

TROUT STREAMS OF
CLAYTON COUNTY

FISHING GUIDE

AN ANGLER'S COMPANION TO THE PUBLIC
STREAMS & RIVERS OF CLAYTON COUNTY

NORTHEAST IOWA'S
HOTTEST HATCHES

Below is a month-by-month breakdown of the best hatches found in Northeast Iowa along with recommended dry and wet flies for each.

Insect hatches

Prime time for fishing each insect

HATCH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	FLIES
Baetis													Blue Winged Olive #16-22
Caddis													Elk Hair Caddis #14-20
Hendrickson													Adams & Dark Hendrickson #12
Hexagenia													Adams & Brown Drake #10-12
Midges													Griffiths Gnat & Brassie #16-22
Scuds													Olive, Gray or Tan Scud #12-16
Stoneflies													Beadhead Prince Nymph #10-16
Sulphurs													March Brown & Gray Fox #14-16
Terrestrials													Hoppers & Crickets #10-12
Trico													White Wing Black Trico #22
Other													Muddler Minnow & Woollybugger #4-10

IOWA'S FISHING
REGULATIONS

Below are guidelines that will be helpful when you fish Iowa. However, it is not a complete list of all fishing regulations and always be sure laws haven't changed. For more information, visit www.iowadnr.gov or contact the DNR Central Office in Des Moines at 515-725-8200.

STREAM CLASSIFICATION

Before you plan your trip, it is important to understand how trout waters are classified in Clayton County. The trout management in Iowa divides trout fisheries into the three categories listed below. Please read each definition to gain an understanding of which stream segments contain catchable trout, are open to the public, or require permission from property owners.

CATCHABLE STOCKED STREAMS

are open to the public and stocked regularly with catchable-sized trout that measure 10 to 12 inches in length.

PUT-AND-GROW STREAMS

are stocked with fingerling trout, or have wild naturally reproducing trout populations. These streams do not receive catchable-sized trout, but provide wild trout fishing experiences. P&G streams are on private property and REQUIRE landowner permission to fish.

RESTRICTIVE REGULATION (RR) STREAMS

are open to the public and can only be fished using artificial lures. RR streams include catch-and-release for all trout in posted areas of Ensign Hollow Creek and a 14-inch minimum length limit on brown trout in posted areas of Bloody Run Creek.

IOWA'S TROUT SEASON

Iowa's trout season differs from Minnesota, Wisconsin & Illinois in that the state offers continuous year-round fishing for brook, brown and rainbow trout.

DAILY BAG LIMIT

The daily bag limit for trout is five and the possession limit is 10.

FISHING LICENSES & TROUT STAMPS

Anglers who fish for trout are required to pay the trout fee in addition to an Iowa fishing license. Both expire each year in January. However, children under 16 years of age may fish for free and possess trout if they fish with a licensed adult who has paid the current trout fee and they limit their combined catch to the day limit of five trout. If young anglers want to fish for and keep their own limit of trout, they only need to purchase the trout fee.

WELCOME TO IOWA'S
TROUT COUNTRY

Kid's Fishing Pond at Big Spring Trout Hatchery

There are 12 spring-fed creeks in Clayton County that comprise over 28 miles of fishable water, three of the state's 15 most-visited trout streams and one of only three trout rearing stations in Iowa. Located in the heart of Iowa's trout region, Clayton County's tranquil landscape attracts some of the most avid anglers in the state. Anglers are attracted to this area for its high concentration of prime trout waters, fish counts, trout stocking plans and year-round opportunities to catch brook, brown and rainbow trout. Iowa DNR efforts have also contributed to making this region of the state a world-class trout fishery. On average, the Iowa DNR stocks approximately 60,000 catchable trout into catchable stocked streams within Clayton County from April 1 - October 31. Over the years, brown trout natural reproduction has increased thereby reducing the number of fingerling brown trout stocked annually. Today, public streams stocked with fingerlings in Clayton County include Bear, Ensign Hollow, Mossy Glen, and South Cedar. Nearly all stocked fingerlings are brown trout, except for the occasional restoration stockings of brook trout. In addition, excess brood trout, or adult trout that typically measure between 14 and 24 inches in length and weigh anywhere from two to eight pounds, are released into streams each year. For more information about Iowa's stocking season, including a list of the streams that are scheduled for stocking, call the Big Spring Fish Hatchery at 563-245-2446, stocking hotline at 563-927-5736, Decorah Trout Hatchery at 563-382-8324, or visit the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov.

