

TROUT STREAMS OF ALLAMAKEE COUNTY

FISHING GUIDE

AN ANGLER'S COMPANION TO THE PUBLIC STREAMS & RIVERS OF ALLAMAKEE COUNTY

NORTHEAST IOWA'S HOTTEST HATCHES

Below is a month-by-month breakdown of the best hatches found in Northeast Iowa along with recommended dry and wet flies for each.

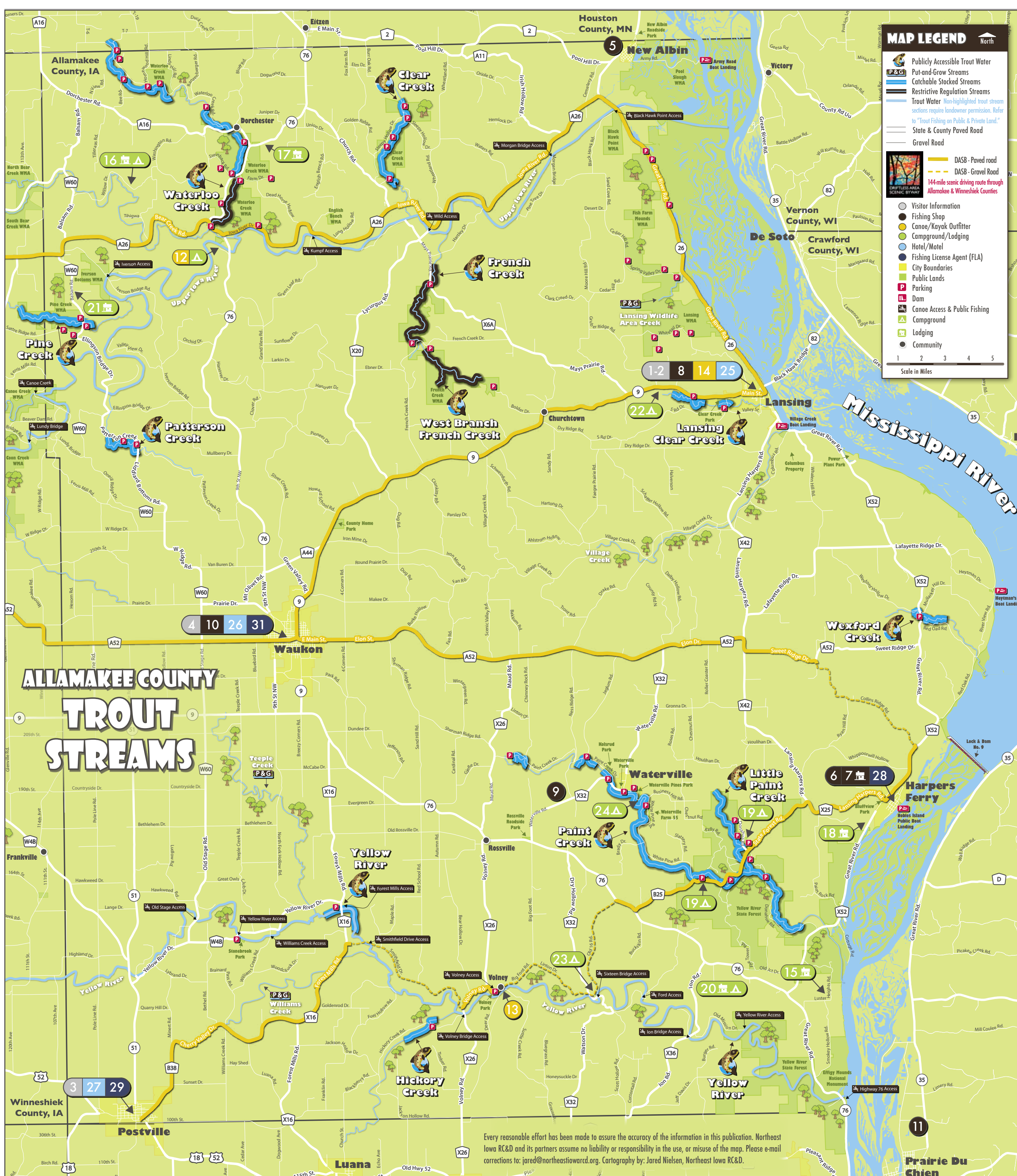
Insect hatches Prime time for fishing each insect

