

# 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

#WowWhoKnew  
VISITIOWA.ORG

## 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.

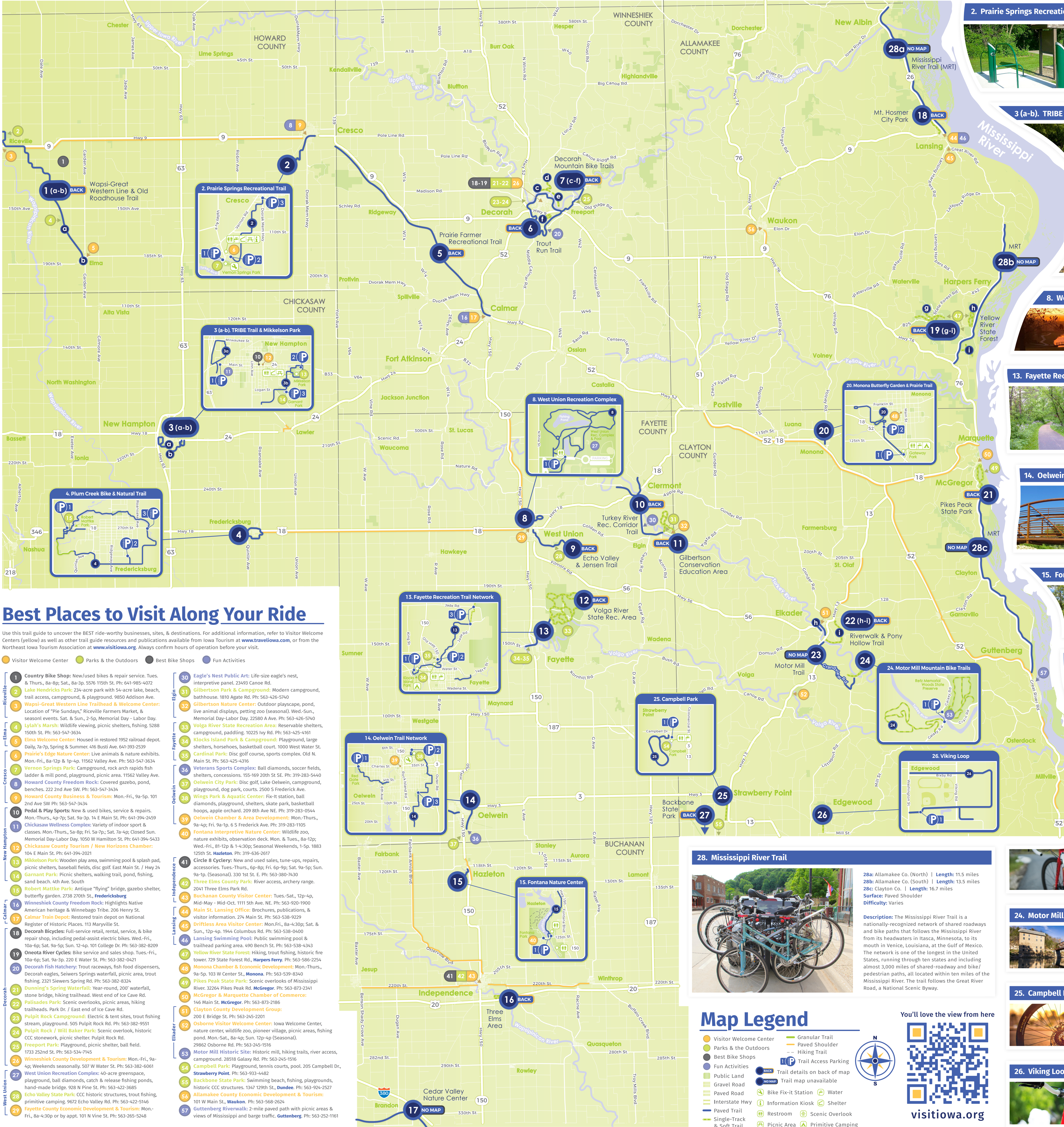
## Acknowledgements

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

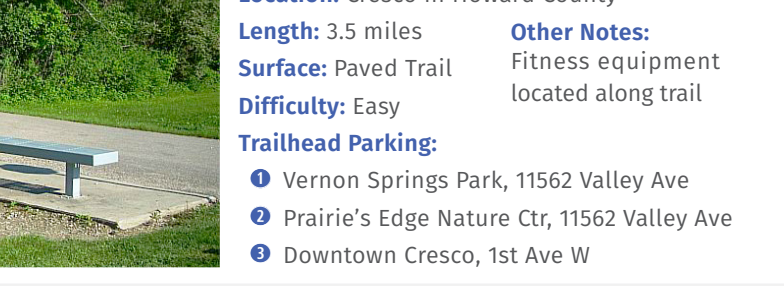


Allamakee County Economic Development & Tourism, Buchanan County Tourism, Chickasaw County Tourism, Clayton County Development Group, Fayette County Economic Development & Tourism, Howard County Business & Tourism, Turkey River Recreational Corridor, Winneshek County Development & Tourism, Upper Explorerland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

