

Clayton County Parks

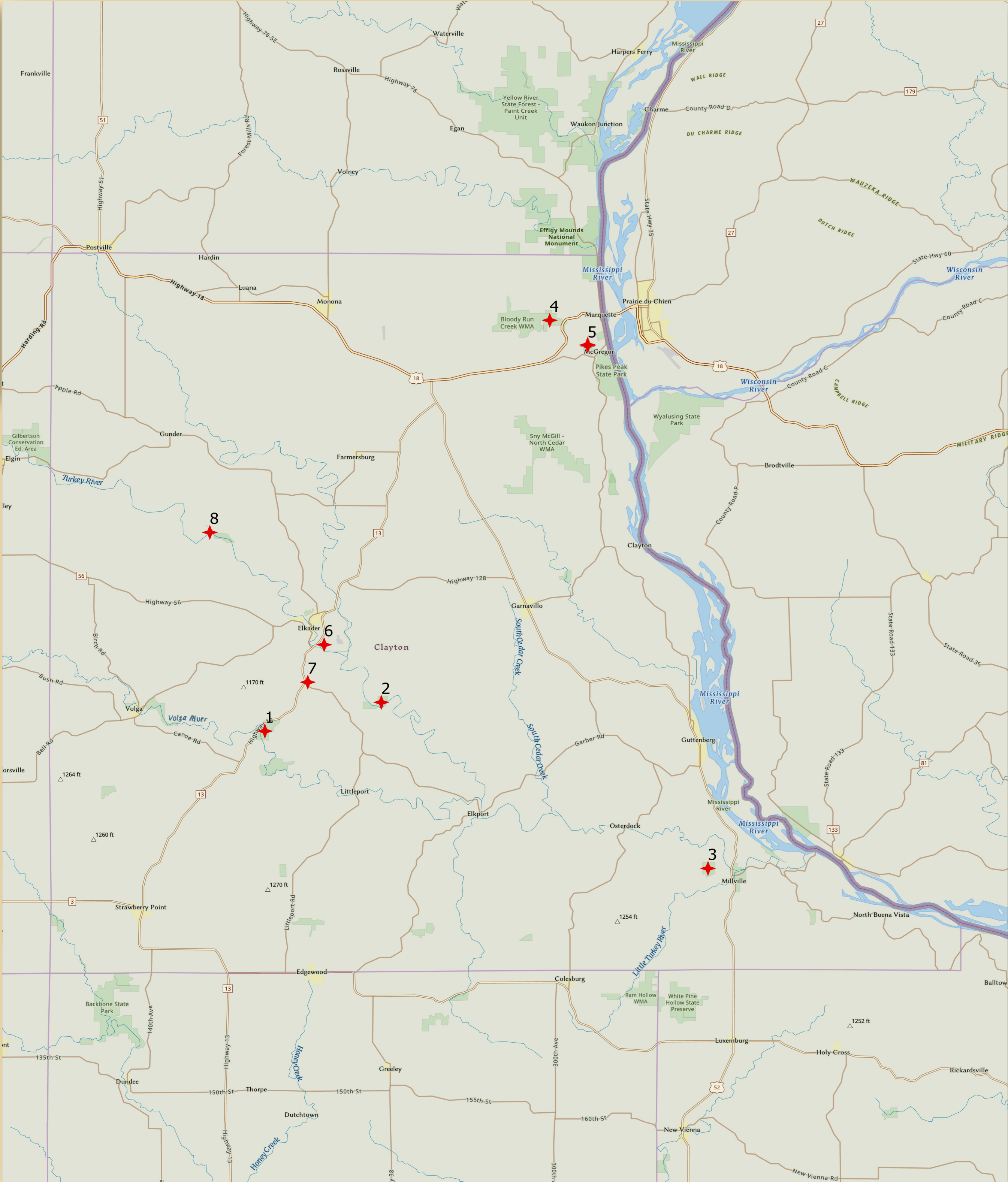
Hiking Guide

Hiking Responsibly

- Stay off of soft trails when wet
- Clayton County Parks allow foraging of only fruits, nuts, berries, mushrooms, and asparagus. Harvesting of plant parts from native species not permitted.
- Practice leave no trace—pack out trash, take only pictures, leave only footprints.
- Share the trail—hikers yield to horses and other pack animals on multi-use trails. In winter, hike adjacent to groomed or ski trails.
- Observe park regulations—all county parks open until 10:30 PM
- Wear high-visibility clothing in hunting areas