HATCH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	FLIES
Baetis				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Blue Winged Olive #16-22
Caddis				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Elk Hair Caddis #14-20
Hendrickson			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Adams & Dark Hendrickson #12
Hexagenia					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Adams & Brown Drake #10-12
Midges	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Griffiths Gnat & Brassie #16-22
Scuds	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Olive, Grey or Tan Scud #12-16
Stoneflies	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Beethead Prince Nymph #10-16
Sulphurs				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	March Brown & Gray Fox #14-16
Terrestrials						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Hoppers & Crickets #10-12
Trico								■	■	■	■	■	White Wing Black Trico #22
Other	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Muddler Minnow & Woollybugger #4-10

IOWA'S FISHING REGULATIONS

Below are guidelines that will be helpful when you fish Iowa. However, it is not a complete list of all fishing regulations and always be sure laws haven't changed. For more information, visit www.iowadnr.gov or contact the DNR Central Office in Des Moines at 515-725-8200.

- STREAM CLASSIFICATION.** Trout waters in Allamakee County are classified into three categories. Please read each definition to understand which stream segments contain catchable trout, are open to the public or require permission from property owners.
 - CATCHABLE STOCKED STREAMS** are open to the public and stocked regularly with catchable-sized trout that measure 10 to 12 inches in length and weigh about one-half pounds.
 - PUT-AND-GROW STREAMS** require landowner permission to fish and are stocked with fingerlings, or young trout that measure about 10-15 cm. These streams produce "stream-raised" trout rather than ones grown to catchable-sized in rearing stations and are only stocked once a year.
 - RESTRICTIVE REGULATION (RR) STREAMS** are open to the public and can only be fished using artificial lures. RR Streams in Allamakee County include the lowest portion of Waterloo Creek, which has a catch-and-release regulation for all trout, as well as French Creek and the West Fork of French Creek, which has a catch-and-release regulation for brown trout.
- IOWA'S TROUT SEASON.** Iowa's trout season differs from Minnesota, Wisconsin & Illinois in that the state offers continuous year-round fishing for brook, brown and rainbow trout.
- DAILY BAG & POSSESSION LIMIT.** The daily bag limit for trout is five and the possession limit is 10.
- FISHING LICENSES & TROUT STAMPS.** Anglers who fish for trout are required to pay the trout fee in addition to an Iowa fishing license. Both expire each year in January. However, children under 16 years of age may fish for free and possess trout if they fish with a licensed adult who has paid the current trout fee and they limit their combined catch to the daily limit of five trout. If young anglers want to fish for and keep their own limit of trout, they only need to purchase the trout fee.



Every reasonable effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the information in this publication. Northeast Iowa RC&D and its partners assume no liability or responsibility in the use, or misuse of the map. Please e-mail corrections to: jared@northeastioward.org. Cartography by: Jared Nielsen, Northeast Iowa RC&D.

WELCOME TO IOWA'S TROUT COUNTRY



There are 15 spring-fed creeks in Allamakee County that comprise over 77 miles of fishable water, three of the state's most-visited trout streams, and the longest coldwater trout stream in Iowa, the Yellow River. Located in the heart of Iowa's trout region, Allamakee County's high relief, pre-glacial landscape is home to some of the most popular trout fishing destinations in Iowa. Anglers are attracted to this area for its high concentration of prime trout waters, fish counts, trout stocking plans and year-round opportunities to catch brook, brown and rainbow trout. Iowa DNR efforts have also contributed to making this region of the state a world-class trout fishery. On average, the Iowa DNR stocks approximately 50,000 catchable trout into catchable stocked streams within Allamakee County from April 1 - October 31. Pine Creek is the only stream not stocked with catchable trout in July and August. Of the stocked catchable trout, approximately 85 percent are rainbows and 15 percent are brooks. The Iowa DNR also stocks over 58,000 brown trout and 50,000 rainbow trout fingerlings in put-and-grow streams. Pine Creek is the only stream with publicly owned access that is stocked with fingerling brown trout. In addition, excess brood trout, or adult trout that typically measure between 14 and 24 inches in length and weigh anywhere from two to eight pounds, are released into streams each year. For more information about Iowa's stocking season, including a list of the streams that are scheduled for stocking, call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324 or visit the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov.

