

NORTHEAST IOWA BIKE GUIDE



northeast
The BEST part of IOWA
www.visitiowa.org

Featuring 28 of the BEST trails in Northeast Iowa!



Welcome to Northeast Iowa's Ride-Worthy Routes

Welcome to Northeast Iowa, home to some of the best bike trails and most scenic landscapes in Iowa. Use this guide to navigate more than 200 miles of paved, granular, soft, and single-track trails spread across seven counties.

Don't miss the Points of Interest section where you'll find contact information for local Visitor Welcome Centers that can provide you even more information on the region's abundant lodging, dining, shopping, outdoor recreation, arts and culture, and historic attractions.

Enjoy your time riding across Northeast Iowa. You'll love the view from here!

Ride the BEST Part of Iowa

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Trail Safety

Many bike trails in Northeast Iowa are multi-use trails and you may encounter walkers, joggers, horseback riders, and pets. Some trails have little or no cell phone service, travel along shared roadways and through towns, or may have been modified since the creation of this map. Please follow these guidelines to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all trail users.

- 1) Share the Trail.** Slow down and be courteous of all users. Bikes yield to horses and pedestrians.
- 2) Ride Right.** Ride on the right and pass on the left.
- 3) Communicate.** Signal when you approach others or are turning.
- 4) Stay Aware.** Keep your eyes and ears open for other trail users or vehicles.
- 5) Make a Plan.** Know your route and tell others where you are going and when you will be back.
- 6) Follow the Signs.** Pay attention to trail signs and directions installed by trail managers.
- 7) Use Safe Equipment.** Wear a helmet and make sure your bike is working properly.
- 8) Leave No Trace.** Trash belongs in the garbage.

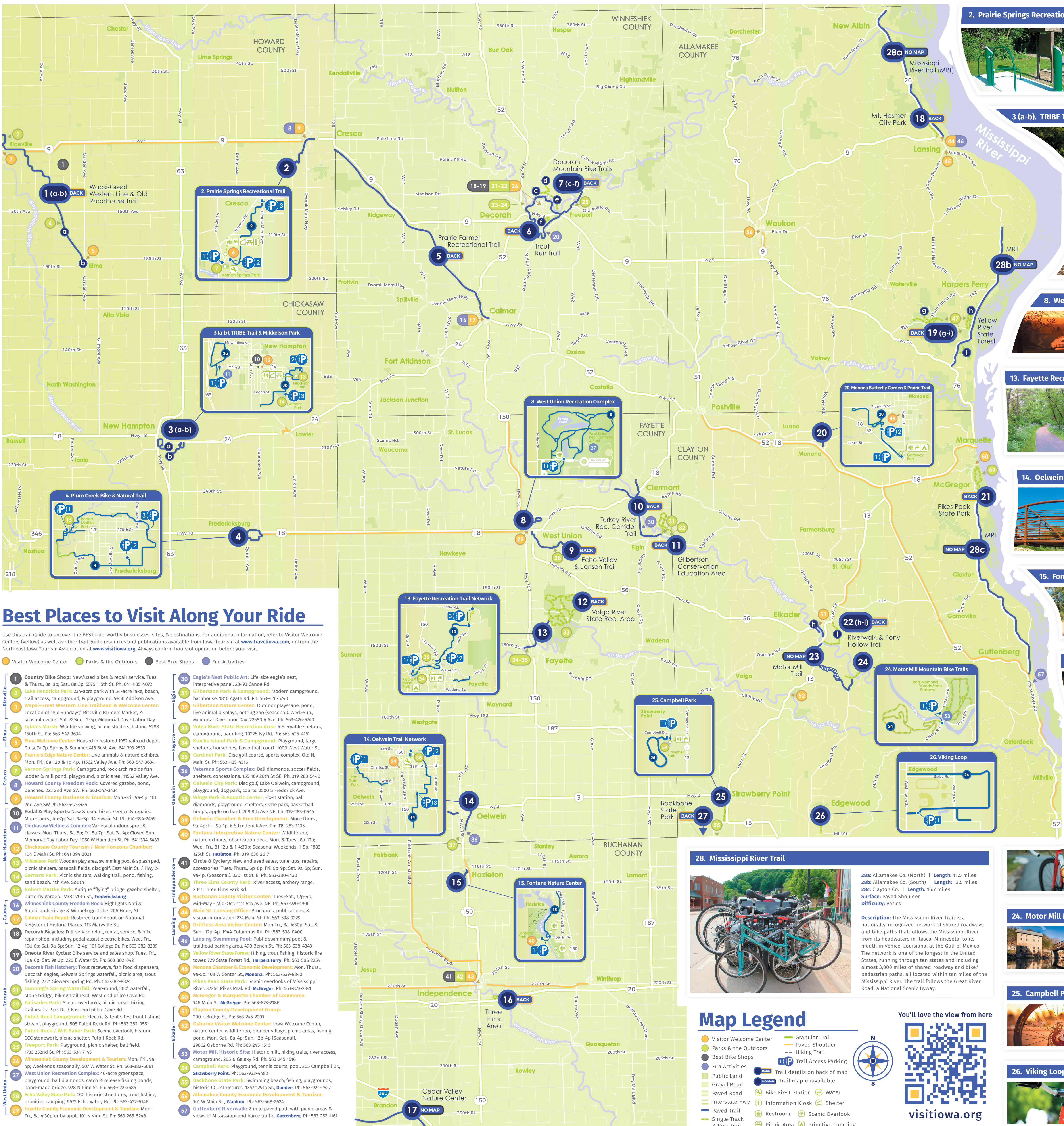
Acknowledgements

This guide was developed by the Northeast Iowa Tourism Association. Input, contributions, grants, and support were provided by the following organizations:



