

## Discover the Trail to Outdoor Fun Biking & Hiking in the Winona Area

Discover history, natural beauty  
and many activities . . . in any season

### Activity Guides

**The beautiful Mississippi River Valley provides year-round natural enjoyment, and Winona's historic rivertown flavor offers many interesting excursions. Write or call to request free guide-maps to these activities:**

**BIKING AND HIKING:** Hundreds of scenic miles of easy or challenging routes climb over bluffs and wind through valleys. This brochure includes maps and details about routes and highlights.

**CANOEING AND KAYAKING:** The Upper Mississippi and its tributaries offer diverse opportunities for paddling enthusiasts. The brochure recommends landing and paddling routes and includes information on water conditions.

**BIRD WATCHING:** The Mississippi Flyway is a major route for migrating birds, and the Winona fields, woods and waters are home to a wonderful variety of birds. This brochure shows the best birding spots in the area.

**STAINED GLASS:** Winona is well-known for its outstanding array of 19th-century stained glass windows. The tour guide has photos and details of noteworthy windows.

**ARCHITECTURE:** Winona's early prosperity is evident in its many grand buildings. The brochure has a self-guided tour of historic downtown structures.

**X-COUNTRY SKIING:** Varied terrain provides interesting trails for skiers of any proficiency. The guide has trail maps and directions to seven area trails.

**SNOWMOBILING:** An extensive trail system covers southeastern Minnesota's fascinating hills and valleys. The area map shows the trails and places to stop.

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## The Winona area is a paradise for bicyclists and hikers.

The river valleys offer flat terrain or gently rolling hills and spectacular views of rivers and bluffs. Steep bluffs challenge those looking for a more vigorous adventure. Over a hundred miles of trails wind quietly along lakes and streams and through woods and fields.

### Bike or Hike Trails



Photo by Mary Farrell

#### Lake Winona

Lake Winona biking and walking path is a popular destination for both visitors and local residents. The five-mile blacktop trail runs along the south side of the city and circles both segments of the lake through Lake Park. The route is flat and easy. This is a good place for families to ride or walk with children. Pedestrians, in-line skaters and cyclists use the path, so be alert. The trail provides excellent views of Lake Park, the surrounding bluffs and some of the city's neighborhoods. Lake Winona trail is a great place to begin exploring the city and the area.

#### Great River State Trail

Rolling through bottomland forest, marshes and prairies, the Great River State Trail traverses the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge, then follows a former railroad grade through Perrot State Park, the town of Trempealeau and the Black River bottoms on its route from Marshland to Onalaska, Wisconsin, crossing 18 bridges along the way.

The 26-mile trail is surfaced with fine-crushed limestone, but is usually solid enough for narrow tires. However, cyclists should watch out for sandy spots, and in wet weather fatter tires may be safer. Birds and wildlife are commonly seen along the trail. Many birders hike the trail. The trail is open to biking

and hiking. Users must purchase a day or seasonal trail pass. To reach the Marshland Trailhead parking area, cross the interstate bridge and turn right on Wisconsin Hwy. 35/54. About 5.5 miles from the foot of the bridge look for the sign for the Marshland Access parking area on the right, across from Cty. Rd. P, just across the railroad tracks.

#### Root River State Trail

Winding along through the picturesque Root River valley, the Root River State Trail is truly one of the most scenic rides in Minnesota. The route follows an abandoned railroad grade for 42 miles from Fountain to Houston. The trail is paved and mostly level, with some gentle hills. Hikers and in-line skaters also use the trail. Wildlife, such as deer, wild turkey and hawks are frequently seen along the trail. You can make your ride on the Root River State Trail short or long — ride a section for an afternoon, or plan a challenging one- or two-day trip. There is no fee for using the trail. The trail is only a short drive from Winona.

#### Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail

Following river and creek valleys and climbing up to the surrounding fields and prairies, the new 18-mile Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail connects with the Root River Trail at Preston. The trail climbs steeply from Preston to Harmony. Hikers and in-line skaters share this multi-use trail.

### Mountain Bike or Hike Trails

#### Holzinger Lodge Trail

To reach the trailhead, follow the Huff St. crossing of Hwy. 61 heading towards the bluff. Turn right onto Lake Blvd. at the "T", and go about three quarters of a mile to Holzinger Lodge parking area on the left. The trail is characterized by short, steep climbs/downhills and winding curves as it forks and wanders about 12 miles through a mature hardwood forest and blufftop. This trail is beautiful in any season, wildflowers abound in spring, and it is lovely in fall colors. The trail surface is mostly rocky clay. Popular with hikers, mountain bikers and dog-walkers, the terrain makes other trail users difficult to see, so use caution.

