



2025

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Cedar Valley  
Nature Trail**  
*Iowa*



# Cedar Valley Nature Trail

Iowa

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## Overview

The Cedar Valley Nature Trail follows the fertile Cedar River between Evansdale and Ely. The 70.6-mile trail comprises three former trails—the Cedar Valley Nature Trail, the Cedar River Trail, and parts of the [Hoover Nature Trail](#).

The pathway is paved for the majority of the route, minus a brief dirt/gravel section between La Porte City and Urbana. Occasional flooding can cause washouts along the trail or damage bridges. Parts of the trail are landscaped with grasses and wildflowers native to the Iowa prairie, providing habitat for the varied songbirds and mammals that live along the corridor; it is not uncommon to see Iowa's state bird, the American Goldfinch. Cross-country

skiing is permitted—except for on the portion of trail in Linn County.

## About the Route

At the northern trailhead in Evansdale, the trail heads southeast over the Cedar River where it's another 4.5 miles to Gilbertville, where a trailhead at East Washburn Road offers restrooms, water, and parking.

From here, it's another 8 miles south to La Porte City. In La Porte City, trail users will have access to several dining and convenience options as well as a park situated next to a railyard. An old Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad depot is located in the railyard, and a Waterloo, Cedar Falls, and Northern Railway station dating from 1912 is located at the corner of Main and Locust streets.

From La Porte City, it's about 3 miles until the trail crosses over the Cedar River for a second time (look for the red cedar trees that give the river its name). The trail then heads east passing by oxbow lakes and through woodlands. This section of the trail also passes through Brandon and Urbana, both of which have markets. This northern section of the trail is an important habitat for nesting waterfowl and songbirds.

In Center Point, trail users can explore a museum in the old railroad depot that's open on summer Sundays. Food and beverages are also available in town. South of Center Point is a rural stretch of trail—look for deer, wild turkeys, and other wild animals—before reaching suburban Hiawatha. The trail runs below power lines as it heads into town; note that the Boyson Road trailhead offers a bike repair station, water, restrooms, and parking.

Continue south past Cedar Lake to a 7-block stretch in downtown Cedar Rapids, host to a variety of restaurants, cultural attractions, and bars. At Seventh Street, the trail turns right, heads 3 blocks to the Cedar River, and then cuts left to



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**States:** Iowa

**Counties:** Benton, Black Hawk, Buchanan, Linn

Length: 70.6 miles

**Trail end points:** Gilbert Dr. (Evansdale) to  
Seven Sisters Road and Ely Road (Ely)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt, Concrete, Crushed  
Stone, Dirt

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike, Inline

Skating, Wheelchair Accessible, Walking, Cross  
Country Skiing

## Parking & Trail Access

The Cedar Valley Nature Trail runs between Gilbert Dr. (Evansdale) and Seven Sisters Road (Ely).

Parking is available at:

- 2302 River Rd (Evansdale)
- 700 Washington St (Center Point)
- Ely City Park, 1635 Hillcrest St (Ely)

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



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