



2025

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Root River  
State Trail**  
*Minnesota*



## Root River State Trail

Minnesota

*Along much of its route, the Root River State Trail follows the winding course of its namesake river for 42 miles through the*



Across the trail's entire route, trail users will have access to outstanding views of the tall limestone bluffs and the steep hills thickly wooded in maples and birch that rise above the river. Watch for wildlife, such as turkeys, deer, raccoons, and birds of prey. Trail users also may encounter rattlesnakes sunning themselves on rock outcrops or along the river bottom and trail. Rattlesnakes are a protected state species and should be left alone.

The towns along the route provide many amenities, including bed-and-breakfasts, campgrounds, restaurants, museums, outfitters, and interesting shops and historical buildings. The trail is built on an old railroad right-of-way that followed the river, linking rural communities throughout this alluring tourism region of southeastern Minnesota.

### Connections

Just east of the Isinours Station Campground, the Root River State Trail links with the [Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail](#).

Along much of its route, the Root River State Trail follows the winding course of its namesake river for 42 miles through the Minnesota towns of Fountain, Lanesboro, Whalan, Peterson, Rushford, and Houston. The paved trail is mostly level, although a section just west of Houston (around Money Creek Woods) has some steep hills for about 0.5 miles.

Cross-country skiing is popular during winter, and the trail intersects with a system of groomed snowmobile trails. Every trailhead in the towns along the route has a bicycle tune-up station. Restrooms are at every official trailhead along the route, except in Whalan.

### About the Route



# Root River State Trail

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**States:** Minnesota

**Counties:** Fillmore, Houston

Length: 42.1 miles

**Trail end points:** 402 Co Rd 8 (Fountain) to  
Houston Nature Center, 215 W Plum St  
(Houston)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike, Fishing, Inline  
Skating, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible, Cross  
Country Skiing

## Parking & Trail Access

The Root River State Trail runs between 402 Co Rd 8 (Fountain) and Houston Nature Center, 215 W Plum St (Houston), with parking available at both ends.

Parking is also available at:

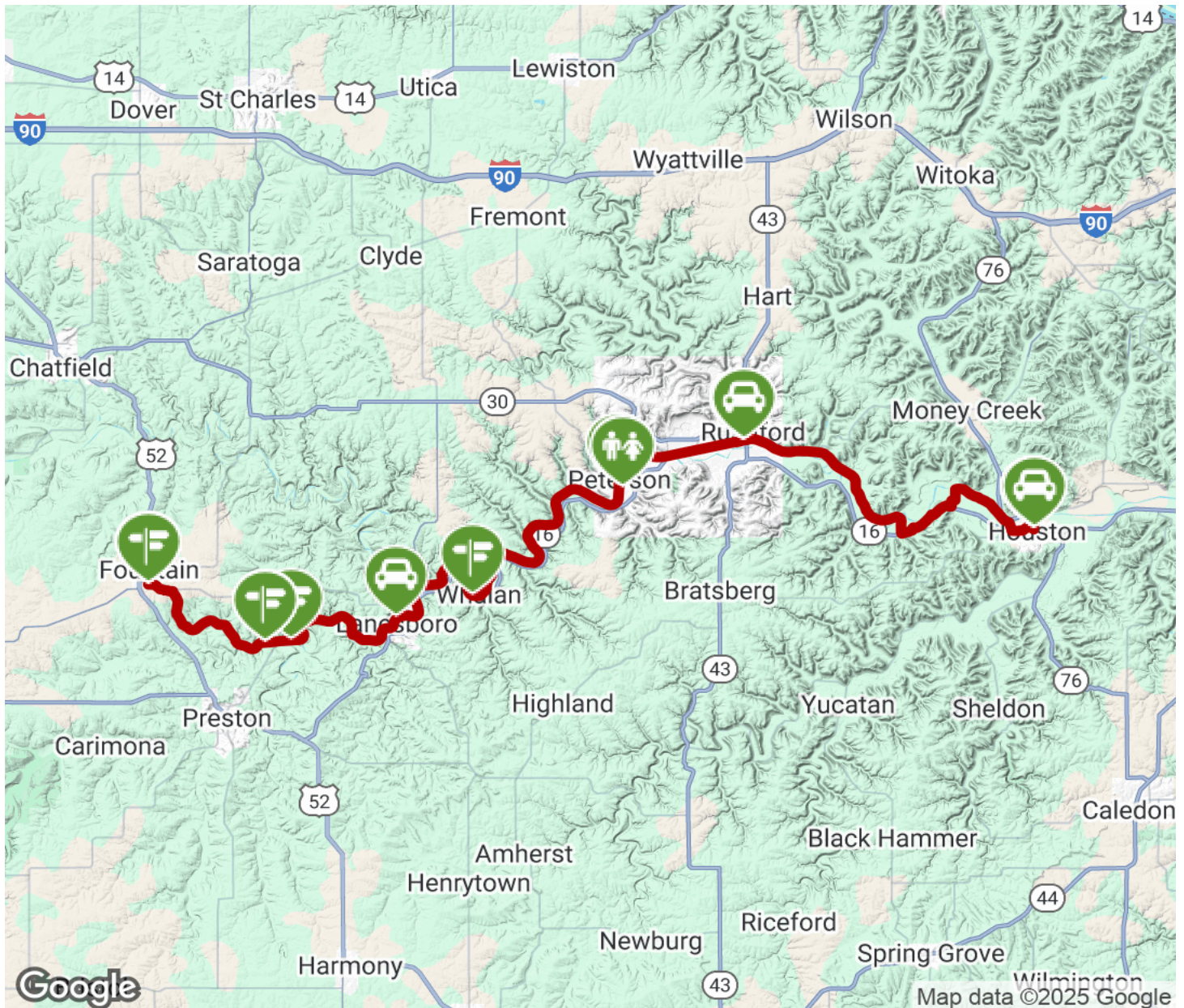
- Isinours Station Campground, 29604 246th St. (Preston)
- 416 Park St (Peterson)
- 401 S Elm St (Rushford)

See [TrailLink Map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



# Root River State Trail

Minnesota



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



**TrailLink**  
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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