















# St. Croix Falls Segment (Atlas Map 1f)

## SNAPSHOT

 **8.9 miles:** Ice Age Trail Western Terminus in Interstate State Park to River Rd.

**Note:** References to “Interstate State Park” or “Interstate SP” refer to Wisconsin’s park, while Minnesota’s park is noted as “Minnesota Interstate State Park.”

	At the Ice Age Trail Interpretive Center and other locations in Interstate State Park, the Polk County Tourist Information Center and Lions Park.		At Interstate SP (incl. Interpretive Center), Polk County Tourist Info Center, Lions Park and St. Croix National Scenic Riverway campsite.
	From the St. Croix River, Big Rock Creek and other small streams/creeks. Do not take water from Mindy Creek as the headwaters are at the site of an old landfill.		Five ColdCache sites on segment.
	Walk-in campsite  in the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.		Dogs must be leashed (8-ft max) and under control at all times.
	Interstate SP campgrounds and campgrounds  in nearby Taylors Falls, Minn. (see Area Services).		Portions overlap bike trails, ski trails, roads and sidewalks.
	At Interstate SP and Lions Park.		Interstate SP and the Wert Family Nature Center have a network of trails; Riegel Park and Ray Zillmer Park each have white-blazed loop trails.
			Portions of this segment may be suitable for those using wheelchairs or similar devices.

## TRAIL ACCESS AND PARKING

**① Ice Age Trail Western Terminus in Interstate State Park Trail Access (45.39967, -92.64956):** From St. Croix Falls at the intersection of USH-8 and STH-35, take STH-35 south for 0.6 mi. Turn right, enter Interstate State Park and follow park roads 1.5 mi to the Pothole Trail parking area. A brief walk clockwise on the Pothole Trail leads to the western terminus marker.

**Parking:** Adjacent to Trail Access.

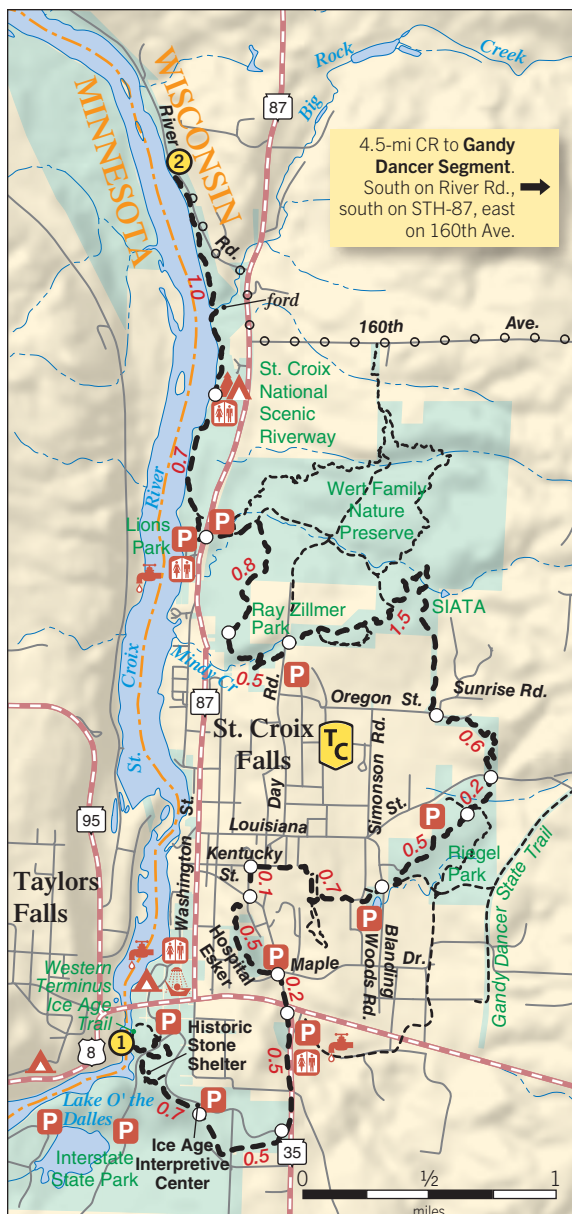
**② River Rd. Trail Access (45.45002, -92.64882):** From St. Croix Falls at the intersection of USH-8 and STH-87, take STH-87 north for 3.0 mi. At River Rd. turn left and go northwest 0.5 mi. **Parking:** Roadside.

**Additional Parking:** (i) Interpretive Center and other parking areas in Interstate State Park. (ii) Polk County Visitor Information Center at STH-35 and USH-8. (iii) East Georgia St. parking area near its intersection with Vincent St. (iv) Blanding Woods Rd. parking area. (v) Riegel Park on Louisiana St. A spur trail leads to the Ice Age Trail. (vi) Oregon St. roadside parking. (vii) Ray Zillmer Park on Day Rd. (viii) Wert Family Nature Preserve on the east side of STH-87. (ix) Lions Park on STH-87.

## THE HIKE

This segment features many geological wonders. The St. Croix River valley you pass through was formed when the area’s glacial lobe retreated. First, meltwater created glacial Lake Duluth. Then, its water drained in giant floods, cutting this valley through billion-year-old volcanic basalt bedrock.

The Interstate State Park’s Pothole Trail offers access to the Ice Age Trail’s western terminus. This loop trail, built soon after the park’s creation in 1900, is one of Wisconsin’s oldest recreational footpaths. From the Pothole Trail parking area, reach the terminus either by taking the northern (non-Ice Age Trail) portion of the loop or the southern (Ice



Age Trail) portion. The glacial potholes and Dalles of St. Croix River, highlighted on the Pothole Trail, were formed when torrential glacial meltwater scoured the riverside bedrock cliffs with rock and silt. The potholes vary in size and depth; the largest is 16 feet deep and 3 feet wide.

The official terminus marker is affixed to a large piece of basalt similar to the one at the Trail's eastern terminus in Potawatomi State Park, Door County. It rests on a basalt cliff overlooking the 100-foot-deep gorge of the Dalles of the St. Croix River. Upriver from just below the terminus marker is the famous rock face of the "Ol' Man of the Dalles." Downriver is a basalt rock protrusion that was unyielding enough to redirect the roaring outflow of the prehistoric lake and river, creating a rare 90-degree turn in the river. This protrusion was the site of the world's largest log jam in 1886. An estimated 50,000,000 board feet of pine piled up for nearly five miles while 400 men worked day and night to clear it. Finally, after six frustrating weeks, a dynamite bomb and a perfectly timed rain that raised the river's water level got the logs moving again.

From the segment's start at the western terminus, head back to the Pothole Trail parking area on the southern portion of the Pothole Trail's loop. Then cross the park road and head southwest on the park's Horizon Rock Trail. The segment ascends steeply, passing the ruins of a stone shelter near a rock-

ledge overlook. Enjoy river views as you walk toward the Ice Age Interpretive Center. Stop in for a detailed map highlighting the park's trails and facilities.

From the Interpretive Center, the segment briefly shares a portion of the Skyline Nature Trail loop before leaving it by turning left and heading east toward the park entrance road. Cross it to join a paved bike path leading north and paralleling STH-35. You'll pass the Polk County Information Center, located on the opposite side of the highway. Follow the paved path as it crosses under USH-8 and turns left on East Georgia Street.