

WELCOME TO IOWA, THE WORLD CAPITAL OF TRAILS!

Here you will find over 1,200 miles of multi-use trails in all corners of the state, and over 670 miles just in central Iowa. Our county road system also offers opportunities to bicycle and explore our beautiful land, small towns, and to meet many friendly people. Enjoy your ride!

WARREN HOSPITALITY

WARREN COUNTY, 22 MILES, PAVED ROADS. PARKING & RESTROOMS: TRAILHEAD IN MARTENSDALE, BUSINESSES IN NORWALK.

If you're lucky, you'll see a family of ducks or geese on this ride, but the ride's fun even if the waterfowl aren't around. As a bonus, the steepest hill is a 3/4-mile drop!

Park your car at the Great Western Trail head on the west edge of Martensdale and bike east along Inwood Street to State Highway 28. Turn north on the highway. At about 6 miles, in Prole comes your downhill to cross the North River. You can easily hit 30 mph and, happily, the climb out of the valley is gradual.

The Casey's in Norwalk is a quick refueling stop on this route. Turn west there, onto G14. Check the pond at a former apple orchard (now a landscaping firm), for the ducks or geese.

At about 12.8 miles, you reach the village of Cumming to intersect again with the Great Western Trail. The Cumming Tap is a favorite country bar for cyclists. Stop for tacos on Tuesday or drop by for steaks on Wednesdays. Headlights are recommended if you ride later than 8 p.m. during summer months.

On your return to Martensdale on the Great Western, you ride through prairie and wetland remnants and cross the North River on a trestle—no hills on a rail-trail!

Side trip: Two Saints Winery (twosaintswinery.com) is a few miles off the loop (between St. Charles and St. Mary's).

—Bob Morgan, Biking Iowa

