



St. Croix River, Seven Islands, mile 95.6
© BOB FRITH

Corridors of Convergence

Habitat transitions that enrich life’s diversity
Solitude in natural settings—rare so close to a major metropolitan area—exists for many who visit St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. The St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers create a corridor where all manner of things past, present, and timeless converge. Scenery shifts as geological zones shift, as prairies and forests meet and mix, and as rivers and streams water the life-rich riparian zones lining their banks. Riverway waters are healthy and still home to all their historically recorded mussel species. Because its many values are so important to our quality of life, this Riverway was among the first protected by Congress under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 1968.

Recreation shifts as the character of the rivers changes. Canoeing is popular on the Namekagon and northernmost St. Croix. Motorboating and sailboating are popular downriver. River traveling, hunting, fishing, and enjoying nature are popular forms of outdoor recreation. The traditional lands of the Ojibwe (Chippewa) meet the lands of the Dakota (Sioux) here. Native Americans have long-standing relationships with the land throughout these corridors of convergence.



Scenic gorge
© MARIBETH LUNDEEN



Quiet stretch
NPS / JEAN VAN TATENHOVE



Open water
NPS / DALE COX

Worthy Waters

All 41 native mussel species still present

The nation’s most-threatened class of organisms is freshwater mussels. The federal government lists 23 percent of the nation’s 304 native mussel species as threatened or endangered. The Riverway hosts a uniquely intact assemblage of mussels. Five are listed as federally endangered. Minnesota and Wisconsin list several as species of concern.

Problems facing these bivalve mollusks (below) include dredging, dams, fish kills, runoff from development, and invasive nonnative species like the zebra mussel. The growing pressure for development, especially south of the St. Croix Falls

Dam, is a grave threat to the future of these mussel populations. Mussels cannot escape these problems alone. They lie on waterway bottoms as they filter water for food, and many move only a few feet in a lifetime. Despite these challenges, all 41 of the St. Croix River’s recorded native mussel species are still found within the park. This attests to the waters’ remarkable health and to the benefit of little development, especially compared to other rivers in the region. Protecting our waters is imperative: The Riverway not only attracts people who love the outdoors but also provides an environment where many species can thrive.

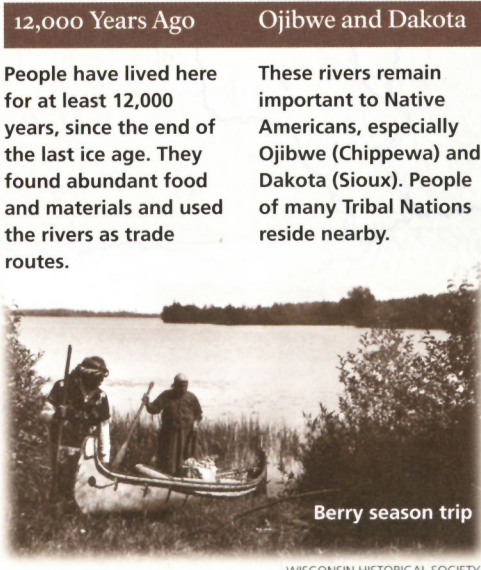


Winged mapleleaf
Elktoe
Butterfly
Creek heelsplitter
MUSSELS—© KLINCK
NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

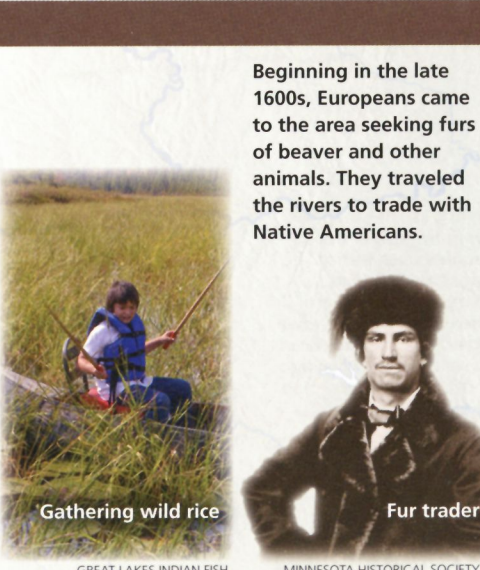
People and the Rivers

Learn about centuries of history along the Riverway. Sites reflect the cultures of Indigenous people, Europeans, and Americans. Structures in the rivers reveal logging and navigation pasts. Other sites demonstrate more-recent conservation and recreation histories.

