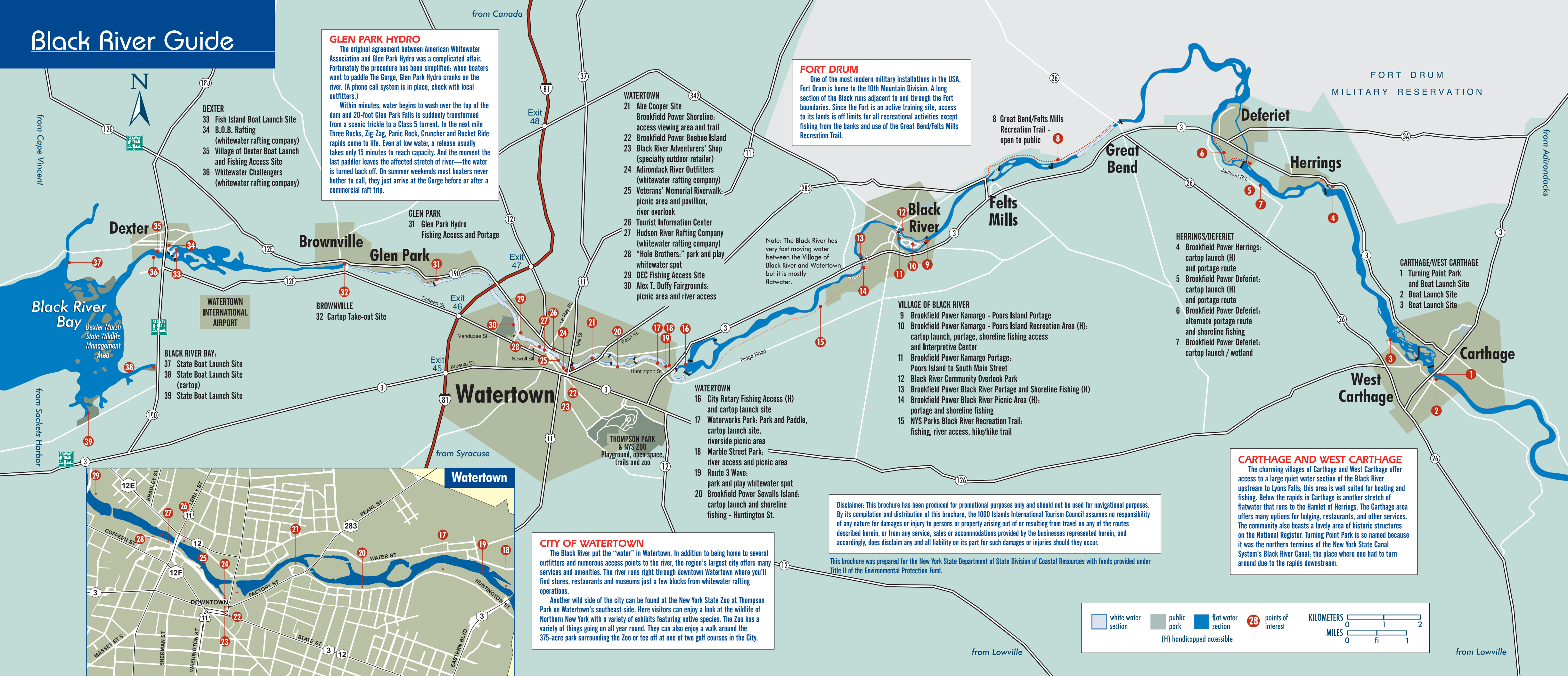


# Black River Guide







The Black River is a playboater's dream. Surfing waves and rodeo holes abound. Many local boaters spend an entire day on the opening half-mile of the rafting run surfing the class 2-3 waves on "the first three sets" starting with Club House Turn and Burns Wall, a series of glassy three-foot waves perfect for surfing, before practicing rodeo stunts at the friendly hydraulic known as "Hole Brothers," a favorite play spot. More play beckons downstream at Inner City Strife and Knife's Edge, the Black's most challenging drop (class 4-5). Below Glen Park Hydro, in the Gorge, you'll encounter: Three Rocks (class 3-4), Zig-Zag (class 3), Panic Rock (class 4), The Cruncher (class 3-4), and Rocket Ride (class 3-5). The Lower Gorge contains two named class 3 rapids, Square Rock and Lost and Found, both prime play spots.

