



• TRAIL TOWNS •

of the Huron River Water Trail

The Huron River Water Trail is a 104-mile inland paddling trail connecting people to the river's natural environment, its history, and the communities it touches in Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

• TRAIL TOWN •



**Huron River
WATER TRAIL**

**Milford, Dexter,
Ann Arbor,
Ypsilanti,
Flat Rock...**
these Trail Towns
welcome you!
Learn more inside.



Plan your trip at huronriverwatertrail.org

Lake Erie

Milford

HURON RIVER MILES 100–98, PADDLER'S COMPANION MAPS 2–3

Visitor Information

Milford Downtown Development Authority, meetmeinmilford.com

Village of Milford, villageofmilford.com

MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

Good to Know Milford, a village of 6,300 is home to River Miles 100 to 98 on the Huron River Water Trail and the first Trail Town to greet trail users paddling through to Lake Erie for the 104-mile journey. Drop the boats in upstream at Proud Lake State Recreation Area and enjoy the seemingly unspoiled landscape with clear waters inhabited by scores of bird species and other wildlife on the 4.5 mile trip to Milford. Or launch your journey at Milford's Central Park, with its ample parking and a picnic area. Then head downstream to Kensington Metropark, Island Lake State Recreation Area or Huron Meadows Metropark.



Highlights From the landing or launch at Central Park it's a short walk to downtown Milford where casual restaurants, ice cream shops, and specialty stores await trail users. An even shorter walk across Main Street to the new River's Edge Brewery is in order for craft beer lovers.

Milford has extensive equestrian, cycling, and hiking trails weaving through and around the Village. The Milford Trail links downtown to miles of scenic open space and panoramic views of the Huron River valley. It offers the perfect arrangement for a paddle and pedal: float the Huron River and explore the ribbon of regional parks surrounding the village by bike.

Trail Town Places to Go:

- **Acorn Farm** (retail/kitchen/homegoods)
- **The Burger Joint**
- **For Feets Sake** (shoes)
- **Milford House** (bar and grill/ice cream)
- **Palate** (restaurant)
- **River's Edge Brewing Co** (tap room/restaurant)
- **Smoke Street BBQ**
- **Trail's Edge Cyclery** (bikes/rentals)

Events Trail-oriented events include guided day trips, and sunset and moonlight paddles offered by the Huron River Watershed Council and two outfitters: **Heavner Canoe and Kayak Rental** and **Village Canoe Rental**. Heavner's is a family-owned 50-year old business that also features educational programs for all ages to explore and enjoy the outdoors. Located closer to town on Milford's east side is Village, which rents canoes and kayaks.

Summertime brings the farmers market, Milford's famous sidewalk sales, the Milford Memories art festival, and the Milford Classic Car Show. **La Fontaine Family Theater in Central Park** features a Thursday evening Summer Concert Series, and Center Street Park hosts bands and fine arts the fourth Friday of each month. History buffs can visit the Milford Historical Society Museum May through November.

History Milford's charismatic, traditional downtown, established just before the turn of the century, but renovated to an Old World style, is on the National Register of Historic Places. The historic core of the village is located on both sides of a bend of the Huron River at the point where Pettibone Creek flows into the Huron. Both river and creek furnished water power to early settlers. The land surrounding the Village was primarily farmland that is now large residential lots and subdivisions, with one-third of the township outside the village being parkland or the General Motors Proving Ground.



LESLIE BANKS



MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL LEAGUE



Dexter

HURON RIVER MILES 63–61,
PADDLER'S COMPANION MAPS 12–13

Visitor Information

Ypsilanti Visitors and Convention Bureau,
visitypsinow.com/dexter

Dexter, dextermi.gov



MARC AKEMANN

Good to Know Dexter is situated where Mill Creek flows into the Huron River at river mile 63, and provides an ideal launching point for paddlers seeking to use the Huron River Water Trail. It is a hub for outdoor pursuits that include fishing, biking, running, and walking, in addition to paddling. Its location between Hudson Mills and Delhi Metroparks, along the Border-to-Border Trail, and close to the Pinckney-Waterloo State Recreation Areas, places the trail user in the middle of it all.