Allamakee County Economic Development & Tourism, Buchanan County Tourism, Chickasaw County Tourism, Clayton County Development Group, Fayette County Economic Development & Tourism, Howard County Business & Tourism, Turkey River Recreational Corridor, Winnebago County Development & Tourism, Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission

Map & Publication Designed by Northeast Iowa RC&D. Website: www.northeastiowarc.org | Ph: 563-864-7112



2. Prairie Springs Recreational Trail



Location: Cresco in Howard County
Length: 3.5 miles
Surface: Paved Trail
Difficulty: Easy
Trailhead Parking:

- Vernon Springs Park, 11562 Valley Ave
- Prairie's Edge Nature Ctr, 11562 Valley Ave
- Downtown Cresco, 1st Ave W

3 (a-b). TRIBE Trail - Industrial & Mikkelsen Park



Location: New Hampton in Chickasaw County
Length: 5.5 miles
Surface: Paved Trail
Difficulty: Easy to Medium
Trailhead Parking:

- Chickasaw Wellness Complex, 1050 W Hamilton St.
- Mikkelsen Park
- Garant Park, Mission Ave

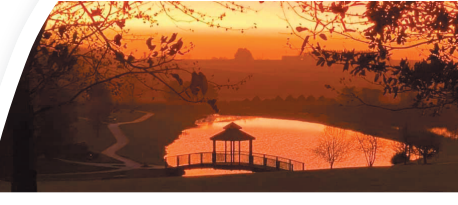
4. Plum Creek Bike and Nature Trail



Location: Fredericksburg in Chickasaw County
Length: 5 miles
Surface: Mix of Granular & Paved Trail
Difficulty: Easy to Medium
Trailhead Parking:

- Robert Matthe Park, 2738 270th St.
- Swimming Pool, 111 Schult Ridge Rd.
- Schoolhouse Museum, 2698 Roanoke Ave

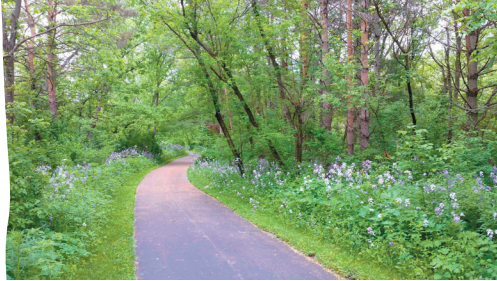
8. West Union Recreation Complex



Location: West Union in Fayette County
Length: 1 mile
Surface: Paved Trail
Difficulty: Easy
Trailhead Parking:

- West Union Rec Complex, 928 N Pine St.

13. Fayette Recreation Trail Network



Location: Fayette in Fayette County
Length: 5 miles
Surface: Paved, Granular, & Boardwalk Trails
Difficulty: Easy
Other Notes: Connects to Volga River State Park
Trailhead Parking:

- Klocks Island Park, 150th St.
- Cardinal Park, Old N. Main St.
- Two Trailheads along Jade Rd.

14. Oelwein Trail Network



Location: Oelwein in Fayette County
Length: 5 miles
Surface: Paved Trail
Difficulty: Easy
Trailhead Parking:

- Red Gate Park, 201 20th St. SE
- Wings Park, 209 8th Ave NE
- Platt Park, 7th St. and 7th Ave

15. Fontana Nature Center



Location: Hazelton in Buchanan County
Length: 1.5 mile
Surface: Paved Trail
Difficulty: Easy
Other Notes: Connects to city of Hazelton
Trailhead Parking:

- Fontana Nature Center, 1883 125th St.

17. Cedar Valley Nature Trail



Location: Brandon in Buchanan County
Length: 6.5 miles
Surface: Mix of Granular & Paved Trail
Difficulty: Easy
Trailhead Parking:

- Brander St., Brandon

20. Monona Butterfly Garden & Prairie Trail



Location: Monona in Clayton County
Length: 1.5 miles
Surface: Paved Trail
Difficulty: Easy
Trailhead Parking:

- Gateway Park C ound, S. Main St./Hwy 18
- Aquatic Center / Butterfly Garden, 601 W Davis St.

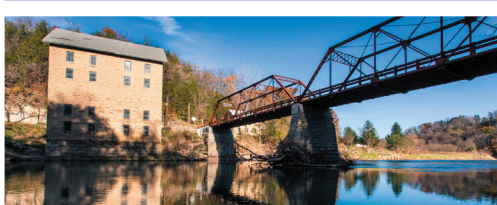
23. Motor Mill Trail



Location: Elkader in Clayton County
Length: 7.5 miles
Surface: Mix of Granular Trail & Paved Shoulder
Difficulty: Medium
Trailhead Parking:

- Motor Mill Historic Site, 28518 Galaxy Rd.
- Turkey River Park, 20195 Strawberry Point Rd.