TROUT FISHING PLACES OF INTEREST

- DRIFTLISS AREA EDUCATION & VISITOR CENTER** Visitor info, interpretive displays, Mississippi River boat ramp, restrooms and fishing pier. 563-538-0400. 1944 Columbus Rd., Lansing
- MAIN STREET LANSING** Provides tourist information about where to eat, stay and shop. 563-538-9229. 274 Main St., Lansing
- ALLAMAKEE COUNTY TOURISM** Provides tourist information about where to eat, stay and shop. 563-568-2624. 101 W Main St., Waukon
- NORTHEAST IOWA RC&D** Provides tourist information about where to eat, stay and shop. 563-864-7112. 101 E Greene St., Postville
- CITY MEAT MARKET** Quality smoked meats, groceries and fishing tackle. 563-544-4236. 199 Railroad Ave, New Albin
- END OF THE LINE BOAT MARINA** Marina with fishing tackle & live bait. 563-586-2475. 219 S 1st St., Harpers Ferry
- PORTSIDE ONE STOP** Gas, groceries, live bait, tackle, bar, restaurant and guest house. 563-538-2557. 124 Jefferson Ave, Harpers Ferry
- WELSH'S VILLAGE FARM & HOME** Business providing live bait and fishing tackle. FLA. 563-538-4884. 330 Main St., Lansing
- EWING FEATHER BIRDS** Sell high quality tackle products at an affordable price. 563-535-7682. 912 Waterville Rd., Waterville
- SPORTSMEN'S UNLIMITED** Outfitter with hunting, fishing, and camping gear. Live Bait. FLA. 563-568-4955. 866 Allamakee St., Waukon
- CABELA'S** Outdoor sporting goods retailer with live bait, fishing equipment and tackle. 33901 St. Hwy 35, Prairie Du Chien, WI
- UPPER IOWA RESORT & RENTAL** 80 campsites along the banks of the Upper Iowa River and near five of Iowa's best trout streams. Canoe and kayak rental. 563-568-3263. 578 Lanning Drive, Dorchester
- BIGFOOT CANOE RENTAL** Rent canoes, kayaks and tubes. Shuttle service is also available. 563-539-4272. 419 Big Foot Rd., Volney
- RIVER-N-RIDGE OUTDOORS** Full service bait shop on the banks of the Mississippi River. 563-538-4188. 90 South Front St., Lansing
- POINT OF VIEW B&B** Four-room B&B located near the Yellow River and Point Creek. 563-586-2061. 416 Luster Heights Rd., Harpers Ferry, IA
- JOE'S CAMPGROUND** 15 campsites & three cabins located near North & South Bear Creek. 563-497-3500. 351 Willow Drive, Dorchester
- SPORTSMEN MOTEL** 9-unit motel, 8-person cabin, and 10-person lodge near Waterloo Creek. 563-277-3615. 2753 Hwy 76, Dorchester
- ANDY MOUNTAIN CABINS** Five cabins located next to the Yellow River State Forest. 563-586-2123. 2335 Andy Mountain Lane, Harpers Ferry
- YELLOW RIVER STATE FOREST** 8,500-acre park with 25 miles of trail, 168 campsites, and access to Big Point and Little Point Creek. 563-586-2254. 729 State Forest Rd., Harpers Ferry
- THE NATURAL GAIT** Campsites, log cabins, and hiking trails along the Yellow River. 563-419-0837. 1878 Old Mission Dr., Harpers Ferry
- DECORAH HIGHLAND CABINS** Located near the Upper Iowa River and several trout streams. 563-277-0049. 284 Old Spruce Dr., Decorah
- RED BARN CAMPGROUND & RESTAURANT** Full-hookup campsites, camper rentals, stocked trout stream, and restaurant. 563-538-4956. 2609 Main St Highway 9, Lansing
- SCENIC VIEW CAMPGROUND** 60 campsites located along the Yellow River. 563-535-7347. 420 Old 16 Rd., Waterville
- PINE BLUFF CAMPSITES** 10 campsites along Point Creek and four miles from Yellow River State Forest. 563-535-7256. 75 E. Main St., Waterville
- SCENIC VALLEY MOTEL** 13 room motel with boat parking located near Lansing Clear Creek. 563-538-4245. 1608 Main St., Lansing
- BOARDERS INN & SUITES** Free wi-fi, continental breakfast, and dog friendly. 563-568-2220. 407 Rossville Rd., Waukon
- PINES MOTEL** 22 room motel with continental breakfast near Yellow River. 563-864-7531. 12458 U.S. Hwy. 18, Postville
- BARRY'S MINI MART** Convenience store with fishing tackle, live bait and groceries. FLA. 563-586-2281. 403 W Chestnut St., Harpers Ferry
- JOHN'S HARDWARE** Hardware store with fishing tackle. FLA. 563-864-7521. 135 S Lawler St., Postville

