



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Trout Run
Trail**
Iowa



Trout Run Trail

Iowa

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The Trout Run Trail provides an experience unique to any other in Iowa, with a hilly landscape that reminds trail users of the meteorite that struck the area long ago. The trail actually loops all the way around the town of Decorah, and the northern portion follows along the Upper Iowa River.

Starting from the west side of Decorah off Fifth Avenue and Pulpit Rock Road, the trail follows along the water, curves right, and then heads left into two campgrounds; note the signage as you wind through. At the south end of the campgrounds, you'll cross a small bridge and then have the option to continue east or cut a sharp right and head south.

Heading south, a brief switchback climb cuts through the

rocky hillside and up to a small overlook with rock walls on either side of the trail. The route then heads back downhill along the highway (to your right) and then comes to a large intersection, where a newly finished trail overpass bridge glides you to the other side; here, depending on the season, you'll be greeted by an abundance of wildflowers. Parking and a detailed trail map are also available.

The trail heads south and outside of town and then takes a sharp left turn—wiggling you through cornfields and up and down switchbacks. Continuing south, you'll come to another sharp series of switchbacks through more cornfields at the southernmost section of trail; take some time to enjoy the beautiful and abundant hills that grace the route.

The trail curves northward through farms along Trout Creek and heads right past the Decorah Fish Hatchery and then left across Trout Run Road and over the creek. From here, you'll follow the creek northeast until you reach the Trout Run Access Area and the Upper Iowa River, where the trail cuts northwestward. As you make your way around the northern loop segment along the river, the route passes several art installations, including a silver archway shaped like a swimming fish, and a trestle bridge picnic area.

Along the way, you're likely to come across cows, wildflowers, and hiking paths venturing off the trail. After you pass a large school and sports fields, the trail and river veer left and head southward to where the loop began. Note that this part of the trail is prone to flooding.

Ahead a short way is Phelps Park with a playground and lots of green grassy spots. You'll then come to a straight strip of trail that takes you along a rocky hill face—part of Decorah's originality—and by a couple of sculptures before connecting back to the campgrounds.



Trout Run Trail

Iowa

States: Iowa

Counties: Winneshiek

Length: 11miles

Trail end points: Fifth Ave. and Riverview Dr.
to Walmart lot at SR 9 and County Road A52/
Old Stage Road (Decorah)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Concrete

Trail category: Greenway/Non-RT

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

Parking & Trail Access

To reach the northwest trailhead and parking from US 52 heading north toward Decorah, turn right onto Pulpit Rock Road for 0.6 mile. Turn right into the parking lot, which is located just before you reach Fifth Ave. The endpoint is located 0.1 mile east on Fifth Ave. just before the intersection with Riverview Drive to the north.

To reach the eastern trailhead/Walmart from SR 9, head northeast (a right turn if you're heading west, a left turn if you're heading east) onto Old Stage Road, and then turn left into the Walmart parking lot. The trail connection is at the western corner of the lot near the Upper Iowa River.



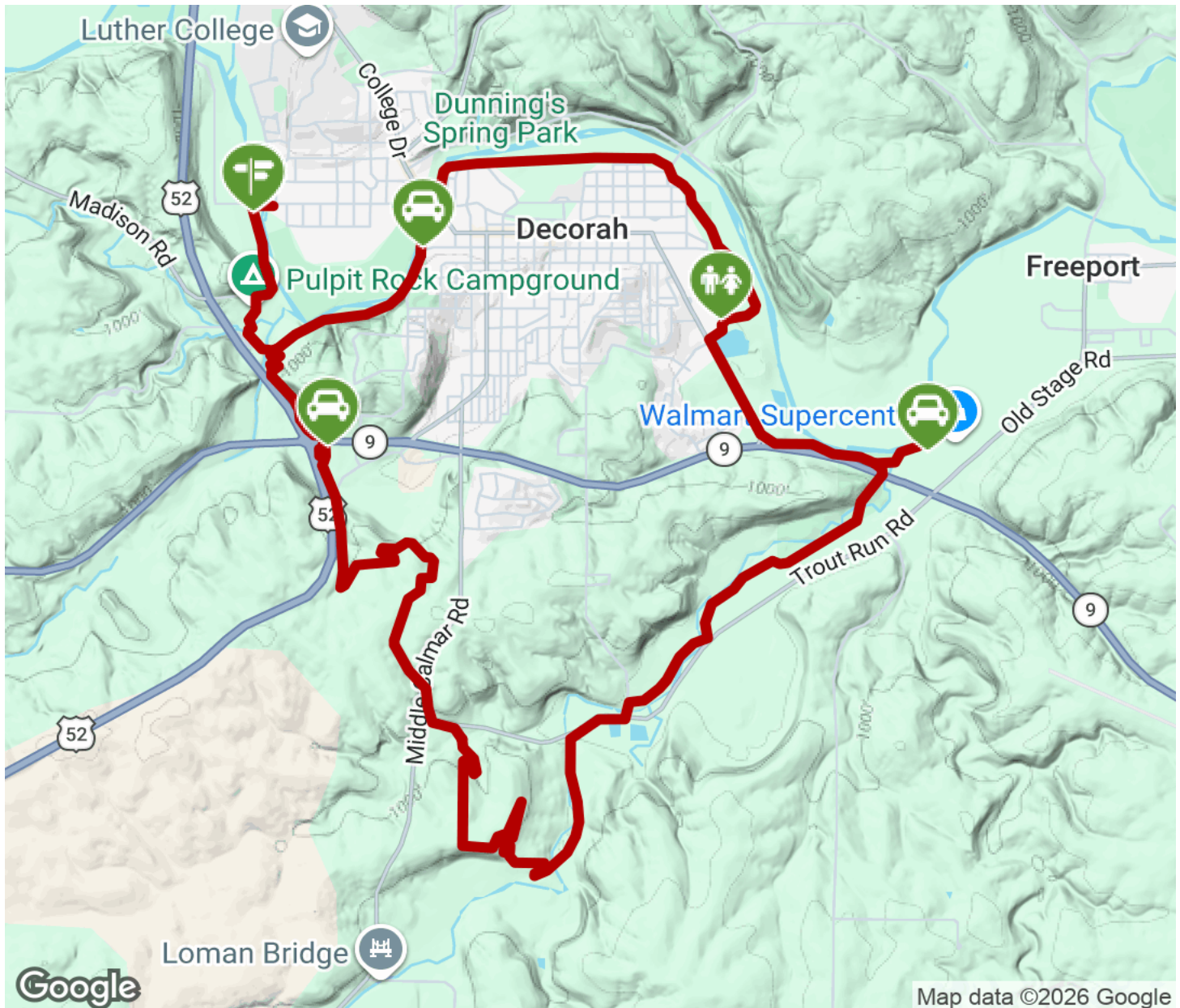
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by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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Trout Run Trail

Iowa



- Trailhead
- Restroom
- Parking
- Water Fountain
- Tunnel