24. Motor Mill Mountain Bike Trails



Location: Elkader in Clayton County
Length: 3 miles
Surface: Single-Track to Hard
Difficulty: Medium to Hard
Trailhead Parking:

- Motor Mill Historic Site, 28518 Galaxy Rd.

25. Campbell Park



Location: Strawberry Point in Clayton County
Length: 0.75 miles
Surface: Paved Trail
Difficulty: Easy
Trailhead Parking:

- Campbell Park, Campbell Dr.

26. Viking Loop



Location: Edgewood in Clayton County
Length: 1 mile
Surface: Paved Trail
Difficulty: Easy
Trailhead Parking:

- Event Center, 305 North Washington St.

28. Mississippi River Trail



28a: Allamakee Co. (North) | **Length:** 11.5 miles
28b: Allamakee Co. (South) | **Length:** 13.5 miles
28c: Clayton Co. | **Length:** 16.7 miles
Surface: Paved Shoulder
Difficulty: Varies

Description: The Mississippi River Trail is a nationally-recognized network of shared roadways and bike paths that follows the Mississippi River from its headwaters in Itasca, Minnesota, to its mouth in Venice, Louisiana, at the Gulf of Mexico. The network is one of the longest in the United States, running through ten states and including almost 3,000 miles of shared-shoulder and bike/pedestrian paths, all located within ten miles of the Mississippi River. The trail follows the Great River Road, a National Scenic Byway.

Map Legend

- Visitor Welcome Center
- Parks & the Outdoors
- Best Bike Shops
- Fun Activities
- Public Land
- Gravel Road
- Paved Road
- Interstate Hwy
- Single-Track & Soft Trail
- Granular Trail
- Paved Shoulder
- Hiking Trail
- Trail Access Parking
- Trail details on back of map
- Trail map unavailable
- Bike Fix-It Station
- Information Kiosk
- Restroom
- Scenic Overlook
- Water
- Shelter
- Picnic Area
- Primitive Camping



You'll love the view from here



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6. Trout Run Trail



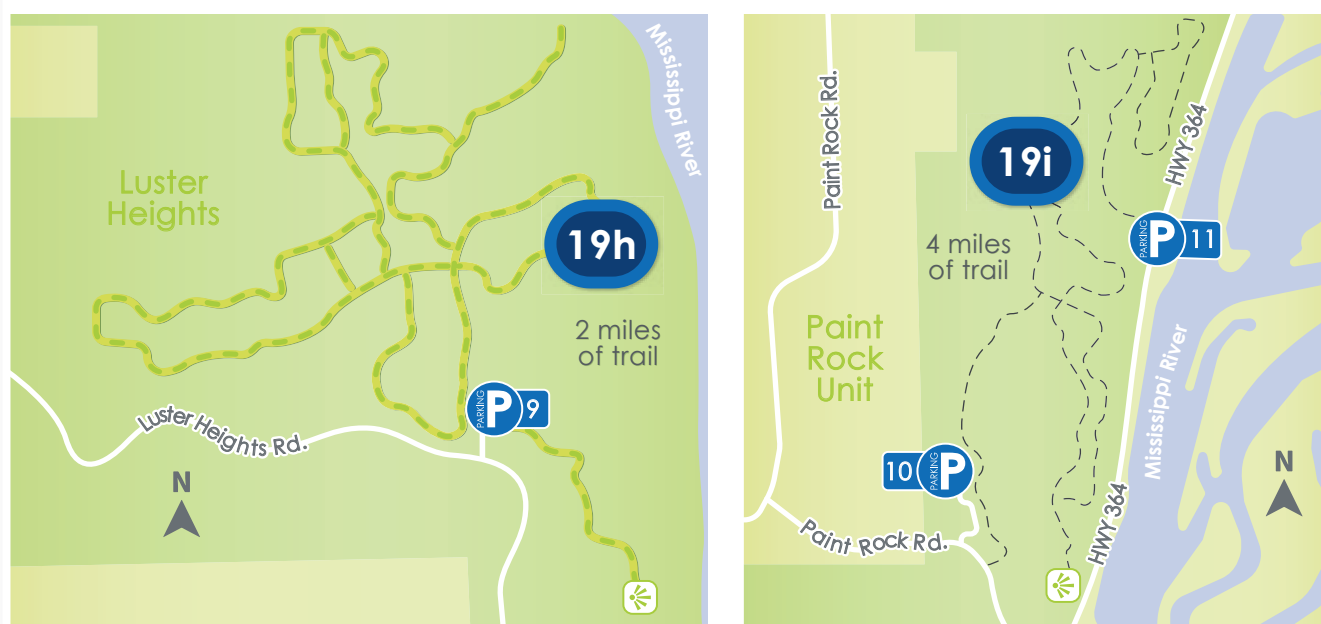
Location: Decorah in Winneshiek County | **Length:** 11 miles | **Surface:** Paved Trail | **Difficulty:** Varies
Description: The 11-mile Trout Run Trail loops Decorah, offering stunning views and safe, non-motorized access to trout streams, the Upper Iowa River, art pieces, the Decorah Fish Hatchery / Siewers Spring, the Decorah eagles, a campground, several parks with miles of hiking trails, and the many shops, restaurants, and breweries of Decorah. Half of the trail is flat and half provides challenging climbs. A 3-mile extension takes riders to the playground and shelter at Freepoint Park.

