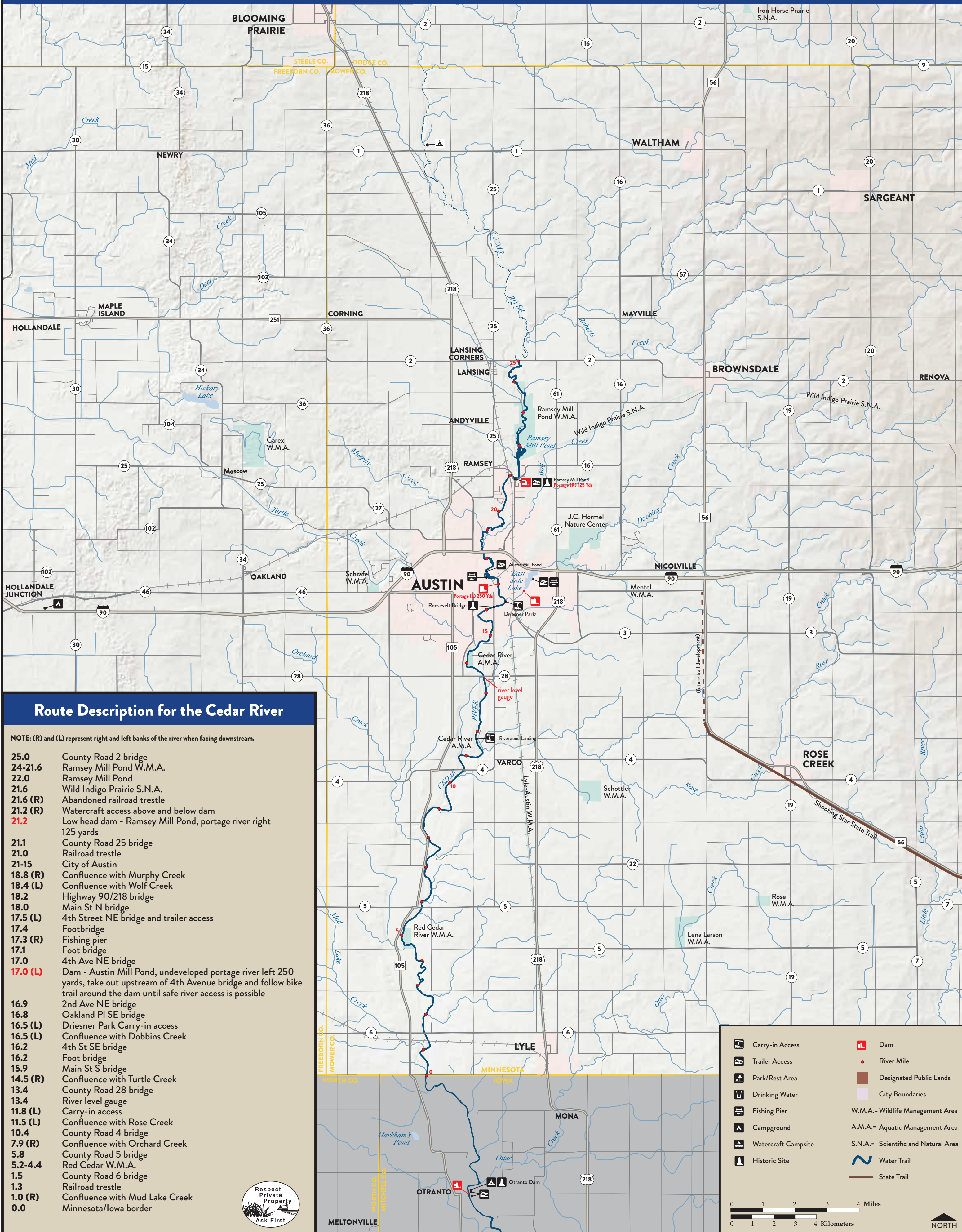


# A WATER TRAIL GUIDE TO THE CEDAR RIVER



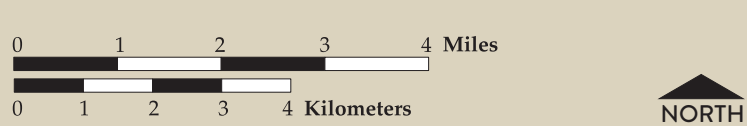
## Route Description for the Cedar River

