

ST CROIX RIVER (SC5)

Put-in	Norway Point Landing	Elevation Drop	68 feet
Take-out	Highway 70 Landing	Average Gradient	4.7 feet per mile
Distance	14.3 miles	Minimum Suggested Flow	4.4 feet @ Norway Point gage
Approximate Time	6-8 hours	Water Level Info / Phone	Namekagon Visitor Center @ Trego 715.635.8346
Most Difficult Rapids	Class 2+		

Paddler's Notes

104.0 Mile Norway Point Landing **River:** The landing is on the left bank in a right bend. After the landing you will paddle past a large island followed by numerous, smaller islands. **Shuttle:** On Highway F, turn north onto Norway Point Road and follow the signs to the landing. This is an excellent developed access. Trailer access ramp, trailer turnaround, parking, picnic area, group campsite.

102.2 Mile Bear Creek The creek enters from river right.

101.4 Mile Nelson's Landing **River:** The landing is on the left bank in the middle of a sharp right bend, downstream of a narrow island. **Shuttle:** On County F, turn north onto Nelson Landing Road, the landing is at the end. Trailer access ramp, trailer turnaround, parking, water, pit toilet, picnic area, campsite.

100.9 Mile Pike Rapids (Class 1) A pair of small wooded islands (*campsite 101.0 is on the larger island*) head this easy 50 yard-long rapids that ends near a sandy beach on a small point on river-right (*campsite 100.8*). As you pass the beach, the river forks around another wooded island named 'Head of the Rapids Island'. It's decision time...

100.7 Mile Head of the Forks, Head of the Rapids Island and the Kettle River Slough
Where the river forks around Head of the Rapids Island is named 'Head of the Forks'.

At Head of the Rapids Island, the main channel flows river-left and the river-right channel runs for 350 yards and forks again at the head of a much larger, 1.5 mile-long island. At this second fork, the river-left fork rejoins the main St Croix River channel while the river-right fork continues on to the Kettle River Slough and the Head of the Rapids Landing on Bear Paw Creek. This may be confusing to read, but it will make sense when you're on the river...

Basically, the Kettle River Slough parallels the main channel of the St Croix River for 4.8 miles (*paddling distance*) around two long narrow islands; the first is 1.5 miles long and the second is roughly 2.8 miles long.

Running the Kettle River Slough

The character and 'runnability' of the Kettle River Slough changes dramatically between low and high river levels. When levels are extremely low to very low, the rapids and rocky sections will be too shallow to navigate and attempting the Slough is not recommended. At low water conditions, the rapids are scrappy boulder gardens and may or may not be navigable. This range is hard to characterize as a change of just a few inches in the river level can have a big impact on whether some of the rapids are runnable or not. When water conditions are at medium (*Good*), the rapids tend to be in the class I-II range and relatively easy to navigate. At high river levels, many of the rapids will become short, high-speed wave-trains, scattered boulders, or 'wash-out' and not exist at all.

An important note, if you're paddling the Kettle River Slough during high water conditions, you should avoid the narrow channels around several of the small islands and stick to the main channel. Overhanging tree branches in the narrows and a deceptively fast current can create a dangerous situation in a hurry if you get hung up.

If you decide to paddle the Kettle River Slough you should take the first right fork as you pass the small sandy beach at campsite 100.8 (river-right).

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MAIN ST CROIX RIVER CHANNEL (*Left Fork*)

- 100.2 Mile** **Big Beef Rapids (Class 1-2)** A series of boulder gardens and rapids run through several bends. The difficulty of the rapids depends on water flow.
- 99.3 Mile** **Fox Landing** **River:** The landing is on the left bank in a small clearing. More riffles follow the landing. **Shuttle:** On County F, turn west onto Fox Landing Road, and follow the signs to the landing. Hand carry access, trailer turnaround, parking.
- 145.7 Mile** **August Olson Rapids (Class 1-2)** The rapids begin shortly before the river splits around a small island. Follow the right fork and watch out for a rocky shelf that extends out from the right bank after the island. The Kettle River Slough rejoins the main fork (*from river-right*) shortly after the ledge. The rapids and boulders continue for a few hundred yards downstream.
- 96.7 Mile** **Confluence with Kettle River Slough**

KETTLE RIVER SLOUGH (*Right Fork*) (*Description below is for the Kettle River Slough*)

The Kettle River Slough offers a very scenic, small-river float through a remote wilderness setting. Definitely a worthy paddle when river levels are adequate.