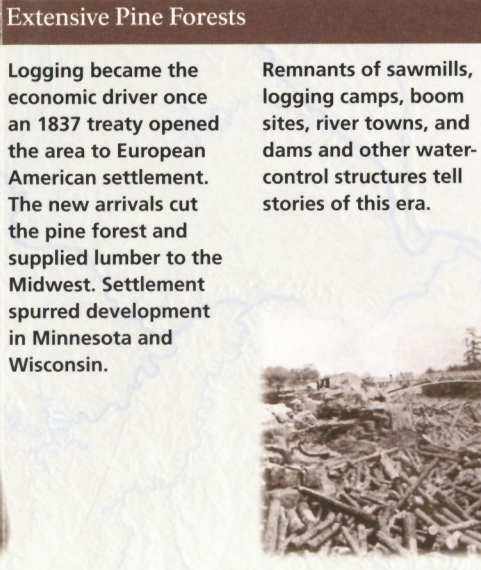
The St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers remain focal points for people who live in and visit the area. Waters attract paddlers, boaters, and anglers. Historic river towns bustle with activity. Scenery and wildlife draw in hikers, artists, and nature enthusiasts.



Berry season trip
WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



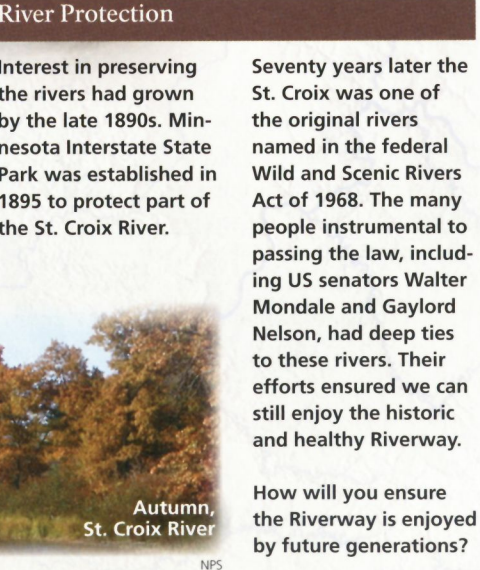
Gathering wild rice
GREAT LAKES INDIAN FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION



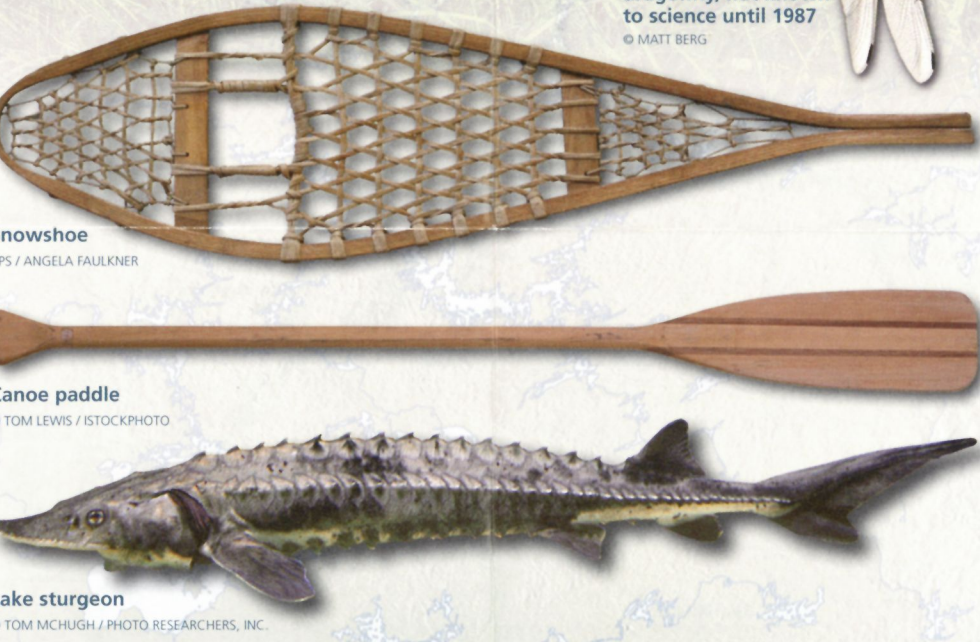
Fur trader
MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Logjam, St. Croix River, 1886
WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Autumn, St. Croix River
NPS

