



# Quad Cities Water Trails

RiverWay Quad Cities



## Trips for Beginners

- **Sylvan Slough** – Sylvan Slough is a wonderful backwater of the Mississippi River. The urban environment gives way to natural surroundings including lily pads and numerous water fowl. The current is slow and allows for a relaxing round-trip paddle. **Put-in:** Sylvan Slough Docks (12) **Take-out:** Same; Distance – 2 miles; Paddle time – about 1.5 hours.
- **Middle Rock River Trail** – This area of water is a safe place to practice your canoe or kayak paddling. The scenery is generally urban with many cabins along both sides of the river. Pleasure boaters and jet-skiers like to use the Rock River but traffic is low during the week. **Put-in:** Greenvalley Public Access (21) **Take-out:** Harold's Landing (20); Distance – 2.5 miles; Paddle time – about 1 hour.

## Trips for Intermediates

- **Upper Mississippi River Trail** – Casual upstream trip along the shoreline of the Mississippi River has moderate current. Exceptional views of the river to Princeton Beach where paddlers can stop for a picnic and swim. Rentals available at Princeton Outdoor Adventures. **Put-in:** Princeton Boat Ramp (1) **Take-out:** Same; Distance – 3 miles; Paddle time – about 2 hours.
- **Middle Mississippi River Trail** – Travel the Iowa shoreline from Lock and Dam 14 Boat Ramp to the Eagles Landing Boat Ramp. This paddle offers great views of the Iowa and Illinois shorelines. Stop at Pigeon Creek Park for a nice hike and picnic. **Put-in:** Lock & Dam 14 Boat Ramp (6) **Take-out:** Eagles Landing (8); Distance – 2.5 miles; Paddle time – about 1 hour.
- **Lower Rock River Trail** – Paddle a short distance down the Mississippi to the Rock River. The current up the Rock is generally low to moderate if the shoreline route is taken. Circumnavigate Turkey Island to see a wide variety of wildlife in this remote area. **Put-in:** Sunset Park (15) **Take-out:** Same; Distance – 5 miles; Paddle time – 3 to 4 hours.

## Trips for Advanced

- **Upper Mississippi River Trail** – (River crossing required - strong current possible) Travel the Iowa shoreline from the LeClaire briefly before crossing to Illinois to portage at Fisherman's Corner (P1). Finish at the Eagles Landing Boat Ramp in Iowa or stick to the Illinois shoreline until Empire Park. This paddle offers great views of the Iowa and Illinois valley particularly during the fall with the changing color of tree foliage. **Put-in:** LeClaire Boat Ramp (4) **Take-out:** Eagles Landing (8); Distance – 6 miles; Paddle time – about 3 hours.
- **Middle Mississippi River Trail** – (River crossing required - strong current possible) Urban paddling at its best...put in at Eagles Landing and cross to follow Campbell's Island to the Illinois shoreline. Travel downstream along the Ben Butterworth Parkway to Sylvan Slough. Great mix of natural and urban landscapes. **Put-in:** Eagles Landing (8) **Take-out:** Sylvan Slough (12); Distance – 5 miles; Paddle time – about 3 hours.
- **Lower Mississippi River Trail** – (River crossing required - strong current possible) Check out the great views of the Mississippi on this trip. After putting in at Credit Island, you'll need to choose a safe crossing to the Illinois shoreline. Enjoy the beautiful backwaters of the Andalusia Slough. Continue the trip to Loud Thunder Campground for an extended paddle. **Put-in:** Credit Island (16) **Take-out:** Andalusia (17); Distance – 7 miles; Paddle time – 3 to 4 hours.

# Welcome to the Quad Cities Water Trails



Photo courtesy Saukenuk Paddlers



Photo courtesy Saukenuk Paddlers



Experience the Mississippi River as it was first discovered, while paddling!  
 The Quad Cities area is rich with water. Paddling conditions on the Mississippi and Rock Rivers are perfect for multi-day excursions with camping access, afternoon urban getaways, and getting in touch with nature for all levels of paddlers.  
 The 45 miles of Quad Cities Water Trails also ties directly into 73 miles of recreational trails for exceptional cycling and hiking.  
 The Mississippi River is arguably the most important waterway in the United States. Throughout its history, whether for Native Americans, explorers, or modern commerce, the Mississippi has always been a major navigation route through the center of North America. It is 2,320 miles long and has the third largest catchment basin in the world collecting water from 1.25 million square miles.

