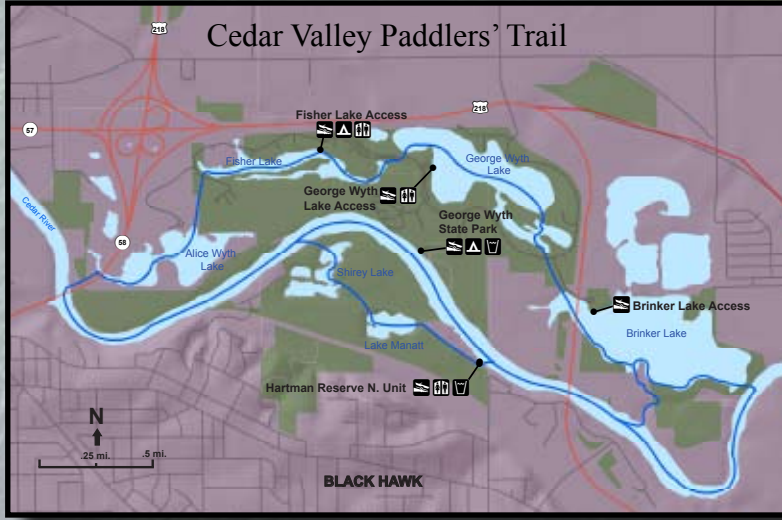
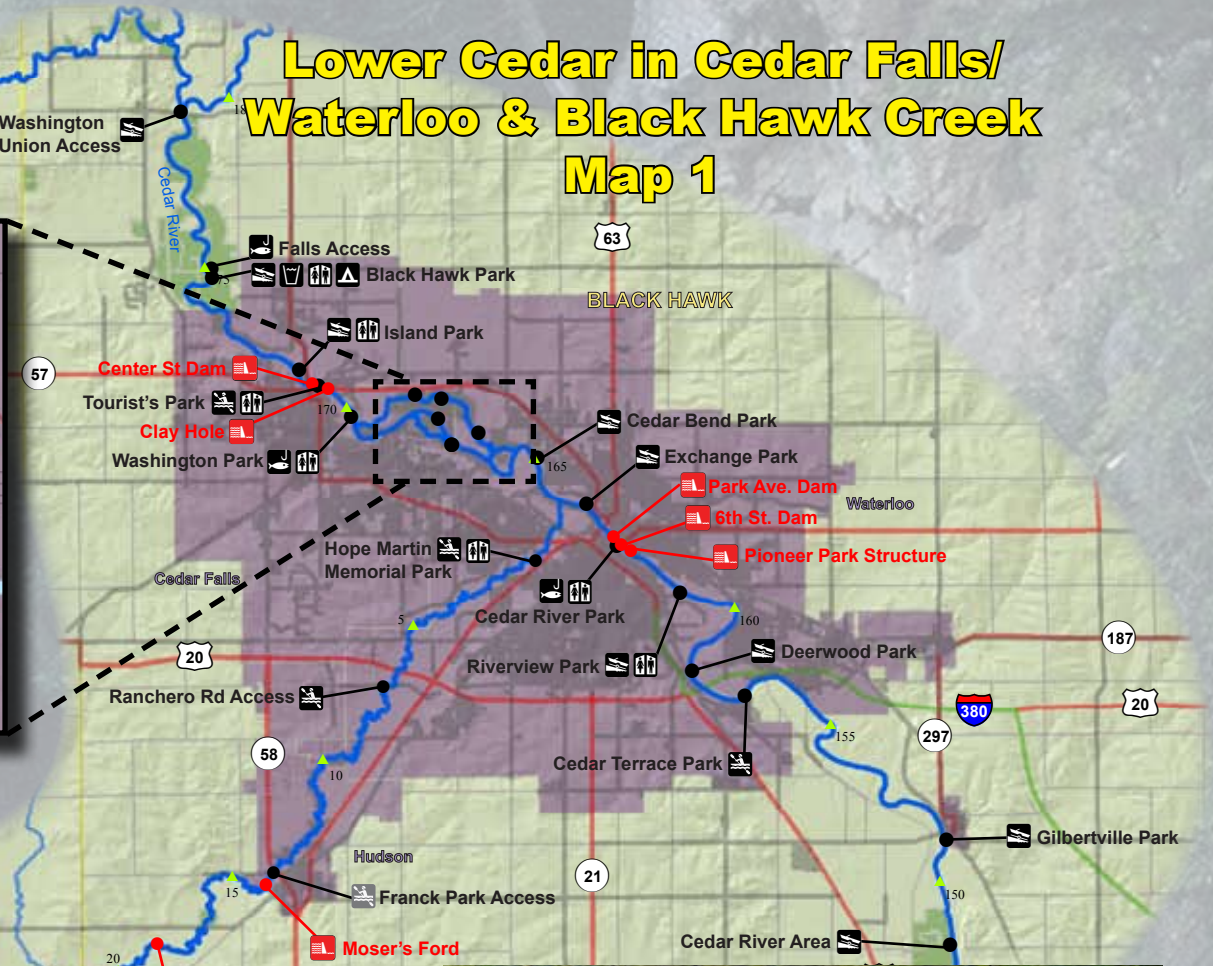


The Cedar Valley Paddlers' Trail is a 10 mile long trail including portages, that allows paddlers to travel through the Cedar River and various lakes located in George Wyth State Park and Hartman Reserve Nature Center. Paddlers can choose to either float through the main loop, paddling from lake to lake, or paddle any of the smaller loops for a shorter trip.