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

- 25.0 County Road 2 bridge
- 24-21.6 Ramsey Mill Pond W.M.A.
- 22.0 Ramsey Mill Pond
- 21.6 Wild Indigo Prairie S.N.A.
- 21.6 (R) Abandoned railroad trestle
- 21.2 (R) Watercraft access above and below dam
- 21.2 Low head dam - Ramsey Mill Pond, portage river right 125 yards
- 21.1 County Road 25 bridge
- 21.0 Railroad trestle
- 21-15 City of Austin
- 18.8 (R) Confluence with Murphy Creek
- 18.4 (L) Confluence with Wolf Creek
- 18.2 Highway 90/218 bridge
- 18.0 Main St N bridge
- 17.5 (L) 4th Street NE bridge and trailer access
- 17.4 Footbridge
- 17.3 (R) Fishing pier
- 17.1 Foot bridge
- 17.0 4th Ave NE bridge
- 17.0 (L) Dam - Austin Mill Pond, undeveloped portage river left 250 yards, take out upstream of 4th Avenue bridge and follow bike trail around the dam until safe river access is possible
- 16.9 2nd Ave NE bridge
- 16.8 Oakland PI SE bridge
- 16.5 (L) Driesner Park Carry-in access
- 16.5 (L) Confluence with Dobbins Creek
- 16.2 4th St SE bridge
- 16.2 Foot bridge
- 15.9 Main St S bridge
- 14.5 (R) Confluence with Turtle Creek
- 13.4 County Road 28 bridge
- 13.4 River level gauge
- 11.8 (L) Carry-in access
- 11.5 (L) Confluence with Rose Creek
- 10.4 County Road 4 bridge
- 7.9 (R) Confluence with Orchard Creek
- 5.8 County Road 5 bridge
- 5.2-4.4 Red Cedar W.M.A.
- 1.5 County Road 6 bridge
- 1.3 Railroad trestle
- 1.0 (R) Confluence with Mud Lake Creek
- 0.0 Minnesota/Iowa border



- Trailer Access
- Dam
- Park/Rest Area
- River Mile
- Drinking Water
- Designated Public Lands
- Fishing Pier
- City Boundaries
- Campground
- W.M.A.= Wildlife Management Area
- Watercraft Campsite
- A.M.A.= Aquatic Management Area
- Historic Site
- S.N.A.= Scientific and Natural Area
- Water Trail
- State Trail





Cedar River

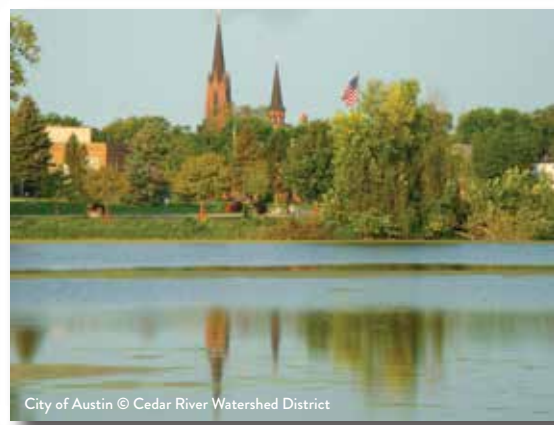
MINNESOTA STATE PARKS AND TRAILS ESTABLISHED 1891



Ramsey Mill Pond © Austin Daily Herald

# A WATER TRAIL GUIDE TO THE CEDAR RIVER

## The Cedar River



City of Austin © Cedar River Watershed District

WMAs offer opportunities for wildlife watching and hunting. The Ramsey Mill Pond WMA contains a mix of wetlands, upland woods and established native prairie. The Red Cedar River WMA is mostly oak woodland and the western edge borders the river.

There are also two units of the Cedar River Aquatic Management Area (AMA) located south of Austin. AMAs ensure that critical fish and wildlife habitats will be conserved, non-boat public access to water resources will always be available, and habitat development on previously disturbed areas can take place.

One of these AMA units is a wetland restoration site created from former farmland. This site offers wildlife habitat, helps improve water quality and reduces soil erosion.



© Cedar River Watershed District

The Wild Indigo Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) is located along an abandoned Chicago-Milwaukee Railroad right-of-way, which gives it a strange shape. Over 340 different, rare plants can be found here. Hiking from the Cedar River to the city of Dexter provides a fascinating view of these rare species. SNAs are protected areas, so please visit the area with care.

### Fishing

There are good fishing opportunities on this stretch of river. Notable fishing spots include the area around Austin for small mouth bass as well as around Lansing, where there have been reports of northern pike. Walleye and bullheads also are present, but bass – especially small mouth and rock bass – are most commonly caught.