Two launches at Mill Creek Park near the Dexter District Library offer easy access with nearby parking. From the lower launch, paddlers will enjoy a half mile of flowing river down Mill Creek into the Huron. Watch out for a low bridge at the library or reported log jams downstream. By taking the upper launch, experienced kayakers can shoot the rapids at the former site of the Mill Creek dam (check conditions carefully to avoid scraping your boat on the rocks or for holes during high water).

Highlights Art along Mill Creek at the park and the community's store fronts and streetscapes create a sense of place. Signage and access points provide a welcoming atmosphere for trail users. Restored habitat and water quality features provide for a cleaner and healthier creek, and the whitewater designation on the American Canoe Association website draws paddlers from Ohio, Indiana, and throughout Michigan.

On or near Main Street, shop at galleries and home goods stores, dine at local pubs and restaurants and outdoor cafés or enjoy beer, coffee, ice cream, or bakery treats at small specialty establishments. Trail users have ready access to banking,

a grocery store, and a local fly fishing outfitter within a short walk of Mill Creek and the Water Trail. The Dexter Cider Mill, right on the Huron near River Mile 63, is open from late August to mid-November.

Events Dexter's cultural events include Dexter Daze and the Paint Dexter Plein Air Festival in August, a Summer Music Series on Fridays and the Farmer's Market on Tuesdays and Saturdays May through October.

Trail Town Places to Go:

- **Bailiwicks Outdoors** (retail)
- **Beer Grotto** (retail/tasting/bar)
- **Dairy Queen**
- **The Dexter Bakery**
- **The Dexter Cider Mill** (cider/fruit/treats)
- **Dexter's Pub** (bar/restaurant)
- **Joe and Rosie's** (coffee/sandwiches)
- **Hackney Ace Hardware**

History and Overview Dexter was first settled in 1824, 13 years before Michigan became a state, when land speculator Samuel L. Dexter purchased a large tract of land and originated the village. It was known as the "Mill Creek Settlement" until the village was platted in 1830 and the name was officially changed to Dexter.

The removal of the Mill Pond Dam in 2008 and subsequent restoration of Mill Creek catalyzed the historic and quaint village to expand its economic and community development opportunities based on the waterway flowing through town. Residents, businesses, and visitors are benefitting from the changes that make Dexter more walkable, more accessible, and give a sense of place to this community on Mill Creek.



MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

Ann Arbor

HURON RIVER MILES 53-46, PADDLER'S COMPANION MAPS 15-17

Visitor Information

Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation, a2gov.org/parks

Ann Arbor Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, visitannarbor.org

Good to Know River Miles 53 to 46 flow through the City of Ann Arbor, which is the largest of the Trail Towns and home to over 100,000 residents and the University of Michigan. This scenic section of the Water Trail offers flat-water ponds to flowing river and includes a series of manmade drops and pools called the Cascades. On weekends, look out for kayaks, canoes, standup paddle boards, rafts, tubes, racing sculls, row boats, and even paddle boats all on a single trip. Here, Michigan's busiest canoe livery provides high-quality rental service as well as access for trail users with their own equipment. Scenic riverside parks line the trail

with a few convenient spots to get out and find food. Ann Arbor's main business districts for dining, entertainment and shopping require a walk of 0.5 to 1.0 mile.



MONSON

in the quiet natural setting of a 22-acre linear park. Argo to Gallup is the Huron River's most popular trip, with a paddle down the drops and pools of the Cascades by kayak or raft (canoes are launched downstream) and a nice current through beautiful scenery. Stop at Island Park for a picnic lunch. Van transportation upriver provided.

Highlights Located at the Argo Cascades, the **Argo Nature Area and Livery** features canoe, one-person kayak, two-person kayak, five-person raft, tube and stand up paddleboard rentals

Gallup Park and Livery offers canoe, one-person kayak, two-person kayak, paddleboat, rowboat rentals, and river-themed programs. This award-winning park includes a 3.25-mile asphalt trail, fishing, public boat launch, playgrounds, picnic areas and pavilions, nature areas, and indoor rental space year-round. The Gallup Coffee Shop overlooking the river offers concessions, ice cream and baked goods.

Parks with public launches: Barton, Bandemer, Argo, Island, Gallup (2).

Scenic parks: Broadway, Riverside, Fuller, Nichols Arboretum, Parker Mill.