22 (h-i). Riverwalk & Pony Hollow Trail



Location: Elkader in Clayton County | **Length:** 4 miles | **Surface:** Pony Hollow - Granular; Riverwalk - Paved Trail | **Difficulty:** Varies | **Description:** The River Walk leads you through downtown Elkader, crossing the Keystone Bridge to the City Park and Pony Hollow Trail. The flat, four-mile, lime chipped Pony Hollow Trail offers one of the region's most scenic rides as it meanders the banks of the Turkey River and Roberts Creek. Pony Hollow Trail is a multi-use trail, including horseback riding. Bikers Yield.

19 (g-i). Yellow River State Forest



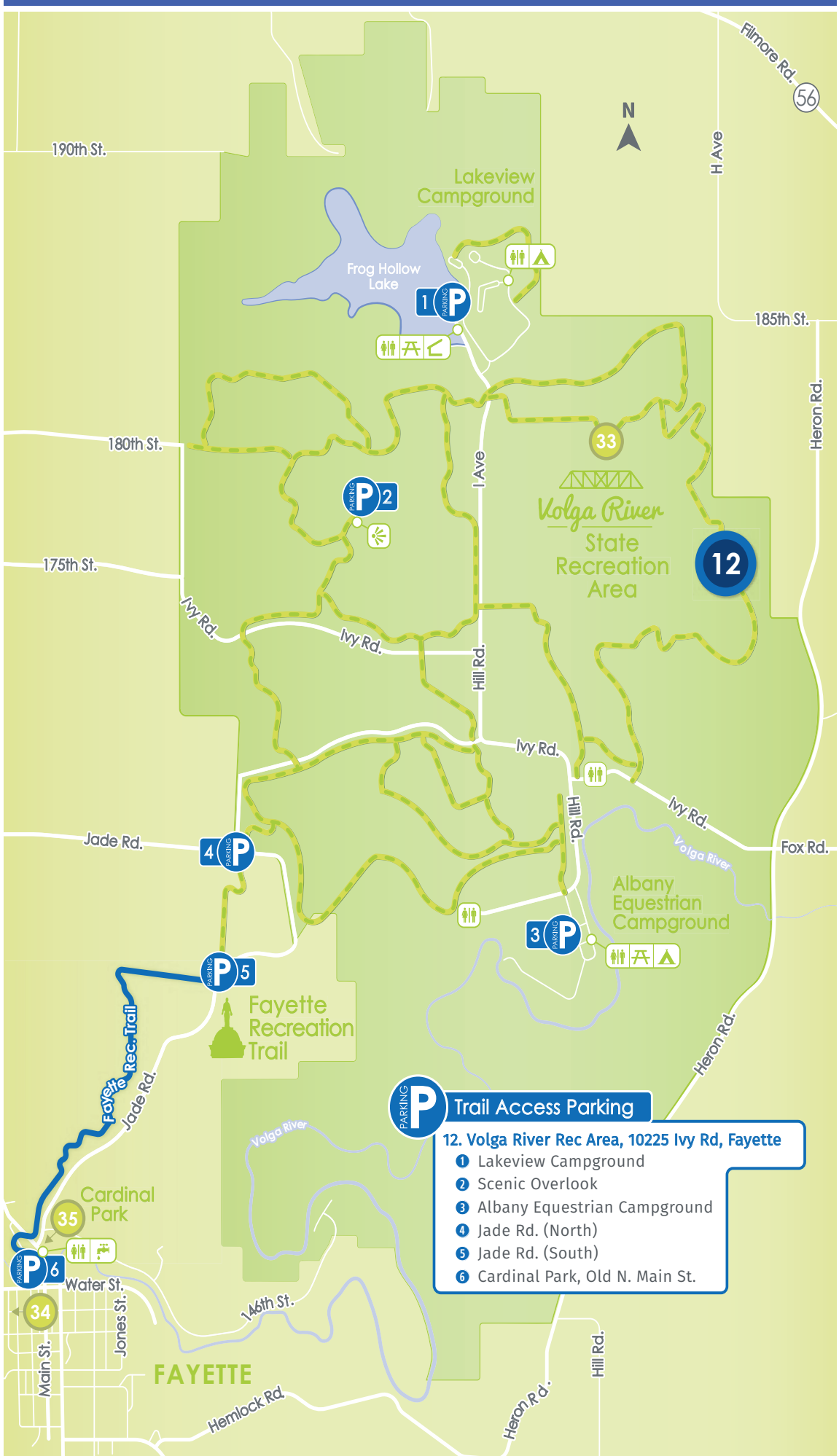
Location: Harpers Ferry in Allamakee County | **Length:** 20+ miles | **Surface:** Single Track & Soft | **Difficulty:** Varies | **Description:** The trails at Yellow River State Forest prove that Iowa is anything but flat. Expect steep climbs rewarded with stunning overlooks and views. Biking is allowed only on designated trails in Paint Creek and Luster Heights Units. Some trails are multi-use and bikers should yield to hikers and horseback riders. All trails in Paint Rock Unit are hiking only.