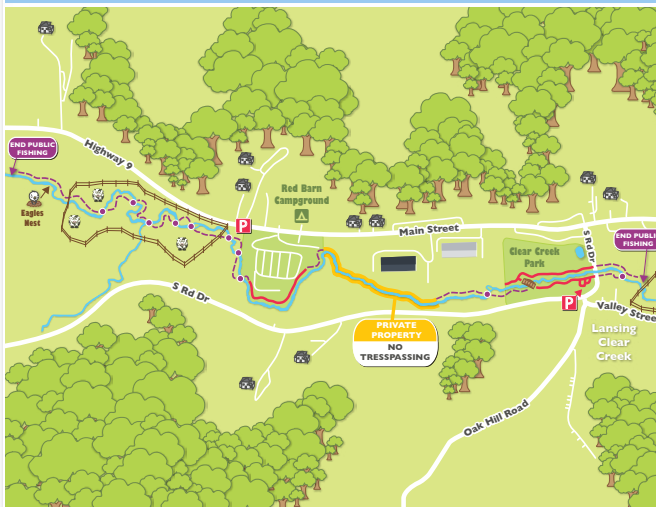
TROUT FISHING ON PUBLIC & PRIVATE LAND



Anglers may fish in waters found on public land such as Iowa State Forests, Parks & Wildlife Management Areas. However, in the Driftless region, many of the trout streams flow through private land. Furthermore, in Iowa, the landowner also owns the streambed. On private property, two systems allow the opportunity for public fishing.

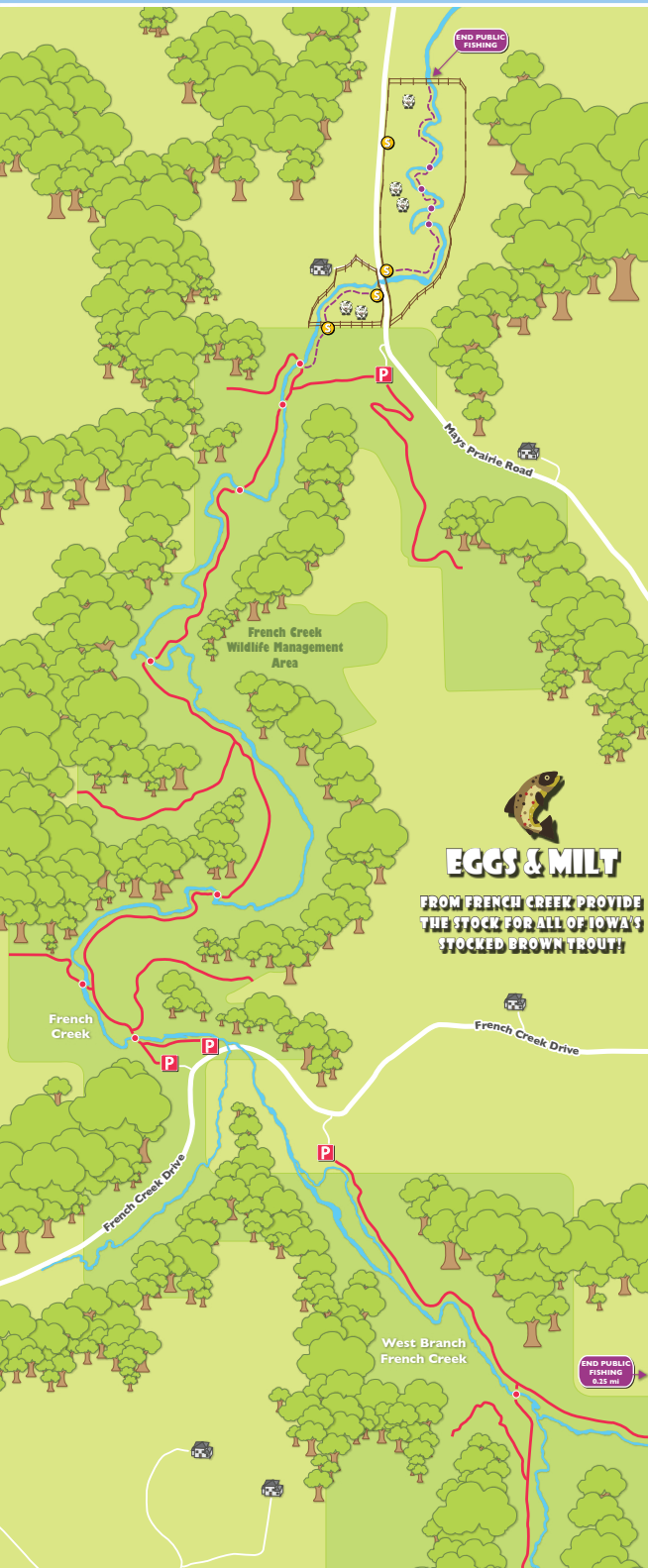
- **THE 'HANDSHAKE AGREEMENT'** is simply a verbal agreement between the landowner and the state, allowing public fishing. On private property where a verbal agreement is in place, one will frequently see white signs which read, 'Private Property. Public Fishing Only'. Stiles, allowing one to easily cross a fence, may also be present. However, the owner ultimately decides if these indicators to public fishing are allowed on the property.
- The second system is the **ANGLER CONSERVATION EASEMENT** that allows public fishing, fish stocking by the DNR, and habitat improvement on the stream. The easement consists of a corridor of 75' on both sides of the centerline of the stream; therefore, the corridor moves as the stream changes direction. This allows continual access to the stream. On private property where an easement is present, DNR staff will post grey signs reading, 'Open for Public Fishing, Stream Easement Area'.
- **IF IN DOUBT** and neither sign is present, stay out or ask the landowner. There are plenty of fishing opportunities in the region.