Nearby State & Federal Hiking Areas

- Pikes Peak State Park (McGregor)
- Effigy Mounds National Monument (Clayton/Allamakee)
- Backbone State Park (Strawberry Point)
- Yellow River State Forest (Harper’s Ferry)
- Volga State Recreation Area (Fayette)
- Wyalusing State Park (Bridgeport, Wisconsin)



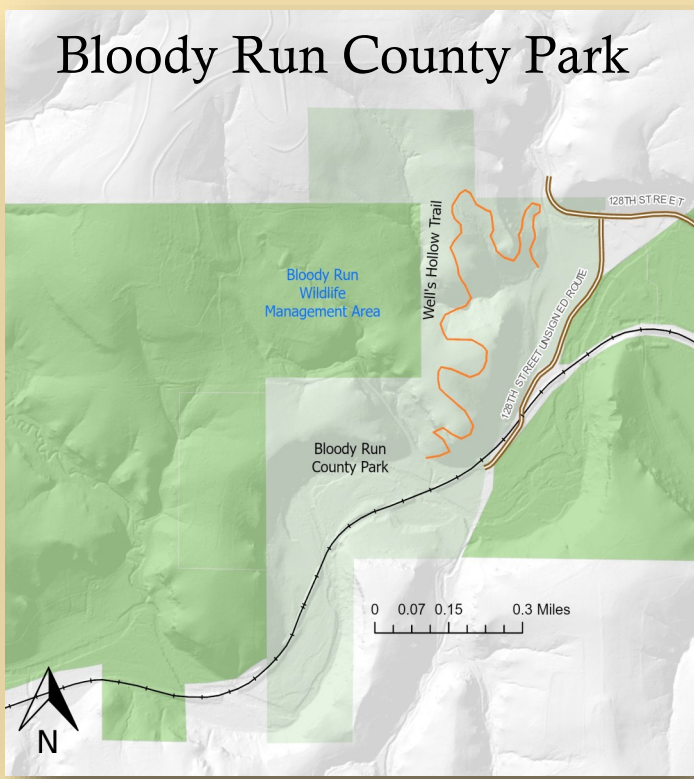
Hiking Iowa’s Paleozoic Plateau

Clayton County sits in the heart of the paleozoic plateau, part of the larger “driftless area” landform that includes portions of southeast Minnesota, southwest Wisconsin, northwest Illinois, and northeast Iowa. The landscape features rugged terrain and exposed bedrock, pockmarked by caves, sinkholes, springs, and coldwater streams. Dense forests dominate the hillsides while prairies and savannas grace the uplands. The unique topography creates a variety of microhabitats centered on America’s greatest river, making the driftless an internationally-recognized biodiversity hotspot.

- 1—Osborne Park
- 2—Motor Mill Historic Site
- 3—Becker West Wildlife Area
- 4—Bloody Run County Park
- 5—Ports of Discovery Trails
- 6—Pony Hollow Trail
- 7—Motor Mill Trail
- 8—Big Spring Campground