1 (a-b). Wapsi-Great Western Line & Old Roundhouse Trail



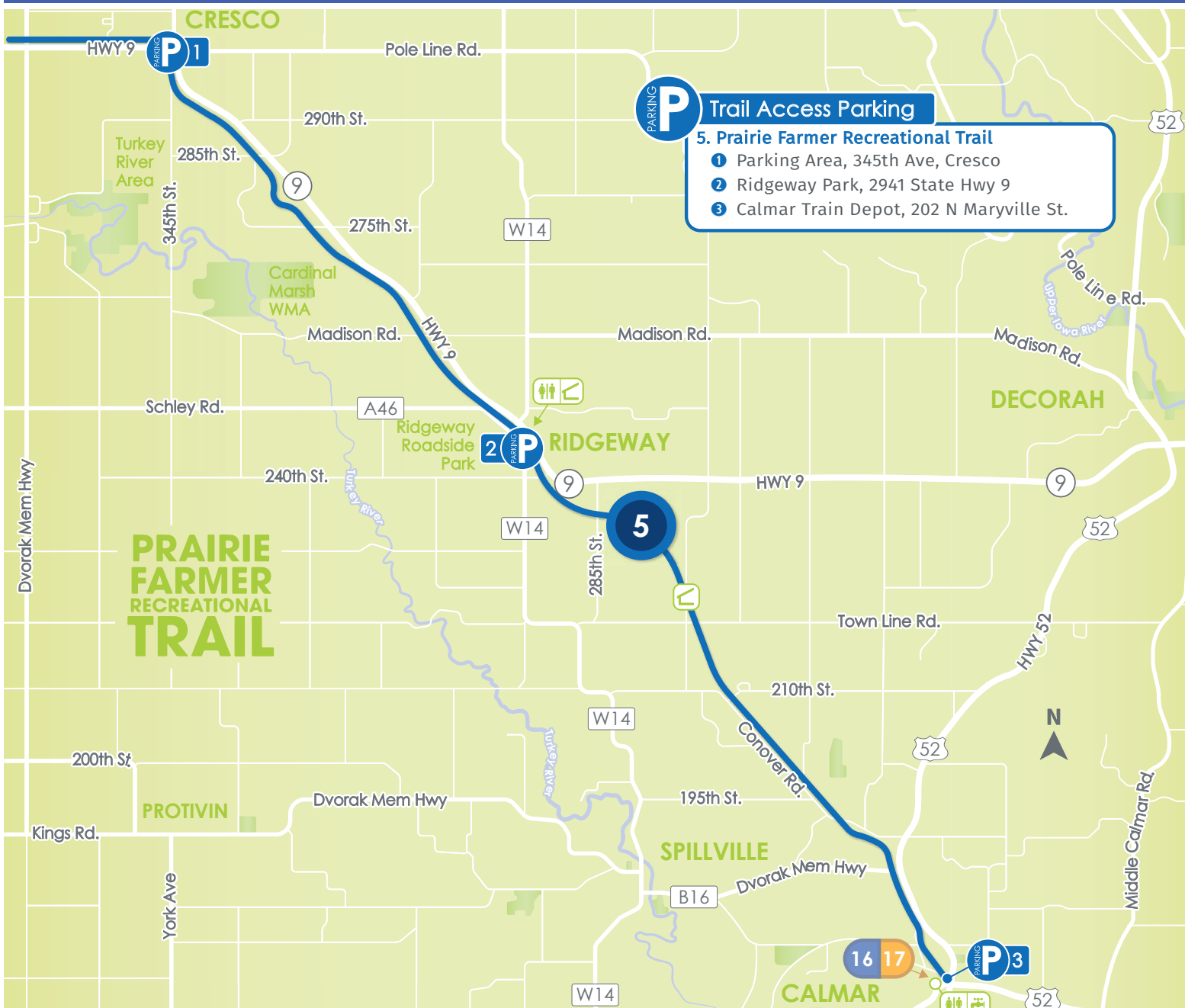
Location: Mitchell & Howard Counties | **Length:** 27+ miles | **Surface:** Paved Trail | **Difficulty:** Varies
Description: The Wapsi-Great Western Line Trail follows 27 flat miles along the former Chicago Great Western Railroad and meets the Old Roundhouse trail near Elma. The trail passes through a variety of picturesque landscapes, including rolling hills, trestle bridges, agricultural fields, Amish farmsteads, prairies, marshes, and woodlands. Users will ride by numerous parks, playgrounds, lakes, campgrounds, and other amenities.

12. Volga River State Recreation Area



Location: Fayette County | **Length:** 20 miles | **Surface:** Soft | **Difficulty:** Varies
Description: Striking rock formations, prairie areas, natural woodlands, and abundant wildlife characterize the rugged topography of the 5,700 acres that make up Volga River State Recreation Area. Two campgrounds, Frog Hollow Lake, and the Volga River provide fishing, paddling, boating, and camping opportunities.