## Lower Cedar in Cedar Falls/ Waterloo & Black Hawk Creek Map 1



Moser's Ford on Black Hawk Creek

## Lower Cedar River From Cedar Falls to Cedar Rapids - Map 2



### Legend

- Hard-surface boat ramp
- Carry down access
- Unmaintained access
- Fishing access
- Campground
- Watercraft campsite
- Restroom
- Drinking water near river
- Dam (danger!)
- Rapids or rock dam
- 5-mile markers, from mouth
- Federal or state highway
- Paved & unpaved roads
- City or town
- Public land

**Black Hawk Creek**, a tributary of the Cedar River, is a stream that originates in Grundy County northwest of Holland. From there it flows through Grundy Center, Morrison and then Reinbeck, where it begins to flow in a northeasterly direction through Hudson and then to the Cedar River in Waterloo. Originally a very small prairie stream, Black Hawk Creek has increased in flow over the last 30 years to the point where it rivals many of Iowa's small rivers in terms of yearly water flow.

Except for the weeks when it is ice covered, the creek is navigable from Grundy Center to the Cedar River at the following levels of flow: (Flow measured at the USGS Gaging Station at Hudson #05463500)

**Grundy Center to Reinbeck:** 250 cfs (Cubic Feet per Second) and above for solo canoes and kayaks; and over 350 cfs for tandem boats.  
**Reinbeck to Hudson:** over 120 cfs.  
**Hudson to the Cedar River:** over 85 cfs.  
 Water flow above 1200 cfs (at the Hudson gage) represents flood stage on the creek, paddling at this level is difficult and hazardous.

Black Hawk Creek is home to beaver, fox, coyote, mink, and deer. On occasion, river otters and badgers can be spotted. Seasonally it offers habitat for most Iowa shore birds and waterfowl. Eagles, owls and many species of hawks are common during the warmer months. Black Hawk Creek is not known for having a remarkable sport fishery.

Unlike the Cedar River, Black Hawk Creek is not a meandered stream. While the creek is navigable, users should be aware that the bed and banks of the river are in private ownership, and sandbar camping without landowner permission is not encouraged.

Just upstream of Cedar Falls, the Shell Rock, West Fork Cedar, and Cedar rivers converge, forming a wide river that offers a variety of landscapes. The Cedar tends to be shallow, with occasional deep holes that are good for finding catfish. The river bottom is generally sandy as it winds through mixed wooded areas, with intermittent rock bluffs, limestone cliffs, and the occasional farm pasture.



Early 1900s postcard of a "Pleasure Fleet" on the Cedar River in Cedar Falls

The Cedar has some of the best game fish populations in the state. Smallmouth bass and walleye are abundant in the rocky areas of the river and below dams. Walleye are most prevalent between Waverly and Gilbertville.

Catfish are abundant throughout the entire Cedar River. They can usually be found in deep pools, and log and brush piles.



Great Blue Heron



As the river moves into Cedar County, it straightens and widens, forming deep holes and accumulating snags, making this area a catfishing haven.

ous streams that feed into the Cedar.

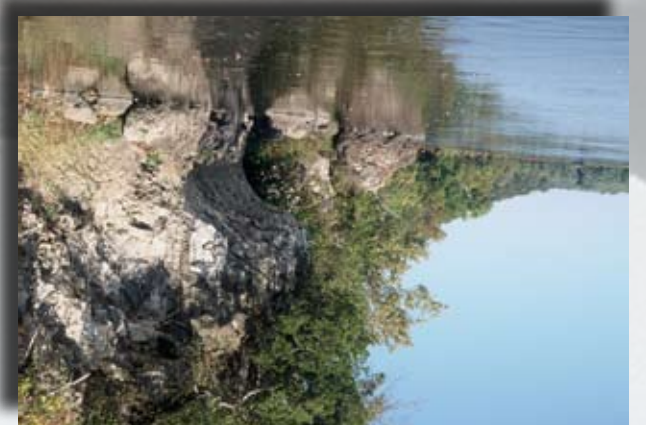
ing season, smallmouths can be caught at the mouths of the vari-