Mussels and some rare fish species, such as the Ozark minnow, are great indicators of water quality. They are very sensitive to increases in water siltation and pollution, and cannot survive in highly disturbed areas. You can help protect them by

avoiding activities that increase erosion along the riverbanks and by disposing of trash properly.

### Wildlife

There are interesting and rare wildlife species that can be seen on the Cedar River. Both of Minnesota's threatened turtle species, the wood turtle and the Blanding's turtle, are found in this river. Wood turtles prefer to nest in sandy, sunny areas along the river, while Blanding's turtles may travel up to one mile away from water to lay their eggs.

Along with turtles, Sandhill cranes are another common sight along the river banks. After overexploitation in the early 1900s, they have made a steady recovery in the state of Minnesota.



sandhill crane © MNDNR

### Plants and Trees

The native tree species surrounding this stretch are bur oak savanna, tallgrass prairie and maple basswood forest. The bur oak is mostly on moraine ridges, the prairie on level or gently rolling hills, while the maple and basswood are in steep ravines or near streams.

This water trails offers a pleasantly wooded paddle for canoeists, and also flows through agricultural land. The highest elevation in the area is 1440 feet near Elkton, and the lowest point is at 1140 at the Iowa border.

### 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.
- Wear a U. S. Coast Guard approved personal

flotation device that state law requires be on board the boat for each person.

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

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

### Boating Information

- 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.
- Not all portions of this water trail are suitable for motor use.

### 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-served basis, unless otherwise noted.
- Bring drinking water. It is only available at a limited number of rest areas. Drinking



© Cedar River Watershed District

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.



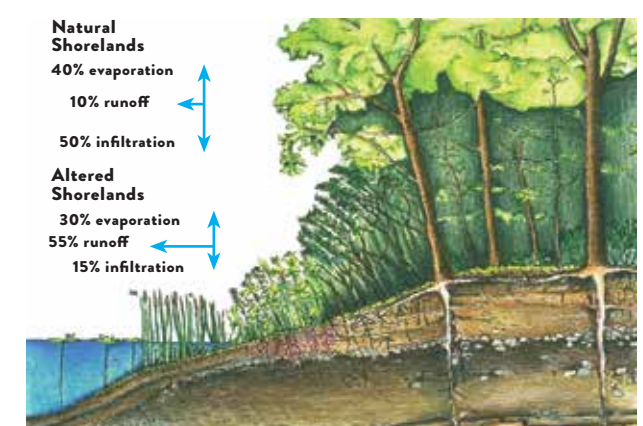
© Cedar River Watershed District

### Sustainable Ecosystems

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

Communities working together can improve water resources by promoting environmentally sensitive land use practices along rivers and throughout watersheds.

Natural shoreline buffers improve water quality by filtering out pollutants and sediments. Healthy and diverse native shoreline plant communities are attractive and provide important shoreline habitat for birds and wildlife.



"The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is an Equal Opportunity Employer"

This information is available in alternative format upon request.

Online water trail information and maps can be found at [mndnr.gov/watertrails](http://mndnr.gov/watertrails)

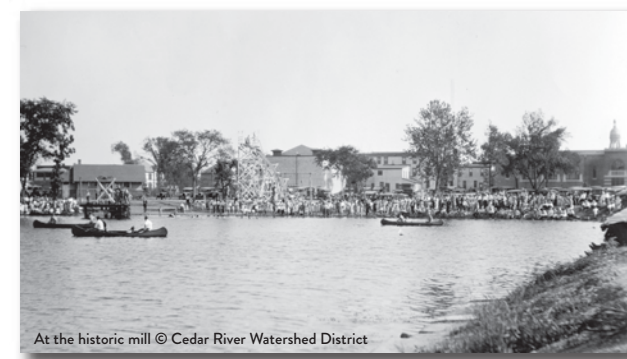
### DNR Information Center

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.



500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040  
651-296-6157 Metro Area  
1-888-646-6367 MN Toll-Free

[mndnr.gov](http://mndnr.gov)



At the historic mill © Cedar River Watershed District

The nearby J. C. Hormel Nature Center in Austin contains 507 acres of trails, woods and wildlife. One can find remnant and restored prairie, hardwood forest, wetlands and streams.

Two Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) – Ramsey Mill Pond and Red Cedar River – are located between Lansing and the Iowa border.