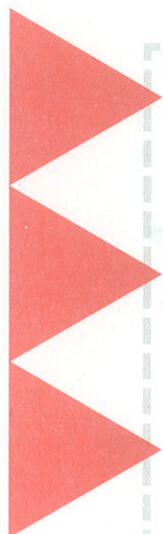


SHELL ROCK RIVER

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 Wiltfong family from Indiana who arrived here in 1853 with two teams of oxen and a team of horses. When the lead wagon overtuned while fording the river, the

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

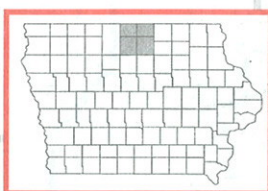
WILKINSON PIONEER PARK IS A GOOD place to put in for a trip down the Shell Rock. It is located on the right bank just below the Rock Falls Bridge. The park contains a covered bridge that was built in 1969.

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.

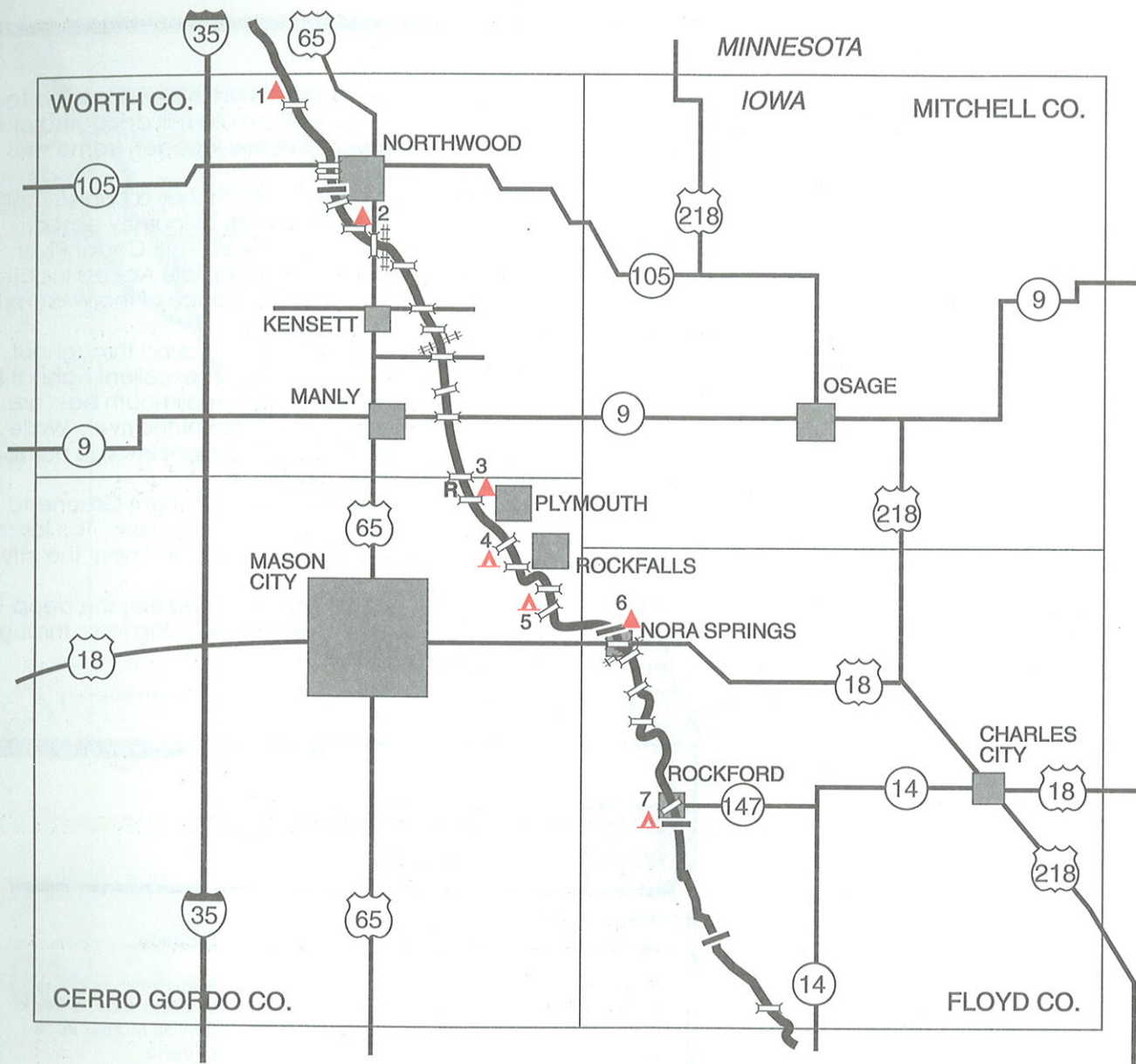
NORTHERN PIKE OFFER THE BEST opportunity for anglers in Worth County, while below Rock Falls, smallmouth bass, channel catfish and rock bass are frequently taken.



SHELL ROCK RIVER

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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

