

## 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.

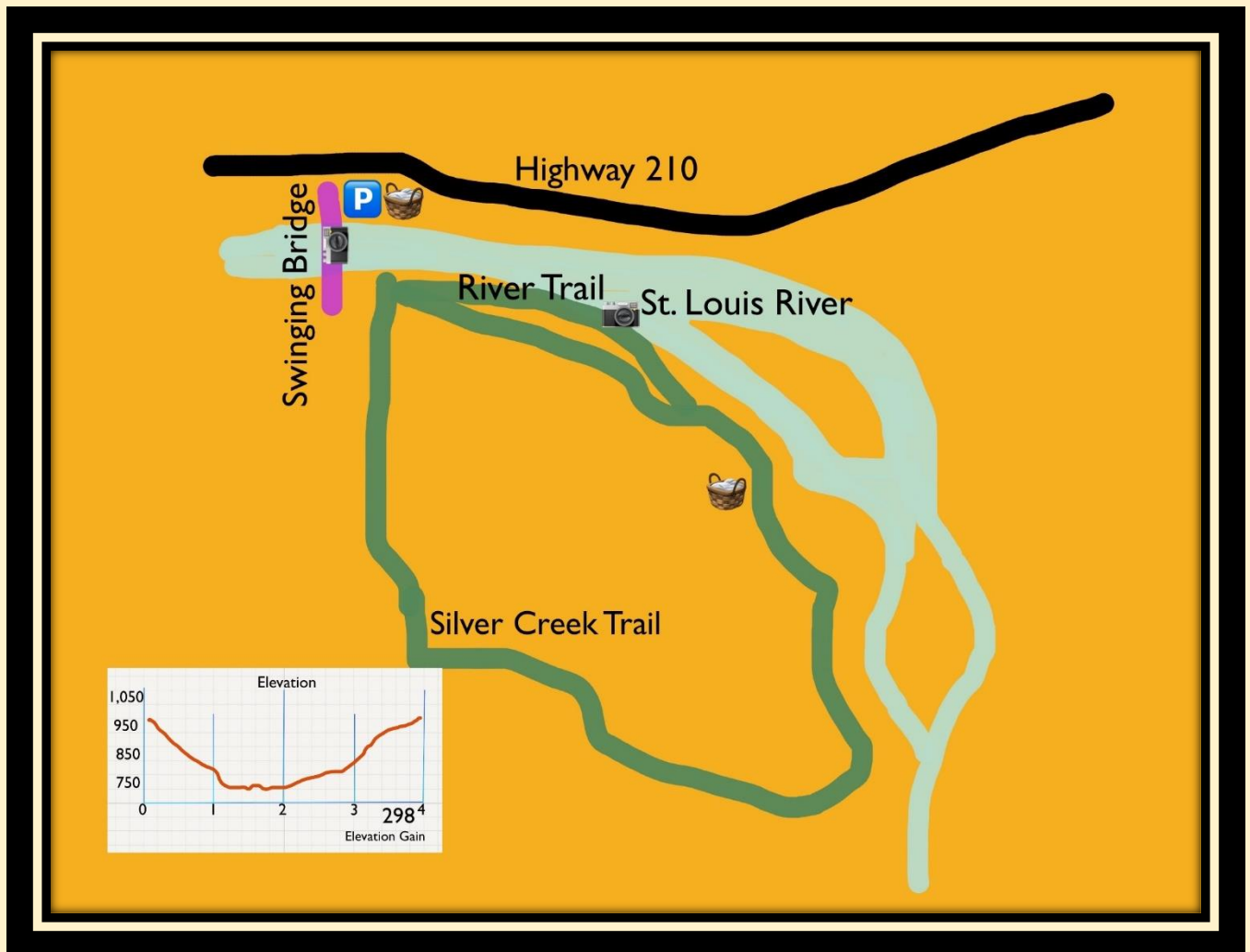


**Swinging Bridge Recreation Center Sign**

**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](http://magnoliacafecarlton.com)) For a special treat head west on highway 210 to the **Sweetly Kismet Candy Store**. [Sweetly Kismet Candy Store](http://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](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us)