Business districts and restaurants within walking distance of the Argo Nature Area and Livery

- **Lower Town** (0.4 miles)
- **Northside Grill** (breakfast/lunch) (0.4 miles)
- **Kerrytown** (restaurants/retail) (0.7 miles)
- **Zingerman's Deli** (0.7 miles)
- **Main Street** (1.1 miles)
- **State Street** (1.3 miles)
- **Casey's Tavern** (bar/restaurant) (0.7 miles)

Events The City of Ann Arbor hosts many of the recreation-based programs on the Water Trail, with three transportation-provided trips ranging in length from 1.5 to 4 hours leaving from either the Argo or Gallup Liveries. Bird walks, moonlight paddles, Halloween Trick or Treat, summer camps for kids, and adventure programs for preschoolers round out the offering. Ann Arbor's main riverside outdoor festival is Huron River Day at Gallup Park in July. The Huron River Watershed Council also offers guided paddle trips and fly fishing lessons spring through fall.

History In 1823, a group of pioneers passed through a fur trading post known as Detroit and pushed on along the banks of the Huron River in search of a location for a new frontier community. Among the settlers was a Virginian named John Allen and fellow pioneer Elisha Rumsey. Some 40 miles west of Detroit, in the slopes that bounded the Huron River, the pioneers established their settlement. By May of 1824, the name "Ann Arbor" had been chosen for the town. Both Rumsey and Allen's wives were named Ann, and the word "arbor" means "a leafy, shady recess formed by tree branches and shrubs," which perfectly describes the landscape of the area in 1824. In 1837 the University of Michigan moved from Detroit to Ann Arbor, setting the stage for the community's growth into one of Michigan's largest cities.



Ypsilanti

HURON RIVER MILES 42-35, PADDLER'S COMPANION MAPS 18-20

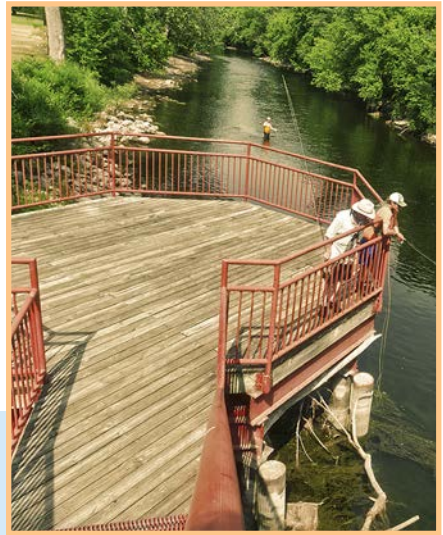
Visitor Information

Downtown Development Authority,
ypsilantidda.org

Ypsilanti Area Convention & Visitors Bureau,
visitypsinow.com

Downtown Association of Ypsilanti,
daypsi.com

Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation
Commission, parks.ewashtenaw.org



DOUG COOMBE

Good to Know The City of Ypsilanti (River Miles 42 to 39) is a small city of 20,000 residents and Eastern Michigan University, with a hip urban scene and a rich automotive heritage. This trail section winds through a serene corridor of lush urban parks and the flat waters of Ypsilanti Township's Ford Lake (River Miles 39 through 35) where paddlers can experience the feel of a northern Michigan lake created by the Ford Lake Dam.

Highlights Ypsilanti is brimming with unique shops, delicious dining, and vibrant entertainment venues, and its two downtown districts, Downtown and Depot Town, are rich in history, culture, and beautifully preserved architecture. Riverside Park near River Mile 40 (a short walk to Downtown and Depot Town) is a popular launch and landing. Downstream at Ford Lake are several parks with access points including **Ford Lake Park** (boat ramp, launch, restrooms, picnic shelters, and recreational facilities) and **Lakeside Park** (boat house, restrooms, picnic shelter, fishing docks and lookouts).

Downtown:

- **Beezy's Cafe** (coffee/breakfast/lunch)
- **B-24s** (coffee/tea/desserts)
- **Haab's Restaurant**
- **The Mix** (women's fashion)
- **Puffer Reds** (shoes/clothing)
- **Red Rock Downtown Barbecue** (bar/restaurant)
- **The Rocket Candy & Novelties** (retail)

For visitors seeking more land-based adventure, this section of the Water Trail provides direct access to Washtenaw County's **Border-to-Border Trail**, a shared-use hike and bike path stretching across the county. **Rolling Hills County Park** with its popular water park, disc golf course, nature trails, fishing pond, picnic areas and playground is a short drive away.