1. LANSING CLEAR CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 2 mile stream with brook, brown & rainbow trout
DESCRIPTION: Beginning west of the town of Lansing, Clear Creek runs through a city park that is located across from the Scenic Valley Motel. Access to this clear-water stream can be found on the south side of Route 9 and at Clear Creek Park on Oak Hill Road, which features about a half-dozen primitive campsites. This stream is known to be stocked full of caddis and scuds, so nymphing can often increase your odds of hooking fish. The deep pools and runs directly upstream from the Oak Hill Road parking lot provides some of the streams best habitat and cover for the trout. This location is also where the DNR stocks catchable-sized rainbows. Over the past few years, the DNR has documented the natural reproduction of brown trout along the upper reaches of this stream. The second stream segment, west of the Red Barn Resort, provides an opportunity for anglers to walk short prairie grass along scenic banks. If you plan to fish here, be aware of the eagles' nest in the spring, as they have been known to be protective of her hatch. Lansing Clear Creek merits fishing and can be a great stream to fish if you are traveling with family, as it is in close proximity to the town of Lansing and many nearby attractions.

2. FRENCH/WEST BRANCH CREEK



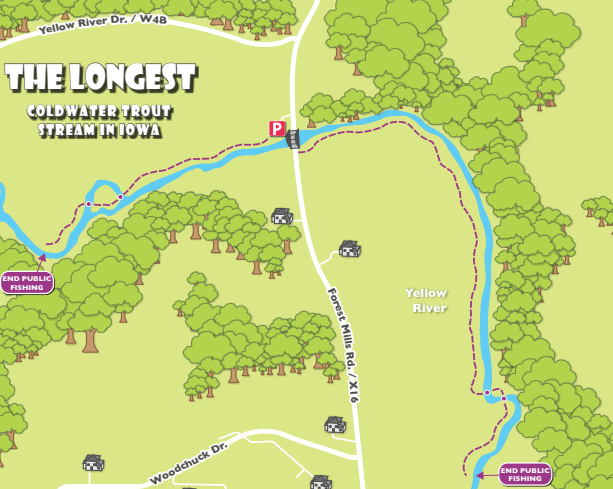
LENGTH & TROUT: 5.6 mile stream with brook, brown & rainbow trout
DESCRIPTION: French Creek is one of the best examples of a classic Driftless stream in the state. The creek was among the first streams in Iowa to support naturally reproducing brown trout. In addition, brookies have been reintroduced to the headwaters, and have also established wild populations. Today, fish densities approach 2,500 per mile, making the creek second only to Waterloo Creek in its ability to grow wild trout. If you plan a trip here, note that the entire stream is under special regulations where only artificials are permitted and all brown trout must be released immediately. The reason for this is that eggs and milt from French Creek browns are incubated to provide the stock for all of Iowa's stocked brown trout. French Creek is designated in two parts, the upper reaches where brook trout predominate, and the lower watershed known for its population of browns. The two segments are divided by a large parking lot that doubles as a primitive camping area. Anglers refer to this stream, especially the upper reaches, as being "wooly." What this means is that you will likely be fishing small water in tight, wooded conditions. However, the density of wild trout, gin-clear water and beauty of the French Creek valley make this a tremendously desirable destination.

