

Map I: East of Union Lake-Riverbend Park, Coldwater River to Union City Water Heritage Trail Terminating in the St. Joe Through Union City to Arbogast Bridge

Greater Union City Water Way and Heritage Water Trail: Thirteen miles of paddling beginning south of Union City at Branch County's Riverbend Park on the Coldwater River, through the Village of Union City via the 5 mile Union City Heritage Water Trail that features 28 historic sites marked with photos and text. Paddling continues across Union Lake, portaging Union Dam and on to the Arney Rd. bridge. To learn about this village that was named for the "Union" of two rivers and more of our rich river history, take time to pull up and read some of the historic signs or go to UCHWT.com. **Launch & paddle at your own risk, this map is provided as a courtesy only and implies no safety or maintenance of river trails.** Locals love their rivers and voluntarily try to keep them passable. Updated info on local paddling can often be obtained by queries in the FB group: Friends of the Union City Heritage Water Trail. We would love it if you would share your experience and photos on that page. Many accesses near bridges are private property with cooperative owners. Please do not litter, loiter, fish or camp at access points. For an updated interactive map with even more info: www.uchwt.com>trail map click on map and map icons for details. Local kayak rental is available from J & J Kayaks: (517) 317-4471

Arbogast Bridge Access and Start of Union Lake: There is a carry in and out on the downstream left just after crossing under the bridge and past the rock rip rap. Please carry out your litter. No fishing, camping, or loitering at this access. **CAUTION: Please realize if you decide to paddle across the lake to Riley Dam, that this is approximately 3 miles with NO current.** If there is a west wind this can be a challenge for a recreational paddler or difficult for a child. For deeper paddling follow the north shoreline after passing under Arbogast Bridge. Approx 1-2 hours to the DNR launch and 2-3 hours to Riley Rd Dam. See other map for more info on Union Lake.

Park St Bridge and Bus Garage Access : This spot downstream left just after passing under the Park St. bridge has become a popular access point with lots of close parking and a short carry. Plenty of parking here as this is at the UC School's maintenance/bus garage driveway.

River Access & Riverview Park : Access point for Greater Union City Water Way and Union City Heritage Water Trail. Has parking, picnic tables and toilet facility (seasonal portajohn) The river access is "unimproved" natural bank Snacks and refreshments available across the street at Jack's Grocery. A short walk north across the Broadway Bridge will take you into Union City's quaint downtown with a variety of food and beverage options.

JP Palmer Launch & Start of Union City Heritage Water Trail Village of Union City Coldwater River Access. If you are coming down the Coldwater River it is downstream on the left after you pass under the old railroad trestle. From this launch the Coldwater river flows north where it terminates into the St. Joe in a few hundred yards. The St. Joe then flows west through the village. It is the starting point for 5 miles of the Union City Heritage Water Trail which contains 28 historic markers commemorating the rich river history through the Village. The trail was launched in 2016 during Union City's Sesquicentennial. There is parking, and carry in access to a "natural" launch. If you are accessing by road watch for the launch signs on Coldwater Rd. just west of the bridge. The launch and parking are back past the large metal containers. Porta potty is available May-October at Riverview Park in downtown Union City. Most paddlers carry their boat back the grassy strip past the drop off cul de sac and launch in the quieter downstream eddy created by the trestle. Approx. 1-2 hours to Arbogast Bridge. The section from here to Arbogast bridge is also used for tubing.