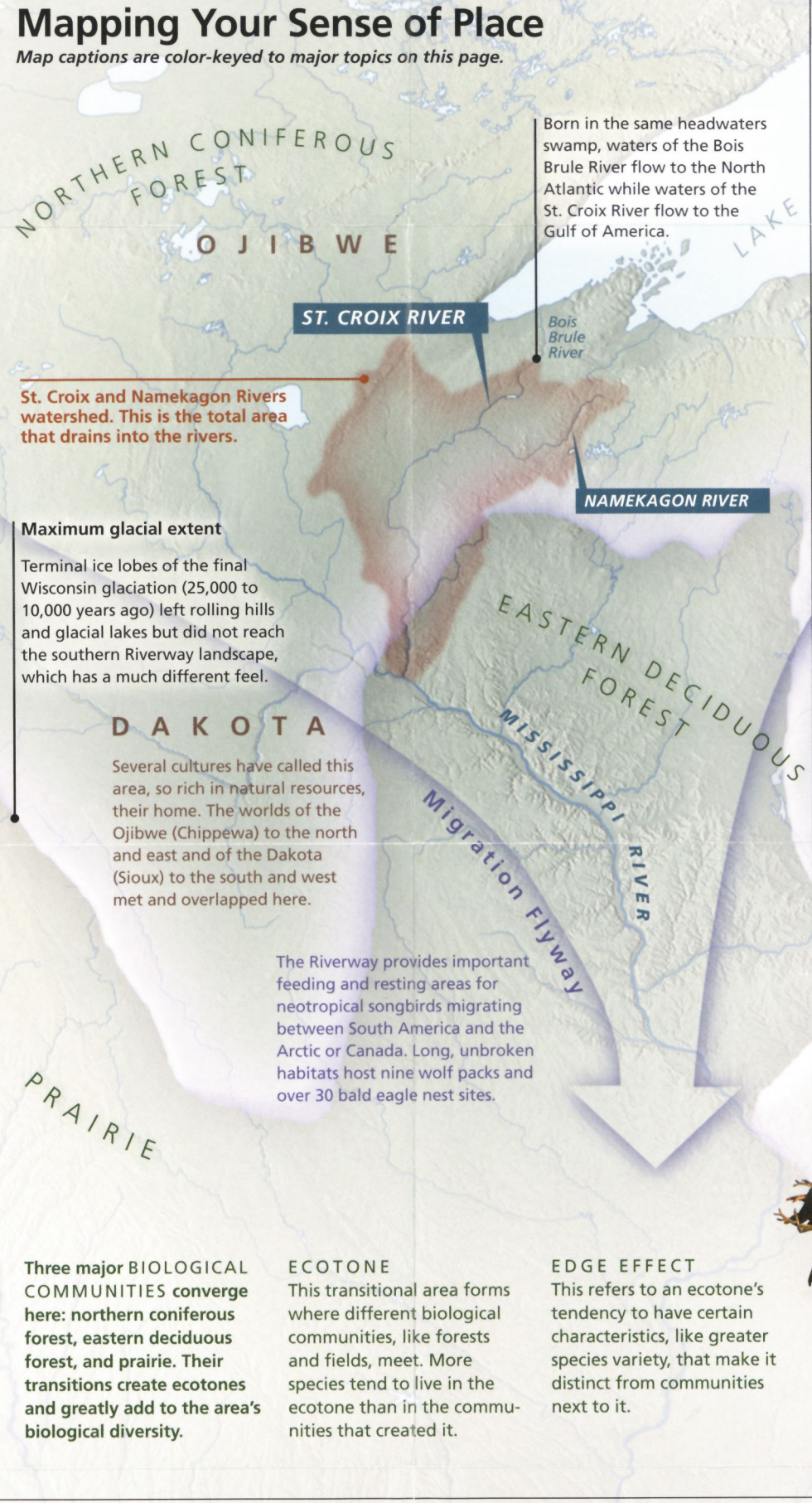


Snowshoe
NPS / ANGELA FAULKNER

Canoe paddle
© TOM LEWIS / ISTOCKPHOTO

Lake sturgeon
© TOM MCHUGH / PHOTO RESEARCHERS, INC.

