



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



# Minnesota River State Trail

*Minnesota*



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When complete, the Minnesota River State Trail will stretch from Big Stone Lake State Park north of Ortonville to Le Sueur, a distance of more than 175 miles. Currently, three disconnected segments of the trail are open, providing approximately 12 miles of trail through the scenic river valley.

The first open segment starts at the southern end of Big Stone Lake (the headwaters of the Minnesota River), just east of the border with South Dakota. The lake's clear waters and sandy beaches make it a popular spot for fishing, boating and swimming. Begin your journey at Lakeside Park, the site of Ortonville's Cornfest, a tradition of live music, children's activities, food and a parade that has been occurring every August since 1931. From there, the trail moves south along a tree-dotted route, closely

hugging the waterway at times for lovely river views, and ends in the expansive Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge.

The second segment begins in Milan, a close-knit community with a rich Scandinavian heritage. The trail travels west from the outskirts of town through open countryside along State Route 40 to the Milan Beach Resort on Lac qui Parle, a reservoir whose name means the "lake which speaks." The lake abounds with many types of song birds and waterfowl, especially during the fall when flocks of Canada geese stop here during their migration.

The final segment begins on the outskirts of Montevideo, a small city named for its stunning views overlooking the valley. It's here that the Minnesota and Chippewa Rivers converge. The trail travels south through rural landscapes to the small village of Wedgahl.

Eventually, the Minnesota River State Trail is planned to link directly with a future extension of the [Minnesota Valley State Trail](#) in La Sueur, as well as with the western end of the [Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail](#) in Mankato.



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**States:** Minnesota

**Counties:** Big Stone, Chippewa

Length: 12.3 miles

**Trail end points:** Lakeside Park at Madison Ave. (Ortonville) to Big Stone NWR; SR 40 (Milan) to Milan Beach Resort; Ashmore Ave. (Montevideo) to State Rd. and 490th St. (Wegdahl)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt, Dirt

**Trail category:** Greenway/Non-RT

**Trail activities:** Bike, Inline

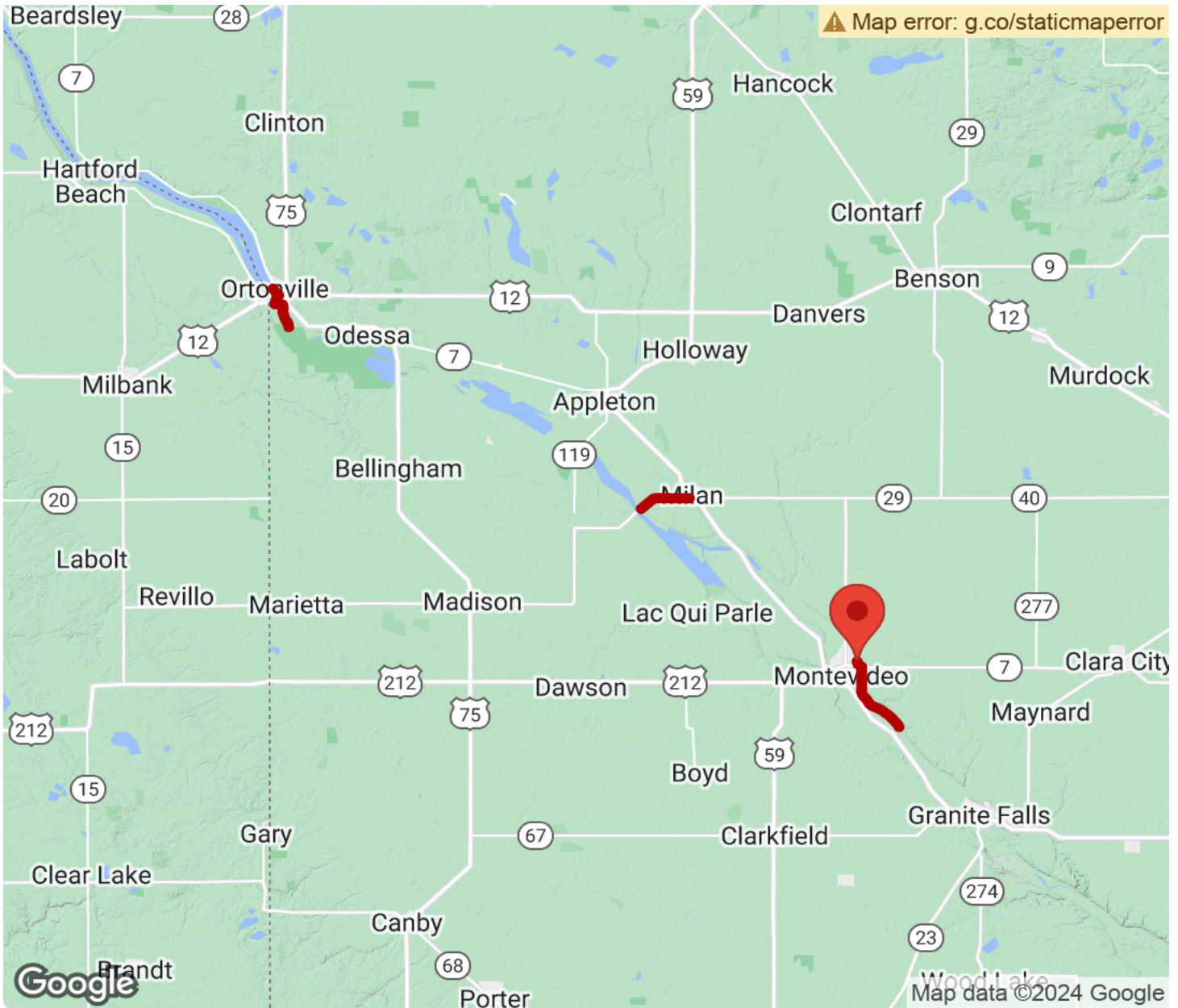
## Parking & Trail Access

Parking for the northernmost segment of the Minnesota River State Trail is available at Lakeside Park in Ortonville. For the southernmost segment, park in the dedicated lot off Ashmore Avenue in Montevideo.



# Minnesota River State Trail

Minnesota



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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