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



### 2. Prairie Springs Recreational Trail



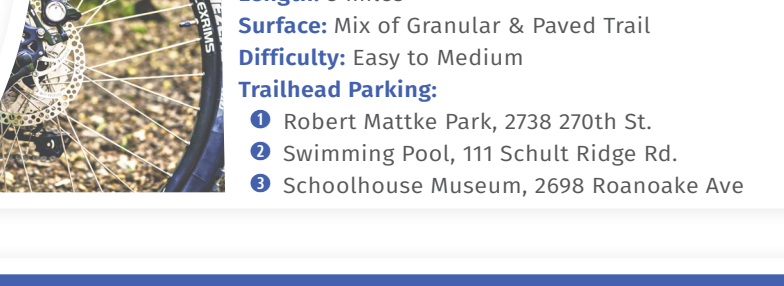
**Location:** Cresco in Howard County  
**Length:** 3.5 miles  
**Surface:** Paved Trail  
**Difficulty:** Easy  
**Trailhead Parking:** Vernon Springs Park, 11562 Valley Ave  
**Other Notes:** Fitness equipment located along trail

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



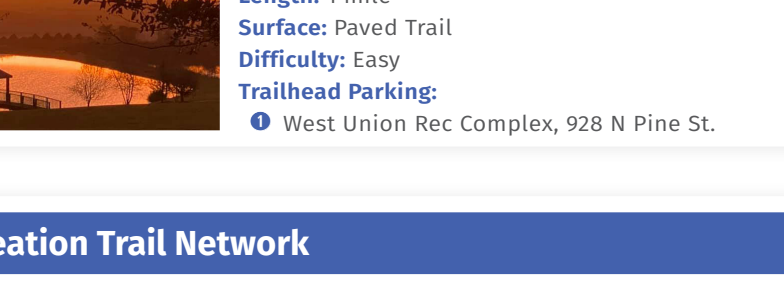
**Location:** New Hampton in Chickasaw County  
**Length:** 5.5 miles  
**Surface:** Paved Trail  
**Difficulty:** Easy to Medium  
**Trailhead Parking:** Chickasaw Wellness Complex, 1050 W Hamilton St  
Mikkelsen Park  
Garnant Park, Mission Ave

### 4. Plum Creek Bike and Nature Trail



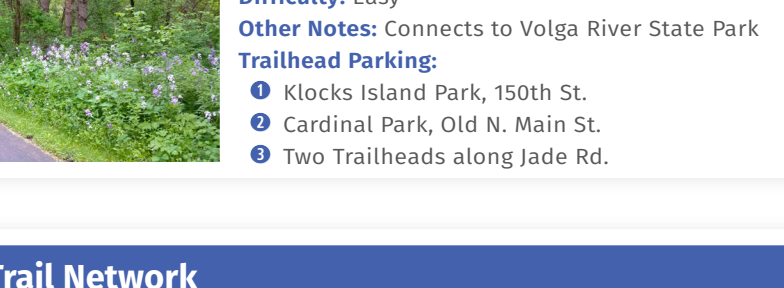
**Location:** Fredericksburg in Chickasaw County  
**Length:** 5 miles  
**Surface:** Mix of Granular & Paved Trail  
**Difficulty:** Easy to Medium  
**Trailhead Parking:** Robert Mattke Park, 2738 270th St  
Swimming Pool, 111 Schult Ridge Rd  
Schoolhouse Museum, 2698 Roanoke Ave

### 8. West Union Recreation Complex



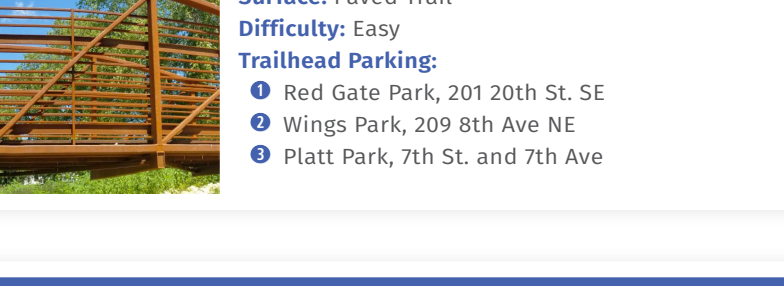
**Location:** West Union in Fayette County  
**Length:** 1 mile  
**Surface:** Paved Trail  
**Difficulty:** Easy  
**Trailhead Parking:** West Union Rec Complex, 928 N Pine St.

