



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



# Central Lakes State Trail

*Minnesota*



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## Overview

The Central Lakes State Trail runs 55 miles between Fergus Falls in Otter Tail County and Osakis in Douglas County.

## About the Route

The official northern trailhead has been an undeveloped parking lot just beyond where the trail crosses under MN 210. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has purchased property immediately south of MN 210 and, in the next few years, will be developing it as the official trailhead. For practical purposes of parking and limited water supply, trail users can park in Delagoon Park and take a short paved trail spur beyond the picnic area/

campground to access the trail at that point (water is available only from sinks in the restrooms at the ballpark). There is also parking at a small gravel lot farther south just before the trail crosses County Road 29 at Chautauqua Lake.

The landscape between the two cities is incredibly diverse, ranging from rolling hills and dense forest to farmland, prairie remnants, and Minnesota's famous lakes. Because the trail runs past lakes used by many species of waterfowl during migration, bird-watching aficionados will want to bring their binoculars.

While much of the trail offers the kind of rural serenity that lends itself to bird-watching and wildlife sightings, it also passes many railroad and state historic sites. The paved pathway also runs directly through the city of Alexandria, just northeast of a small town where the Kensington Runestone, an alleged Viking artifact, was discovered. The urban route passes several miles of both commercial and residential areas before reentering a pastoral landscape. There are significant road crossings along this route, so caution is advised.

The small towns of Ashby, Garfield, Nelson, Brandon, and Evansville all offer convenience stores or cafés where you can grab a bite to eat. The trail is a spacious 14 feet wide for its entire length.

## Connections

In Osakis, the Central Lakes State Trail connects directly to the [Lake Wobegon Trail](#). That trail continues south for another 62 miles to the city of St. Joseph.

## Trail History

The completion of the final segment of the Central Lakes State Trail in 2005 was the culmination of a positive partnership between volunteers and local and state officials that began in 1992 with the purchase, by the State of



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**States:** Minnesota

**Counties:** Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail

Length: 55miles

**Trail end points:** trail underpass under SR 210 (Fergus Falls) to 1st Ave E & Main St at Lake Wobegon Trail (Osakis)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike, Inline

Skating, Wheelchair

Accessible, Snowmobiling, Walking

## Parking & Trail Access

The Central Lakes State Trail runs between the trail underpass under SR 210 (Fergus Falls) and the intersection of 1st Ave E & Main St at the Lake Wobegon Trail (Osakis).

Parking is available at numerous locations along the trail. There are trailheads with parking and restrooms in Fergus Falls, Dalton, Ashby, Evansville, Brandon, Garfield, Alexandria, Nelson, and Osakis. Visit the [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions.



