

Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge  
 Headquarters  
 51 East Fourth Street, Room 101  
 Winona, MN 55987 (507/452 4232)

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/UpperMississippiRiver>  
 Email: [UpperMississippiRiver@fws.gov](mailto:UpperMississippiRiver@fws.gov)  
 507/452 4232

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
 1 800/344 WILD  
<http://www.fws.gov/>

People with hearing impairments may contact the refuge through the Federal Relay Number at 1 800/877 8339.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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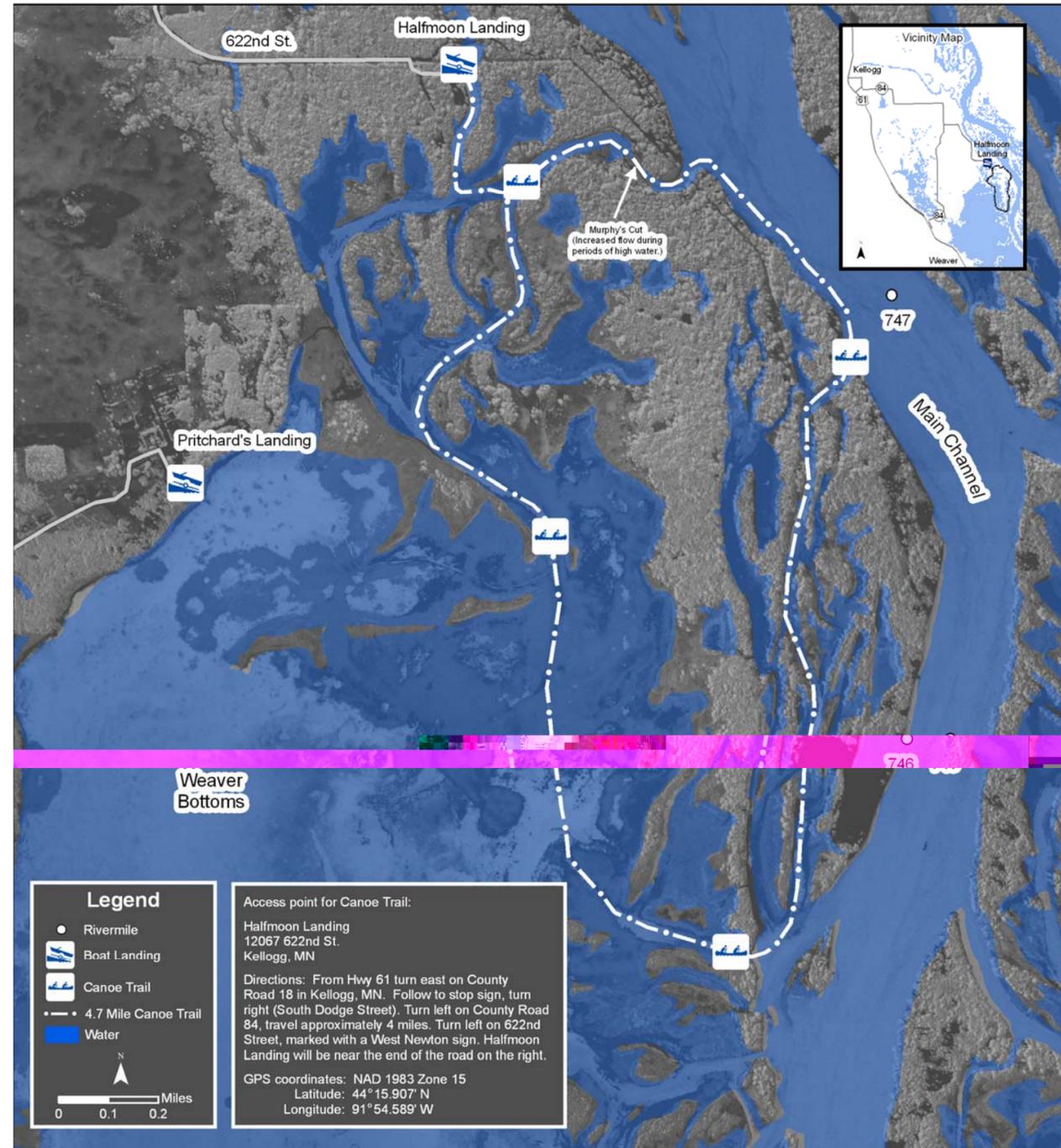
*Canoe Trails*  
 Pools 5, 5A, 7  
 Halfmoon, Verchota, Long Lake

Winona District (Pools 4-6)  
 51 East Fourth Street, Room 203  
 Winona, MN 55987 (507/454 7351)

La Crosse District (Pools 7-8)  
 555 Lester Avenue  
 Onalaska, WI 54650 (608/783 8405)

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
 La Crosse Service Center  
 3550 Mormon Coulee Road  
 La Crosse, WI 54601 (608/785 9000)

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## Welcome to the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge

Established in 1924, "Upper Miss" Refuge consists of 240,000 acres and winds over 260 miles through beautiful bluff country. Diverse habitats such as marshes, wooded islands, bottomland forests and upland prairies are home to countless numbers of fish and wildlife. Paddle the canoe trails to enjoy an intimate look at this river refuge.

### About the Canoe Routes

Come prepared. Conveniences such as restrooms, water and first aid are not available at landings.

**Halfmoon Landing** - This 4.7 mile easy trail is posted for clockwise travel. During high water or when dense vegetation is present this trail is more challenging. Murphy's Cut may be impassable due to strong currents during high water. Be aware of the current and river traffic where the trail joins the main channel.

**Long Lake Landing** - This 4.5 mile easy trail is posted for counter-clockwise travel. During the summer months aquatic plant beds can make paddling difficult near the shore in Big Marsh requiring adjustments to deeper water. Expect faster current near the main channel.

**Verchota Landing** - This 11.2 mile challenging trail is posted for counter-clockwise travel. Best for stronger, experienced paddlers, there is a lot of upstream paddling and the current can be strong. During low water, rock obstructions are exposed and you may need to portage. You may wish to enter and explore the slow/no wake and electric motor areas.

### Paddling on the Mississippi River

Always wear a properly fitted personal flotation device (PFD).

Tell someone where you will put in, take out, and your return time.

Thunderstorms can develop quickly. Check the weather forecast before heading onto the water. If a storm approaches, get off the water.

There are no restrictions to where canoes can go on Mississippi River backwaters. If you feel comfortable, explore off trail.

Be aware of river traffic. Motorboats and barges can throw large waves which can swamp a canoe.

Some areas along canoe trails are popular with hunters. Be extra cautious when canoeing during hunting seasons.

Make yourself visible - wear bright colors, put reflective tape on your paddle or boat, carry a light and whistle.

The bluffs can "tunnel" the wind making it stronger and causing more waves, especially in open areas.

Be aware of currents. If you begin moving too fast, paddle toward the shore.

Backwaters can be dangerous if the water is high and the current is flowing through log jams, snags and low hanging branches.

Scout ahead for possible hazards and portage areas.

See *Public Use Regulations* brochure for more information.