For more information, visit www.ClaytonCountyConservation.org

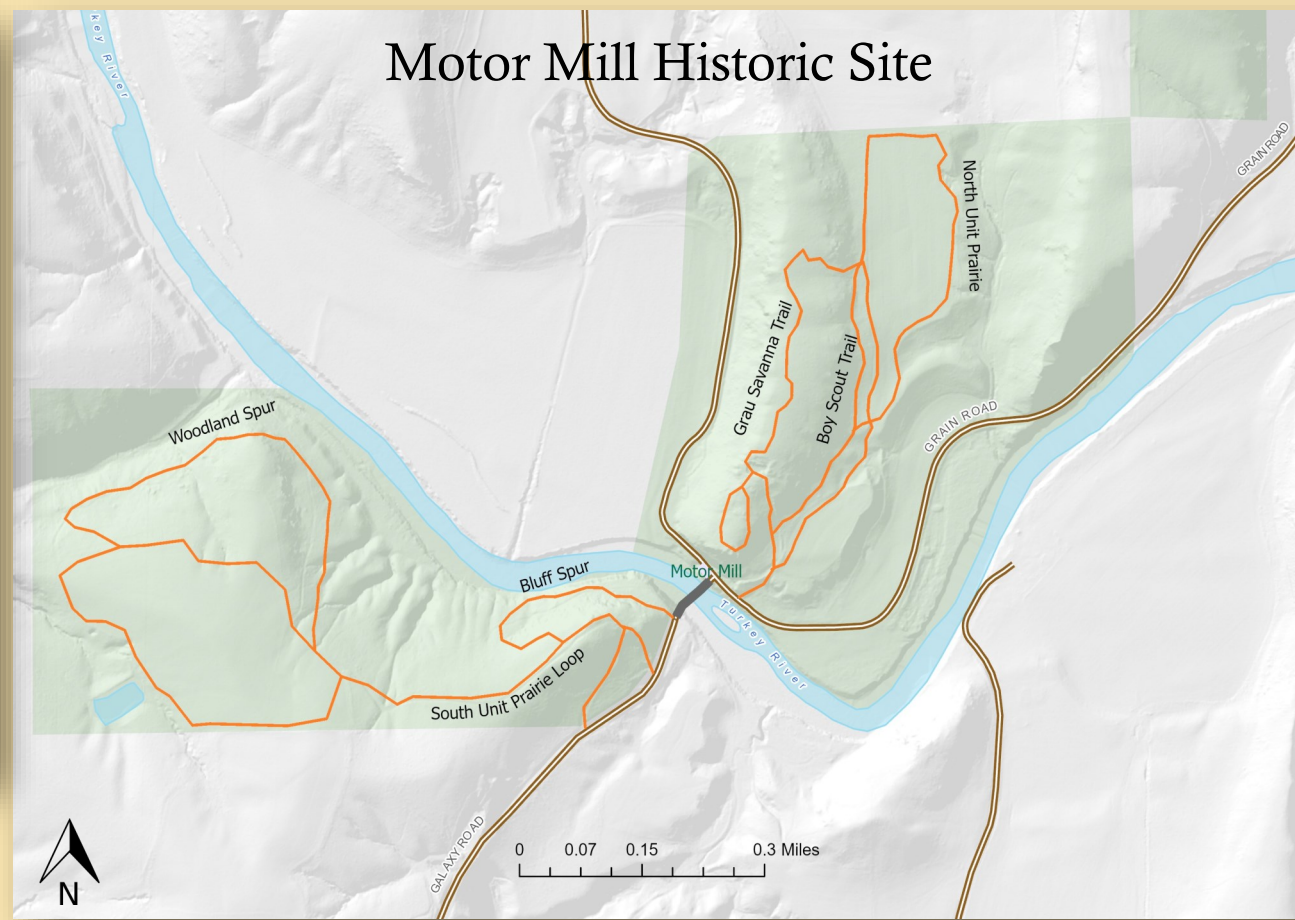


Bloody Run County Park is home to the Well's Hollow Trail, a rugged singletrack trail traversing the bluffs above Bloody Run Creek. Pulse-pounding climbs, beautiful views, remnant oak savannas, and a setting within an Audubon-certified Important Birding Area (IBA) give this trail something for everyone.

Other Amenities: Camping, Fishing, Picnic Shelter, Primitive Restrooms, Water (May-October)



Osborne Park



Take a hike on the four miles of trails surrounding the historic town site of Motor, and it's easy to see why this town held such promise when founded in the mid-1800's. The south unit offers everything from dense, cool maple-basswood-birch forest to open oak woodland and beautifully restored prairie. The north unit's Grau Savanna Trail mixes natural and cultural history, passing the quarry that built the town of Motor and featuring interpretive signage on the park's flora and fauna.