5. Prairie Farmer Recreational Trail



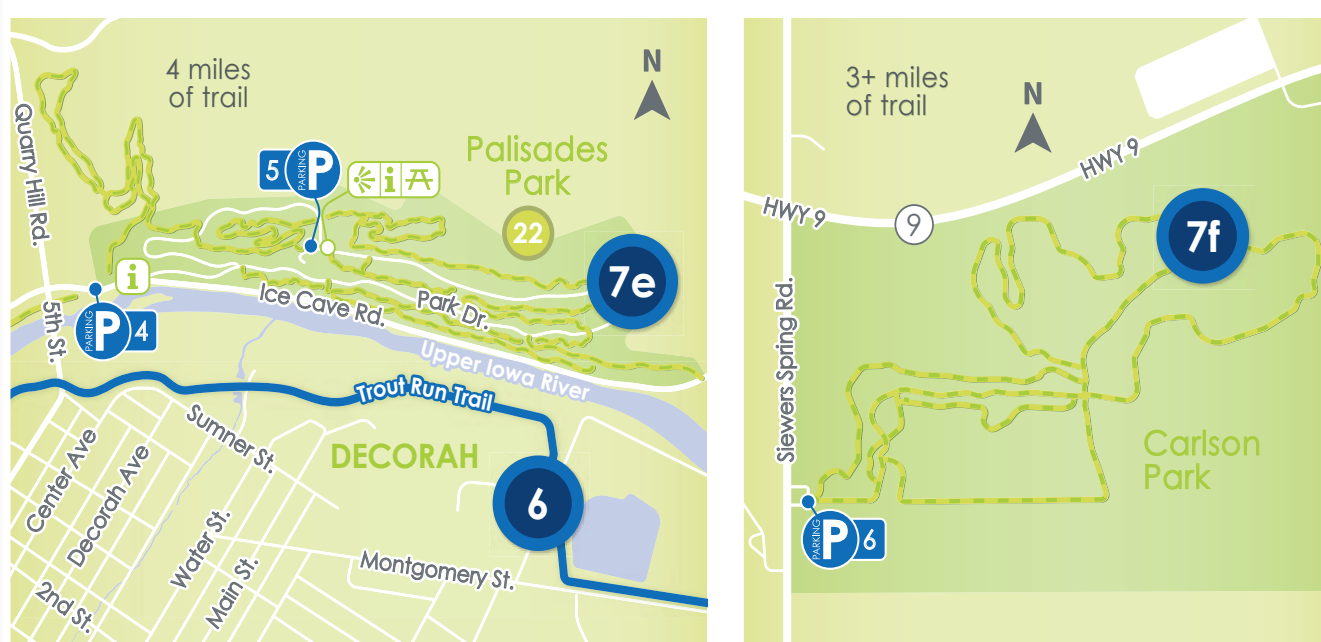
Location: Winneshiek & Howard County | **Length:** 20 miles | **Surface:** Paved Trail | **Difficulty:** Easy
Description: The Prairie Farmer Recreational Trail stretches from Cresco through Ridgeway to Calmar along scenic woodlands, meadows, and agricultural land. The quiet trail primarily follows the abandoned Milwaukee Railroad line for a smooth, flat, and easy twenty-mile ride that offers great opportunities for viewing native wildflowers and wildlife. The trail is named for a radio show once broadcast in the Midwest and is well-marked with emergency signage.

21. Pikes Peak State Park



Location: McGregor in Clayton County | **Length:** 11 miles / 2.8 Miles of Mtn Bike Trail | **Surface:** Single-Track | **Difficulty:** Varies | **Description:** Pikes Peak State Park is one of Iowa's premier destinations, located along a National Scenic Byway and famed for its stunning views. The Point Ant Trail offers challenging mountain biking. All other trails are hiking only, but provide breathtaking views of Bridal Veil Falls or the confluence of the Mississippi and Wisconsin Rivers.