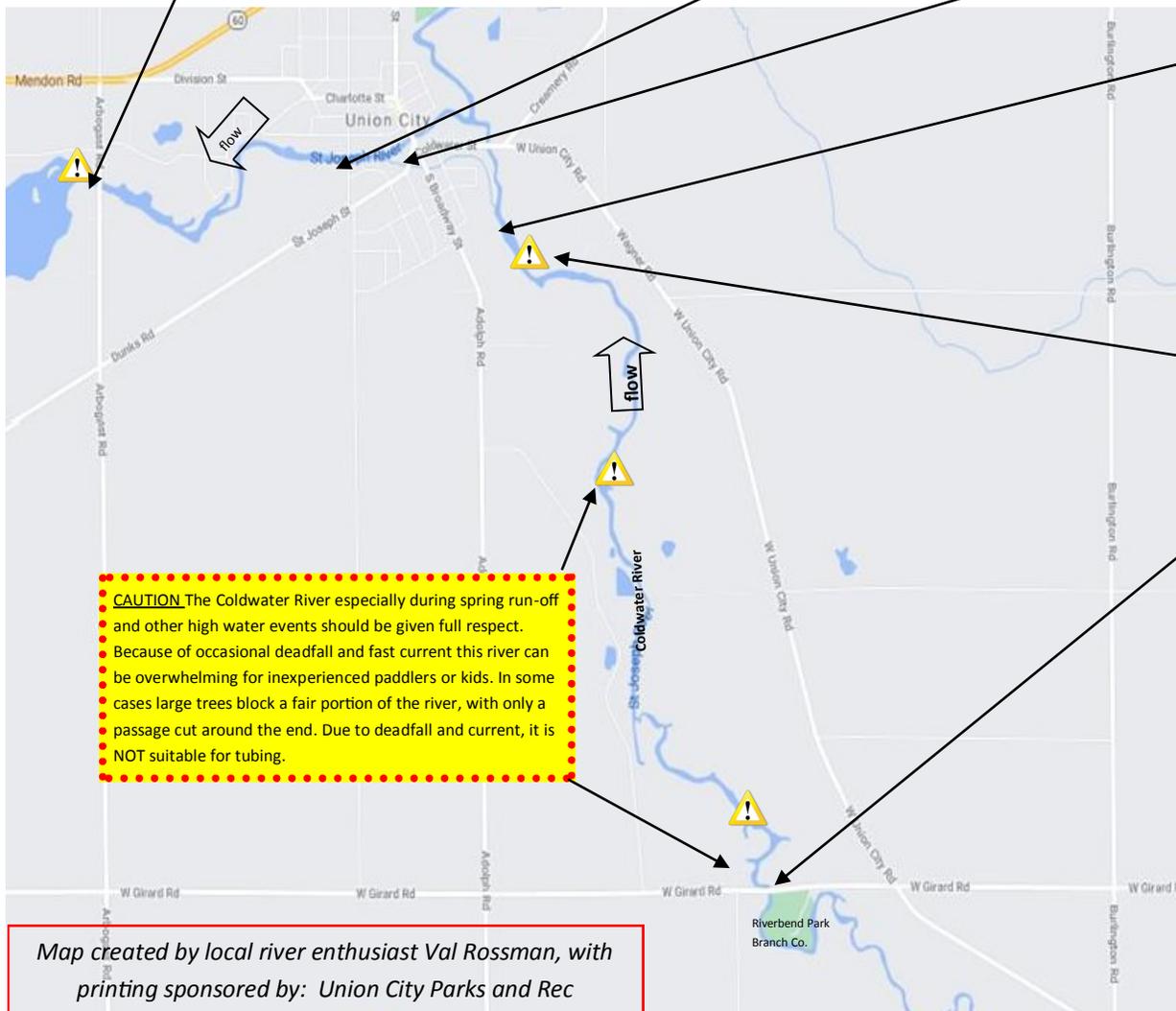
Railroad Trestle: Be aware that a lot of water funnels through the old railroad trestle abutments and occasionally deadfall gets hung up here. This can be a tricky spot to navigate especially during high water. Look ahead, set up well and paddle strong! This trestle is above the JP Palmer Launch site, so those launching at the Palmer will not cross through this.

Start of the Greater Union City Waterway, Riverbend Park & Girard Rd Launch: on Coldwater River at Branch County's Riverbend Park (parking, toilet and picnic facilities-seasonal). Launch inside the park or at Coldwater Rd. bridge.(private property) From this point the Coldwater river flows north to Union City and terminates in the St. Joe, with the next parking/access at the JP Palmer Launch in the SE corner of the village off of Coldwater Rd. Approximate distance to next access point J.P. Palmer launch (beginning of Union City Heritage Water Trail) in SE corner of Union City 3.2 miles. Be aware there is significantly more current in the Coldwater River between here and the entrance to the St. Joe. No section of river on this map is "maintained." While there are locals who paddle these rivers and try to remove deadfall that is no guarantee that you won't have to climb/carry/maneuver around some. **This section of the Coldwater River above Union City because of the strong current and potential deadfall, is more suitable to experienced paddlers, especially during high water and spring run off.** Approx. 2-3 hours to JP Palmer Launch. Google maps incorrectly labels this as the St. Joe River.