3 & 4. PAINT AND LITTLE PAINT CREEK



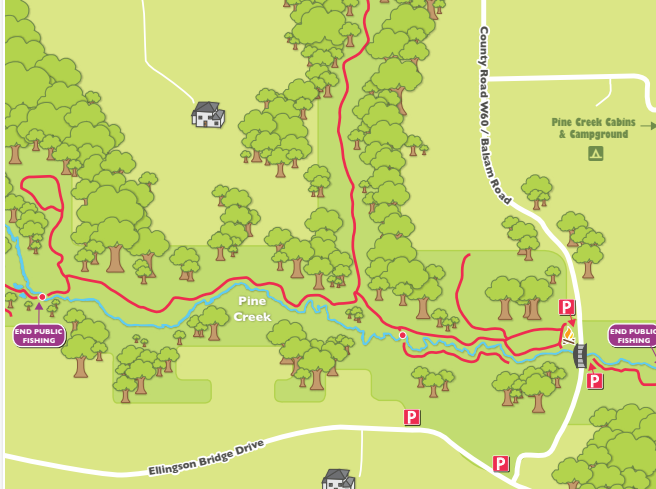
LENGTH & TROUT: 14 mile stream with brook, brown & rainbow trout
DESCRIPTION: For fly fishers who enjoy camping within casting distance of trout, a trip to the Yellow River State Forest makes a compelling destination. Located 6 miles Southwest of Harpers Ferry, this state park contains 8,500 acres of mixed hardwood and conifer forest, three trout streams (the Yellow River, Paint Creek, and Little Paint Creek), four campgrounds with 168 campsites, 40 of them equestrian, and trails for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding and snowmobiling. Almost entirely encompassed by the public forest, Paint Creek features over six miles of stream containing stocked rainbows and brookies along with wild browns. The stream takes its name from Paint Rock Bluff, near Waukon Junction, Iowa. Once an important navigational landmark for Mississippi River traffic, it was named for the Indian paintings and petroglyphs on it. This creek is small, perhaps 10-25 feet wide with the publicly accessible sections beginning west of the town of Waterville. This westerly section is mostly pasture, but by the time the creek reaches Waterville, it flows through a canyon between almost vertical cliffs some 150 feet high and continues to flow next to limestone rock faces as it winds through the state forest boundary. This region is quite scenic, with sloping terrain, rock outcrops and lush woodlands. The water here is gin clear, and turns an indescribable blue/green color in the deeper pools. Colder and more intimate, Little Paint Creek joins Paint Creek after crossing Highway 825 near the state forest's equestrian campground and flows parallel to Donahue Road. This tributary is smaller and colder than Paint Creek and harbors wild browns and brook trout, in addition to stocked rainbows and brookies. Excellent water is accessible from the state forest's largest camping unit, Little Paint Campground. Hugging the stream, this campground is spread out along the valley floor to the west of State Forest Road. The primitive campsites here are large and grass covered, with many sites smack dab on Little Paint Creek. A smaller camping unit is also located on the main stem of Paint Creek called Big Paint Campground. If you decide to stay at either, know that all campsites within the Yellow River State Forest are primitive, which means there is no provision of electricity or water and restrooms are non-flushing vault toilets. All campers are able to access a supply of fresh drinking water free of charge at the information center at Big Paint.

5. YELLOW RIVER



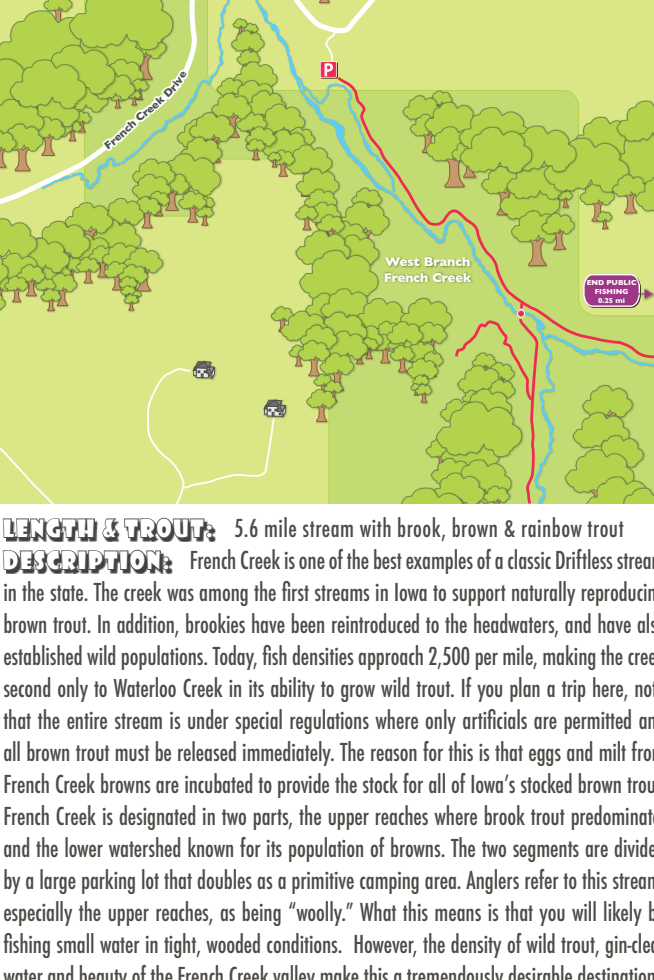
LENGTH: 35 mile stream (1.7 miles of public access) with brown & rainbow trout
DESCRIPTION: Recognized as the longest cold-water trout stream in Iowa, the Yellow River is purported by the Iowa DNR Fisheries to have the highest gradient of any canoeable stream in the state. The challenging rapids, limestone cliffs, towering bluffs, mature hardwood forests and boulders the size of boxcars all contribute to this river being known for its spectacular scenery and fishing. For the first time ever, anglers now have access to 1.7 miles of the Yellow River through a Permanent Anglers Access Easement that was finalized in 2021 (segment featured in map above). This was the first such easement established on private property on the Yellow River. In addition to this angler access, fishing from a canoe can be done beginning at the Old Stage Canoe Access. You must also be aware that by Iowa law, you can launch a canoe at the road crossings and canoe access points, but you are not permitted to wade-fish unless you have permission from the landowner. A popular float is from Volney Bridge Canoe Access to Highway 76 Canoe Access just north of Marquette, some 18 miles.