TROUT FISHING
PLACES OF INTEREST

1

BIG SPRING FISH HATCHERY & CAMPGROUND. Rearing station & visitors center where guests can fish for trout in the Turkey River or in Iowa's only "Kid's Trout Fishing Pond (for children <15)." 563-245-2446. 16212 Big Spring Rd, Elkader

2

CLAYTON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT GROUP. Help desk & information about events, lodging, restaurants and fun things to do. 563-245-2201. 200 E Bridge St, Elkader

3

OSBORNE WELCOME CENTER. Nature & welcome center with native wildlife exhibit, walking trails, & gift shop. 563-245-1516. 29862 Osborne Rd, Elkader

4

GUTTENBERG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. Visitor center that can help with questions about where to eat, sleep, & shop. 563-252-2323. 323 S. River Park Dr, Guttenberg

5

DNR AQUARIUM & HATCHERY. Self-guided tours of live fish, mussels & turtles of the Mississippi River. 563-252-1156. 331 S River Park Dr, Guttenberg

6

MARQUETTE DEPOT MUSEUM. Visitor center with information about where to eat, sleep, fish, & shop. 563-873-1200. 216 Edgar St, Marquette

7

GUTTENBERG BAIT, TACKLE & HUNTING SHOP. Live bait, fishing supplies & hunting/fishing licenses. 563-252-1838. 1402 South Hwy 52, Guttenberg

8

KUEMPEL HARDWARE. Hardware store that sells fishing tackle, equipment & fishing licenses. 563-252-1824. 430 S River Park Dr, Guttenberg

9

CABELA'S. Retail mainstay stocking a huge inventory of hunting, fishing & camping supplies. 608-326-5600 33901 St, WI-35, Prairie du Chien, WI

10

TURKEY RIVER RENTALS. Canoe and kayak rentals, with shuttle service along the Turkey River. 563-245-3802. 460 S High St, Elkader

11

BIGFOOT CANOE RENTALS. Canoe & kayak rentals, with shuttle service along the Yellow River. 563-539-4272. 419 Big Foot Rd, Monona

12

BACKBONE STATE PARK & CAMPGROUND. 2,000 acre park with 125 campsites, restrooms, a lake, & easy access to 9.4 miles of fishing along the Maquoketa River & Richmond Springs trout stream. 563-924-2527. 1347 129th St, Dundee

13

DEER RUN RESORT. 80 RV campsites located next to a stocked 5-acre pond near the Turkey River. 563-245-3337. 501 S High St, Elkader

14

FRIEDEN'S PARK & CAMPGROUND. 3 primitive campsites across the Turkey River next to six-story limestone grist mill 563-245-1516. 23002 Grain Rd, Elkader

15

PARADISE VALLEY CAMPGROUND. 233 campsites located next to Snv Magill and North Cedar Creek trout stream. 563-873-9632. 19745 Keystone Rd, Garnaville

16

MINER'S CREEK HIDEAWAY. 50+ campsites & 4 cabins located along Miners Creek trout stream. 563-880-2571. 1304 Miners Creek Rd, Guttenberg

17

BLOODY RUN PARK & CAMPGROUND. 135-acre park with 19 primitive campsites located along Bloody Run trout stream. 563-245-1516. 128th St, Marquette

18

PIKES PEAK STATE PARK. 970-acre park with 77 campsites by the tallest bluff on the Mississippi River in Iowa. 563-873-2341. 32264 Pikes Peak Rd, McGregor

19

SPOOK CAVE & CAMPGROUND. 60 campsites & 8 cabins located along Bloody Run trout stream. 563-873-2144. 13299 Spook Cave Rd, McGregor

20

BAUMGARTNER'S BACKBONE LODGE. Luxurious vacation rental next to Backbone State Park. 563-933-4810. 39871 Cty Hwy W68, Strawberry Point

21

JOY SPRINGS PARK & CAMPGROUND. 90-acre park with 5 primitive campsites located along Joy Springs trout stream. 37771 Alpha Ave, Strawberry Point

