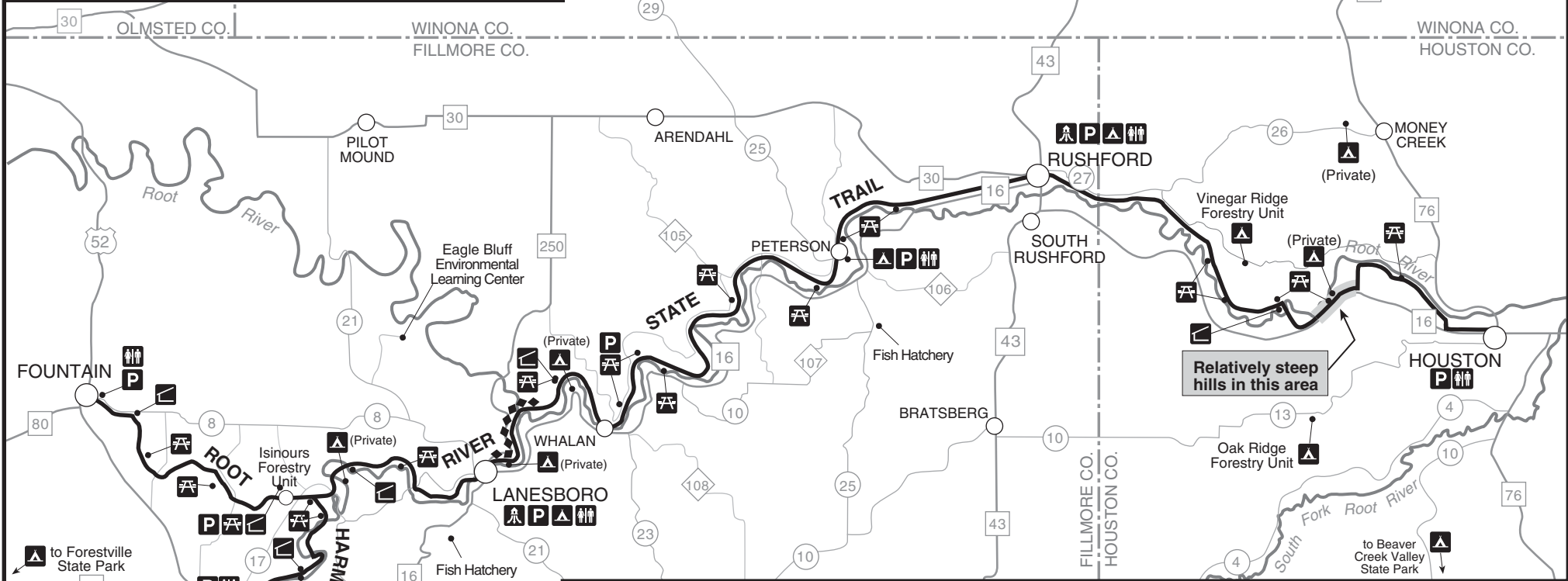


# Root River & Harmony-Preston Valley State Trails

## Fillmore & Houston Counties



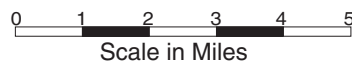
### MAP EXPLANATION

#### Trail

- Paved (Asphalt)
- Snowmobiling Allowed
- Change in trail difficulty
- Parallel Horse Trail

#### Facilities

- Trail Center
- Parking
- Picnic/Rest Area
- Shelter
- Campground
- Toilet



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	6.5	12.0	11.2	15.8	24.7	29.5	35.3	24.3	42.3
Fountain	5.5	4.7	9.3	18.2	23.0	28.8	17.8	35.8	
Isinours Junction		10.2	14.8	23.7	28.5	34.3	12.3	41.3	
Preston			4.6	13.5	18.3	24.1	22.5	31.1	
Lanesboro				8.9	13.7	19.5	27.1	26.5	
Whalan					4.8	10.6	36.0	17.4	
Peterson						5.8	40.8	12.6	
Rushford							46.6	6.8	
Vinegar Ridge Unit								53.6	
Harmony									
Houston									



## The Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail

Come and enjoy Minnesota hospitality, southeastern style!! The paved Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail is a beautiful 18 mile long multiple use trail that connects the communities of Harmony and Preston with the existing Root River State Trail. Main summer uses are hiking, biking and in-line skating. The trail is groomed for cross country skiing in the winter.