6. PINE CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 2.5 mile stream with brook & brown trout
DESCRIPTION: Straddling the Winneshiek-Allamakee County line north of Decorah, Pine Creek is a tributary to Canoe Creek and the Upper Iowa River and is noted for its naturally reproducing trout. This stream is for the serious angler in search of landing wild stream-reared brown and brook trout. Bushwhacking through willow thickets is often required to fish the narrowness of the five-foot-wide stream corridor that twists and turns along cleared farmland and forested timber. Besides the rush of catching a wild trout, this stream's setting is truly pictorial, with bluffs, oak-hickory woodlands, goat prairie and trickling trout water all nestled together within a deep-cut valley, which is a distinctive feature of the entire area. Much of this creek is contained within the 7,205-acre South Pine Creek Wildlife Management Area that begins just downstream of the County Road W60 bridge. Public land surrounding Pine Creek is also open to hunting, in case you feel the need to trade in your long fishing pole for long arms and take to the woods in search of grouse, squirrel or woodcock.

7. WATERLOO CREEK



KNOWN FOR HOLDING MORE THAN 4,000 TROUT PER MILE

8. PATTERSON CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 1.4 mile stream with brook, brown & rainbow trout
DESCRIPTION: Located near the Howlin' Hills Farm in rural Allamakee County, Patterson Creek is a pleasant fly fishing destination that runs through open pasture. In 2010, Healing Harvest Forest Foundation volunteers along with members of the Iowa Driftless Chapter of Trout Unlimited installed trout-stream bank hides, also known as lunger structures, to increase the stream's ability to host holdover trout and enhance the overall fishing experience for anglers. Considering this stream now has a loyal following, the added structures and rocky banks have made this stream a pleasant destination for fly fishermen. Look for holdover fish at the sharp bends and stream segments with fast moving water.

9. HICKORY CREEK



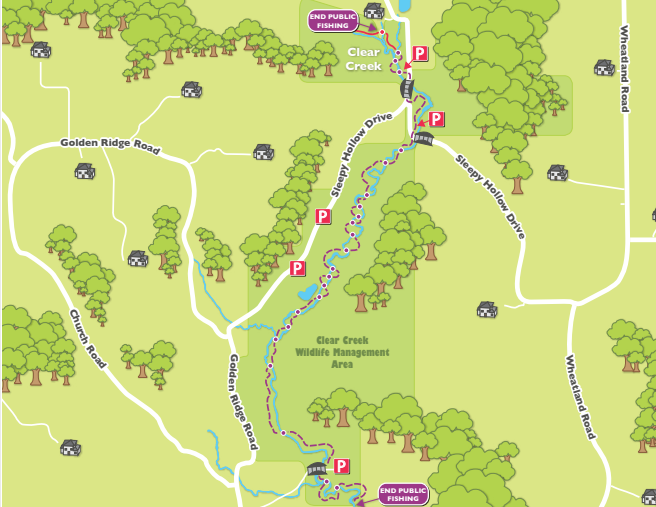
LENGTH & TROUT: 1.5 mile stream with brook & brown trout
DESCRIPTION: Located northwest of Monona, this clear stream flows within an isolated valley and winds its way along the base of a steep hill. Hickory Creek is divided from the road by a narrow strip of filled fields and can be accessed by parking near the bridge on Hickory Creek Road. DNR efforts have taken place to restore trout habitat through bank stabilizers and lunger structures. Although brown and brook trout are stocked here and there has been some natural reproduction of browns, this creek is not the place to catch bruisers or big fish. Expect trout in the 8- to 12- inch range with a few surpassing 14 inches.

