

Cedar River Crossing

5473 Sutliff Rd NE
Solon, IA 52333

Overview: Cedar River Crossing is a 560-acre property comprised of wetland, riparian forest, upland oak savanna, and both relic and restored prairie. The property is bordered by the Cedar River for over two miles, and lies within the river's floodplain. During flood events, the natural ecosystem acts as a sponge, absorbing and filtering floodwaters. Cedar River Crossing is named to honor the historic river fording area located on the site. The crossing was used by both Native Americans and Euroamerican colonizers. A limestone monument is located in the southern portion of the property near the crossing.



History: Johnson County Conservation acquired the first portion of Cedar River Crossing in 1999, and the remaining parcels were added between 2014-2017. Much of the land was used for row crop production and cattle pasture prior to JCC's ownership. In 2019, JCC completed an intensive project to restore 144 acres of wetland, 79 acres of prairie, and 71 acres of oak savanna in the north half of the property. A half-mile stream corridor was also restored and remeandered through the project area.



Features:

- Wildlife is abundant in this habitat corridor. Species of special conservation concern, such as eastern hognose snakes and blanding's turtles are regularly recorded here. The property is also a popular hunting location.
- The wetland complex and backwater channels on this landscape are particularly attractive to shorebirds, providing a birding hotspot.
- A large astronomical clock is built into the landscape. This feature allows visitors to connect with the annual cycles of the earth, as the lines of the clock align with the sunrise/sunset on the solstices and equinoxes.
- A denitrification basin serves as a collection point for water drained off 800 acres of surrounding farmland. The natural microbial communities in this basin metabolize nutrients before they enter the wetlands and Cedar River below.
- This site is primitive. There are no bathrooms or structures onsite currently. Visitors are welcome to hike throughout the property (there are no regularly maintained trails at this time). Other recreational features of the preserve include nature study of the area's prairie, wetland, and forest habitats.





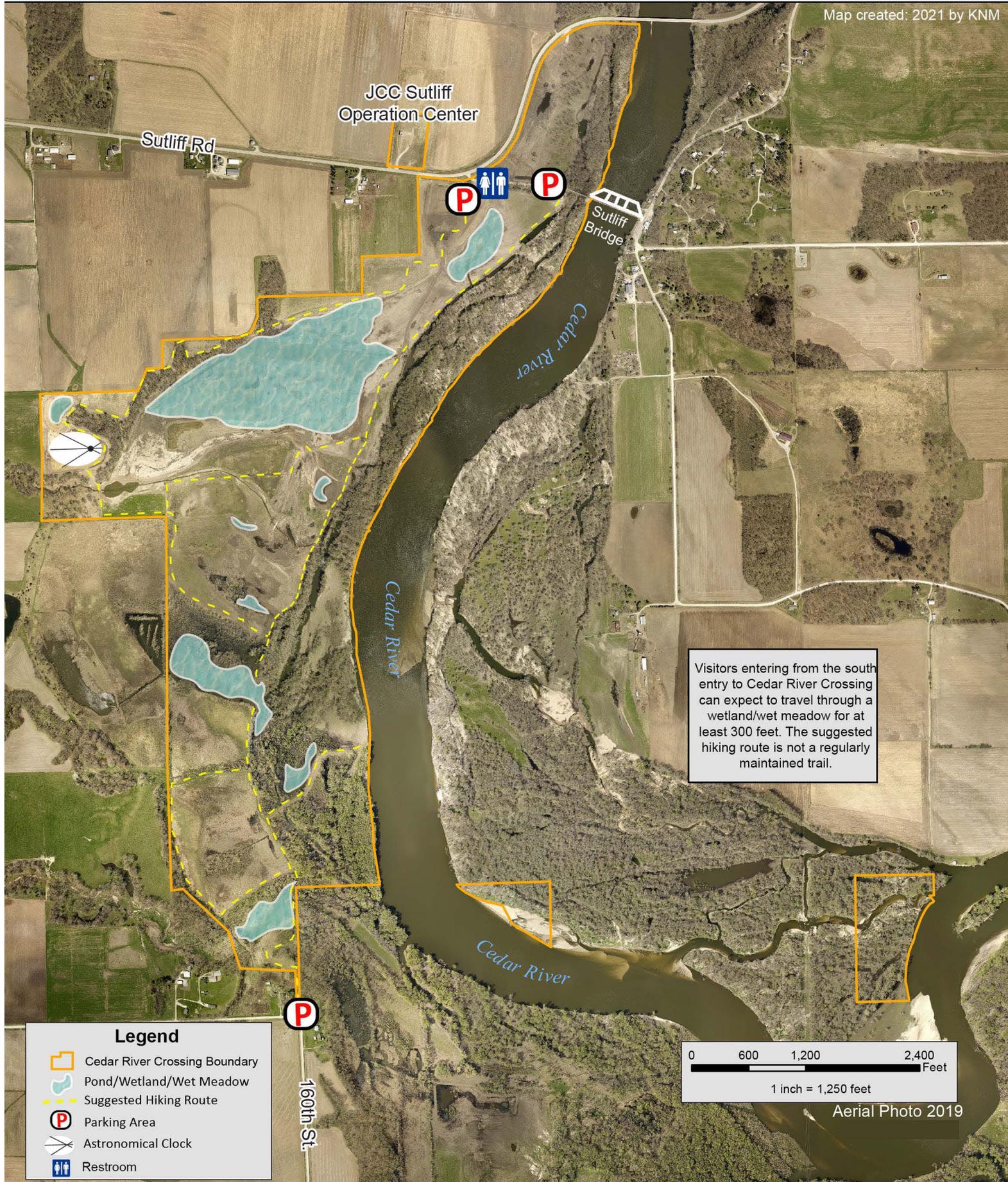
Cedar River Crossing Conservation Area

North Parking Area: 5473 Sutliff Rd NE, Solon, IA 52333

South Parking Area: 5398 160th St NE, Solon, IA 52333



Map created: 2021 by KNM



JCC Sutliff
Operation Center

Sutliff Rd



Sutliff
Bridge

Cedar River

Cedar River

Cedar River

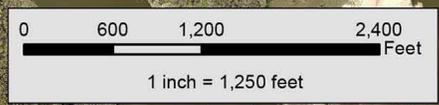


160th St

Visitors entering from the south entry to Cedar River Crossing can expect to travel through a wetland/wet meadow for at least 300 feet. The suggested hiking route is not a regularly maintained trail.

Legend

- Cedar River Crossing Boundary
- Pond/Wetland/Wet Meadow
- Suggested Hiking Route
- Parking Area
- Astronomical Clock
- Restroom



Aerial Photo 2019