7 (c-f). Decorah Mountain Bike Trails



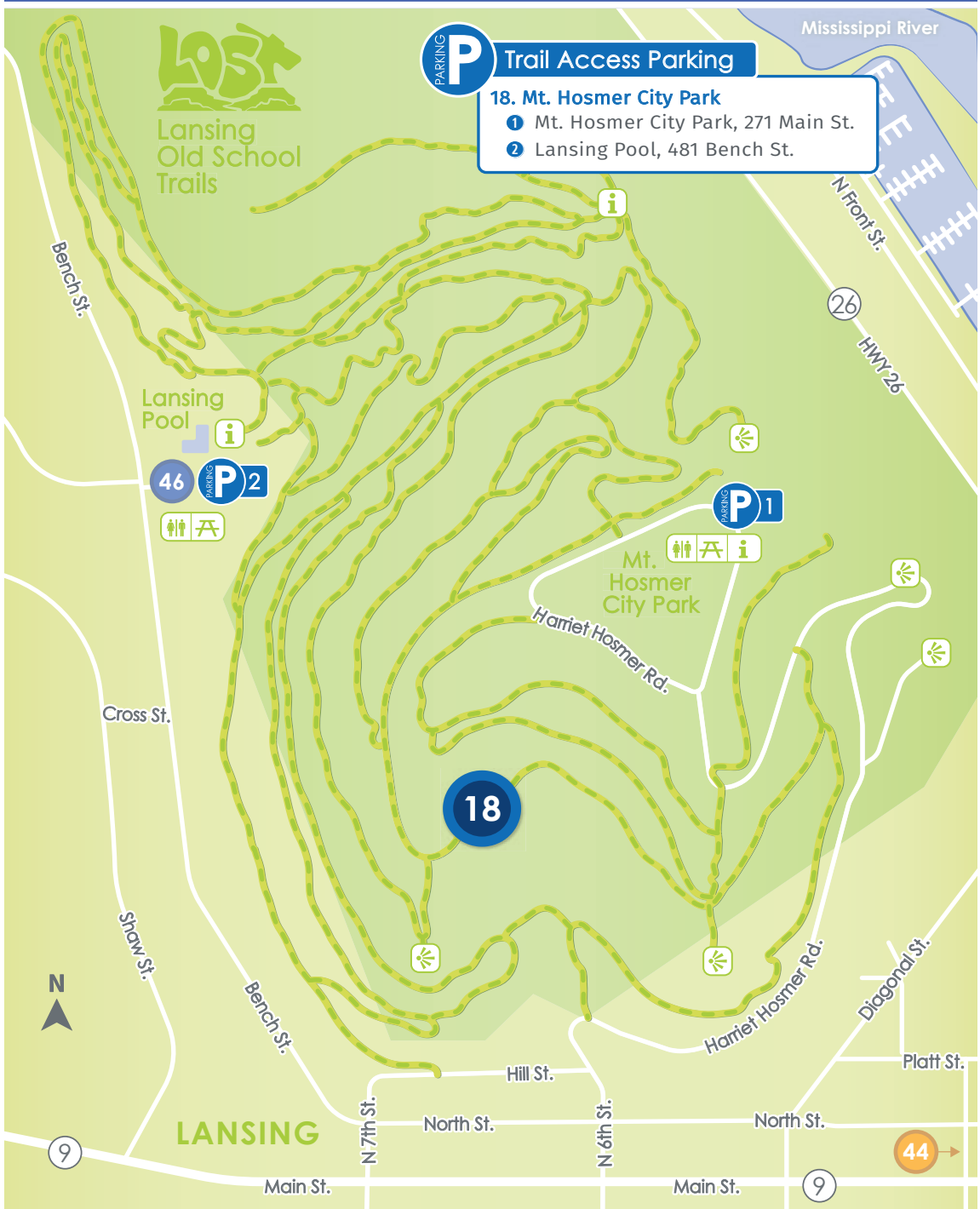
Location: Decorah in Winneshiek County | **Length:** 30+ miles | **Surface:** Single-Track & Soft | **Difficulty:** Varies
Description: More than twenty miles of scenic, well-maintained, and challenging single-track and soft trails twist, loop, and climb throughout 450 wooded park acres. Detailed trail signs aid navigation and include loop and route maps, directional arrows, difficulty ratings, safety considerations, and points of interest.

11. Gilbertson Conservation Education Area



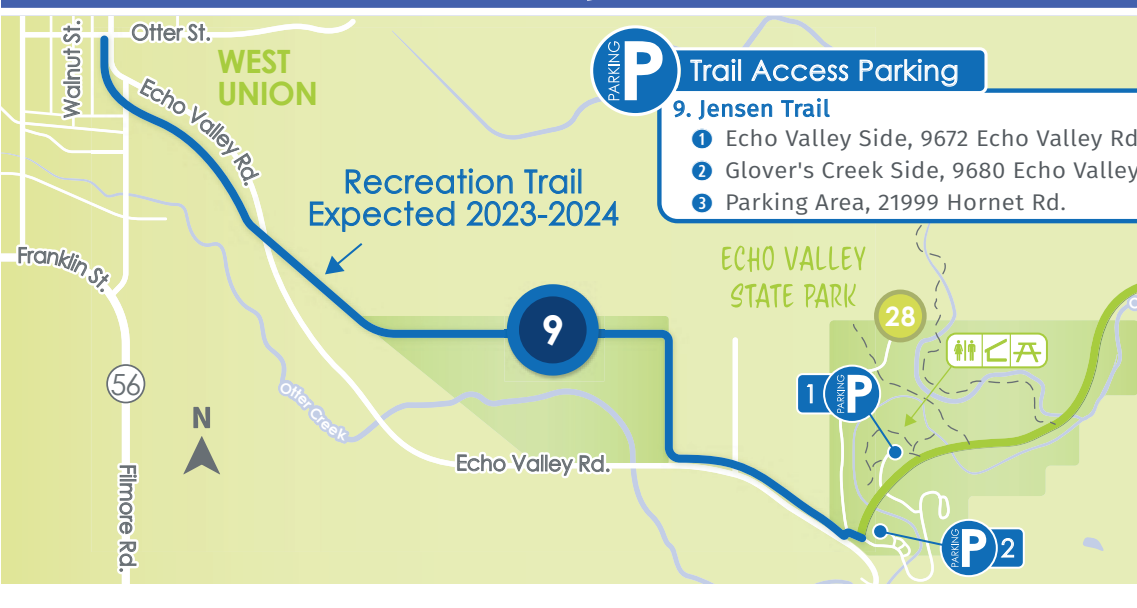
Location: Elgin in Fayette County | **Length:** 10 miles | **Surface:** Soft Trail | **Difficulty:** Medium
Description: Nine miles of multi-use trails are located within over 1,000 acres situated along the Turkey River and lined with streams, prairies, river bottoms, and limestone bluffs. Other amenities include a campground, pavilion, restrooms, natural landscape, nature center, fishing pond, historic buildings, and a summer petting zoo.