10. WEXFORD CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 1.4 mile stream with brook & rainbow trout
DESCRIPTION: Wexford Creek is located five miles north of Harpers Ferry on the Great River Road or CR52. This stream is hard to miss, as it is situated within a beautiful valley next to the oldest Catholic Church site between Dubuque, IA and St. Paul, MN known as the Wexford Immaculate Conception Church. You can't miss the cemetery, church and tiny wayside chapel on the west side of the road, which is also the side where fence crossings have been built to provide stream access. Wexford Creek is a nice little stream that meanders through pasture land on its short journey to the Mississippi River. Stocked weekly with brook and rainbow trout, nice fish can often be caught at the pool near the Wexford Hollow Drive bridge.

11. CLEAR CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 3.4 mile stream with brook & brown trout
DESCRIPTION: This small stream is located 4 miles east of Dorchester along Sleepy Hollow Drive. Known as a put-and-grow stream, Clear Creek is different from most put-and-grow streams since it is located within the Clear Creek Wildlife Management Area, or publicly owned land that does not require landowner permission to fish. Stocked annually with fingerling brookies and browns, this creek has been known to maintain populations of naturally reproducing trout. Although you are not likely to catch big bruisers in this stream, it is a nice creek to fish if you are after the wild brook and brown trout.

TROUT FISHING GUIDE SERVICES

FLY FISHING GUIDE SERVICE

Kent Monte

nei FLY FISHING

Ethan Jason

DRIFTLESS FISHERS, LLC

Liz

DRIFTLESS ON THE FLY

Jared Ryan Amanda

UP NORTH ADVENTURES

Bob

- 1. BEAR CREEK ANGLERS.** Fly fishing guide service focused on introducing beginners to the sport of catch and release fly fishing or the novice who could use some helpful fishing tips. Contact them at 563-419-4433 or www.bearcreekanglers.com
- 2. nei FLY FISHING.** Guides Ethan and Jason offer full-day and half-day wading trips on the spring-fed creeks of Northeast Iowa. Trips can include equipment rental & casting lessons. All skill levels welcome. Email Ethan at neilyfishing@gmail.com or visit www.neilyfishing.com
- 3. DRIFTLESS FISHERS, LLC.** Woman owned and operated. Full-day (8 hours) and half-day (4 hours) guided trips. Equipment rental is offered. One hour casting lessons are also available. For more information, email Liz Stepler at driftlessfishers@gmail.com
- 4. DRIFTLESS ON THE FLY.** Full-day (8 hours) and half-day (4 hours) guided walk-wade trips and float trips are available. All guided walk-wade and float trips include flies, leader, tippet, transport to and from, snacks and refreshments. Email info@driftlessonthefly.com
- 5. UP NORTH ADVENTURES.** We will guide you on a day trip (8 hours) for rainbow and brown trout. Rods and tackle will be supplied. Also offer Mississippi River fishing trips, guided kayak eco-trips and dog sledding. Email snowdog@acgroup.cc

TROUT GUIDE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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IOWA'S TROUT FAMILY

BROOK TROUT are native to Iowa and are recognized by two main characteristics: vivid white lines on the front or leading edge of the lower fins, and the top portion or back is covered with light wormy streaks or mottlings on a darker background called vermiculations.

BROWN TROUT are brown with silvery sides and obvious black spots outlined by orange coloration. They have a square tail, and a lower jaw that juts out ahead of their upper jaw. Males, during the breeding season, often exhibit vivid yellow to reddish-yellow colors along the belly region and a sharply hooked lower mandible.

RAINBOW TROUT are olive to greenish-blue over most of the upper body, fading to a silvery-white along the belly. They are most easily separated from the other trout species by the strikingly prominent pink-red horizontal stripe that extends down each side of the fish and the small black spots on the sides, back, dorsal and caudal fins.

TROUT STREAM MAP LEGEND

- Paved Roads
- Mowed Trail (MT)
- Blaze Your Own Trail (BYOT)
- Parking Access
- Campground
- Road Bridge
- Shelter
- Spring
- Fire Pit
- Residential House
- Cow Pasture
- Playground
- Hiking Trail
- MT Stream Crossing
- BYOT Stream Crossing
- Universal Access
- Public Land
- Pedestrian Bridge
- Picnic Area
- Trout Water
- Trout Stile
- Cabin/Lodging
- Livestock Fence
- Bike Trail