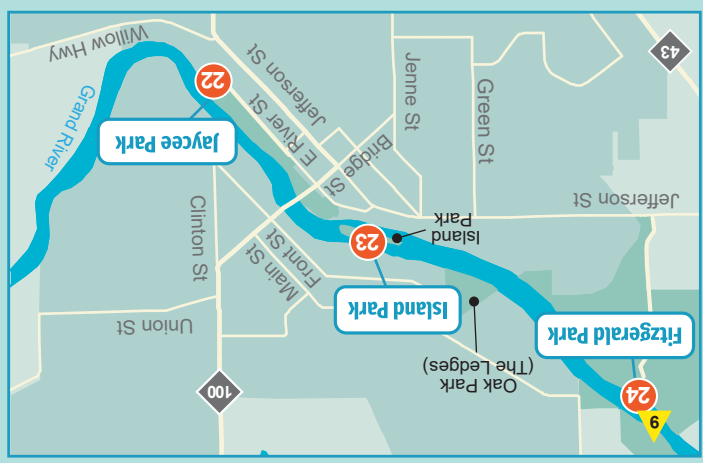


GRAND LEDGE

This city is known for its beautiful sandstone ledges that line the banks of the Grand River. Visitors will enjoy Grand Ledge's bustling downtown and retail areas, public art, and small-town charm. There is nearly 10,000 feet of parkland along the river, including an accessible boat launch and splash pad at Jaycee Park and a Riverwalk Trail connecting Jaycee Park to Fitzgerald Park's famous rock outcroppings along the river.



PORTLAND

Paddlers approaching this "City of Two Rivers" from the south will enjoy the wildlife corridor along the Portland State Game Area. Named for the Grand and Looking Glass Rivers' intersection, Portland provides ample paddling and fishing opportunities. Over eight miles of paved riverwalks connect seven bridges and parks, providing a natural beauty to the vibrant downtown district. Paddlers can find a convenient launch at Thompson Field as they view the Verlen Kruger Memorial.



DELTA TOWNSHIP

Suburban residents of Eaton County's most populous municipality enjoy accessing the Grand River from three offer accessible launch sites. Paddlers can fish at the Grand Woods, Delta Mills, and the Willow Canoe Launch enjoy a trail walk at each access site, or catch beautiful views of the river from the Capital City Bird Sanctuary.



MIDDLE GRAND RIVER WATER TRAIL

The Middle Grand River has 13 dams and caution zones. All dams are hazardous and require careful navigation. Most locations have portage paths or designated routes where paddlers can carry their watercraft around obstacles like dams or rapids. **Never** paddle over a dam, and follow signage for when and where to exit the river.

1. **Smithville Dam:** Use the portage path on river right (north).
2. **State Street Dam:** No portage. Exit at McArthur Park (river right, northeast), and portage 1 mile along city streets to Mill Pointe Park.
3. **Eaton Rapids Sanitary Dam Site:** Remnants of dam exist. Passage possible in high water left of island. Portage on river left (west).*
4. **Pedestrian Bridge:** High water creates entrapment hazard. After heavy rain, avoid this area or portage.*
5. **Dimondale Dam Site:** Rock weirs remain but passage is possible in high water. Use floating ramp and short portage on river right (north).*
6. **Moores Dam:** Portage on river right (south).
7. **North Lansing Dam:** Portage on river right (east).
8. **Delta Mills Dam Site:** Dam remnants create a small riffle, navigable for most paddlers. Access site available just downstream on river left (south).*
9. **Grand Ledge Dam:** Portage on river left (south). Take-out near the dam requires caution.
10. **Portland Dam:** Portage on river left (south). Boat launch available upstream for paddle craft and small powerboats.
11. **Webber Dam:** Access on both sides. River left (west) boat launch has poor downstream portage. Use river right (east) for portage.
12. **Wagar Dam:** Mandatory portage; dangerous for unfamiliar paddlers. No portage route around the dam or road access exists. Plan ahead to avoid it and obtain property owner permission if possible.*
13. **Lyons Dam site:** Removed dam remnants create waves. Skilled paddlers may pass at high water on river left (west). Marshy portage on river right (east) is difficult.*

*Areas of Caution

Dams and Areas of Caution

This family-friendly trip only takes an hour on the water. Launch a canoe or kayak at the Grand Ledge on Willow Highway and Grand Ledge Canoe Launch east of Jaycee Park on your left. Smallmouth bass fishing is good on this trip. For a longer trip, put in at Delta Mills (5.9 miles).



WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE TOUR

Launch a canoe or kayak at the Charlotte Highway Bridge and paddle 1.2 miles down to Portland, taking out at the Verlen Kruger Memorial at Thompson Field on your left. This is a wild, beautiful stretch of the Grand River in the Portland State Game Area, nearly undisturbed and full of wildlife. Don't be surprised to see eagles, hawks, herons, turkeys, beavers, and river otters. The river is clear, with numerous boulders—good fishing for smallmouth bass, walleye, and salmon when in season. Stop for lunch and rest at the Erldman Road access site on the left about four miles downstream by staying far to the left of all islands—look for the power lines on the left bank. Note: the only restrooms on this trip are in Portland. The shuttle for this trip is only 5 miles.



Best of the Middle Grand River



All routes are round trip, beginning and ending at Rotary Park. Arrows indicate direction of travel.

A1 Rotary Park
Begin and end your trip at Rotary Park. Paddle upstream under I-496 (strong current) downstream. Rent or bring your own watercraft. Paddle upstream through wooded and urban areas to the Red Cedar River junction.
Distance: 1.8 miles
Paddle Time: 1-1.5 hours

A2 Left Fork Upstream
Paddle up the Red Cedar River through quiet, tree-lined bays toward Potter Park Zoo and Michigan State University. Watch for abundant wildlife, including bald eagles.
Distance: 4.5 miles
Paddle Time: 2-3 hours

A3 Right Fork Upstream
Paddle the Grand River toward Moores Dam. Strong current provides a good workout. Float back to Rotary Park.
Distance: 4 miles
Paddle Time: 1.5-2 hours

A4 Downstream
Paddle downstream toward Old Town if the Fish Ladder's gray tower near the portage exit on river right. Avoid the red safety floats marking the dam cutoff. Take out here or paddle back to Rotary Park.
Distance: 1.4 miles
Paddle Time: 1-2 hours

About the Grand River

The Grand River is the longest river in Michigan. Starting in its headwaters near Jackson, it flows north and west through mid-Michigan. Its watershed covers over 5,500 square miles of land, 18 counties, and 158 townships.



What is the Middle Grand River?

It is an 87-mile stretch of the Grand River between the city of Eaton Rapids and the village of Lyons with a diverse mix of urban, suburban, and wild areas for paddlers to enjoy. The Red Cedar, Looking Glass, and Maple rivers are major tributaries that flow into the Middle Grand River.



Middle Grand River Water Trail

With an abundance of boat and kayak launches, well-marked signs along its banks, curated experiences, and wayfinding maps, MGROW has assembled the resources users need to plan a trip that matches their desired experience, skill level, and equipment along the 87-mile-long Middle Grand River Water Trail.

MGROW, in partnership with the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, developed the Middle Grand River Water Trail Development Plan to guide the creation of a designated water trail on the Middle Grand River. In late 2018, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources selected it as one of the first of eight designated water trails in the state.

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (Tri-County) is designated by the state as the region's area wide water quality management planning agency under the Clean Water Act and is proud to help support MGROW and its efforts. The planning agency offers a Virtual Trail Explorer of the water trail and other regional trails. For a 360-degree view of the river or to learn more about Tri-County's activities, visit mitrcpc.org.

Get Involved!

The mission of the Middle Grand River Organization of Watersheds (MGROW) is to protect and preserve the history and the natural resources of the Middle Grand River watershed by promoting education, conservation, restoration, and wise use of watershed resources. When you join MGROW, you support our efforts to make the Middle Grand River a cleaner, safer, and more accessible resource for the public, including projects like this map. Join our efforts by visiting mgrow.org/join.



EATON RAPIDS



Visitors can enjoy two parks on the banks of the Grand River and the shops and restaurants within Dimondale's quaint downtown. Darnold Island Park offers an accessible launch site, a fishing pier, a walking pathway, restrooms, and picnic tables.

Known as Michigan's Island City, this quaint town offers 1,050 feet of riverbank for your enjoyment. A series of natural rock weirs offers paddlers a unique rapids experience, and kayak and canoe rentals are available at Mill Pointe Park. Visitors will enjoy dining at fine restaurants and browsing in shops in downtown Eaton Rapids, including the historic Miller Farm.

LANSGING

