

SOUTHERN ST. LOUIS COUNTY PADDLING

- ◆ Cloquet State Forest
- ◆ Minnesota State Designated Water Trail
- ◆ Fond du Lac Band of Ojibwe

0 0.375 0.75 1.5 Miles

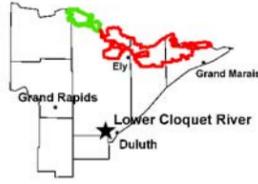


Cloquet River at St. Louis County Road 7

The Cloquet River stretches from wetlands in central Lake County to the St. Louis River in southern St. Louis County. The stretch of river between Independence and the St. Louis is an enjoyable paddle that offers a variety of water types, scenic beauty, and great fishing. This portion of the river has a wilderness feel with only a handful of homes and other human influences being visible from the water. A variety of wildlife is commonly seen; bald eagles are particularly prevalent.

Starting at Independence from the carry down landing at the Highway 53 wayside rest, paddlers will enjoy moderate currents and a few Type I rapids before under County Road 8. Similar conditions are found between CR 8 and CR 694. From CR 694 to the St. Louis River take out at Highway 2, the rapids are a bit more frequent and can be Type II. Overall, the river is navigable by beginning paddlers if they have a sturdy canoe and are prepared to get wet once in a while. The Cloquet's many boulders mean it is not Kevlar canoe friendly - royalex and aluminum rule here.

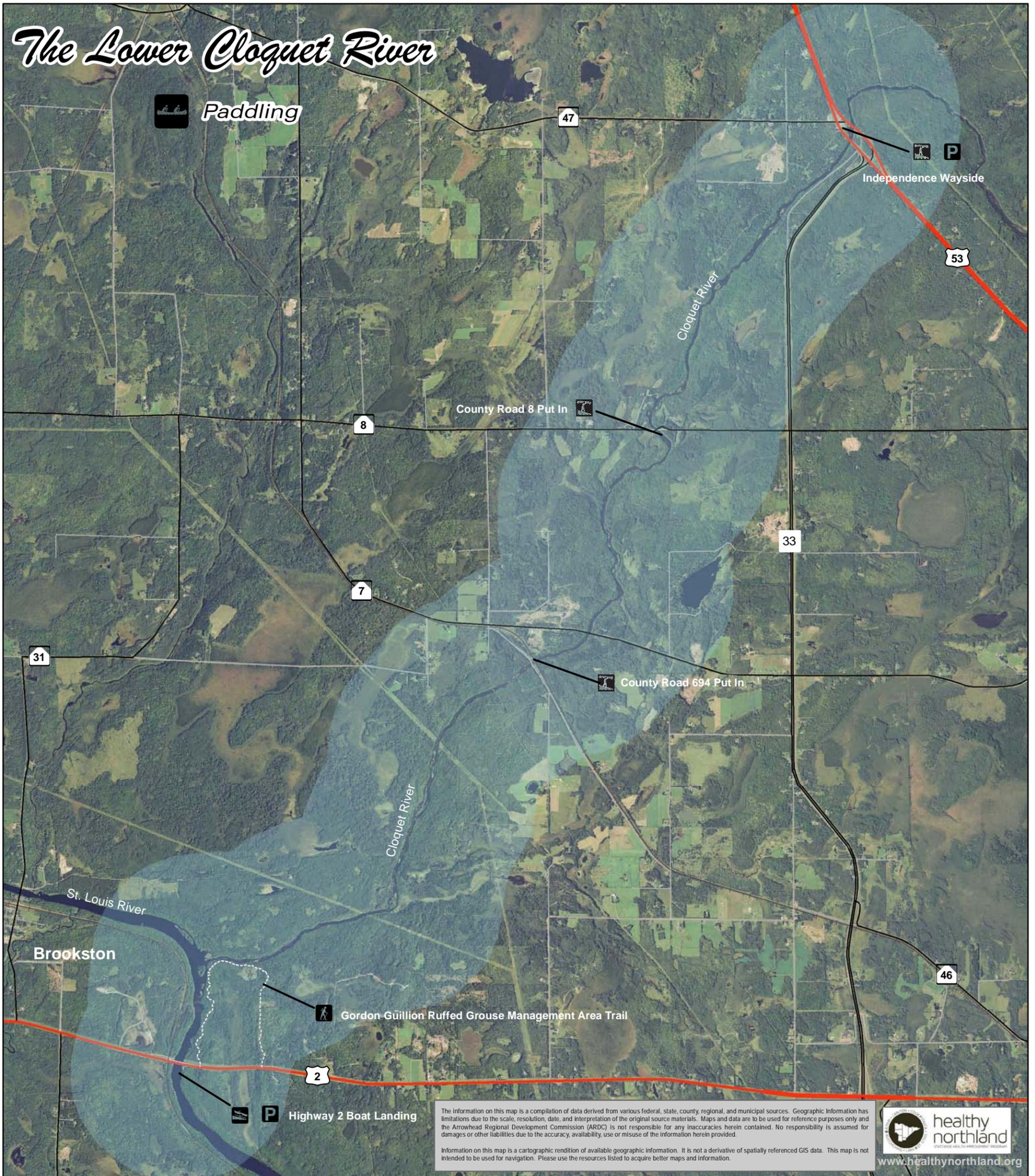
Fishing on the Cloquet is very good. Smallmouth bass are the most prolific, but anglers should be aware the bass are often migratory. In early spring the bass move upstream towards the Island Lake Dam, then slowly work their way back downstream over the course of the summer and often end up wintering in the St. Louis River. In this stretch of water, the bass tend to be moving through in July and early August. Anglers will catch these smallies on virtually any common bass baits from live leeches to rubber frogs and topwater baits. Fishing for other species can be decent throughout the summer. Channel catfish, walleye, and redhorse suckers are common catches and northern pike are present as well. Brown trout are rare catches, but can be had where smaller, cooler streams enter the Cloquet.



Resources

- Minnesota DNR Water Trail
- Cloquet Valley State Forest
- Fond du Lac Band Resource Management

- www.dnr.state.mn.us/watertrails/cloquetriver
- www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_forests/sft00013
- www.fdlrez.com/newn



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