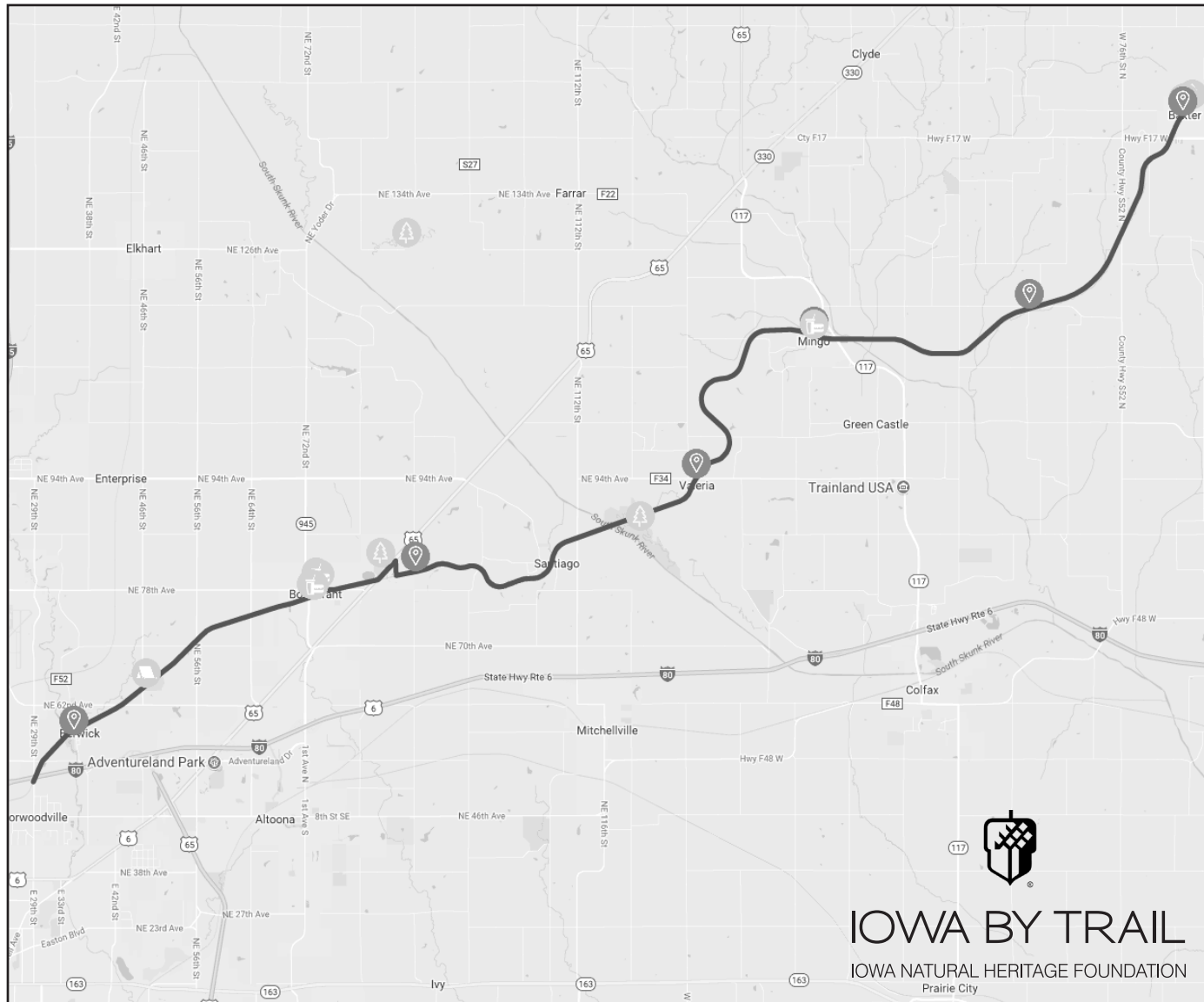


Chichaqua Valley Trail



TRAIL CONTACT:

Jasper County Conservation

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Email: conservation@co.jasper.ia.us

Polk County Conservation

Phone: 515-323-5300

Email: info@polkcountyiowa.gov

Friends of the CVT

Email: cook-jeff@hotmail.com

MILES: 26.13

TRAIL SURFACE: Asphalt

CITIES: Baxter, Ira, Mingo, Valeria, Bondurant, Berwick

DIFFICULTY: Easy

TRAIL DESCRIPTION:

The Chichaqua Valley Trail is part of a proposed 110-mile trail loop that crosses the forested banks and timbered bluffs of the Skunk River. The hiking and cycling route takes trekkers through many small Iowa communities and wildlife habitats, including the Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt. When the trail passes through the Greenbelt, it opens into an extensive wildlife area with lots of recreational opportunities including camping, birdwatching, canoeing and hunting (though park amenities are not located right by the trail). Along the trail, one will spot mile markers showing the distance to Kansas City for this former railroad route. The trail also crosses stone bridges dating from the Wisconsin, Iowa & Nebraska Railroad that built this rail line in 1885. In later years, the line was used by the Chicago, St. Paul, & Kansas City Railroad (1886-1892), Chicago Great Western Company (1892-1968), and finally the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad Company (1968-1984). The line was abandoned in 1984, acquired by the counties and opened as a recreational trail in 1987. It includes a scenic crossing of the Skunk River. Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation provided technical assistance to complete the acquisition.