### 13. Fayette Recreation Trail Network



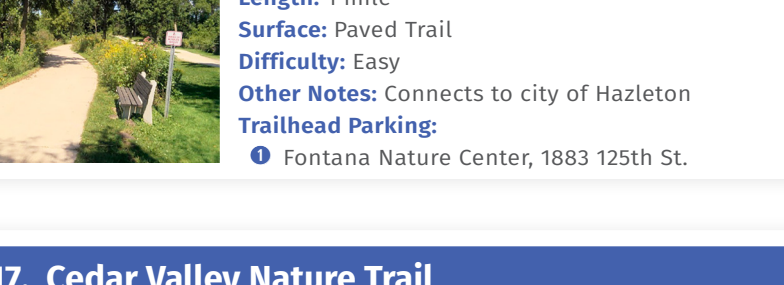
**Location:** Fayette in Fayette County  
**Length:** 5 miles  
**Surface:** Paved, Granular, & Boardwalk Trails  
**Difficulty:** Easy  
**Other Notes:** Connects to Volga River State Park  
**Trailhead Parking:** Klocks Island Park, 150th St  
Cardinal Park, Old N. Main St  
Two Trailheads along Jade Rd.

### 14. Oelwein Trail Network



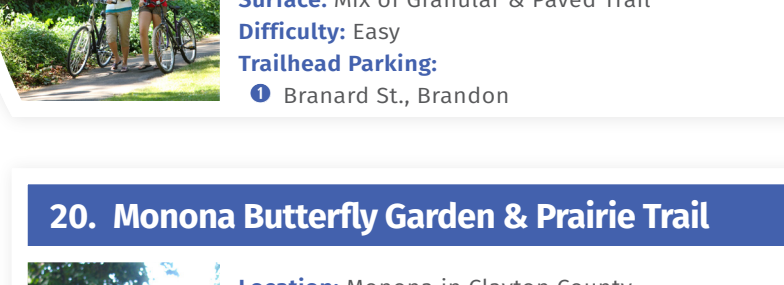
**Location:** Oelwein in Fayette County  
**Length:** 5 miles  
**Surface:** Paved Trail  
**Difficulty:** Easy  
**Trailhead Parking:** Red Gate Park, 201 20th St. SE  
Wings Park, 209 8th Ave NE  
Platt Park, 7th St. and 7th Ave

### 15. Fontana Nature Center



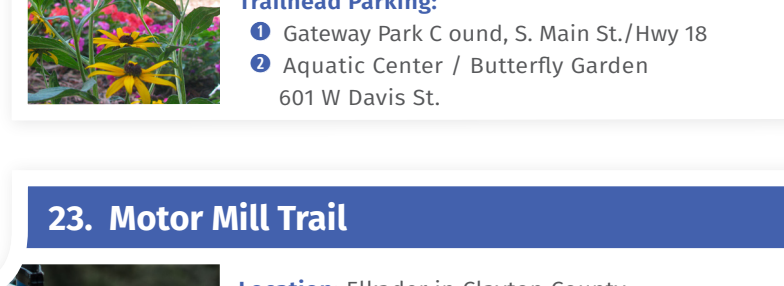
**Location:** Hazelton in Buchanan County  
**Length:** 1.5 miles  
**Surface:** Paved Trail  
**Difficulty:** Easy  
**Other Notes:** Connects to city of Hazelton  
**Trailhead Parking:** Fontana Nature Center, 1883 125th St.

### 17. Cedar Valley Nature Trail



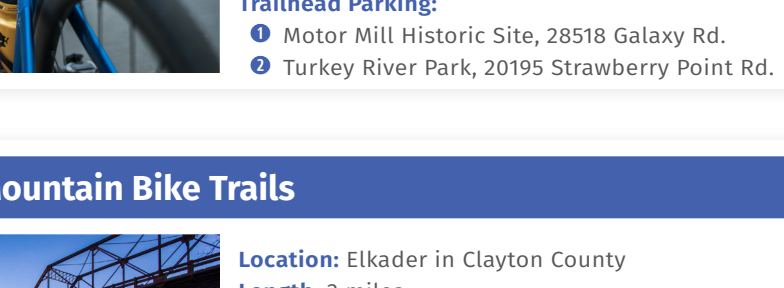
**Location:** Brandon in Buchanan County  
**Length:** 6.5 miles of a 67-mile trail  
**Surface:** Mix of Granular & Paved Trail  
**Difficulty:** Easy  
**Trailhead Parking:** Gateway Park, 201 20th St. SE  
Platt Park, 7th St. and 7th Ave