22

BUCK CREEK PARK & CAMPGROUND. 100-acre park with 2 primitive campsites located along Buck Creek trout stream. 232nd St, Garnaville

23

ELKADER INN MOTEL. 12-room hotel near the Turkey River. 563-245-2020. 24886 IA-13, Elkader

24

COBBLESTONE INN & SUITES. 54-room hotel near Lady Luck Riverboat Casino & Bloody Run Creek trout stream. 563-873-8900. 100 North St, Marquette

25

FRONTIER MOTEL. 20+ room motel with pool near Casino Queen & Bloody Run Creek trout stream. 302 1st St, McGregor. 563-873-3497

26

FRANKLIN MOTEL. Historic 20+ room hotel & restaurant 4 miles from Joy Springs and the Upper Maquoketa River. 563-933-4788. 102 Elkader St, Strawberry Point

27

CLAYTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE where fishing licenses & trout stamps may be purchased. FLA. 563-245-2710. 111 High St NE, Elkader

28

FISK FARM & HOME SUPPLY. Hardware store that sells fishing tackle, live bait, fishing licenses, & trout stamps. FLA. 563-539-2405. 603 Hwy 18 W, Monona

29

NADING SERVICE & SPORTING GOODS. Gas station that sells, tackle, live bait, fishing licenses, & trout stamps. FLA. 563-933-6195. 201 Commercial St, Strawberry Point

30

CLAYTON COUNTY MAP LEGEND

Publicly Accessible Trout Water

Put-and-Grow Streams

Catchable Stocked Streams (CS)

Restrictive Regulation Streams (RR)

Fingerling Stocked CS Streams

Fingerling Stocked RR Streams

Not Stocked-Natural Reproduction Only

Trout Water

Visitor Information

Fishing Shop

Canoe/Kayak Outfitter

Campground/Lodging

Hotel/Motel

Fishing License Agent (FLA)

City Boundaries

Public Lands

Lodging

Parking

Dam

Canoe Access & Public Fishing

Campground

Clayton County Townships

State & County Road

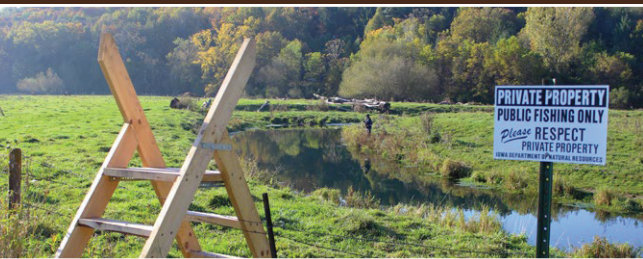
Gravel Road

Non-highlighted trout stream sections require landowner permission. Refer to "Trout Fishing on Public & Private Land."

The River Bluffs Scenic Byway is a 109-mile tourist road that traverses through Fayette and Clayton Counties in NE Iowa. Please visit www.traveliowa.com for additional information.

Every reasonable effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the information in this publication. Northeast Iowa RC&D and its partners assume no liability or responsibility in the use, or misuse of the map. Please e-mail corrections to: trout@northeastioward.org. Cartography by: Jared Nielsen, Northeast Iowa RC&D

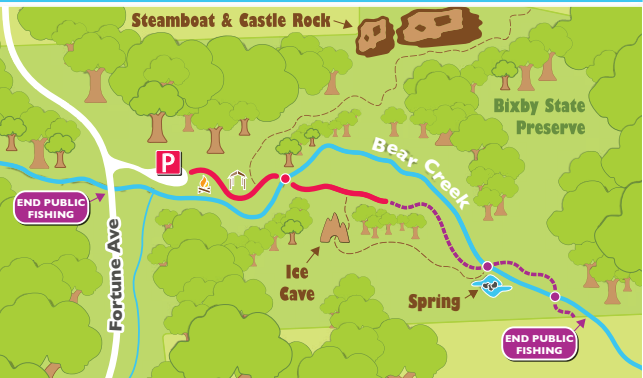
TROUT FISHING ON
 PUBLIC & PRIVATE LAND



Anglers may fish in waters found on public land such as Iowa State Forests, Parks, and Wildlife Management Areas. The IA DNR also buys private land from willing landowners, increasing fishing opportunities on publicly-owned land. However, in the Driftless region, many of the trout streams flow through private land. Furthermore, in Iowa, the landowner also owns the streambed. On private property, two systems allow the opportunity for public fishing.