The opening half-mile is directly adjacent to parking areas near Veterans' Memorial Riverwalk Park and Newell Street. The entire shuttle from take-out in Brownville to Newell Street in Watertown is a mere 20 minutes round-trip. And for apres activities, you can't beat Watertown's numerous restaurants and bistros.

For some additional playboating, head to the eastern side of the City and the rodeo spot known as the Route 3 wave. This wave is best during the summer months when water flows are lower and can be accessed by paddling upstream from the put in at Waterworks Park or from the new access point from Marble Street Park on the north side of the river adjacent to the feature.

The Route 3 wave plays host to an international competition in late August/early September and has been paddled by boaters from around the world. But it's also gentle enough for novice boaters to handle. Nestled between two dams and with a nice gentle run out at the end of the wave train, this is an ideal park and play spot.

The Black River starts its descent off the Tug Hill Plateau in a series of waterfalls and rapids at Carthage and Felts Mills. Then, when it reaches Watertown, it makes its final tumultuous descent during a seven-mile stretch. This is where all the whitewater action takes place.

Starting below the Mill Street Dam in Watertown is a whitewater run that features 14 sets of class 3-4 rapids and a spectacular 20-foot waterfall. The kicker is that numerous upstream

Area rafting companies offer guided trips in the spring, summer and fall. The run starts with three class 2-3 rapids that are often used by novice boaters as a training run or by experienced paddlers as a site for some quick summer play. Then the river flows quickly out of town, passing under I-81 before reaching the challenging class 5 drop at "Knife Edge."

Rafters continue their trip, after a portage at Glen Park Hydro, with a quick and exciting ride through a long series of rapids in a dramatic 200-foot deep canyon. The final section of the trip is a leisurely mile to the village of Dexter.



*Late fall on the Black River. Turning Point Park. Carthage*

If whitewater isn't your thing, check out the Black River's flatwater sections which are found behind some of the many dams. In Watertown you

can put in at the City's Rotary Cartop Boat Launch and paddle up to the base of the rapids outside the Village of Black River, a distance of about 3 miles one-way. In addition, you could paddle the one mile stretch from Dexter to Black River Bay or continue on and enjoy a tour of the bay.

Another interesting section of the Black River starts in Carthage which was once the northern terminus of the Black River Canal, a busy shipping route used during the 1800s. Starting from the aptly named Turning Point Park, you can explore our river for over 40 miles on nearly continuous flatwater.

The largest historic barriers to fish movement were at Great Falls in Watertown (where the Mill Street Dam is now located) and Long Falls at Carthage. During the 1980s, fish ladders were built around dams in Dexter and Glen Park to allow steelhead and chinook salmon from Lake Ontario to migrate upstream as far as Court Street in Watertown during the spring, late summer and fall spawning runs.

The Dexter area offers outstanding walleye and smallmouth bass fishing above and below the dam. Trout are stocked at two areas in Watertown and smallmouth bass are also caught here.

Between Carthage and Felts Mills the fishing is good below the dams and in the reach below Deferiet and Fort Drum. The placid waters above Carthage are home to at least 35 species of fish, most notably walleye pike, smallmouth bass, northern pike, brown bullhead, pickerel and rock bass.



*Veterans' Memorial Riverwalk, Watertown.*

Several scenic parks and trails overlook the Black River—perfect spots for a picnic, mountain biking or just a quiet walk.

In Watertown, the Veterans' Memorial Riverwalk, Waterworks Park, Marble Street

A group of people are participating in a water activity on a river. Several individuals are in kayaks and canoes, some wearing life jackets. A large, multi-tiered stone dam or bridge structure spans the background of the river. The scene is outdoors with trees and a clear sky.

*Black River Fest kayak clinic at Hole Brothers, Watertown.*

Two recreation trails suitable for hiking, mountain biking and xc skiing parallel the Black River. The Great Bend-Felts Mills Recreation Trail winds along a hillside on the northern shore near Fort Drum. Another trail is the Black River Trail which offers a connection from the eastern outskirts of Watertown to the Village of Black River.

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