The main types of migratory birds include: Black, Wood, Mallard, Teal, Widgeon, Pintail and Ring-necked ducks, Canada Geese, swans, American White Pelicans and many types of songbirds. We are also home to one of the most magnificent birds in the world, the great bald eagle. The eagles are very plentiful along the shores of the upper Mississippi.  
 The river also provides a home to many different fish and other types of animals. Over 100 different species of freshwater fish can be found in the Mississippi including: catfish, walleye, bass, northern, sunfish, and crappie. The many different types of fish found in the great river allow for some of the best fishing in the entire world. The Mississippi River can be fished year round, which allows one to enjoy the sport and all of the magnificence that each season in the upper valley has to offer.  
 Canoe or kayak fishing can be a great way to catch dinner or a fun recreational activity. Iowa or Illinois fishing licenses can be used by hook-and-line anglers on the Mississippi River. For more info go to the Iowa or Illinois Department of Natural Resources web sites.

- Cold water – Mississippi waters are the first to cool off and last to warm up
- River traffic – Stay out of the main channel (designated by green and red buoys) and be aware of traffic when crossing the river
- Dams – Stay well clear of dams and utilize designated portage areas

- All vessels are required to hold a line (hanging from the lock wall) or tie off on the side of a vessel, holding on to the line
- One short signal blast designates that lockage is complete, and you may exit the lock

## Common Sense Paddling Safety Tips

- Wear your life jacket
- Be prepared to swim
- Never boat alone
- If you collide with an obstruction, lean toward it
- File a float plan with a relative or friend
- Paddle within your experience and fitness levels
- Confine your first outings to calm backwater areas
- Consider taking a paddling safety course
- Be familiar with capsize recovery techniques
- Always check weather forecasts and river conditions before setting out
- Paddle in groups whenever possible and know the experience levels of those in the group

## Adhere to 'Leave No Trace' Pledge

- Plan ahead and prepare
- Dispose of waste properly
- Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- Carry-in, carry-out
- Respect wildlife
- Be considerate of other visitors
- For more information on "leave no trace", go to [www.lnt.org](http://www.lnt.org)

## Learn to Paddle

A variety of paddling classes are available year-round for all abilities. Classes are taught by licensed instructors and address water safety, technique and skills. For a full listing go to: [www.riveraction.org](http://www.riveraction.org).

## Kayak/Canoe Rental

Kayaks or canoes can be rented from Princeton Outdoor Adventures, Princeton, IA (online at: [www.princetonoutdooradventures.com](http://www.princetonoutdooradventures.com), or call: 563-289-5445) and Fluid Adventures, Moline, IL (online at: [www.fluid-adventures.com](http://www.fluid-adventures.com), or call: 563-508-2040).

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Navigation Charts are online at: <http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/NIC2/mrcharts.cfm>

## Hunting Seasons

Water trail users need to be aware of their surroundings for not only barge traffic, but hunting seasons as well. Duck blinds, structures covered with vegetation cuttings and located in the river, are used for waterfowl hunting. Some temporary blinds may be used on a daily basis. Refer to state regulations for additional information.

## Bike Trails

There are 65 miles of scenic trails along the Mississippi River in the Quad Cities region and many more along the Rock River. Trails can be accessed from most of the water trail launch sites. Bike the trails back upstream in lieu of driving separate pick-up vehicles or for solo paddle excursions. Trail maps available at [www.riveraction.org](http://www.riveraction.org).  
 For a real adventure, check out the off-road trails on Sylvan Island in Moline and Sunderbruch Park in Davenport. These rugged single-track mountain bike trails offer a fantastic workout and outdoor fun.

## 'Taming of the Slough'

River Action hosts the Taming of the Slough Adventure Race each September, consisting of a paddle section (2 miles), mountain biking (8 miles), and run/off-road hill climb (2 miles). The race is geared for all levels of participation. Compete as an individual, two-person team, or three-person relay. More info is available at [www.riveraction.org](http://www.riveraction.org).

## Locking Rules for Advanced Paddlers

- There is no fee for locking through
- Stay out of posted/restricted areas
- Stay in your boat when locking through
- Inform lockmaster that you want to lock through by pulling the small boat signal chain located at the end of the wall or call lock on marine radio (Channel 14)
- Enter the lock when the gates are fully open and you receive the green signal light to enter

## River Traffic

At first sighting, a tow heading in your direction is usually two or three miles away. At that distance, you still have 20 to 30 minutes to relocate to a more comfortable location on the river. Being aware of traffic on the river is always important, but it should never prevent you from safely paddling the Mississippi. Always steer clear of the main channel and industrial areas.

## Up and Downstream Connections

Paddlers who want an extended trip should look into the Wapsipinicon River Trail, which meets the Mississippi River three miles north of Princeton, IA, and Odessa Water Trail, 30 miles south of Buffalo, IA on the Mississippi. Careful planning is needed when traveling downstream of the Quad Cities as paddlers will encounter Lock & Dam 16 at Muscatine, IA.