- THE “HANDSHAKE AGREEMENT” is simply a verbal agreement between the landowner and the state allowing public fishing. On private property where a verbal agreement is in place, one will frequently see white signs which read, ‘Private Property. Public Fishing Only’. Stiles, allowing one to easily cross a fence, may also be present. However, the owner ultimately decides if these indicators to public fishing are allowed on the property.
- The second system is the **ANGLER CONSERVATION EASEMENT** that allows public fishing, fish stocking by the DNR, and habitat improvement on the stream. The easement consists of a corridor of 75’ on both sides of the centerline of the stream; therefore, the corridor moves as the stream changes direction. This allows continual access to the stream. On private property where an easement is present, DNR staff will be posting new, grey signs reading, ‘Open for Public Fishing. Stream Easement Area’.
- IF IN DOUBT, and neither sign is present, stay out or ask the landowner. There are plenty of fishing opportunities in the region.

4. BEAR CREEK



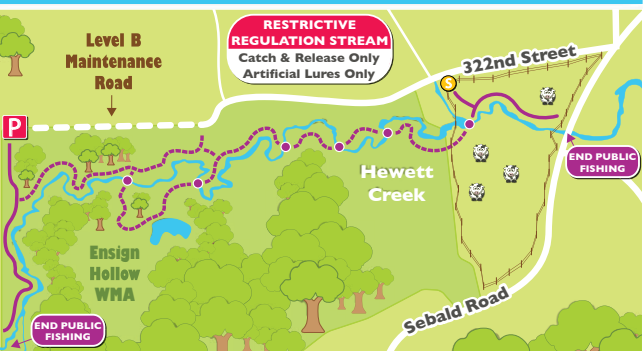
LENGTH & TROUT: 0.5 mile stream with fingerling stocked Brown Trout
DESCRIPTION: If you enjoy nature as much as fishing, Bixby State Preserve is a must-see destination. Known to contain the highest diversity of plants per acre of any Iowa woodland (over 380 native species), the park’s features (Ice Cave, Steam Boat/Castle Rock, Algitic Talus Slopes, Springs, Dolomite Boulders) are as much of the experience as fishing the gurgling small streams cool, lush-green deep pools for brown trout.

7. MOSSY GLEN CREEK



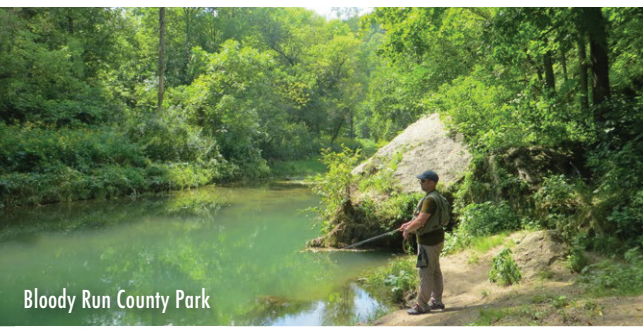
LENGTH & TROUT: 0.5 mile stream with self-sustaining Brown Trout
DESCRIPTION: Known to be one of the prettier streams in the county, Mossy Glen is not for the faint of heart, or weak of leg. After parking at the end of a dirt road in the middle of a cornfield, anglers must complete a 0.5 mile steep downhill hike through dense forest to reach the preserve. Upon arrival, anglers should be aware that NO TRAILS leading to the stream, or along the stream exist (visit in the Fall or Spring). However, the stream itself rewards visitors with gin clear water, wild brown trout, cobble substrate, mini waterfalls, large mossy rock grottoes, ankle-to-knee deep runs, and broad pools for those in search of exploratory fishing.

8. ENSIGN HOLLOW



LENGTH & TROUT: 1.3 mile stream with self-sustaining Brown Trout
DESCRIPTION: Hewett Creek (aka Ensign Hollow) supports a moderate density brown trout population (most in the 6-10 inch range) that sustains itself through natural reproduction. This stream is one of Iowa’s special regulations streams, meaning that anglers must use artificial lures only, and follow a strict catch-and-release policy for all trout. Anglers should be aware that stream access along shorelines within the WMA can be very weedy, making Spring and Fall the best times to visit this very narrow stream.