St. Croix snaketail dragonfly, not known to science until 1987
© MATT BERG



River Recreation

Shoreline primitive camping par excellence

Creating the Riverway in 1968 signaled a shift in thinking about the rivers. For over 300 years they had been harvested, exploited, and manipulated. The Riverway is now treasured more for scenic beauty, recreation, and wildlife habitat.

The Riverway’s diversity offers a variety of recreation: paddling, inner-tubing, fishing, boating, wildlife-watching, and shoreline primitive camping. Trout fishing is popular on the upper Namekagon. Smallmouth bass capture attention on the St. Croix. Upper portions of the rivers are generally

wilder, yet you can find solitude throughout the Riverway. Below St. Croix Falls, the Riverway’s setting mixes forested areas with suburban landscapes. Try motorboating, houseboating, sailboating, and water-skiing. State parks along the rivers in both Minnesota and Wisconsin offer developed campgrounds, picnic areas, beaches, and hiking trails.

Which type of recreation will you try? Once you decide on an activity, the park staff, website, and river-section maps can point you to spots that suit your needs.



Easy rapids
NPS / JEAN VAN TATENHOVE



Nice catch
NPS / JEFF BUTLER



Autumn view
NPS / DONALD ERET

A Wealth of Habitats

Unfragmented forests crucial for wildlife

The Riverway’s north-south corridor is a refuge for wildlife due to nearly unbroken shoreline habitats. Past glacial actions (map at left) created a varied landscape scattered with rolling hills, numerous lakes, and rich river bottoms.

Where glaciers left sediments 100 feet thick, the river is slow and deep—perfect for paddlefish and common map turtles. Where the river flows fast, darters, stoneflies, and pistolgrip mussels seek shelter in outcrops of exposed bedrock. When

streamside areas with seasonal floods and groundwaters are added, the result is many distinct plant and animal habitats.

The Riverway’s open water, marshlands, wooded bottomlands, and bluffs offer excellent opportunities for birding. Some kingfishers dive for fish here all year. Neotropical songbirds including redstarts, blackpoll warblers, and wrens migrate through, often at night, and many nest here in summer.



Great blue heron
© MARK S. WURST

Belted kingfisher
© JAMES NEGER

Bald eagle
© HARRY BEHRET / ISTOCKPHOTO

Marsh wren
© ROBERT ROYSE

Blackburnian warbler
© ALAN MURPHY

American redstart
© WILSON HUM

Hooded mergansers (above) migrate mostly short distances. They are popular Riverway waterfowl.
© BILL HORN

Semipalmated sandpipers (right) migrate from South America to subarctic Alaska and Canada.
© ARTHUR MORRIS

Weighing under half an ounce, blackpoll warblers (above) migrate 12,000 miles from South America to breed in Canada.
© ALAN MURPHY

Explore All the Riverway Has to Offer

This map shows the entire Riverway but is not intended for river navigation. Instead, use section maps of the river for details on road access, services, and facilities. You can get these maps at visitor centers and other information sites and on the park website: www.nps.gov/sacn.

Park Facilities St. Croix River Visitor Center in St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, and Namekagon River Visitor Center in Trego, Wisconsin, are open seasonally. Park headquarters is open year-round, but make entry arrangements with staff when St. Croix River Visitor Center is closed.

Fees There are no fees to access the Riverway's federally owned land and facilities. State parks may charge entrance and camp fees with daily and annual permits.

Accessibility We strive for accessibility. For information go to a visitor center, ask a ranger, call, or check the website. Service animals are allowed.

Wear Your Life Jacket All watercraft must have a US Coast Guard-approved lifesaving device for each person aboard. People under 13 must wear a properly fitted life jacket in moving watercraft including boats, canoes, kayaks, and inner tubes. Everyone should wear a life jacket while running rapids and when in high-water conditions. Non-swimmers should always wear a life jacket.

Water Safety The Riverway has no lifeguards or supervised beaches. Closely monitor children near water. • Do not swim alone, at night, or in unfamiliar places. • Do not overload your craft. If you capsizes, stay upstream of your vessel. • Boaters: Watch your wake near paddlers and propeller near swimmers. • While inner-tubing, wear a lifesaving device, float with others, and navigate rapids feetfirst. • To jump and dive off bridges is illegal. • Entering the river to swim from shore in Minnesota's Interstate State Park is prohibited. • Swimming between US 8 and the public boat launch at Wisconsin's Interstate Park is prohibited. • Before trips use the website to check water levels, especially on upper stretches.