The northern two-thirds of the Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail follows or crosses Watson Creek, the South Branch of the Root River, and Camp Creek, passing through a variety of wooded areas and farmland on an abandoned railroad grade. This section is wheelchair accessible. Three fishing platforms provide access to trout fishing in Camp Creek just outside of Preston.

Unlike the northern segment of this trail, the southern segment was not constructed upon an abandoned railroad grade. The southern segment of the trail between County 16 and Harmony climbs out of the river valley, and angles cross country into Harmony. The trail rises up and down over a number of little hills and is punctuated with a rather strenuous incline that may not be suitable for all users.

Although Harmony and Preston were both settled in the 1850s, the cities are quite different in appearance. Harmony was developed upon the agricultural uplands above the Root River valley while Preston is located within the valley. Both communities speak to a very different time in Minnesota's history with several preserved buildings and interpretive opportunities.



This trail requires a permit for anyone cross-country skiing. For more information about the Ski Pass, please call the DNR Info Center at 1-888-MINNDNR or check the website at [www.mndnr.gov](http://www.mndnr.gov).

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### PARKING AVAILABLE:

*\* Do not leave valuables in your vehicle.*

- PRESTON: Hwy 52 to Fillmore Street (same as Co. 12), approximately 1/2 mile to the parking lot.
- HARMONY: Hwy 52, to 4th Street NW, approximately 1/2 mile west to the parking lot.
- FOUNTAIN: From Hwy 52 take County Road 8 about one mile to parking lot by city park/softball field.
- LANESBORO: Parking is available in the lot next to the Bass Pond off of County 8. Additional parking is available along the streets and at the parking lot by the Community Center/Sylvan Park.
- WHALAN: Parking on streets.
- PETERSON: From Hwy 16, turn into Peterson on Mill Street, go 1/2 mile to Fillmore Street, turn left to the city campground/ softball field. Parking is also available along the streets.
- RUSHFORD: From Hwy 16, turn north on Elm Street, go one block. Parking lot is at restored railroad depot.
- HOUSTON: Turn west on Plum Street off of Hwy 76, go one block to the Nature Center.

### DNR Information Center

500 Lafayette Road  
Saint Paul, MN 55155-4040  
(651) 296-6157 (metro area & outside MN)  
1-888-MINNDNR (646-6367) (MN toll free)  
TDD (651) 296-5484 (metro area)  
1-800-657-3929 (MN toll free)

### Minnesota Department of Tourism

100 Metro Square  
121 7th Place East  
Saint Paul, MN 55101-2112  
(651) 296-5029 (metro area & outside MN)  
1-888-TOURISM (MN toll free)

### Minnesota Bikeway Maps

### Minnesota Department of Transportation

395 John Ireland Boulevard  
Room 110  
Saint Paul, MN 55155  
(651) 296-2216

MnDOT produces two maps (east and west MN) that grade the quality of road shoulders suitable for biking. There is a charge for these maps. Maps not available for the Metro area.

*This information is available in alternative format upon request.*

**You can also check out this website at:  
[www.mndnr.gov/state\\_trails/index.html](http://www.mndnr.gov/state_trails/index.html)**



## Root River & Harmony - Preston Valley

Fillmore & Houston Counties



## The Root River State Trail

Discover the dramatic river carved bluffs of southeastern Minnesota! The Root River State Trail is a 42 mile long, multiple-use trail through the quaint and picturesque rural communities of Fountain, Lanesboro, Whalan, Peterson, Rushford and Houston. This asphalt trail was mainly constructed upon an abandoned railroad grade which is generally level and wheelchair accessible. The eastern segment between Vinegar Ridge and Houston is relatively more challenging than the western segment with a rather steep, half-mile segment that may not be suitable for all users.

Bicycling, in-line skating, and hiking are the main summer uses of the trail. Cross-country skiing is popular in the winter. The Fillmore and Houston county Grants-in-Aid (GIA) trail system, which provides many miles of groomed snowmobile trails in the area, intersects briefly with the Root River State Trail.

The Root River State Trail provides outstanding views of the soaring limestone bluffs of the Root River Valley. Wildlife is abundant and sightings of wild turkey, deer, hawks and turkey vultures are common. Rattlesnakes, a State Threatened and Protected Species, are occasionally found on rock outcrops, along the river bottoms, or sunning themselves on the trail. They should be left alone.

Historical buildings and rural communities along the trail provide sites of interest to trail users. They also provide many services. Campgrounds, bed and breakfast inns, restaurants, museums, outfitters and unique stores are found in many of the trail towns.