



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Central Lakes
State Trail**
Minnesota



Central Lakes State Trail

Minnesota

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



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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 Minnesota, of an inactive Burlington Northern Railroad corridor.



Central Lakes State Trail

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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, Snowmobiling, Walking, Wheelchair

Accessible

Parking & Trail Access

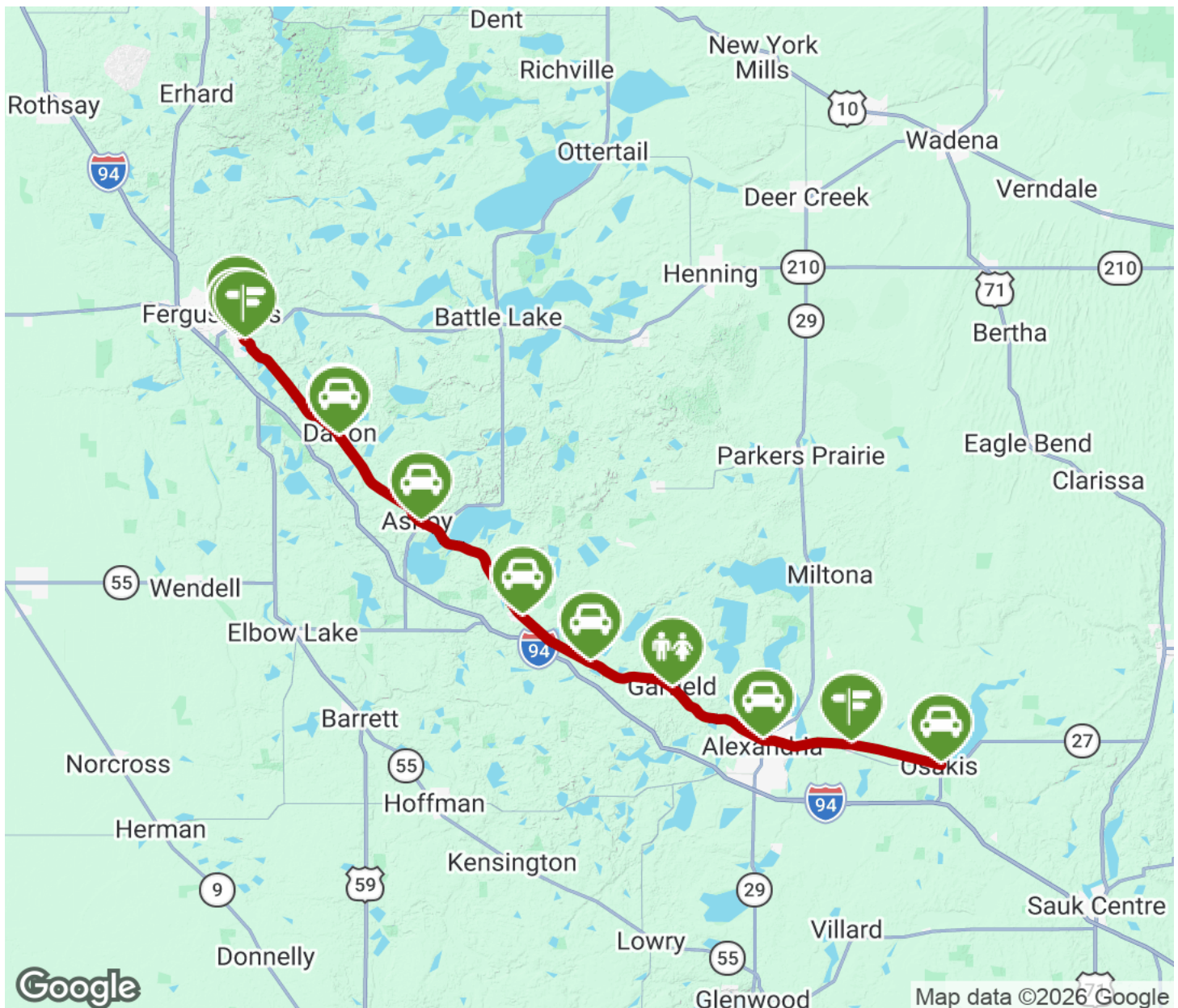
The Central Lakes State Trail runs between the trail underpass under SR 210 (Fergus Falls) and the intersection of 1st Ave E & Main St at the Lake Wobegon Trail (Osakis), where there is parking.

There are numerous parking options along the route, visit the [TrailLink map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



Central Lakes State Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

TrailLink.com