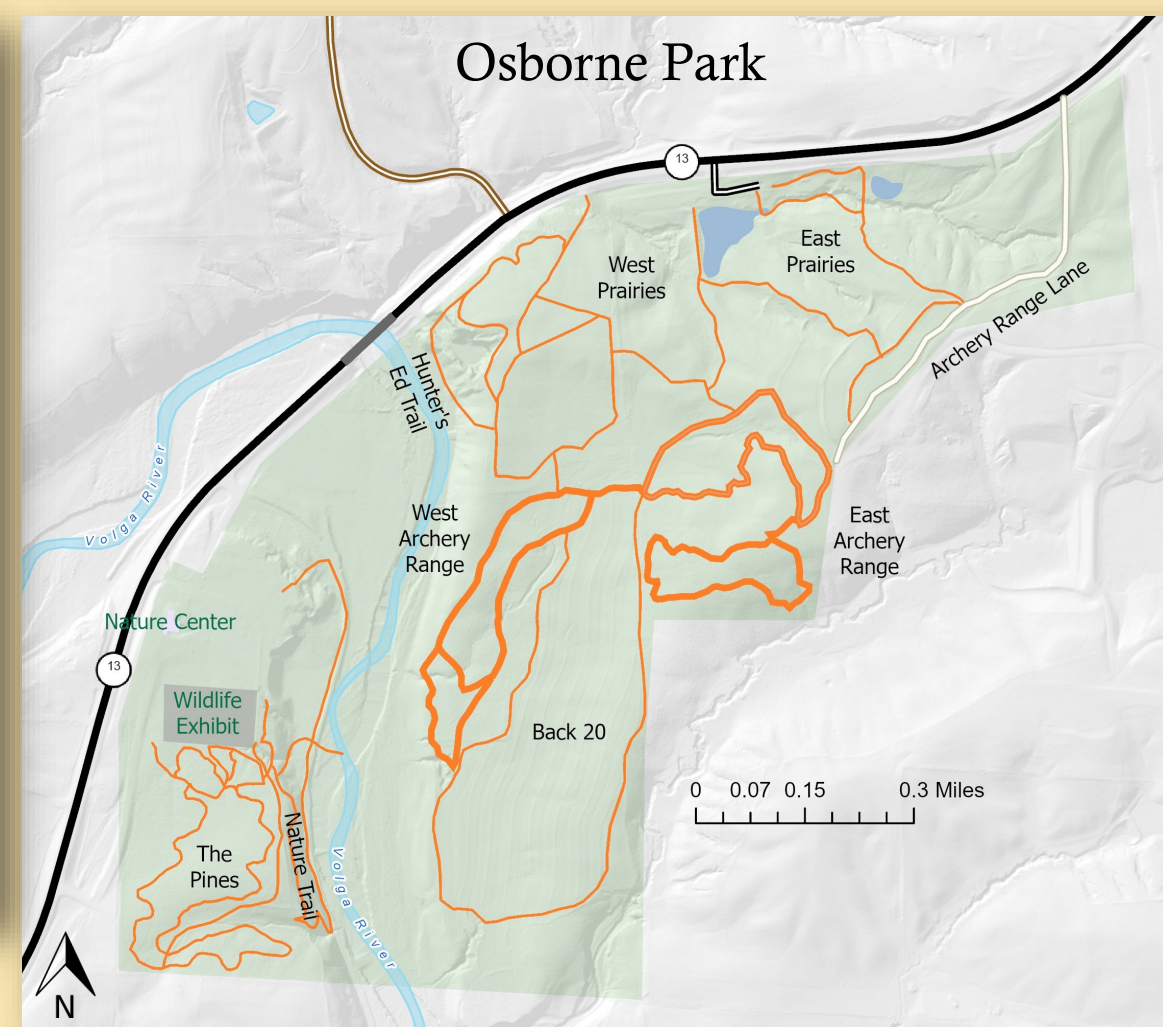
Other Amenities: Camping, Fishing, Water Trail Access, Primitive Restrooms, Water (May-October), Horseback Riding (south unit), Hunting (south unit; bow only)