### 20. Monona Butterfly Garden & Prairie Trail



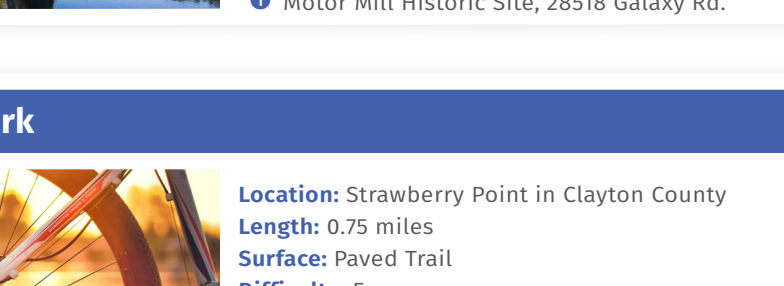
**Location:** Monona in Clayton County  
**Length:** 1.5 miles  
**Surface:** Paved Trail  
**Difficulty:** Easy  
**Trailhead Parking:** Gateway Park, S. Main St./Hwy 18  
Aquatic Center / Butterfly Garden, 601 W Davis St.

### 23. Motor Mill Trail



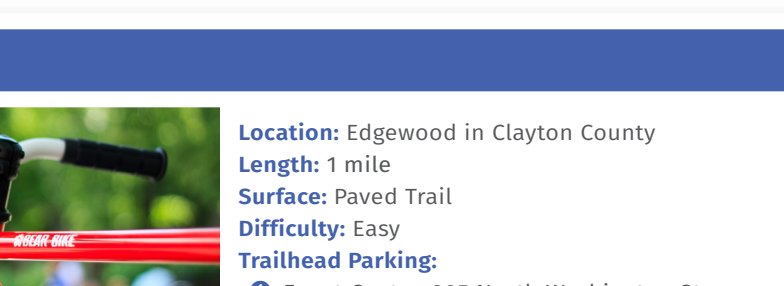
**Location:** Elkader in Clayton County  
**Length:** 7.5 miles  
**Surface:** Mix of Granular Trail & Paved Shoulder  
**Difficulty:** Medium  
**Trailhead Parking:** Motor Mill Historic Site, 28518 Galaxy Rd.  
Turkey River Park, 20195 Strawberry Point Rd.

### 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-roadway 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
- Paved Trail
- 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
- Picnic Area
- Primitive Camping