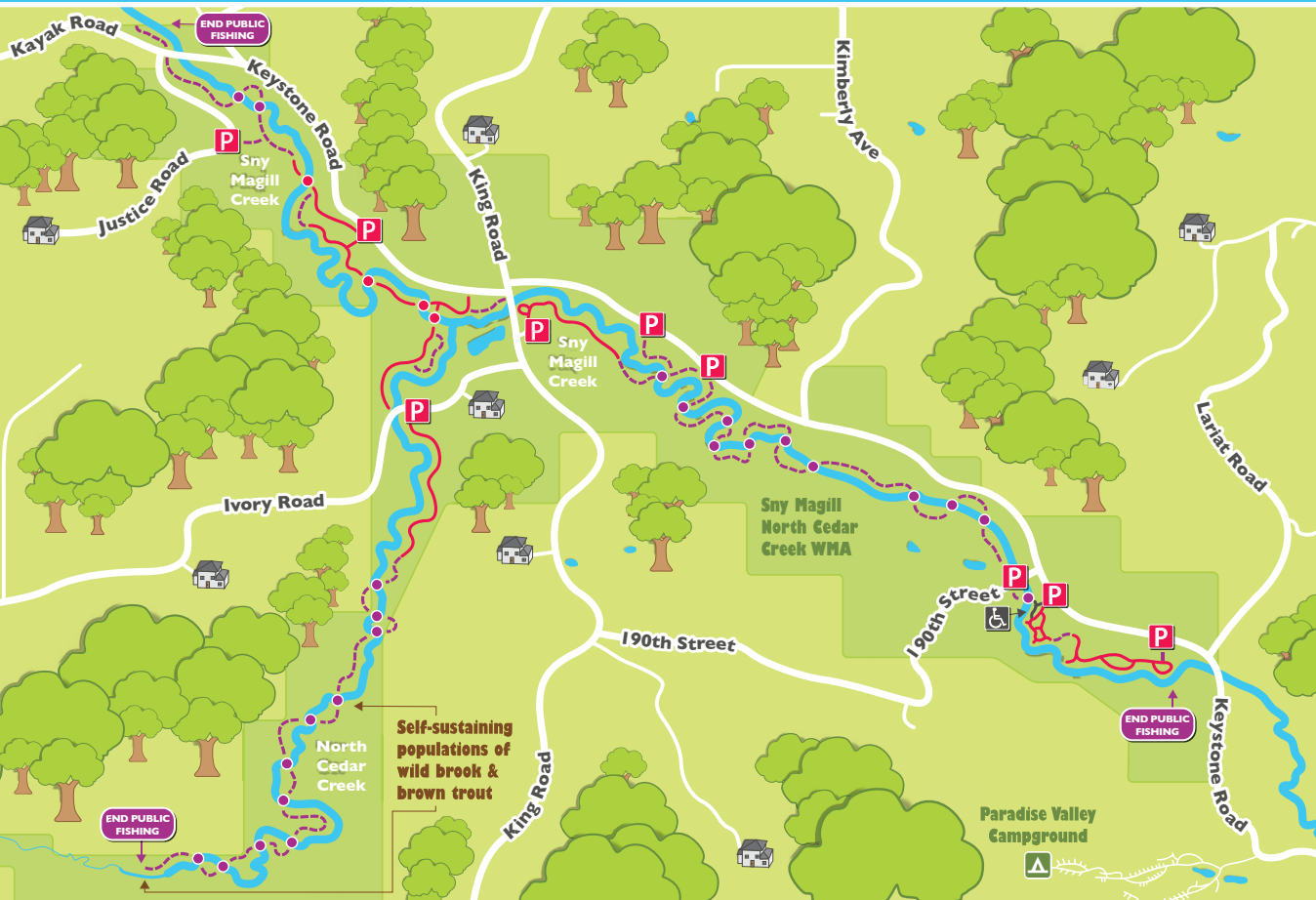
1. BLOODY RUN CREEK



Bloody Run County Park

LENGTH & TROUT: 6.5 mile stream with Brook, Brown & Rainbow Trout
DESCRIPTION: Located two miles west of Marquette, Bloody Run Creek is a long put-and-take stream that has a restrictive regulation section roughly four miles long in the middle. Of all the streams located in Clayton County, Bloody Run, at least in places, is the most like a river. With good diversity of water, anglers will experience waters similar to most other county creeks and then come across a pool the size of a small farm pond. For this reason, it’s recommended that fly fishing participants bring streamers and woolly buggers with their tackle, while spinning reel users pack the reliable worm and bobber. With plenty of runs, bank hides, and pools, lots of wild brown trout in the 10-12 inch range are common. The Iowa DNR also stocks this stream weekly from April to the end of October with catchable 10-12 inch rainbow trout. If you walk the middle segment of stream within the 919-acre Bloody Run Wildlife Management Area (WMA), you will find a portion of the stream where only artificial lures can be used and all brown trout must be more than 14 inches to be kept. It is important to note that while Bloody Run intertwines with the railroad tracks, trespassing on private railroad property is illegal and dangerous. Therefore, **anglers are NOT PERMITTED to walk on the railroad tracks.** If you prefer to fish along sections that are fairly easy for anglers with limited mobility, the stream segment within the 135-acre Bloody Run County Park is well maintained and easy to walk. For overnight visitors, 19 primitive camp sites are located within Bloody Run County Park. Campsites come with a fire ring, garbage cans, and access to drinking water and primitive toilets.

5 & 6. NORTH CEDAR CREEK AND SNY MAGILL CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 7 miles of stream with Brook, Brown & Rainbow Trout
DESCRIPTION: Located a couple miles west of Pikes Peak State Park, Sny Magill and North Cedar Creek are two of the more popular trout streams in the county. However, there is plenty of water to explore between Sny Magill’s many stocking holes and North Cedar Creek’s remoteness, solitude and heavy tree cover. Sny Magill has been known to produce some particularly large wild brown trout, though 12-14 inch fish are common. In addition to finding self-sustaining wild brook and brown trout in the southern third of North Cedar, Sny Magill is stocked weekly April through October with catchable 10-12 inch rainbow trout. If you prefer to fish along sections that are fairly easy for anglers with limited mobility, the southeast section of stream between 190th Street and Lariat Road is the most developed and maintained. Habitat improvement projects completed along this section provide accessible streambanks and easy stream access points that tend to attract both fish and anglers. Lots of habitat work has been done here to enhance the plethora of deep holes and long runs. For those that are looking for some seclusion, North Cedar Creek is a narrow stream with gin clear water and cobble substrate. Here, most anglers tend to fish the northern section along Ivory Road that is well maintained.