Bloody Run County Park



Pony Hollow Trail

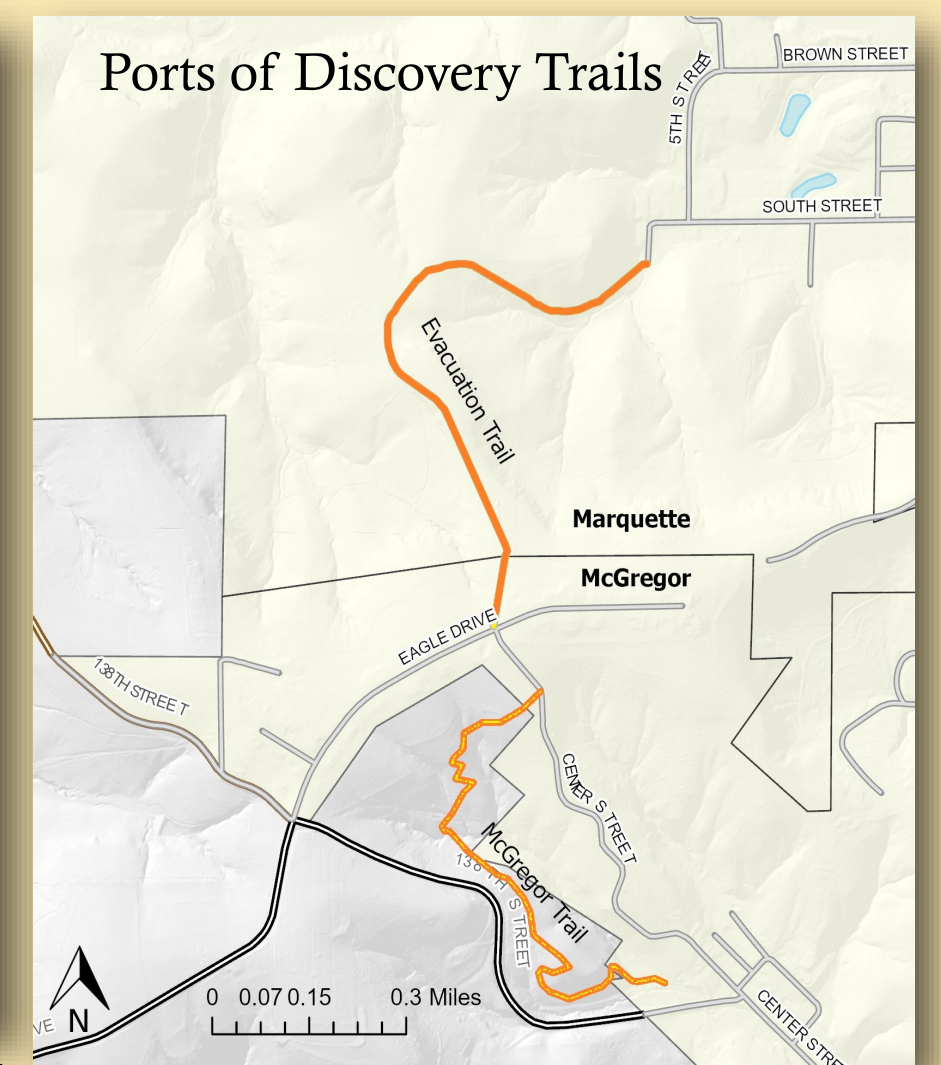


Osborne Park, headquarters of the Clayton County Conservation Board, boasts just over six miles of hiking trails, ranging from the minimum-maintenance Hunter's Ed Trail to the wide and well-groomed trails through the prairies, the pines, and along the Volga River. Trail users can find exceptional solitude on the trails at Osborne, with winter activities including cross-country ski trails or snowshoeing. Snowshoes rentals are available at the nature center.

Other Amenities: Nature Center, Wildlife Exhibit, Restrooms, Fishing, Water Trail Access, Picnic Shelters, Archery, Disc Golf