You'll love the view from here



visitiowa.org

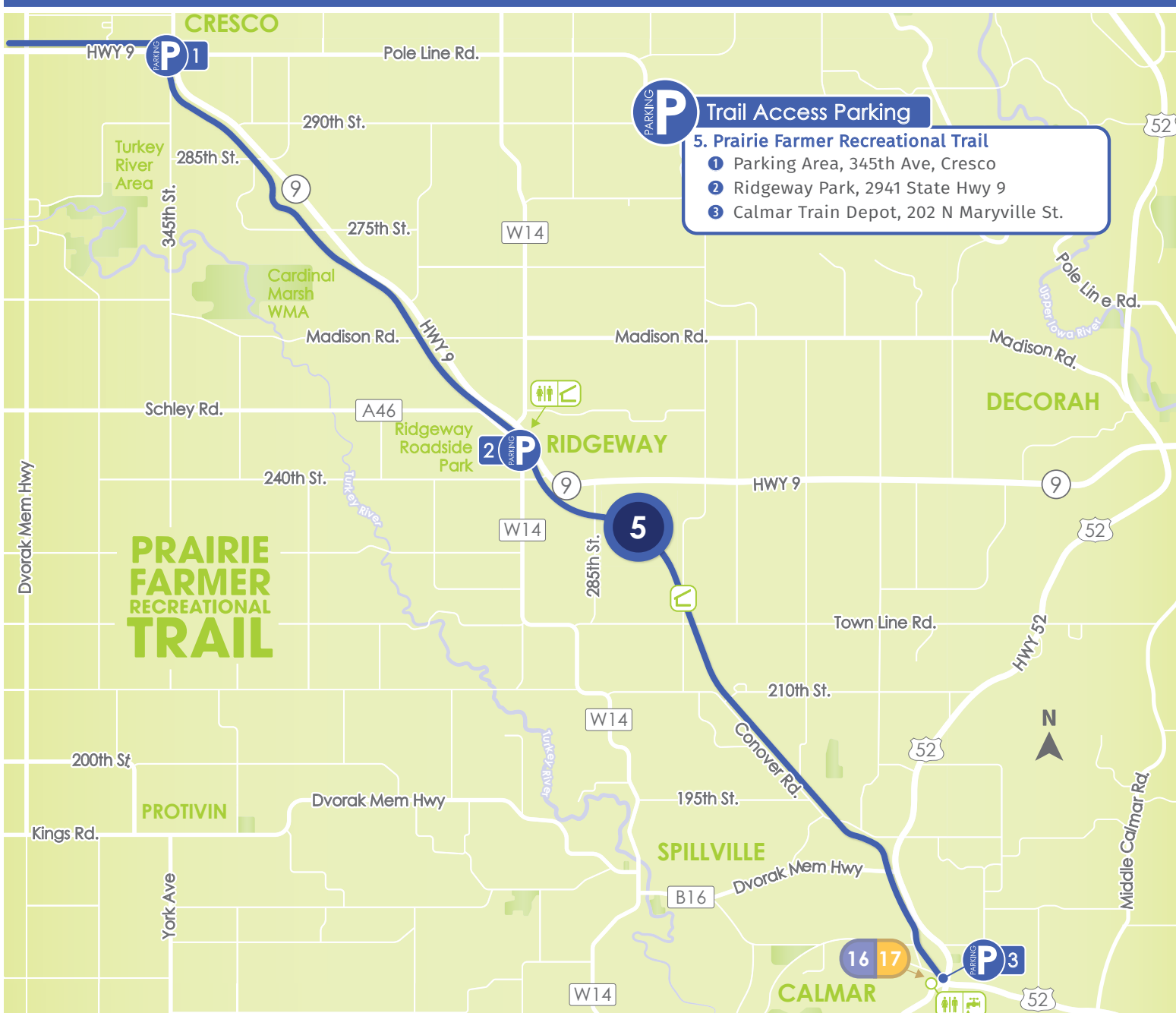


## 6. Trout Run Trail



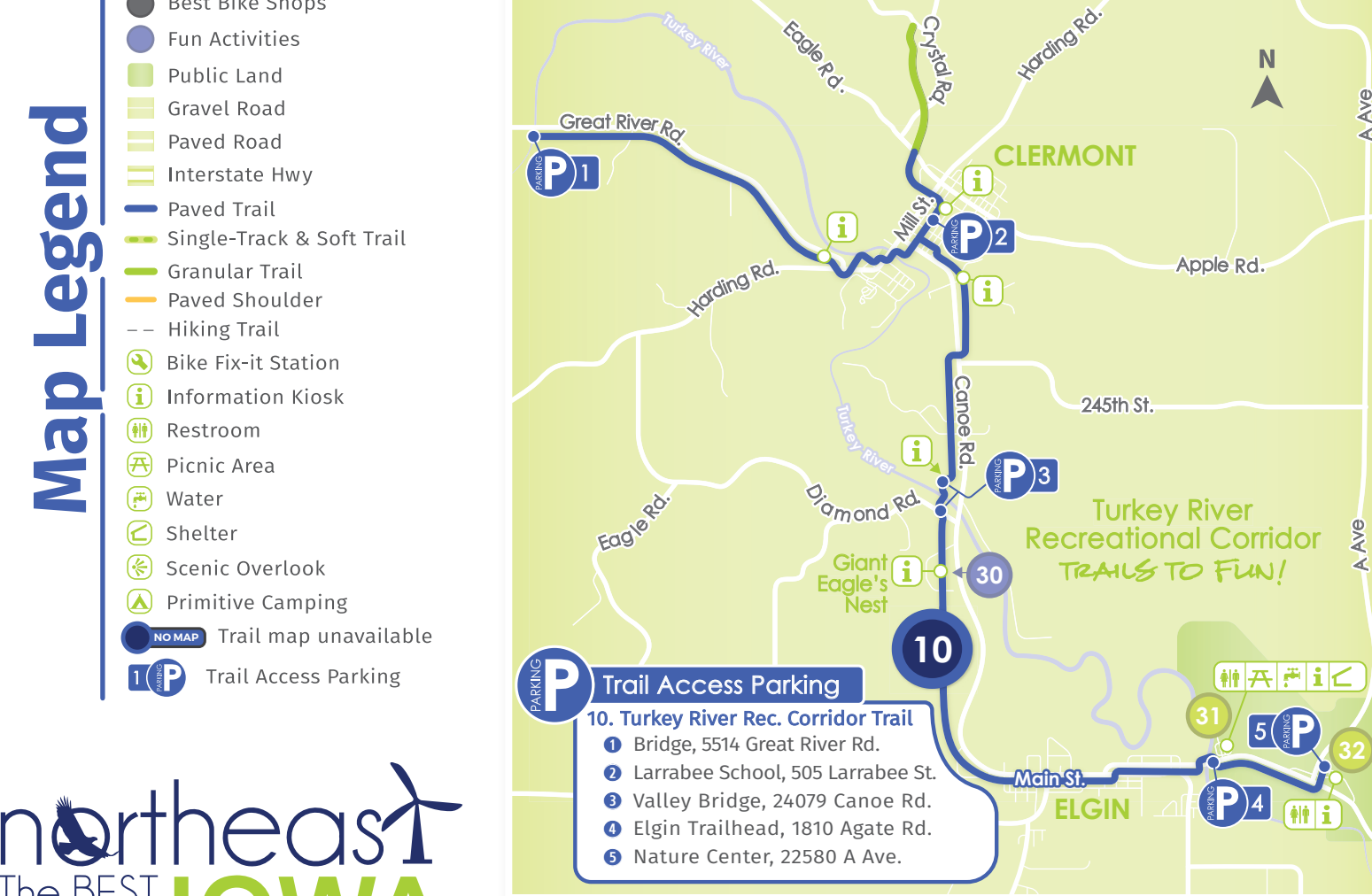
**Location:** Decarah in Winneshiek County | **Length:** 11 miles | **Surface:** Paved Trail | **Difficulty:** Varies  
**Description:** The 11-mile Trout Run Trail loops Decarah, offering stunning views and safe, non-motorized access to trout streams, the Upper Iowa River, art pieces, the Decarah Fish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