#### Great River Bluffs State Park

This 3,067-acre park contains 6.5 miles of trails, including great views of the Mississippi River and the Black River bottoms.



Photo by Mary Farrell

#### Perrot State Park

The 8.5 miles of mountain bike trails in Perrot State Park include many hills, and a few very steep stretches. Less experienced mountain bikers will probably need to walk their bikes at times. The trails get a lot of bike and foot traffic on weekends.

Bikers may use only the designated bike trails and must purchase a day or seasonal trail pass. A state park daily or seasonal permit is also required on all cars parked in the park.

All park trails are open to hiking. The trail along the Mississippi River and Trempealeau Bay passes a number of Indian mounds. Another trail climbs to Brady's Bluff and a spectacular panorama of the river.

#### Bronk Unit Trail – Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest

This trail follows a long, strenuous climb through a prairie meadow to the top of the Bronk Bluff. Great river views are the reward for the climb. To reach the trailhead, take Hwy. 61 north four miles past the intersection with Hwy. 14 and turn left onto Cty. Rd. 23. Go about three miles, then watch for the Bronk Unit sign on the left.



#### Trout Valley Management Unit – Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest

A spring-fed trout stream flows through this 2,375-acre state forest. The seven-mile trail is open to all uses except four-wheel-drive vehicles. It winds from valley to bluff top, and along steep wooded bluffs. Bikes may travel only on designated trails.

#### Snake Creek Management Unit – Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest

This 3,000-acre state forest contains two trail systems: 1.5 and 3.5-mile loops on the north side of the valley and a 10-mile loop on the south side. The north trails mostly follow the valley, crossing the creek several times. The south trail climbs to the top of Rattlesnake Ridge and follows the edge of the ridge. ATVs and motorcycles use the south trail. Bikes may travel only on designated trails.

### Hiking Trails

#### St. Mary's University Trails

Sixteen kilometers of rolling trails wander through valleys and along Garvin Brook behind the university campus. The entrance to the University is located on Hwy. 14 about one mile south of the intersection with Hwy. 61. Park in the lot behind the Page Theatre, and follow the path across the road. Open dawn to dusk.

#### Beaver Creek State Park

This 706-acre state park offers fishing and eight miles of hiking trails. One trail follows Beaver Creek through the length of the park and onto state forest land. Other trails climb to the wooded bluff tops.

#### John A. Latsch State Park

A challenging trail to the bluff top rewards hikers with several stunning views of the Mississippi River and the Whitman Bottoms.

#### Whitewater State Park

This 2,745-acre park is laced with 12 miles of trails. Some trails follow the popular trout streams, and some climb the steep, rocky, picturesque bluffs.



Photo by Kay Shaw

### Bicycle Tours

#### Levee Park-Prairie Island Loop

This mostly level, 13.5-mile ride offers many good views of the Mississippi River, a restored prairie and several backwaters.

Park in the lot at the foot of Walnut St. at Levee Park. Follow Levee Park Dr. west (upstream) through Levee Park to the bike trail that follows the river under the highway bridge. Keep following Riverview Dr. along the river past the harbor to the intersection at Prairie Island Rd. Turn right and follow Prairie Island Rd. the length of the island and past the Minnesota City Boat Club. Follow the road on the short, unpaved section up the hill, then continue to the "T" and turn left on Wenonah Rd. Follow Theurer Blvd. to the "T" with Pelzer St., then turn left and stay on Pelzer, which becomes River View Dr. and returns to the bike trail under the highway bridge. (Note: Hikers will enjoy the 1.5-mile trail at Prairie Island Park. Look for the trailhead near the deer park.)

#### Highway 43-Gilmore Valley Loop

See both town and country on this tour. Begin the loop from Lake Park. Leave your car in the parking area at the foot of Hamilton St. Follow Sarnia St. east five blocks to Mankato Ave. and turn right. Cross the intersection of Hwy. 61 and Mankato Ave. and go about 0.75 mile and turn right onto Hwy. 43. At the top of the hill turn right on Cty. Rd. 21, a level road that takes a country route. Follow Cty. 21 along a steep downhill coast through Gilmore Valley past the St. Mary's University campus. Turn right on Hwy. 14 and watch for the path on the right. Follow the Gilmore Ave. bike route across the bike bridge and across Hwy. 61. Pick up the Lake Park bike path at Vila St. and ride it back to the Hamilton St. parking area.