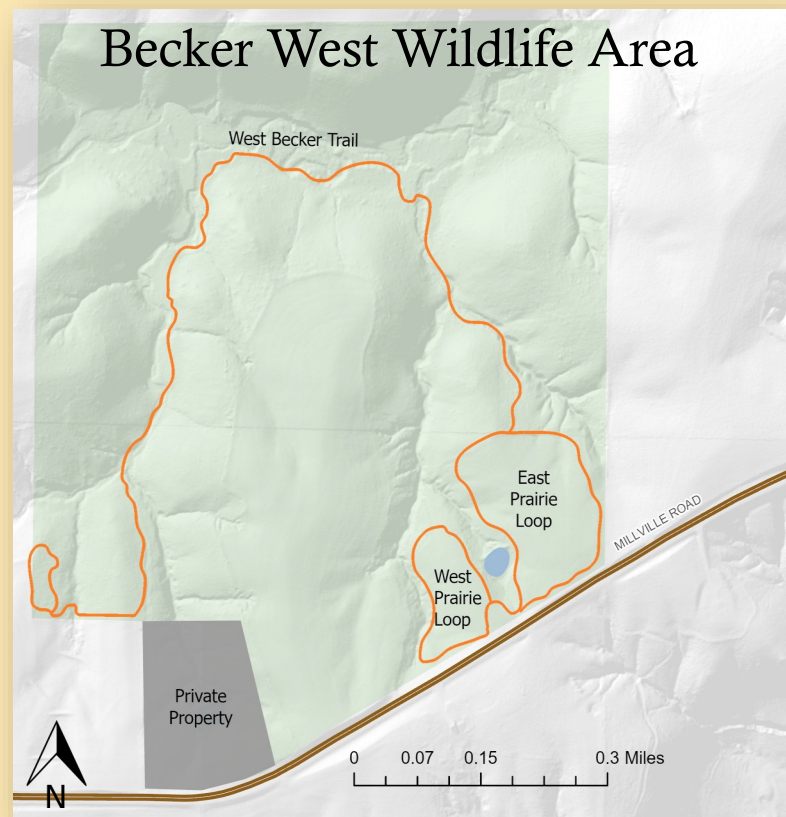
Becker West Wildlife Area



Two trails connect the cities of Marquette and McGregor. The Evacuation Trail, a gravel multi-use path climbs from the Marquette bench to Eagle Drive. The McGregor Trail, a primitive singletrack trail, descends through a wooded conservation easement into the town of McGregor. Both trails have steep grades, ascending more than 200 feet in less than a mile.