## 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.

## 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 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.

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



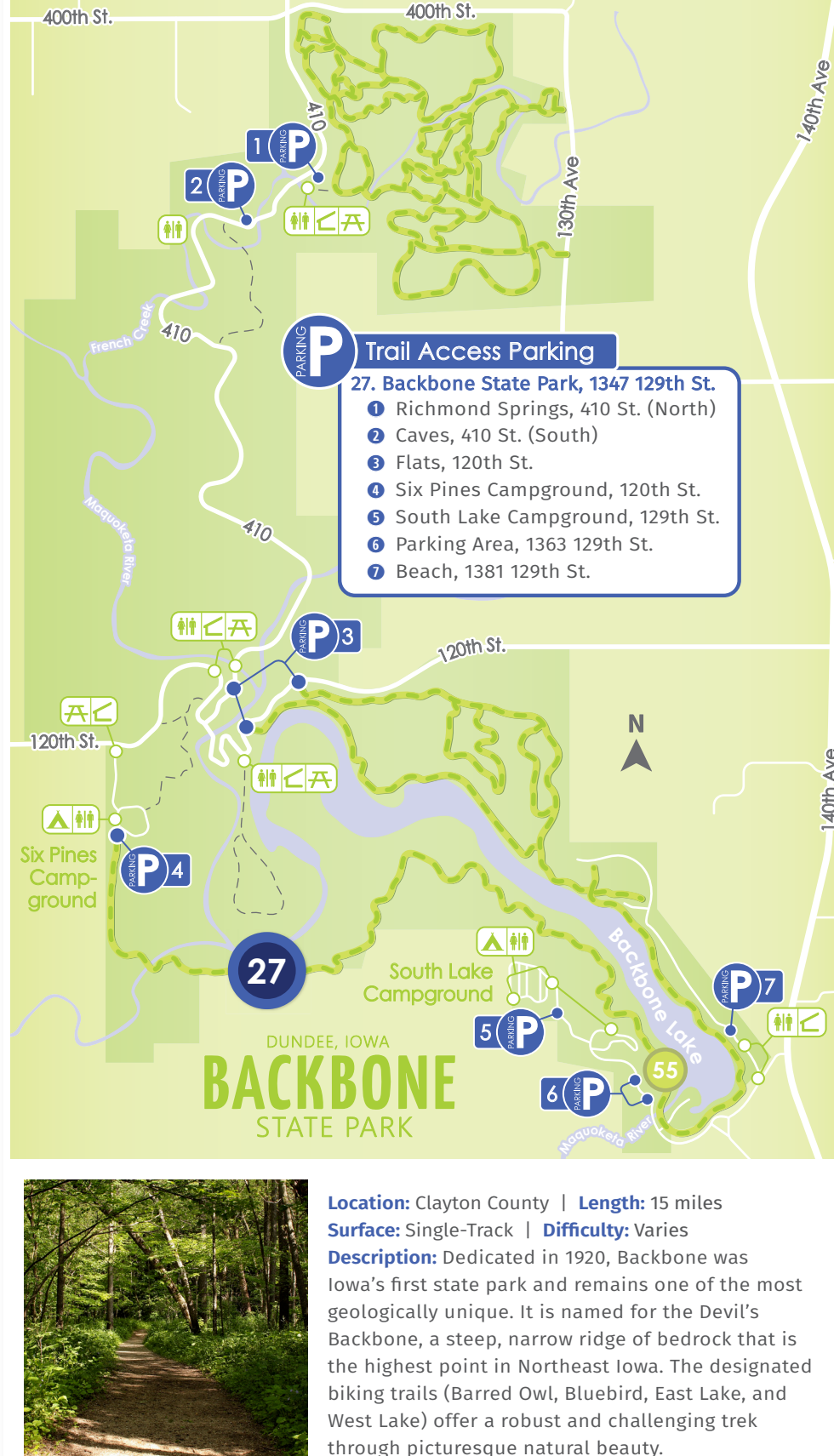
**Location:** Elkader in Clayton County | **Length:** 4 miles | **Surface:** Pony Hollow - Granular; Riverwalk - Paved Trail | **Difficulty:** Varies | **Description:** The River Walk leads you through downtown Elkader, crossing the Keystone Bridge to the City Park and Pony Hollow Trail. The flat, four-mile, 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.

