Welcome to our waterways.

Elkhart County’s rivers, lakes, and streams provide a variety of opportunities for canoeing and kayaking. Whether you’re a novice or advanced paddler, there’s something here for you.

This brochure does not provide an exhaustive list of the paddling opportunities available in Elkhart County – here, we’re just sharing a few of our favorites.

Get your gear.

Rent or purchase a canoe locally at the following locations:

- Fluid Fun Canoe and Kayak Sales – 609 N Division St, Bristol. (574)848-4279
- City of Goshen Parks: Elkhart River Canoe Trip – 607 W Plymouth Ave, Goshen. (574)534-2901
- City of Goshen Parks: Fidler Pond boat rentals – 1424 Lincolnway East, Goshen. (574)534-2901
- City of Elkhart Parks: Ideal Beach boat rentals – 52256 Ideal Beach Rd, Elkhart. (574)262-1769

And don’t forget to pack:

- A Personal Floatation Device (PFD)
- Appropriate clothing, including a hat and sturdy footwear
- Sunscreen and insect repellent
- A dry bag
- A basic first aid kit
- Water and a snack

Safety first.

To ensure your safety, always wear your Personal Flotation Device (PFD); paddle with a friend; know your limits and the limits of your boat; prepare a float plan and give it to someone not paddling with you; follow all safety, danger, and directional signage; and portage at all dams.

Also remember … respect private property, leave no trace, and be courteous and considerate of the waterways and of others enjoying them.

About us.

The mission of the Elkhart County Waterways Alliance is to promote and enhance recreation and sustainability of connected waterways in Elkhart County through improved:

- Access
- Management
- Education
- Advocacy

Our partners.

Follow us.

Elkhart County Waterways Alliance

Like us on Facebook for the latest news on Elkhart County’s waterways! Share trip reports, warn others about logjams, learn about upcoming events, and more.

Guide created May 2019
Trip #1: Christiana Creek (Advanced – experienced paddlers only)
• 3A. Start at Willowdale Park (1320 Olive Ave, Elkhart).
• 3B. End at Beardsley Park (100 W Beardsley Ave, Elkhart).
• Did you know? The lower Christiana is the only natural Class 1 whitewater in northern Indiana!

Trip #2: St. Joseph River from Bristol to Six Span (Moderate)
• 2A. Start at Hermance Park (300 E Vistula St, Bristol). Rentals are available at this site.
• 2B. End at Six Span (54360 CR 17, Elkhart)
• Did you know? Since the St. Joseph River moves slowly, this route can be paddled upstream!
• Did you know? This trip features lots of neat islands you can use for rest breaks!
• Want a longer trip? Start further upstream in Mottville, Michigan!

Trip #3: Elkhart River from Goshen to Ox Bow (Moderate)
• 3A. Start at Shanklin Park (411 W Plymouth Ave, Goshen). Rentals are available at this site.
• 3B. End at Ox Bow County Park (23033 CR 45, Goshen)
• 3C. Want a longer trip? Paddle further downstream to the Elkhart Environmental Center (1717 E Lusher Ave, Elkhart).
• 3D. Want an even longer trip? Paddle further downstream to Studebaker Park (1020 McDonald St, Elkhart).

Trip #4: Fidler Pond Park (Easy)
• 4. Fidler Pond Park (1424 Lincolnway East, Goshen) is a great place to learn how to canoe or kayak! Have fun paddling around the pond. Rentals are available at this site.
• Fidler Pond is also a fantastic fishing spot, especially for families.

Trip #5: Goshen Millrace / Elkhart River loop (Moderate)
• 5. Start and end at Powerhouse Park (W Washington St. Goshen)
• First, paddle south on the Goshen Millrace – it has no current!
• Then, paddle north on the Elkhart River downstream.

Trip #6: Elkhart River at River Preserve County Park (Advanced)
• 6A. Start at Benton Landing (41.507306, -85.760194).
• 6B. End at Baintertown Hydro (67202 CR 29, New Paris)
• Did you know? There are numerous other access points at River Preserve. Visit https://elkhartcountyparks.org/destinations/river-preserve/ for more information.