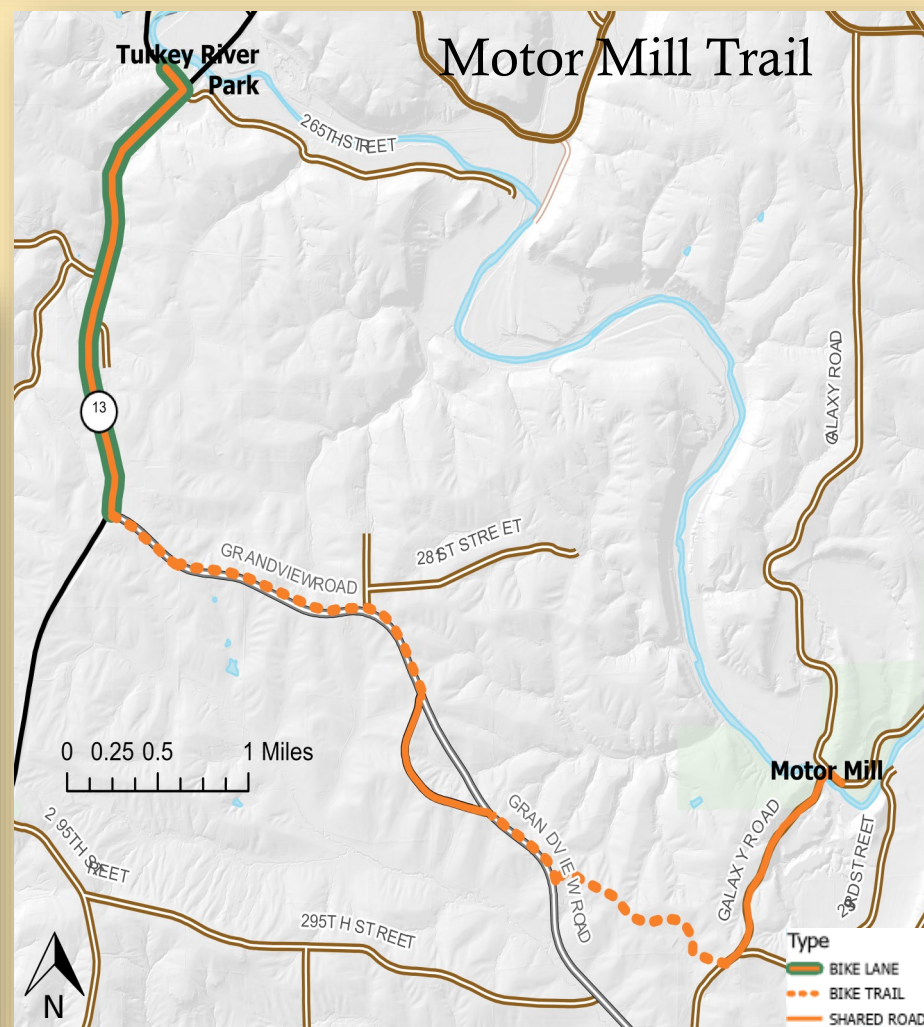


Motor Mill Historic Site



The Becker West Wildlife Area offers a wonderful diversity of habitats. Starting in the prairies on the east end, a primitive hiking trail travels 1.25 miles along a "disappearing stream," intermittent flows in and out of the valley's fractured limestone. A small loop takes users through a restored oak woodland on the west end.

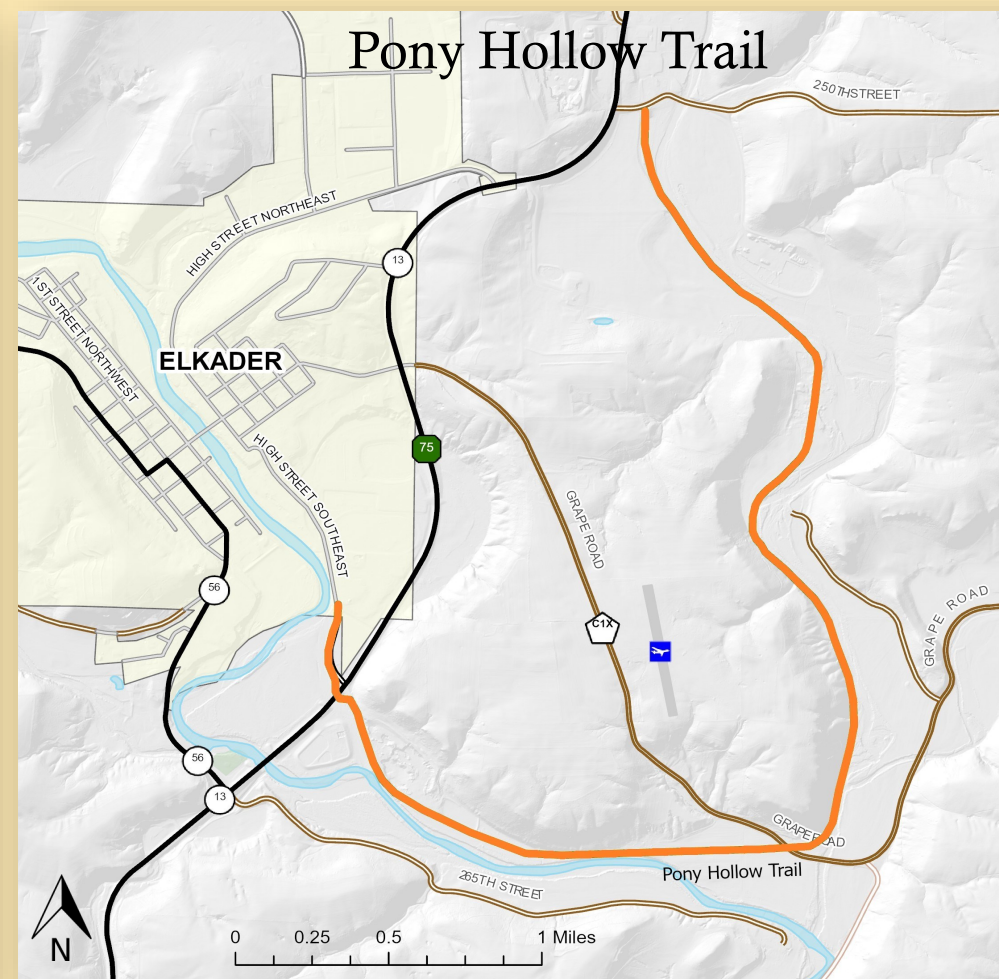
Other Amenities: Hunting



The Motor Mill Trail, completed in 2021, takes users on the scenic journey from Elkader to Motor Mill. The segments along Grandview Road allow users to take in the views along the River Bluffs Scenic Byway separate from traffic.