- 100.6 Mile** **Head of the Rapids Landing** **River:** The wide mouth of Bear Paw Creek is on river-right where the Kettle River Slough bends south. The landing is about 75 yards up Bear Paw Creek on the left as you look/paddle upstream. **Shuttle:** The landing is in Minnesota's St Croix State Park, you will have to inquire for directions from the park headquarters. A scenic lookout is located before the landing. Hand carry access, trailer turnaround, parking, water, group campsite.
- 99.9 Mile** **Rapids (Class 1)** Riffles and/or rapids run down the right fork (*main channel*) around a small island.
- 98.9 Mile** **Upper Kettle Rapids (Class 1-2)** A long rapids occur where the channel splits around a few narrow islands and runs through a sharp s-turn. Follow the main flow to navigate the rocks. Water levels definitely affect the rapids, in low water you may have to step out and push. In high water, the rapids become a fun wave train.
- 97.6 Mile** **Kettle River, Lower Kettle Rapids (Class 1-2)** A pair of islands in the Kettle River confluence channels the (*Kettle*) river into three mouths. A set of rapids below the second mouth may be challenging in lower flows, the river bed drops several feet in a short distance. Tightly packed boulders can make maneuvering difficult. The rapids may not be present in higher flows.
- 96.7 Mile** **End of Kettle River Slough** The channel bends left and you'll encounter more whitewater as you near the confluence. The rapids can be fast and wavy where a ledge extends out from the left bank, just before the confluence (*varies with river levels*). August Olsen Rapids (*class 1-2*) runs for several hundred yards below the junction. The river is wider and more shallow as it flows past beautiful rock formations and stands of pine and spruce. A spring fed creek tumbles through a cut on the left bank.

CONFLUENCE

- 95.4 Mile** **Seven Islands** The river widens and flows around a chain of scenic islands.
- 93.7 Mile** **Snake River** The Snake River enters from river right.
- 93.6 Mile** **Soderbeck Landing (Wisconsin)** **River:** Soderbeck Landing is on river-left, 250 yards below the Snake River confluence. Several scenic wooded islands are downstream; paddle the narrow channels on river-right, but be careful of overhanging tree branches. **Shuttle:** On County Highway F, turn west onto Ferry Road and continue to the landing. Trailer access ramp, trailer turnaround, parking, pit toilets, picnic area.

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- 93.6 Mile Snake River Landing (Minnesota)** **River:** The Snake River Landing is on river-right, 250 yards below the Snake River confluence. Soderbeck Landing is directly opposite. A popular group canoe campsite is next to the landing. This is also the north trailhead for the St Croix Trail. The Snake River Campground (*Chegwatana State Forest*) is 1.5 miles away. **Shuttle:** The landing is at the east end of St Croix Rd, 10 miles east of Pine City, MN. Trailer access ramp, trailer turnaround, parking, picnic area, group canoe campsite, pit toilets.
- 91.3 Mile Sandrock Cliffs, Campground** **River:** Canoe access to Sandrock Cliffs is down a narrow channel on river-left in a cluster of small islands. This is a popular day use area where scenic sandstone cliffs overlook the St Croix River. A hiking trail leads uphill to several overlooks and a rustic hike-in campground. This is not a designated landing on the Riverway. **Shuttle:** From Highway 70, turn north onto Soderbeck Road, turn west (*left*) onto Benson Rd, turn north (*right*) onto Tennessee Rd and continue to the end. Hand carry access, parking, rustic campsites, picnic area, pit toilets.
- 89.7 Mile Highway 70 Landing, Marshland Visitor Center** **River:** You will see the Highway 70 Bridge from far upriver. The landing is on the left bank, before the bridge. The Marshland Visitor Center sits on the opposite bank (river right). The Wisconsin DNR's St Croix Campground lies downstream of the bridge, on the left bank, below a wayside park. **Shuttle:** On Highway 70, the landing is east of the bridge (WI side) on the north side of the road. The entrance to the wayside park is on the opposite (south) side of the highway. The entrance to the St Croix Campground (Wisconsin DNR) is on River Road, behind the wayside park. The Marshland Visitor Center is on the northwest side (MN) of the bridge, overlooking the river. **Highway 70 Landing:** Trailer access ramp, trailer turnaround, parking, pit toilets.

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Driving Directions (Google Maps)



Norway Point landing



Nelson's landing



Fox Landing



Head of the Rapids Landing



Soderbeck Landing



Sandrock Cliff Landing



Highway 70 Landing

GPS - NAD83 / WGS84

Norway Point Landing	45.92402,-92.63996
Bear Creek	45.91591,-92.67286
Nelson's Landing	45.90562,-92.67710
Head of the Forks	45.90111,-92.68928

Left Fork, Main Channel

Big Beef Rapids	45.89745,-92.69693
Fox Landing	45.89055,-92.71323
August Olsen Rapids	45.86374,-92.73598
Forks Confluence	45.85814,-92.73633

Right Fork, Kettle River Slough

Head of the Rapids Landing	45.90369,-92.69557
Upper Kettle Rapids	45.89404,-92.71772
Lower Kettle Rapids	45.87527,-92.73480

Below the Kettle River Confluence

7 Islands	45.84080,-92.74945
Soderbeck Landing	45.82343,-92.76407
Sandrock Cliff Landing	45.79400,-92.76985
Highway 70 Landing	45.77417,-92.78017