Enjoy Our Rich River History

Learn even more by enjoying the signs along the Union City Heritage Water Trail:

- Skinny Bullock was a beloved local "Daniel Boone" character who lived on the banks of the river, watch for what remains of his Elk Horn Lodge, west of town on the St. Joe.
- The village of Union City is named for the union of the Coldwater and St. Joseph rivers.
- Union City was considered the headwaters of navigation to Lake Michigan and on to Chicago via the St. Joe.
- Fur traders traveled this river and there was a trading post here.
- Many friendly Potawatomi lived in this area and made maple sugar.
- The shallow east end of the lake near Arbogast bridge is a fabulous spot to watch birds. Eagles and osprey are often seen over the lake. Loons stop off during the migration. Keep your eye out for beavers, geese, swans, various ducks, egrets, blue herons, sandhill cranes and king fishers.



CAUTION The Coldwater River especially during spring run-off and other high water events should be given full respect. Because of occasional deadfall and fast current this river can be overwhelming for inexperienced paddlers or kids. In some cases large trees block a fair portion of the river, with only a passage cut around the end. Due to deadfall and current, it is NOT suitable for tubing.

Map created by local river enthusiast Val Rossman, with printing sponsored by: Union City Parks and Rec

Map II: West of Union City -Arbogast Bridge, East Across Union Lake, St. Joe River to Arney Rd.

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Enjoy Our Rich River History

Learn even more by enjoying the signs along the Union City Heritage Water Trail:

- The shallow east end of Union Lake near Arbogast bridge is a fabulous wetland spot to watch birds. Eagles and osprey are often seen over the lake. Loons stop off during the migration. Keep your eye out for geese, swans, various ducks, egrets, blue herons, sandhill cranes, king fishers & beavers.
- 500+ acre all sports Union Lake is nearing 100 years old with the completion of the Riley Dam in 1923.
- Turn of the 1900's world re-nowned painter JP Palmer loved the quiet life in this area and painted many river scenes that are now valued collector's items.
- Riley Dam built in 1923 still creates up to 15% of the hydro in the area.
- When the lake was first formed, it was known only as the "Municipal Pond," it wasn't until 1927 that it got its designation as "Union Lake." In the 1930's lots went for \$25-50.
- The Union Lake Community Association works diligently on water quality, weed control and fish stocking.
- A mill race ran from the Coldwater River to the St. Joe through the village, powering several saw mills and huge grist mill that stood for 111 years before burning in a spectacular fire in 1949. It was the discovery of this water power potential that led to the creation of the settlement here.
- Union City was a stop on the underground railroad and slaves followed the Coldwater River to town.

Arbogast Bridge Access and Start of Union Lake:

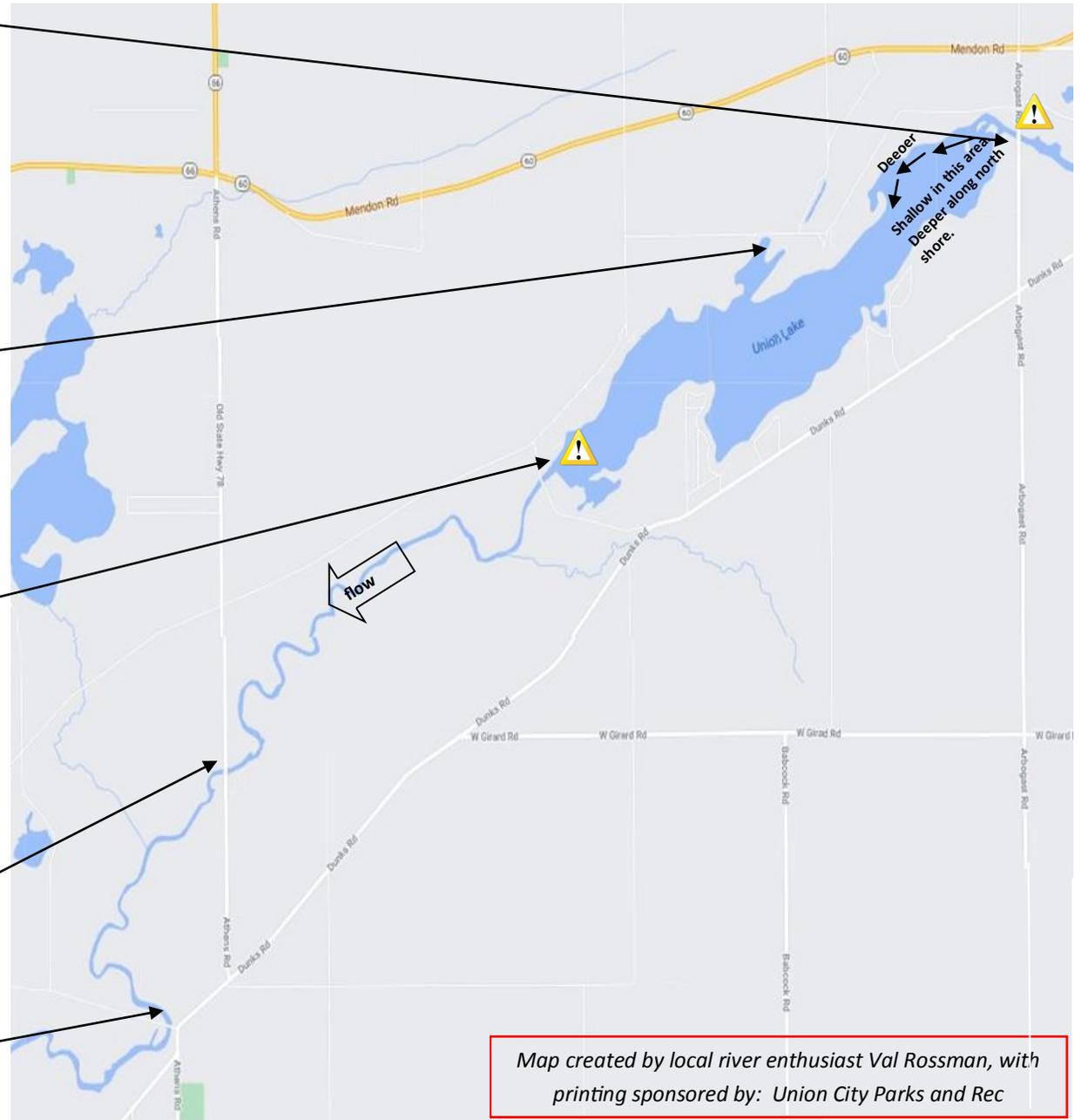
There is a carry in and out on the downstream left just after crossing under the bridge and past the rock rip rap. Please carry out your litter. No fishing, camping, or loitering at this access. **CAUTION: Please realize if you decide to paddle across the lake to Riley Dam, that this is approximately 3 miles with NO current.** If there is a west wind this can be a challenge for a recreational paddler or difficult for a child. For deeper paddling follow the north shoreline after passing under Arbogast Bridge. If you look for the 911 antenna tower and a low flat roof brick structure with red doors, to the southwest as you come on to the lake, those are landmarks for the portage/dam on Riley Rd. Approx 1-2 hrs. to the DNR launch and 2-3 hrs. to Riley Dam.

DNR Access Site--Tuttle Rd: Typical DNR access site with pit toilet, dock and concrete boat ramp. Good for those wishing to shorten the paddle across Union Lake. You need a Michigan Recreational Passport to use this parking and ramp.

Dam Portage & End of the Union City Heritage Water Trail: portage around the Village of Union City's Riley Dam that is nearing its 100th birthday and still produces up to 15% of the local hydro. The portage is on the upstream right of the dam. Follow the openings in the buoy structures straight to the roller dock. **Do not approach the dam or other structures!** There is no fishing or swimming from this dock. There is plenty of parking here on property owned by the Village of Union City. You can reenter (rocky unimproved access) on the village property or carry across Riley Rd and enter at a popular launch spot. The area on the west side of Riley Rd is privately owned with a cooperative owner. Please do not loiter, litter or camp. The shady stretch below here to Arney Rd is a very popular with local paddlers on summer weekends. Approx 1 1/2-2 hrs, to Old 78 & 2 to 3 hrs. to Arney Rd.

Old 78/Athens Rd. Bridge: This is private property with a cooperative owner. Please do not camp, litter or make fires here. This is down stream right (NW) side of the bridge. Pretty decent access and room for a couple of vehicles.

Arney Rd. Bridge: The access at Arney Rd. Bridge on right upstream from the bridge is private property with an owner who has allowed access and parking there for years. Please don't ruin this great access point by abusing it, partying there, loitering or littering. Do not block the entrance to his campground on beyond the access area near the bridge.



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