#### Garvin Heights Challenge

For the experienced cyclist who desires a training challenge, the Garvin Heights climb is tough to beat. Tour de France winner Greg La Monde trained on this road which climbs 540 feet in 1.15 miles with a grade of 9.2%. The road is narrow with sharp curves and high traffic during commuting hours, and the surface can be sandy and rough. The road demands extreme caution both climbing and descending. A complete stop must be made at the bottom of the hill to avoid cross traffic.

#### Trempealeau River Loop

The twisting rural roads that follow the Trempealeau River through bottomlands and farm fields make this a fun and moderately challenging 34-mile ride. To begin, park at the Marshland trailhead lot (see Great River State Trail). Cross Hwy. 35 and ride Cty. Rd. P to the village of Dodge. Hold to the left after crossing the river bridge into Dodge onto Cty. Rd. J. Follow Cty. J about 8.5 miles to Lovers Lane, turn left and cross the bridge, then turn left at the "T" to Cemetery Rd. Keep following Cemetery Rd. until it turns into River Rd., then becomes Barth Rd. Barth Rd connects again with Cty. P. Turn left on Cty. P to return. These roads are lightly travelled, but riders should use caution, especially on the many sharp curves. The road surface is very rough in stretches. There is one long steep hill north of Dodge and a couple moderate hills.

#### Winona to Wabasha

Follow the green rolling bluffs north on U.S. Hwy. 61 to discover the quiet pastoral elegance of the Mississippi River Valley. The 60-mile round trip provides many scenic areas and small towns to stop and enjoy. Paved shoulders on this busy highway provide safe cycling, but stay alert as traffic moves at high speeds.

#### Winona to La Crosse

The Great River Road (U.S. Hwy 61) hugs the banks of the Mississippi River on this breathtakingly beautiful ride. The round trip to La Crosse, Wis., is 60 miles, but riders can adjust their trip to any length. Traffic travels as fast as 70 mph, so keep well to the right.

A short trail bypasses I-90 (which is closed to bike traffic) on a segment of the old highway. It starts at a gate on the entry road to the rest area at the Dresbach Lock & Dam and ends at the south end of the village of Dresbach, where the road turns to go under I-90.

- Turn a day trip into an overnight outing with a stay at the Great River Bluffs State Park bicycle campground. No need to climb the steep bluff road to the state park headquarters; this five-site group camp is located in a wooded area adjacent to Highway 61 and provides water and vault toilets. Watch for signs for the camp along the highway just north of Dakota.
- Visit the village of Pickwick and the 1859 stone flour mill. Turn on County Rd. 7 and follow it for about three miles to Pickwick. The road is narrow and does not have paved shoulders, but traffic is generally light. The mill is open for tours most summer weekends. Trout Creek rolls over a 25 foot falls below the mill. Refreshments are available in town.



# Discover the Trail to Outdoor Fun

## Bicycle Safety & Courtesy

- Always wear a helmet.
- Follow the rules of the road and trail:
  - Keep right
  - Ride single file
  - Signal turns
  - Announce your intention to pass another rider
  - Use a white headlight and a red taillight or reflector for night riding.
- Keep your bicycle in good repair.
- Yield to motor vehicles and pedestrians.
- Ride predictably and defensively.

## Trail Safety & Etiquette

- Hike or ride with a partner, or tell someone where you are going.
- Bring plenty of drinking water and a trail map with you.
- Stay on trails, leave no trace.

## Need more information?

- Contact the Winona Area Mountain Bikers club at [www.wamb.com](http://www.wamb.com).
- Maps of the Root River and Harmony-Preston Valley state trails and trails in the Snake Creek, Trout Valley and Bronk units are available from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources by calling toll-free 1-888-646-6367.
- Bike Rentals available at Adventure Cycle & Ski (507) 452-5665.

