

3.Silver Creek/River Trail Route



View looking east down St. Louis River from the Swinging Bridge, photo spot #1

Highlights: The **Swinging Bridge** of course, with great views east and west. The **River Trail** with up close views of the rock formations and Oldenburg Point. The **upper forest trail** is spectacular in fall. The little **picnic spot overlooking the Silver Creek valley**.

Parking and Directions:

From I35 take exit 239 Scanlon and turn left at highway 45. At the stop sign in Carlton turn left and follow signs for **Jay Cooke State Park**. Park at the **Swinging Bridge** parking lot. Head down the hill and cross the **Swinging Bridge**. Climb over the rocks at the bottom of the hill and head straight up to the top. At the top look for signs for the **Silver Creek Trail**. You can go left and do the loop clockwise or straight ahead and do the trail counter clockwise.

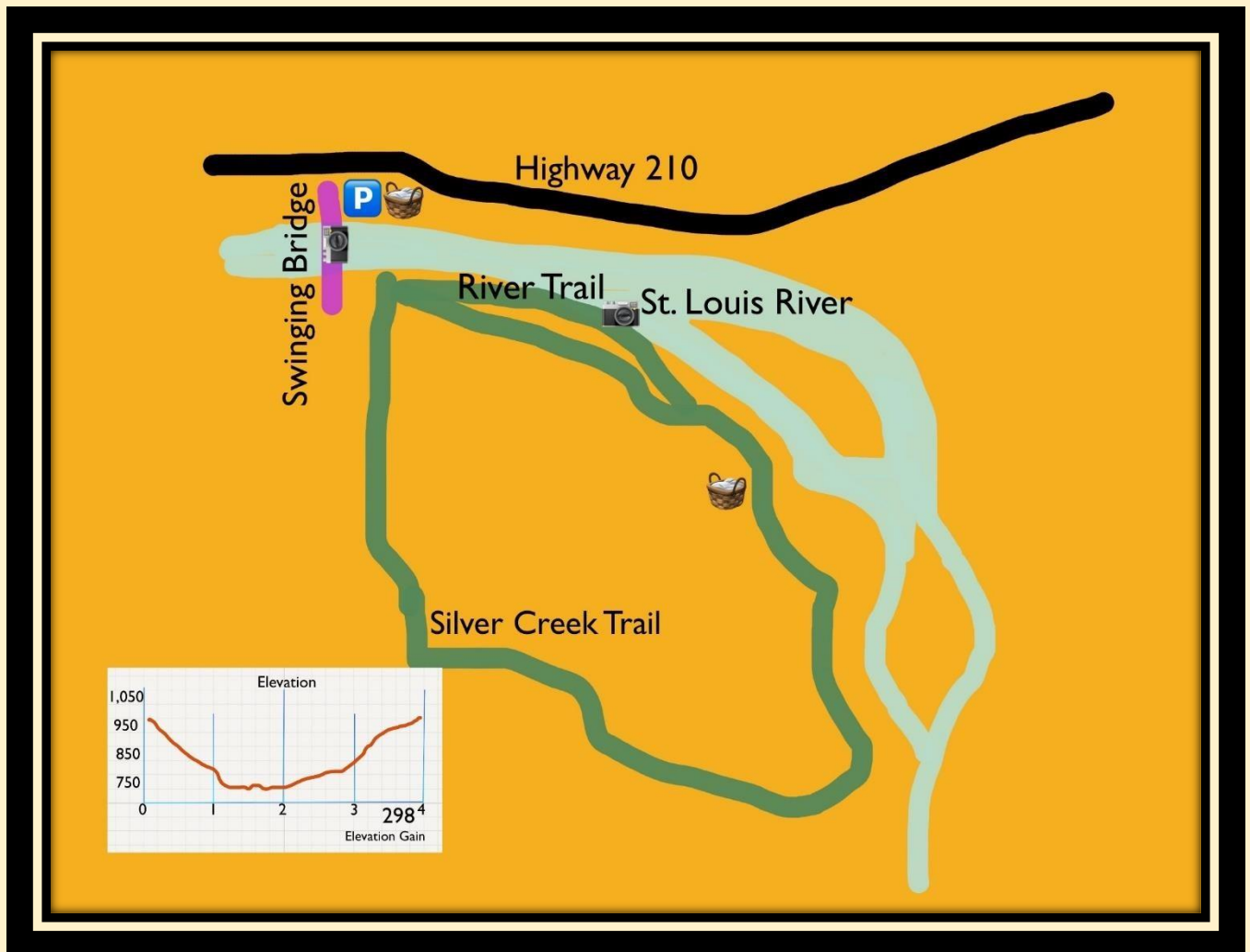


Swinging Bridge Recreation Center Sign

Distance: Full loop including River Trail **4 miles**

Difficulty: Easy to Moderate

Recommended for: all hikers



The Route:(heading left, clockwise)

Mile 1: You hike east through a wide, beautiful hardwood forest trail. Not too far along the trail you will see a sign for the **River Trail**. **The River Trail** drops down about 90 feet to the river level and provides great views of the **rock formations and Oldenburg Point**. The bottom of the River Trail can be a little muddy and rocky but definitely worth your time.

Mile 2: After you come up from the River Trail you will continue through the hardwood forest.

This section is actually part of the **Lake Superior Hiking Trail**. As you come around the corner moving away from the river, look for the picnic table to your left. This little area has a great overlook of the **Silver Creek** river valley.

Mile 3: You head downhill into the Silver Creek river valley. The trail drops gradually down to the bottom of the hill. This is a very open area with few trees.

Mile 4: The last mile is a gradual climb back up the hill to where you started. About three quarters up the hill, you will see a **picnic shelter** just off to the **right of the trail**.

Extended Route: After completing the **Silver Creek Loop**, you can head to the **West Ridge Loop** for another two miles. Or hook on to one of many other connecting trails (see the park map.)

Family Friendly Route: After crossing the Swinging Bridge and heading straight up the hill, find the sign for the **Silver Creek Trail heading to your left**. Follow the Silver Creek Trail until you see a **picnic table to your left**. This is a good stop for snacks. When you are done **head back to the river on the Silver Creek Trail** until you see the sign on your right for the **River Trail**. Head down the River Trail for some rock climbing and great views. Finally, when you cross back over the Swinging Bridge look down to your right and you will see a **nice little beach** with plenty of rocks for throwing and big rocks for climbing.



Silver Creek Trail in fall



View East from the bottom of the River Trail, photo spot #2



View across the river from the bottom of the River Trail, photo spot #2

After the hike:

Head back to Carlton where you can enjoy ice cream and snacks at the **Magnolia Café** in Carlton. (magnoliacafecarlton.com) For a special treat head west on highway 210 to the **Sweetly Kismet Candy Store**. Sweetly Kismet Candy Store Or you could enjoy a cold beverage and burger at the **Streetcar Kitchen and Pub**. <https://www.facebook.com/CarltonStreetcar/>

For trail maps and current trail conditions, head to the Jay Cooke State Park web site.

www.dnr.state.mn.us

Strava Link <https://www.strava.com/routes/3171566144204633288>