Special Water Use Regulations Observe "Slow speed" and "Slow—No Wake" zones on the St. Croix River between St. Croix Falls Dam and the Mississippi River. • Personal watercraft (PWC) including Jet Skis are prohibited north of Stillwater, Minnesota. • A checkpoint at mile 29.5 (High Bridge) prohibits upstream travel to prevent the spread of zebra mussels. • Between Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends waterskiing is prohibited in some zones after noon on weekends and holidays. • Find full regulations at Riverway access points, marinas, state parks, and the park website.

Fishing A fishing license is required on the Riverway; state regulations apply. Park rangers and state conservation officers enforce regulations. • On the Namekagon and northernmost 25 miles of the St. Croix, a Wisconsin license is required. • Where the St. Croix River is the boundary between Wisconsin and Minnesota, a license from either state is valid.

Hunting, Firearms You may hunt in season. For firearms regulations check the park website.

Private Property Respect property owners' rights. Do not trespass or use facilities without owner permission.

Picnicking Many picnic areas line the Riverway. The largest are Osceola Landing on the St. Croix and Earl Park Landing on the Namekagon.

Firewood, Fires Possessing firewood that originates over 25 miles from the Riverway is prohibited. Moving firewood can transport pests that kill trees. Use local wood. You may collect dead and down wood, except from islands. • Build fires only in steel fire rings or grills. Fires must be out and ashes cold before you leave the area.

Lodging, Supplies, Services Find these at nearby communities. Local outfitters supply river recreation equipment, paddleboat trips, vehicle shuttles, and guides. A list of authorized outfitters is on the park website.

For Your Safety To protect bare feet, all glass containers are prohibited at Riverway landings. • Drinking water is available at limited locations. Bring drinking water to protect against illness caused by *Giardia*. • Use caution near high cliffs. • Wear sunscreen, sunglasses, and a hat to prevent sunburn. Shoes that can get wet are recommended.

Lyme Disease Deer ticks are prevalent and may carry Lyme disease. Take precautions, check daily for ticks, and know symptoms of infection.

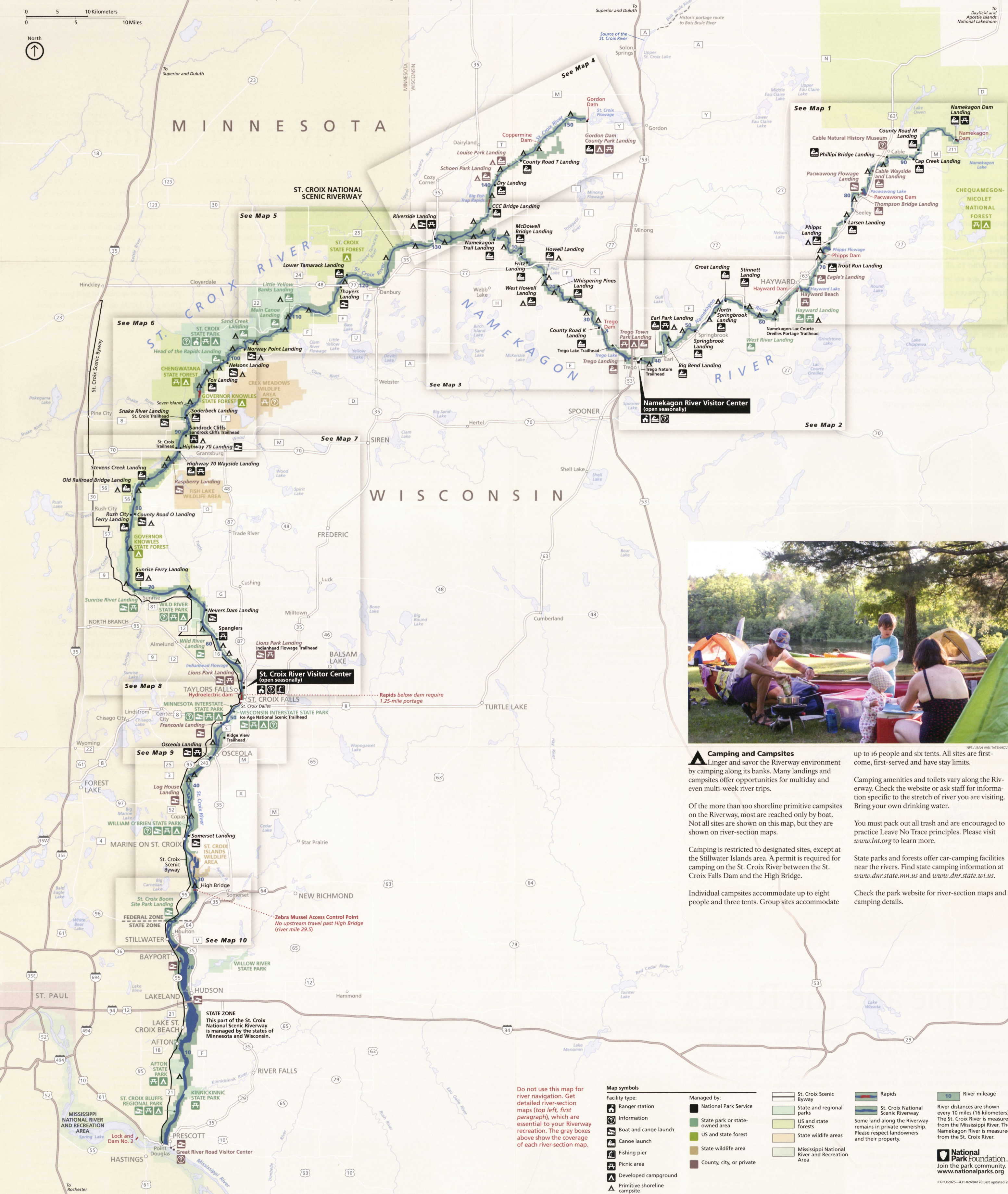
Protect the Park Federal laws protect all natural and cultural features in the park. • Do not disturb rock formations, artifacts, mounds, or remnants of historic structures. • Do not pick wildflowers or gather plants, fruits, or nuts for commercial uses. • Do not disturb freshwater mussels or their empty shells.

