

YELLOW RIVER

Volney Bridge to Highway 76 Access

THE YELLOW RIVER is a small-stream tributary to the Mississippi River in Allamakee County. It is a short float trip offering beautiful rolling hills and steep bluffs for scenery, plus a rewarding look at some northeast Iowa history.

IN PREHISTORIC TIMES, INDIANS built burial mounds along the river to honor their dead. A very large concentration of mounds is found at the Effigy Mounds National Monument located at the mouth of the Yellow. French traders referred to the river by name as far back as the early 1700s. The first water mill in the

state was built along the river in the 1830s by Lt. Jefferson Davis, future President of the Confederacy. It was used to saw lumber for nearby Fort Crawford. Many businesses and towns flourished on the Yellow River, then disappeared. Canoeists may have a difficult time imagining the remote river valley as one of the "liveliest industrial vicinities west of the Mississippi."

SINCE THE YELLOW RIVER is a small stream, the water level can fluctuate rapidly. Users should be alert for sudden storms that may cause unexpected rises in water levels. Paddlers should also be aware of low water conditions, making travel difficult in late summer — particularly in the upper reaches of the river.

THE RIVER HAS NO dangerous rapids or dams to portage, but users should be aware of occasional fallen trees that can flip the unwary canoeist. The river is classified as a non-meandered stream throughout its course. This means the river bottom is private property. Landowners occasionally need to control their livestock on both sides of the river and may install fences across the path of your canoe or tube. Respect the land-owners' property and negotiate their fences with care.

FISHING THE YELLOW RIVER is similar to fishing other northeastern Iowa streams. Smallmouth and rock bass can be found in the upper sections with channel catfish and other Mississippi River species found near the river's mouth.

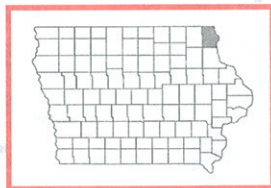
THE YELLOW RIVER RISES in southeastern Winneshiek County and flows across Allamakee County to the Mississippi. The stream valley is narrow, sharply meandered and bordered by timbered hills and bluffs. The stream itself is narrow, shallow and has a rock-rubble bottom. The rate of fall is greater than in any other canoeable stream in the state. The river gets its name "yellow" from the discoloration caused by local clay.

NEAR THE TOWN OF VOLNEY, the river becomes large enough to canoe. This stretch to the Mississippi has no access other than county road bridges and a take-out at the mouth. There are no camping areas and only one state-owned parcel about one and one-half miles below the bridge. The trip is not a relaxing experience, but the fishing and scenery are excellent and worth the effort. The riffles are numerous, requiring frequent walks. Travel as light as possible and don't short yourself on time.

ONE OF THE FEW ROAD crossings along the river is the Sixteen bridge, named for its location at Section 16 of Linton township. This is also the site of the now-extinct town of Buckland. The segment below contains the best smallmouth bass water on the stream.

THE NEXT BRIDGE MARKS the site of Ion, another early mill town. This segment contains the fastest water of the trip. Near the bottom of this fast water is the site of the old Davis Mill as well as the Winnebago Indian Mission School site.

THE FINAL SEGMENT of the lower river leads you to a take-out access on the left, near the entrance to Effigy Mounds National Monument. This attraction extends above and below the mouth of the Yellow and deserves extra time to explore and enjoy.



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Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
0 miles	1. Volney Bridge	1 mi SW Volney
4 miles	2. Sixteen Bridge	3 mi E Volney
6 miles	3. Ion Bridge	9 mi E Volney
9 miles	4. Highway 76 Access	5 mi N Marquette

