river mile 10.2), which burned down in 1895, is now marked only by the flume where the wheel turned and a short rapids where the dam once stood.

Planning A Safe River Trip

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

- Get acquainted with your route. Plan your trip with a map before you depart and advise someone of your plans including planned departure and arrival times.
- Travel with a companion or group.
- Choose a distance that is comfortable for you, most people paddle two to three river miles per hour.



- Be cautious of river obstructions, such as overhanging and dead trees in the river.
- Bring a first aid kit that includes waterproof matches.
- Bring an extra paddle in your canoe.
- You must pack out all trash.
- Leave only footprints; take only photographs!

Rest Areas and Camping Sites

- Public rest areas are available along the route to rest, picnic and explore.
- Camp only in designated campsites, which are available on a first come-first serve basis, or make reservations at local or DNR campgrounds.
- Bring drinking water. It is only available at a limited number of rest areas. Drinking river water is not recommended, but if you do it must be treated.
- Respect private property. Stop only at designated sites; much of the shoreland is private property.
- Be sanitary! Use designated toilet facilities or bury human waste away from the river.

Rating White Water

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

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



Boating Information

- Wear the U. S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device that state law requires be on board the craft.
- Bring an extra paddle.
- Not all portions of this river trail are suitable for motor use.
- Register your watercraft. All watercraft more than 9 feet in length, including nonmotorized canoes and kayaks, must be registered in Minnesota or your state of residence.

Sustainable Ecosystems

Outdoor recreation is dependent on a healthy and attractive natural environment. Sustainable outdoor recreation enables people to enjoy the outdoors without negative impacts on the environment. Communities working together can improve water resources by promoting environmentally sensitive land-use practices along rivers and throughout watersheds. Natural shoreline buffers improve water quality by filtering out pollutants and sediments. Healthy and diverse native shoreland plant communities are attractive and provide important shoreline habitat for birds and wildlife.