More Information St. Croix National Scenic Riverway 401 North Hamilton St. St. Croix Falls, WI 54024 715-483-2274 www.nps.gov/sacn

Follow us on social media.

Use the official NPS App to guide your visit.

St. Croix National Scenic Riverway is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. The National Park Service manages 230 miles of the Riverway. To learn more about national parks and National Park Service programs in America's communities, visit www.nps.gov.



Camping and Campsites Linger and savor the Riverway environment by camping along its banks. Many landings and campsites offer opportunities for multiday and even multi-week river trips.

Of the more than 100 shoreline primitive campsites on the Riverway, most are reached only by boat. Not all sites are shown on this map, but they are shown on river-section maps.

Camping is restricted to designated sites, except at the Stillwater Islands area. A permit is required for camping on the St. Croix River between the St. Croix Falls Dam and the High Bridge.

Individual campsites accommodate up to eight people and three tents. Group sites accommodate

up to 16 people and six tents. All sites are first-come, first-served and have stay limits.

Camping amenities and toilets vary along the Riverway. Check the website or ask staff for information specific to the stretch of river you are visiting. Bring your own drinking water.

You must pack out all trash and are encouraged to practice Leave No Trace principles. Please visit www.lnt.org to learn more.

State parks and forests offer car-camping facilities near the rivers. Find state camping information at www.dnr.state.mn.us and www.dnr.state.wi.us.

Check the park website for river-section maps and camping details.

Do not use this map for river navigation. Get detailed river-section maps (top left, first paragraph), which are essential to your Riverway recreation. The gray boxes above show the coverage of each river-section map.

Map symbols

Facility type:

- Ranger station
- Information
- Boat and canoe launch
- Canoe launch
- Fishing pier
- Picnic area
- Developed campground
- Primitive shoreline campsite

Managed by:

- National Park Service
- State park or state-owned area
- US and state forests
- State wildlife area
- Mississippi National River and Recreation Area
- County, city, or private

St. Croix Scenic Byway

St. Croix National Scenic Riverway

Some land along the Riverway remains in private ownership. Please respect landowners and their property.

Rapids

River mileage

River distances are shown every 10 miles (16 kilometers). The St. Croix River is measured from the Mississippi River. The Namekagon River is measured from the St. Croix River.

National Park Foundation. Join the park community. www.nationalparks.org

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