

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 the 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

