

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.

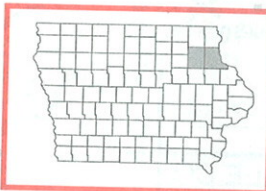
THE TURKEY HAS NO dangerous rapids, but canoeists should be aware of occasional fallen trees that can easily flip the unwary paddler. The Turkey River is a non-meandered stream above Elkader which means the river bottom is private property. Occasionally, landowners need to control livestock on both sides 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.



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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

- DAM
- ▲ LANDING AREA
- ▲ LANDING WITH CAMPING
- ≡ BRIDGE
- #### TRAIN BRIDGE
- R FISHING RIFLE