## Water Safety

Safety is critical when paddling the Mississippi or Rock Rivers. Be sure to monitor water conditions before starting your trip. Go to [www.rivergauges.com](http://www.rivergauges.com) and click on "Rock Island District" for current conditions at Locks & Dams 14 and 15.  
**Be aware of:**

- High water and floods – High water travels swiftly and carries much debris



Photo by Stephanie Makosky courtesy of Moline Dispatch Publishing Co.



Photo courtesy Saukenuk Paddlers




















# QUAD CITIES WATER TRAILS

## PUBLIC ACCESS POINTS

In addition to the access points listed here, there are 7 other boat launches  shown on the large map below which can be used by paddlers.

	Latitude	Longitude	Parking	Water	Restrooms	Camping	Restaurants	Hotels/B&B's
1	Princeton Boat Ramp	41.679	-90.338	X	X	X	X	
2	Cordova Public Access	41.683	-90.318	X	X	X		X
3	Port Byron Boat Ramp	41.607	-90.337	X	X	X		
4	LeClaire Boat Ramp	41.599	-90.343	X	X	X	X	X
5	Rapids City - Shuler's Shady Grove	41.583	-90.343	X	X	X		
6	Lock & Dam 14 Boat Ramp	41.573	-90.407	X	X	X		
7	Fisherman's Corner	41.569	-90.396	X	X	X	X	
8	Bettendorf - Eagles Landing Boat Ramp	41.549	-90.441	X	X	X		
9	East Moline - Empire Park Boat Ramp	41.544	-90.421	X	X	X		
10	Moline - Ben Butterworth Boat Ramp	41.518	-90.461	X	X	X		
11	Bettendorf - Leach Park Boat Ramp	41.523	-90.516	X	X	X	X	X
12	Moline - Sylvan Slough Docks	41.509	-90.519	X	X	X	X	X
13	Rock Island - Schweibert Park Docks	41.513	-90.575	X	X	X		
14	Davenport - Centennial Park Boat Ramp	41.516	-90.592	X	X	X		
15	Rock Island - Sunset Park Boat Ramp	41.494	-90.604	X	X	X		
16	Davenport - Credit Island Boat Ramp	41.501	-90.608	X	X	X		
17	Andalusia Marina	41.449	-90.721	X	X	X	X	
18	Buffalo Beach	41.455	-90.723	X	X	X	X	
19	Buffalo Shores Campground	41.453	-90.742	X	X	X	X	
20	Moline - Harold's Landing	41.462	-90.501	X	X	X		
21	Moline - Greenvalley Park Public Access	41.457	-90.457	X	X	X		
22	Colona Boat Ramp	41.471	-90.391	X	X	X		