18. Mt. Hosmer City Park



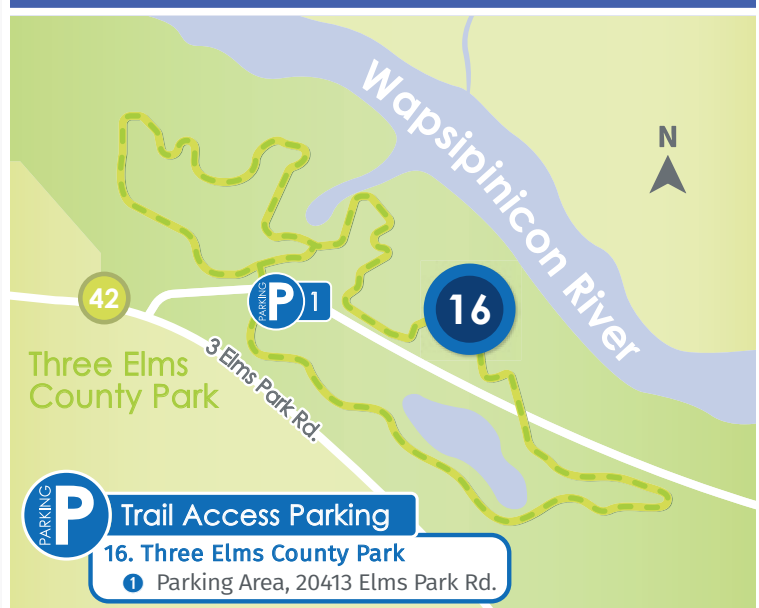
Location: Lansing in Allamakee County | **Length:** 8 miles | **Surface:** Single-Track | **Difficulty:** Varies | **Description:** Mt. Hosmer offers spectacular panoramic views of the Mississippi River. It is named after Harriet Hosmer, a young female passenger on a cargo steamboat in 1851 that won a barefoot race to the top of the bluff against the ship's male crew members.

9. Echo Valley State Park & Jensen Trail



Location: West Union in Fayette County | **Length:** 5 miles | **Surface:** Paved Trail & Granular Trail | **Difficulty:** Easy
Description: Echo Valley State Park preserves many historical structures hand built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. Additional recreational opportunities include picnicking, trout fishing in two streams, and primitive camping. Local farmer Richard Jensen developed sections of the Echo Valley Trail system on an 1890 railroad right-of-way running through his property and later transferred ownership to the Fayette County Conservation Board for permanent protection and public enjoyment.

16. Three Elms Area



Location: Independence in Buchanan County | **Length:** 1 mile | **Surface:** Single-Track | **Difficulty:** Varies | **Description:** The Three Elms Trail is one-way. Be sure to follow arrows and stop at all stop signs. No riding during events at the area's archery range.



This bike guide was sponsored and supported by NEITA, Northeast Iowa Tourism Association. NEITA is a regional collaborative group that works together to promote tourism for the region.

We invite you to come explore our beautiful corner of the state on two wheels and enjoy all of our bike-friendly destinations. Questions? We are happy to assist you with travel planning and would love to answer any questions you might have, mail you a brochure, offer suggestions for your trip, assist with directions, or anything that will make your planning easier. Please allow us to be of assistance! We can be contacted by visiting www.visitiowa.org.

10. Turkey River Rec. Corridor Trail



Location: Elgin/Clermont in Fayette County | **Length:** 7 miles | **Surface:** Paved Trail | **Difficulty:** Easy
Description: The Turkey River Recreational Corridor connects three communities (Clermont, Elgin, and Elkader) and two counties (Clayton and Fayette) that are all linked by the scenic beauty of the Turkey River. The trail between Clermont and Elgin takes riders through two downtown communities while showcasing the wooded hills, rich farmland, abundant wildlife, historic landmarks, and cultural and outdoor experiences found within the Turkey River Recreational Corridor. A life-size eagle's nest public art piece, numerous shelters and parks, and interpretive kiosks are located along the trail.

27. Backbone State Park



Location: Clayton County | **Length:** 15 miles | **Surface:** Single-Track | **Difficulty:** Varies
Description: Dedicated in 1920, Backbone was Iowa's first state park and remains one of the most geologically unique. It is named for the Devil's Backbone, a steep, narrow ridge of bedrock that is the highest point in Northeast Iowa. The designated biking trails (Barred Owl, Bluebird, East Lake, and West Lake) offer a robust and challenging trek through picturesque natural beauty.