Events Water Trail-oriented events offer four seasons of outdoor activity with themed walking tours, group paddles, and fly fishing instruction from Schultz Outfitters in Depot Town. Outdoor festivals at Riverside and Frog Island parks are a regional draw and include the Heritage Festival, Mittenfest, Michigan Summer Beer Festival, Orphan Car Show, and more.



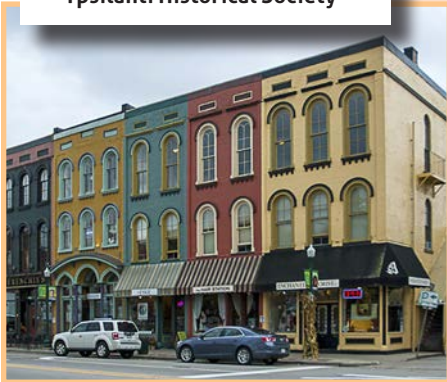
STEPHEN BROWN

History Ypsilanti is a historic community figuring prominently in the 19th and early 20th century industries of railroad, air, and auto transportation. Many stunning buildings show this rich history. History buffs will enjoy the Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Museum, the Michigan Firehouse Museum, the Ypsilanti Historical Museum, and the Ford Lake Dam and Powerhouse, both of which are National Historic Landmarks.

Depot Town:

- **Aubree's Pizzeria & Grill**
- **Café Ollie** (coffee/sandwiches)
- **The Eyrie** (artisan-made gifts)
- **Hudson Automotive Museum**
- **Michigan Firehouse Museum**
- **Schultz Outfitters** (retail)
- **Sidetrack Bar and Grill**
- **Ypsilanti Historical Society**

The vision for Ypsilanti's riverfront came from the landscape architecture firm of the Olmsted Brothers, led by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. He saw the Huron River as a necklace of water with vibrant green spaces dangling from it like gems. The river also provides access to important historical sites related to the auto industry and its labor movement. Automotive Heritage District destinations feature interpretive signage to help visitors learn the story of the auto companies, preserving an important era in American history.



MARY CHRISTIANSON



Flat Rock

HURON RIVER MILES 10–6, PADDLER'S COMPANION MAPS 26–27

Visitor Information

Flat Rock Downtown Development Authority, downtownflatrock.com

City of Flat Rock, flatrockmi.org

Flat Rock Community Center, flatrockrec.org

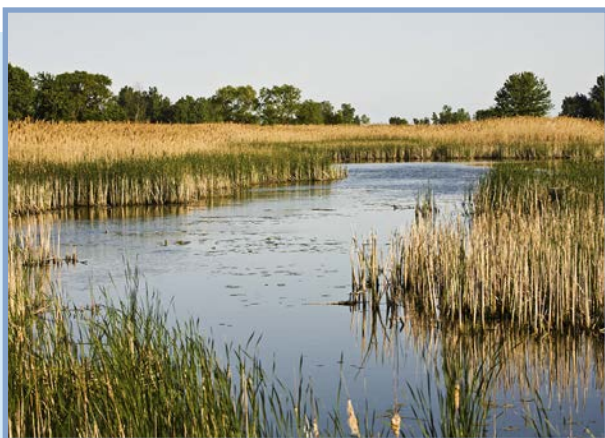
Good to Know The City of Flat Rock, River Miles 10–6, is situated at a fortuitous junction of land and water trails, and near the Hull's Trace Unit of the River Raisin National Battlefield Park.

The final nine miles of the Water Trail provide unimpeded flowing river conditions from Flat Rock all the way to Lake Erie. Parkland

gives this section a forested, natural feel. At River Mile 0, the Water Trail connects to the Detroit River Water Trail, open water paddling on Lake Erie, and the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. The unique landscape of this part of the river and the rich cultural history, including the Battle of 1812 corduroy road—a River Raisin Battlefield National Park site—add to the attraction.

Paddling into Flat Rock presents a challenge. To portage the Flat Rock Dam, paddlers must contact Flat Rock Metal by phone to gain entry through a gated fence owned by the company.