North Cedar Creek

9. TURKEY RIVER & BIG SPRING TROUT HATCHERY

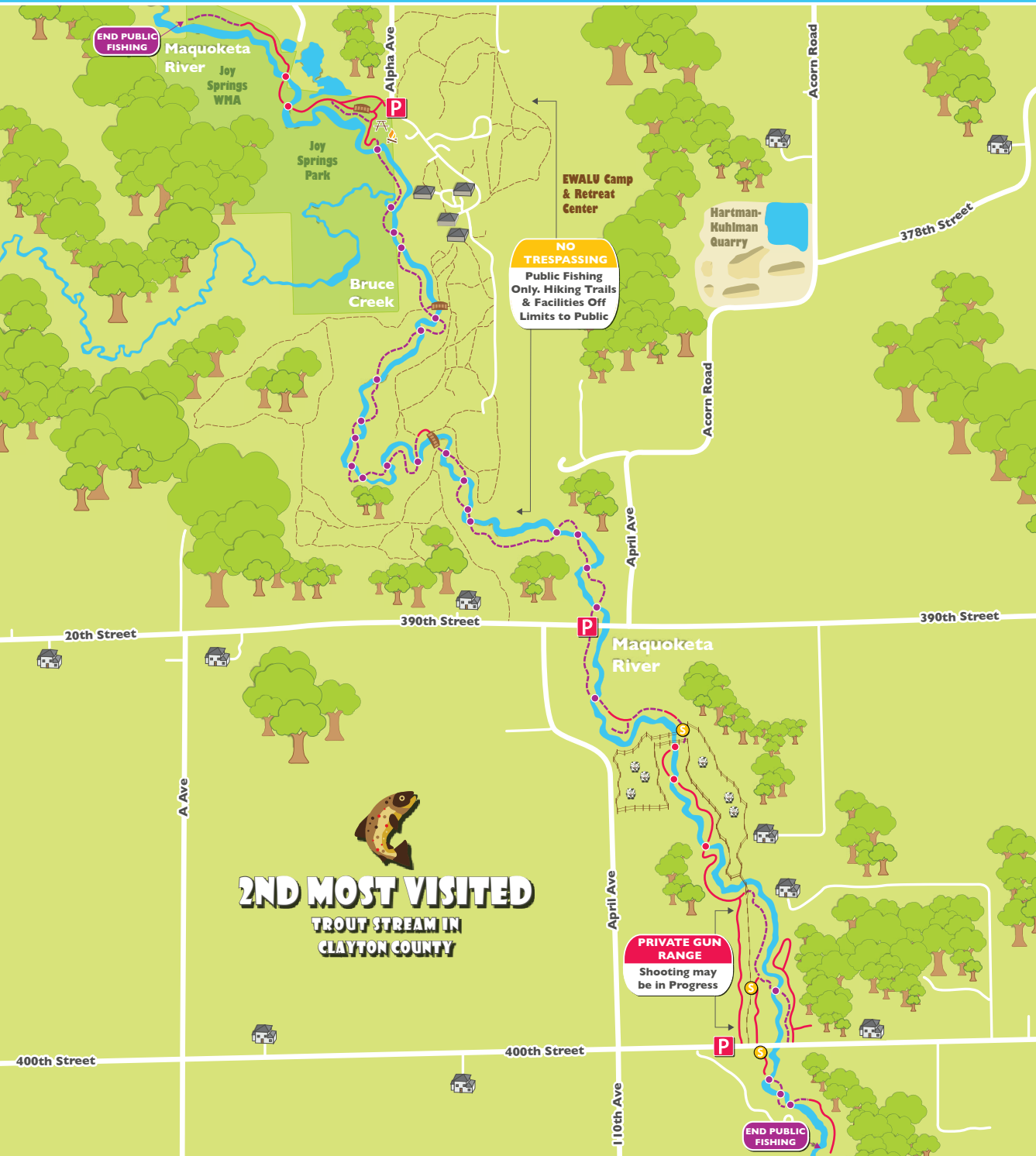


LENGTH & TROUT: 1.0 mile stream with Rainbow Trout
DESCRIPTION: The Big Spring Trout Hatchery is located along the Turkey River 10 miles northwest of Elkader. This state-owned facility receives rainbow fingerlings from the state hatchery in Manchester, raises around 150,000 of them to stockable size, and later releases them into 16 trout streams throughout northeast Iowa. Water for the hatchery’s 24 raceways and four earthen ponds is supplied from Big Spring, Iowa’s largest spring. Flow from this spring usually ranges from 20,000 to 30,000 gallons per minute (GPM), but can exceed 150,000 GPM. Though you may not get the solitude that fishing private water provides, you just might experience amazing trout fishing in terms of both quantity and average fish size. Recently completed hatchery renovations include an improved angler access trail along the Turkey River, a pond at the entrance that is open for public fishing, and a kid’s pond for young anglers 15 and under (kids must be accompanied by a licensed adult) that are both stocked with rainbow trout. Trout are stocked in the Turkey River three times a week, including most Saturdays from April 1 through the end of October. The hatchery grounds and Turkey River are open to the public seven days a week year-round. Special tours, trout fishing information, and licenses are available at the Information Center & DNR office. Visitors to the trout hatchery can also feed the trout, picnic, launch a canoe into the Turkey River, or camp at the Big Spring or Frieden Park Campground, both of which are small non-electric campgrounds located close to the hatchery.

