



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Mississippi
River
Regional Trail
(Dakota
County)**
Minnesota



Mississippi River Regional Trail (Dakota County)

Minnesota

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This Mississippi River Regional Trail running through eastern Dakota County is a segment of a larger regional trail system that is itself part of the National Park Service's Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

The northern portion of the Dakota County segment includes a completed, paved 13.5-mile section starting in South Saint Paul and ending in Rosemont. The 11.7-mile Hastings component starts just down the road in the Spring Lake Park Reserve and goes through the heart of the river city of Hastings, past Lake Isabelle, and crosses the Vermillion River, before ending in the Hastings Scientific and Natural Area (SNA). The last few miles of this trail that will make it a continuous route are currently being developed and will bring the length of the Dakota County section to nearly 28 miles when finished.

Beginning in Simon's Ravine, the northern segment of the trail follows along a levee and offers a continuous overlook view of the railroad and barge commerce on and along the Mississippi River. Curving slightly inland, the trail runs through the city of Inver Grove Heights before meandering amidst the forests and landscapes of several nature preserves. After heading first through the Katharine Ordway Natural History Study Area, the trail then winds among the wooded, 200-foot bluffs in the Pine Bend Bluff Scientific and Natural Area (one of the least-disturbed natural areas along the Mississippi River in the metro area).

Just over 2 miles are still under development north of the Spring Lake Park Reserve, where the trail picks up again and winds through the bluff-top countryside northwest of Hastings before dropping down and crossing Lock and Dam No. 2 on the Mississippi River. After curving through downtown Hastings and crossing the Vermillion River, the trail ends near C.P. Adams Park.

At its northern trailhead, the South Saint Paul section of this trail links to another paved trail heading west to Kaposia Park and beyond, called the River to River Greenway. Connections to other trails are found along the route, including links to a network of trails throughout the city of Hastings.

Restrooms, parking, and drinking water are marked on the map and are available at multiple locations along the route, including Kaposia Landing, Simon's Ravine Trailhead, Swing Bridge Trailhead, Pine Bend Bluffs Scientific and Natural Area (SNA), and Spring Lake Park Reserve.



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States: Minnesota

Counties: Dakota

Length: 25.2miles

Trail end points: Simon's Ravine Trailhead on Concord St N (South St. Paul) to Ravenna Trail (Hastings)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Fishing, Wheelchair Accessible, Walking

Parking & Trail Access

Parking is available at numerous points along the trail. Please view the map for all the locations and detailed directions.

To access Simon's Ravine Trailhead (northern section), from I-94, follow signs for US 10 E. Take Exit 242D to merge onto US 52 S. In 1.9 miles, take the MN 156/Concord St. exit, and turn left onto MN 156 S./Concord St. In 1.9 miles turn left onto Bryant Ave., and parking will be on the right.

To access the south end of the northern section, from I-94, follow signs for US 10 E. Take Exit 242D to merge onto US 52 S. In 12.5 miles take the 117th St. exit. Turn left onto 117th St. S.E., and in 0.2 mile turn left onto Courthouse Blvd. The trail is just behind the Pilot Travel Center. There are multiple other access points along the trail.

To access the Hastings trail section (southern section), from I-94, follow signs for US 10 E. Take Exit 242D to merge onto US 52 S. Go 13.6 miles, and take the MN 55 exit. Continue on MN 55/Courthouse Blvd., and go 4.4 miles east. Turn left onto Mississippi Trail, and go 1.7 miles. Turn left onto Idell Ave. In 0.5 mile turn left onto 127th St. E., and go 0.6 mile to reach Schaar's Bluff trailhead in Spring Lake Park Reserve.

To access the southeastern trailhead in Hastings, from I-94 take Exit 244. Head south on US 10/US 61, and keep left on US 61/Hiawatha Pioneer Trail for 18.3 miles. Turn left onto 10 St E, and in 0.9 miles the lot will be on your right. Additional parking is available at Rivertown Dog Park.



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