## 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.

## 27. Backbone State Park

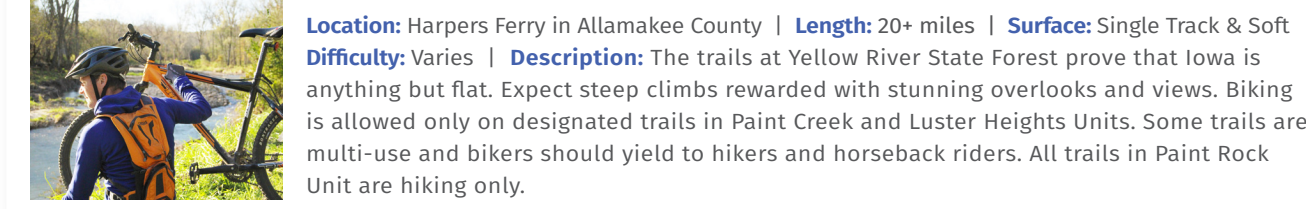


**Location:** Clayton County | **Length:** 15 miles  
**Surface:** Single-Track & Soft | **Difficulty:** Varies  
**Description:** Dedicated in 1920, Backbone was Iowa's first state park and remains one of the most geologically unique. It is named for the Devil's Backbone, a steep, narrow ridge of bedrock 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.

## 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.



**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.

## 7 (c-f). Decarah Mountain Bike Trails



**Location:** Decarah 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.

## 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.

## 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, recreational, natural landscape, nature center, fishing pond, historic buildings, and a summer petting zoo.