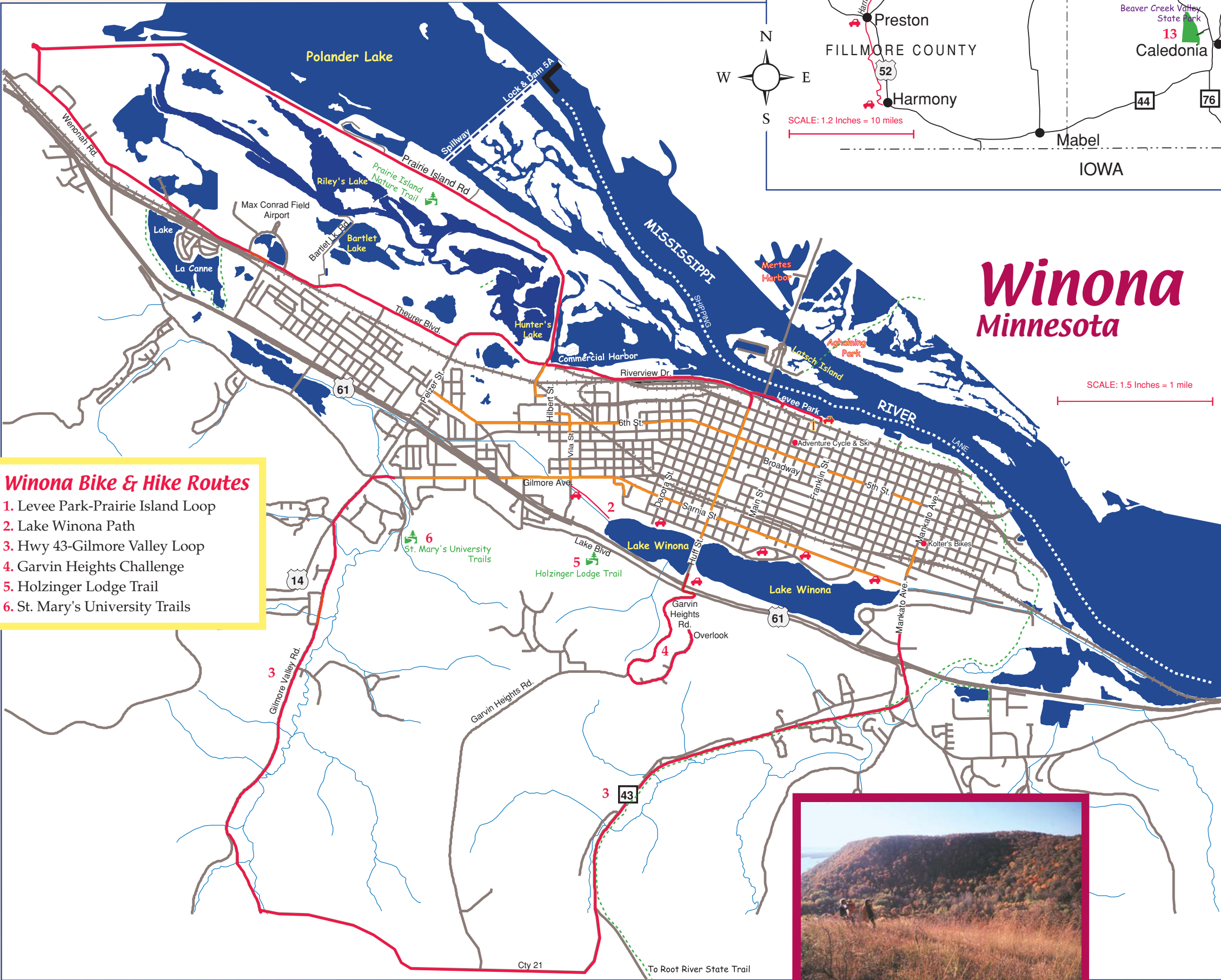
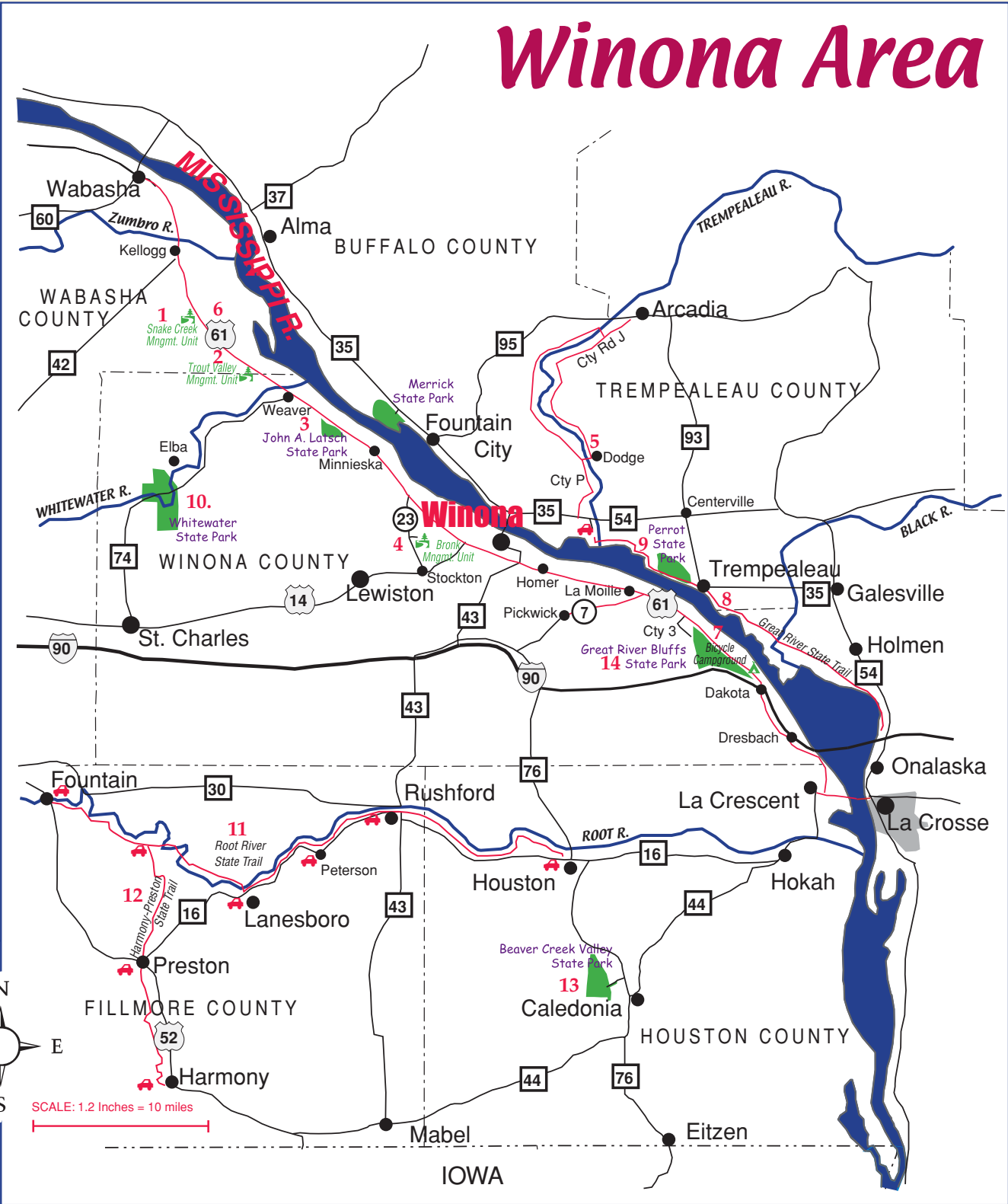
Cover photo courtesy of Adventure Cycle & Ski

## Winona Area Hike & Bike Routes

1. Snake Creek Trail  
(From Hwy. 61 northbound, turn west at the sign four miles south of Kellogg)
2. Trout Valley Trail  
(From Hwy. 61 northbound, turn west at sign the 20 miles north of Winona)
3. John A. Latsch State Park
4. Bronk Unit Trail
5. Trempealeau River Loop
6. Winona to Wabasha
7. Winona to La Crosse
8. Great River State Trail
9. Perrot State Park
10. Whitewater State Park
11. Root River State Trail
12. Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail
13. Beaver Creek State Park
14. Great River Bluffs State Park

## Legend

- Bike Tours
- City Bike Routes
- Bike Stores
- Proposed Bike Trails
- Parking



## Winona Bike & Hike Routes

1. Levee Park-Prairie Island Loop
2. Lake Winona Path
3. Hwy 43-Gilmore Valley Loop
4. Garvin Heights Challenge
5. Holzinger Lodge Trail
6. St. Mary's University Trails

## Not Far Away



IN SOUTHEASTERN MINNESOTA

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