TROUT STREAM MAP LEGEND

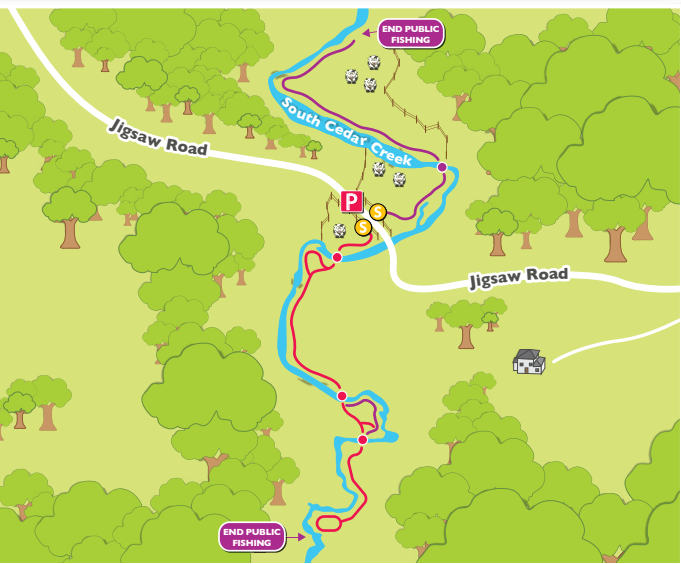


2 & 3. MAQUOKETA RIVER & JOY SPRINGS CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 8.8 miles of stream with Brook, Brown & Rainbow Trout
DESCRIPTION: The Upper Maquoketa River watershed begins north of Highway 3 near the town of Arlington, with the coldwater reach beginning where springs enter the river at Joy Springs Park. Contained within this 90-acre public area of rolling forestland is a large shelter, restrooms and five primitive campsites. There are also 0.8 miles of easily accessible trout water. Following the Maquoketa River south of Joy Springs County Park, public fishing easements provide anglers with downstream access for another 3.7 miles. However, much of this acreage is remote and requires considerable effort to fish. Anglers must be within 75 feet from the center line of the stream to stay within angler easements, which may require some wading and travel through dense riparian vegetation and crumbling stream banks. If you are planning to fish the 2-mile stream section from Joy Springs County Park to 390th Street, please respect EWALU Camp & Retreat Center’s private property rights by avoiding all hiking trails and site facilities. Before gearing up for your fishing trip, it’s also helpful to know that the Maquoketa River is sand-bedded with some segments having sparse habitat, so anglers often concentrate their effort near fallen trees, channel constrictions, and rock features that provide habitat for trout. Most of the Maquoketa River corridor is forested and easiest to fish with spin gear, but there are pastured segments and open sections that are good for fly fishing—most notably, the 0.5 mile section of river north of 400th Street that begins at the far end of the gun range and includes the open pasture between both areas where barbed wire fences cross the stream. Here, extensive conservation efforts to restore the river’s natural shape and flow have included streambank reshaping and stabilization efforts. Rock weirs, or channel spanning rock structures, have also been installed to create pools, then riffles and a run of faster water to replicate ideal trout habitat. Though some anglers utilize the trail that crosses through the gun range to access this 0.5 mile section of the Maquoketa River, there is a trailhead sign next to the road that declaims “STOP AND READ! – If this gate is open or this sign is uncovered, then target shooting is in progress...At this point to gain entry you must hunk your horn three (3) times. If no response from shooters, then STAY OUT!!” Anglers should also note that the 0.2 miles of easily accessible trout water south of the 400th Street bridge is closed every December during deer hunting season. The Maquoketa River is stocked regularly with catchable rainbow trout from April to October and annually with stream-reared fingerling brown trout in May.

11. SOUTH CEDAR CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 0.5 mile stream with Brook, Brown & Rainbow Trout
DESCRIPTION: South Cedar is a nice, easy-to-fish stream, located just outside of Garnavilla in a tucked away valley. Roadside parking next to the bridge allows you access to the water and the option of walking up or down stream. South Cedar Creek itself flows through pasture land until it intersects Jigsaw Road, where it begins to run parallel to a steep wooded hillside. This southern section of stream (showcased above with the red mowed trail) is easy to walk and fish for trout. Though South Cedar Creek is not cold enough to be stocked year-long, the stream is stocked unannounced on a weekly basis in April, May, June, September and October with catchable 10-12 inch rainbow trout. French Creek fingerling brown trout have also been stocked annually since 2006.

TROUT GUIDE
 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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IOWA'S
 TROUT FAMILY