## LEGEND

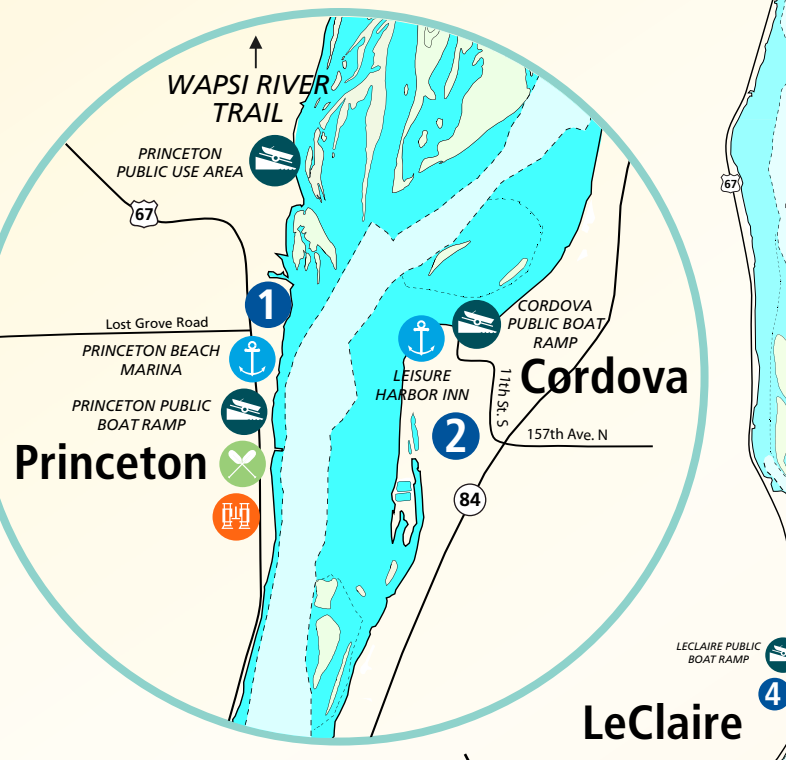
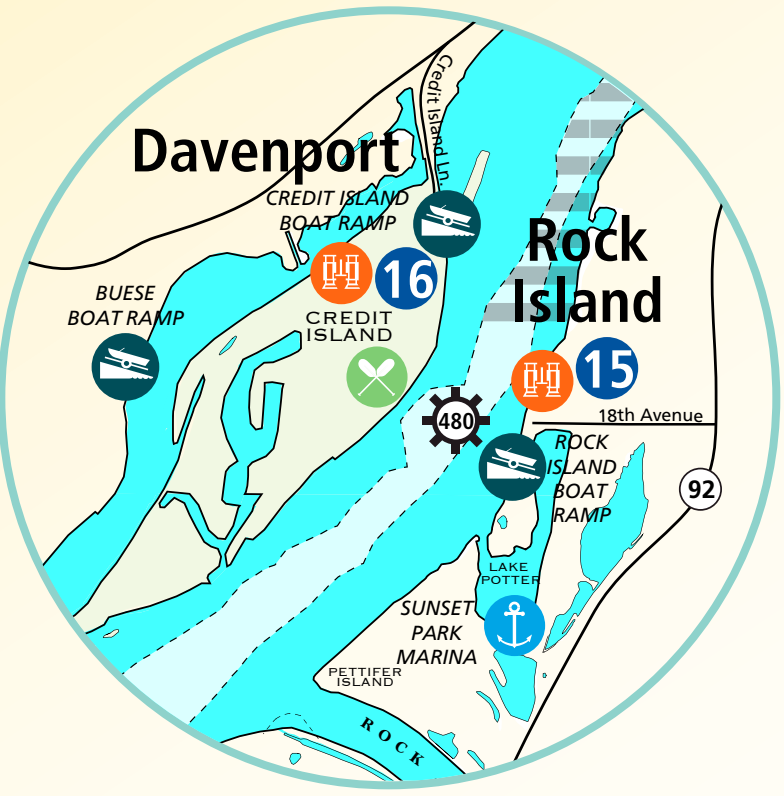
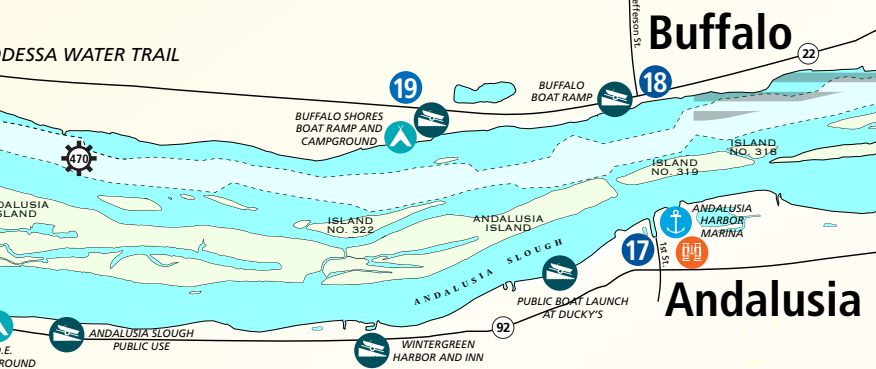
-  Boat Launch
-  Carry Down Access
-  Marina
-  Bicycle Rental
-  Canoe/Kayak Rental
-  River Mile Marker
-  Wing (Lateral) Dam
-  Campground
-  RiverWay Marker
-  Caution (Industrial activity)
-  Hazardous (Stay clear)
-  River Channel
-  Navigation Channel (Barge traffic)
-  Portage
-  Dam
-  Water Taxi Dock
-  Water Taxi Route

## PORTAGES AND DAMS

	Latitude	Longitude
P1	Fisherman's Corner Portage	41.568 -90.395
P2	Sylvan Island Portage	41.515 -90.538
P3	Steel Dam Portage	41.460 -90.547
P4	Hennepin Canal Portage	41.456 -90.561
D1	Lock & Dam 14	41.573 -90.398
D2	MidAmerican Energy Hydro-Dam	41.511 -90.531
D3	Arsenal Island Hydro-Dam	41.515 -90.539
D4	Lock & Dam 15	41.519 -90.568
D5	Sear's Dam	41.461 -90.578
D6	Steel Dam	41.461 -90.549

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

- General Emergency: **9-1-1**
- Rock Island County Sheriff (Illinois): **309-558-3413**
- Illinois State Police (East Moline): **309-752-4915**
- Scott County Sheriff (Iowa): **563-326-8625**
- Iowa State Police (Stockton): **563-284-9501**
- U.S. Coast Guard (Rock Island): **309-782-0627**
- Lock & Dam 14 Lockmaster: **563-332-0907**
- Lock & Dam 15 Lockmaster: **309-794-5266**



**WARNING:** Do not kayak or canoe during flooding or high water. Be sure to check river levels and river conditions before embarking on any canoe/kayak trips, even those marked as beginner routes. Be aware that even moderate wind conditions can create significant waves in open areas and make canoeing/kayaking much more difficult and hazardous.