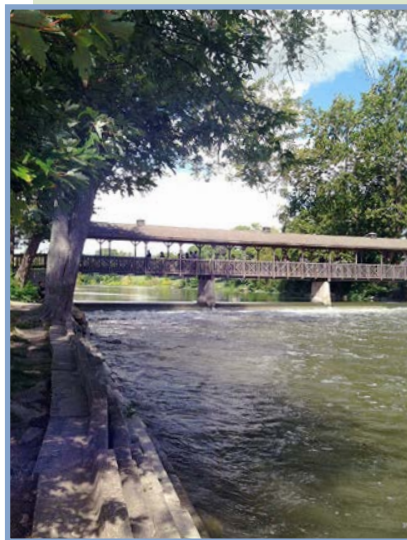
Highlights Flat Rock is an ideal launching point for a trip downstream to Lake Erie and Pointe Mouillée. At HuRoc Park, street parking and a quaint covered pedestrian



JMP PHOTOGRAPHY

Trail Town Places to Go:

- **Dairy Queen**
- **Kate's Kitchen** (breakfast/brunch)
- **Michael's on the River** (bar/restaurant)
- **The ROC Restaurant & Wine Bar**
- **Simpler Times Downtown General Store** (coffee/ice cream/specialty grocery)



HRWC

bridge provide access to a fast water launch just downstream of the bridge. For a more protected and slower entry to the river, head to the boat launch at Seneca Street, east of Telegraph Road.

HuRoc Park is a gateway into the downtown business district. Riverside amenities such as picnic tables, bathrooms, drinking fountains, and information kiosks provide a welcoming atmosphere for users of the Greenways and the Water Trail. It is a short walk from the park to downtown restaurants and shopping and places for coffee or ice cream.

Labo Park, downstream at River Mile 4 is a convenient stopping point, about halfway between Flat Rock and Lake Erie. Paddlers will find a launch, restrooms, and a picnic area.

Events CountryBlast, Cruzin' HuRoc Park, and Flat Rock Riverfest, a 3-day festival held annually in September.

History Pristine landscape, including towering forests and the clean, clear Huron River, drew early pioneers to the area and the riches the land offered encouraged settlers to stay. American Indians established villages along the Huron's banks dating back to the 1700s.

Michael Vreelandt is considered to be the founder of the settlement that became Flat Rock with his five sons and their families in 1823. The family built the first grain and lumber mills in what was the Village of Vreelandt which became Smooth Rock before becoming known as Flat Rock in 1838.

Henry Ford, who was attracted to the waterpower of the Huron River, built a dam as a power plant and established the Ford Motor Company Lamp Factory that assembled headlights from 1923 to 1950. The dam includes a fish ladder built in 1997 that allows fish to go further upstream to spawn.



Today Flat Rock is the recreational hub among Downriver communities offering the Water Trail, beautiful parks, the Downriver Linked Greenways bike trails, extraordinary baseball facilities and a community center, all while maintaining a unique, small town feel.

A river renaissance is taking place in the cities and towns along the Huron River. Through RiverUp!, river corridor revitalization is underway with the goal of making the Huron River the new "Main Street" where residents and tourists recreate, live, gather, commute, and do business. Learn more at hrwc.org.

RiverUp!

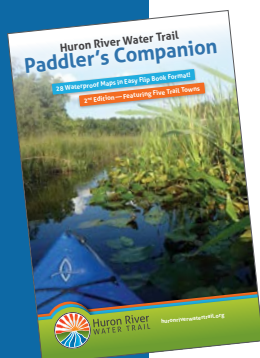
At the heart of it all are cities and towns that have made a commitment to the Huron River Water Trail, creating fun destinations where trail users



Huron
River
Watershed
Council

can venture off the trail to enjoy the scenery, services, heritage, and character of a community. Learn more about the Huron River Water Trail, Trail Towns or plan your trip at huronriverwatertrail.org.

The Huron River Water Trail is recognized as a **National Water Trail**. The National Water Trails System is a distinctive national network of exemplary water trails that are cooperatively supported and sustained. It is an interagency collaborative effort administered by the National Park Service. Go to nps.gov/watertrails.



Trail Towns information inside is excerpted from the Paddler's Companion, a waterproof spiral-bound set of 28 maps for the entire Huron River Water Trail. Get it at huronriverwatertrail.org/store.



Huron River
WATER TRAIL