## 9. Echo Valley State Park & Jensen Trail



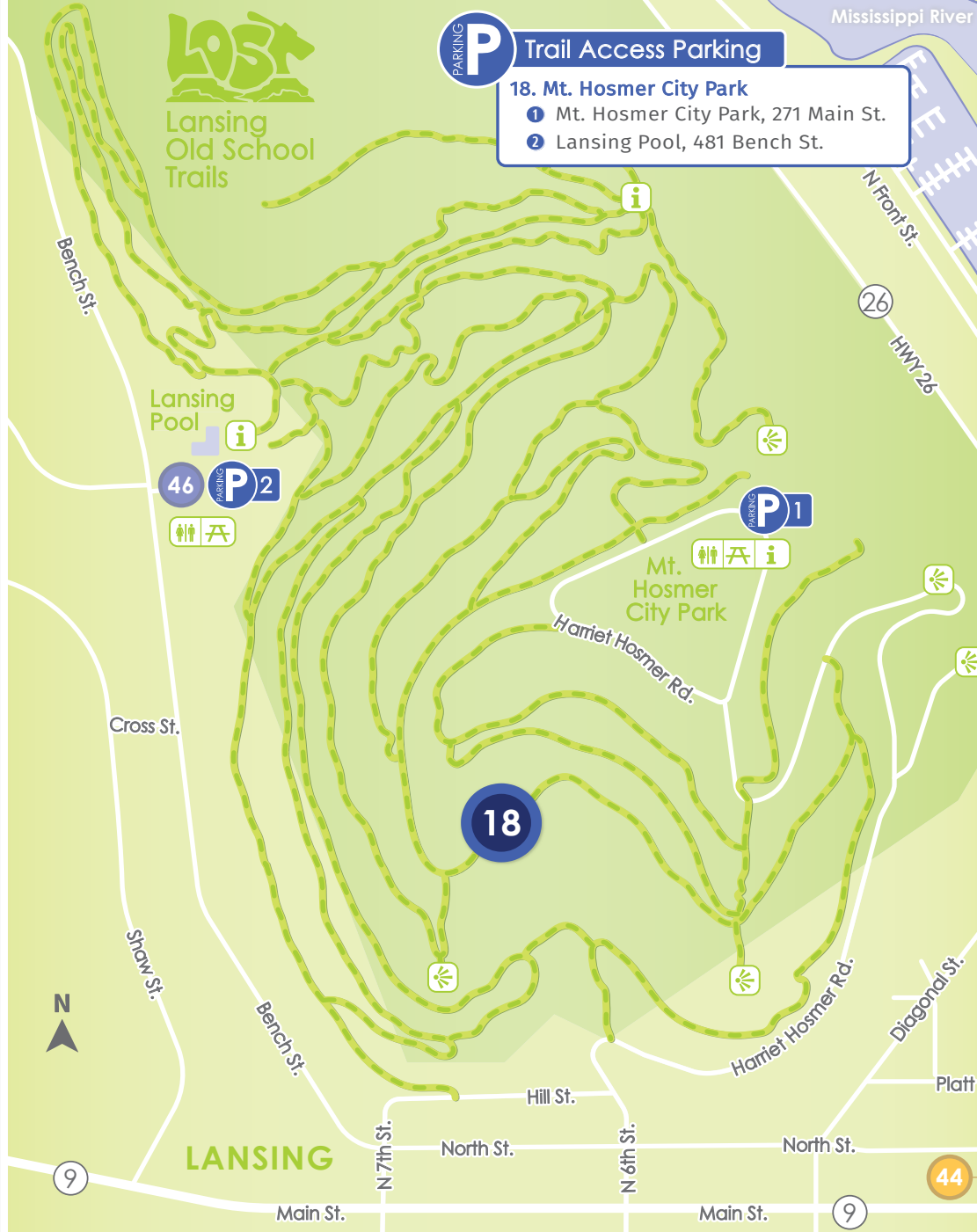
**Location:** West Union in Fayette County | **Length:** 5 miles | **Surface:** Paved Trail & Granular Trail | **Difficulty:** Easy  
**Description:** Echo Valley State Park preserves many historical structures hand built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. Additional recreational opportunities 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.

## 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.

## 18. Mt. Hosmer City Park

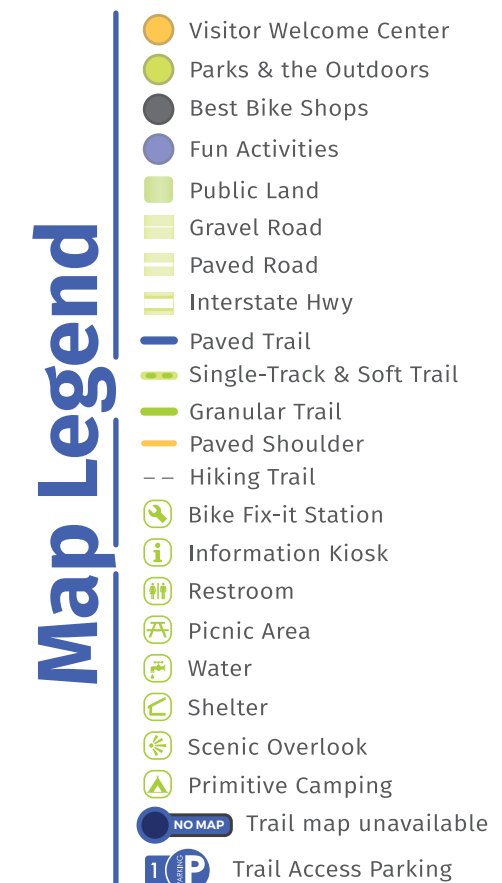


**Location:** Lansing in Allamakee County | **Length:** 8 miles | **Surface:** Single-Track  
**Difficulty:** Varies | **Description:** Mt. Hosmer offers spectacular panoramic views of the Mississippi River. It is named after Harriet Hosmer, a young female passenger on a cargo steamboat in 1851 that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

## 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.



**northeast**  
**The BEST**  
**part of IOWA**

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](http://www.visitiowa.org).