Benton County and Wildcat Bluff. In early June during their spawn-

place to find walleye and smallmouth bass is the area between

areas of the river between Benton and Cedar county. Another good

Smallmouth bass, rock bass, and walleye can be found in rocky

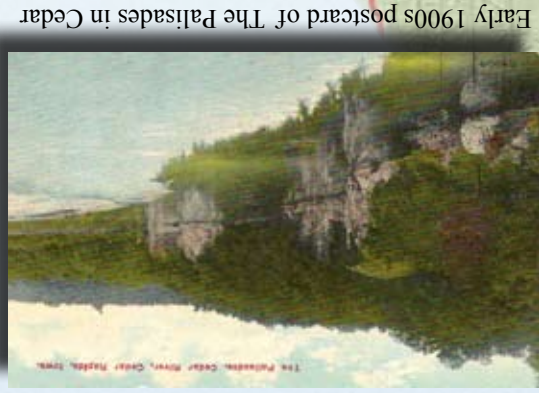


Limestone Bluff on the Cedar River

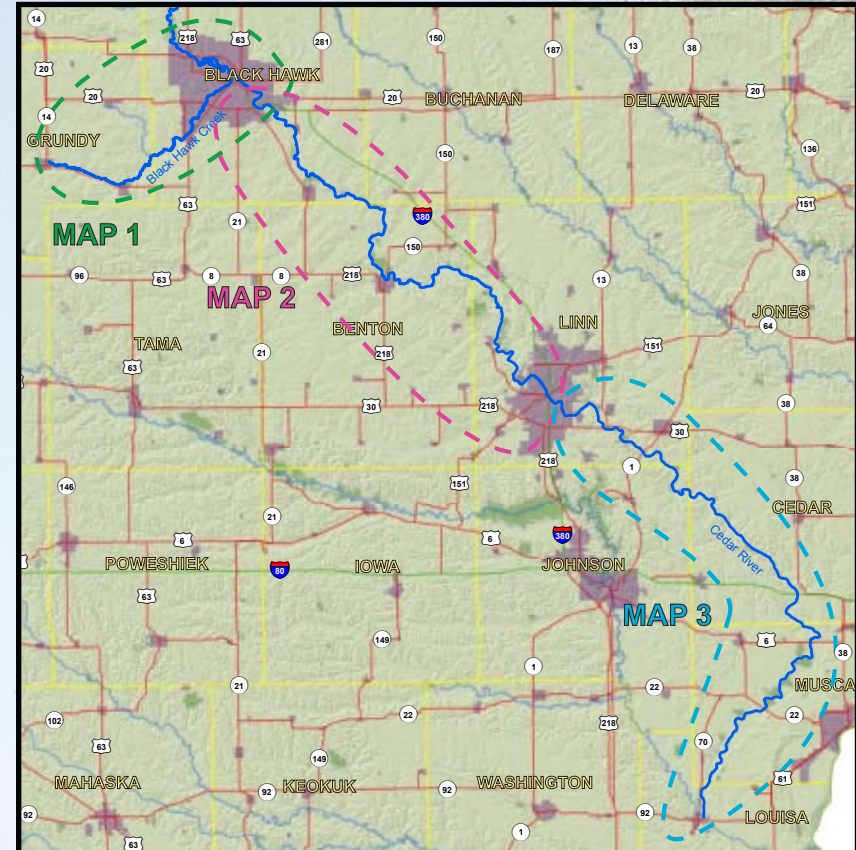
The Cedar offers great scenery as it winds through wooded areas, occasionally passing limestone bluffs. One of the most breathtaking features can be found at Palisades-Kepler State Park, where there is a limestone gorge that is well over 100 feet deep. The last 71 miles of the Cedar offer a slightly different experience from the upper stretch, as the river flows naturally, free of dams, from Palisades-Kepler State Park to the confluence with the Iowa River.

From Cedar Rapids to the confluence with the Iowa, the Cedar straightens out in some areas and is often wider than 600 feet, moving past islands and frequent sand bars that offer good camping opportunities. When camping on sand bars, set up camp as high as possible, while staying below the "ordinary high-water mark". Anything above the that mark is privately owned land and unless it's in a public area. The ordinary high-water mark is not a perfectly defined line but camping on sandbars or other places below permanent vegetation growth is acceptable on this river.

## Lower Cedar River Confluence with Iowa River Map 3



Early 1900s postcard of The Palisades in Cedar Rapids



Black Hawk Creek

## Lower Cedar River & Black Hawk Creek From Cedar Falls to Confluence of Iowa River



Cedar River at Palisades-Kepler State Park

# Expedition & Fishing Guide

### Be safe out there!

**Wear a life jacket**  
Life jackets save lives, but will not work if you do not wear it.

**Don't boat under the influence**  
For your safety, do not use alcohol or drugs on the water.

**Watch for hazards**  
On rivers, hazards like dams, fences, snags, rocks, and bridge abutments may be present. Dams and snags in particular can be killers. Avoid them!

**Plan to get wet**  
You may capsize, so dress for the weather. When the water and/or weather get cold, warm-when-wet clothing and a wetsuit are needed.

### Stay legal!

Most land along these rivers is privately owned - these waters are navigable and open to the public, but you must respect private property.

Littering is a crime - pack out everything you bring in. Report littering or dumping by calling 888-NOLITTR.

**Resources**  
Water trails and recent listing of canoe/kayak liveries  
[www.iowadnr.gov/riverprograms/](http://www.iowadnr.gov/riverprograms/)

River gages  
[waterdata.usgs.gov](http://waterdata.usgs.gov) or [www.rivergages.com](http://www.rivergages.com)

Federal regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap. State law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, or disability. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to the Iowa DNR, 502 E. Ninth St., Des Moines, Iowa, 50319.