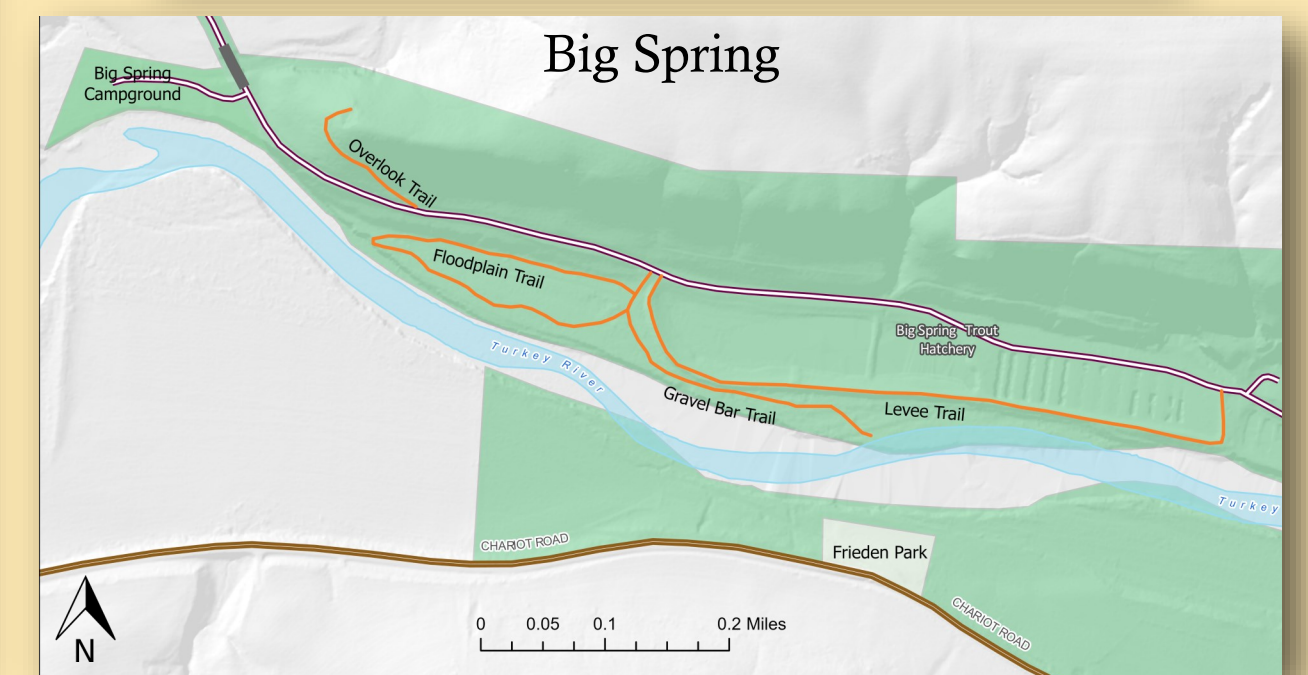
Grandview to Galaxy connection closed during hunting seasons

Other Amenities: Biking, Horseback Riding, Snowmobiling, Restrooms at Turkey River Park (May-October) and Motor Mill (All year), Water at Motor Mill (May-October)



The Pony Hollow Trail rambles along a former railroad bed, parallel to the Turkey River and Roberts Creek. The flat, lime-chip surface trail offers easy walking among the quiet serenity of mature forest and burbling streams. The trail has excellent birdwatching opportunities, with bald eagles and kingfishers appearing regularly along the riparian corridor. Beavers and muskrats ply the waterways, and interpretive signage helps to put the area's natural and cultural history into clear focus.

Other Amenities: Biking, Horseback Riding,, Snowmobiling, Restrooms, Water (May-October; Elkader City Park)



The Big Spring Campground provides a gateway to the larger Big Spring Trout Hatchery grounds and fishing access, and Wildlife Management Area, managed by the Iowa DNR. Several small hiking trails provide opportunities for an immersion into the amazing habitat surrounding Iowa's largest cold water spring. The Overlook Trail provides stunning views of the valley below, while the Gravel Bar and Floodplain Trails connect hikers with the riparian forest along the banks of the Turkey River.

Other Amenities: Camping, Primitive Restrooms (May-October), Fishing, Water Trail Access, Hunting (DNR ground only), ATV/UTV Trails