

Oconto River – Underhill (Oconto County)

The trip as described by Mike Svob in his book as “Oconto River O-2” is 16.8 miles, and is an excellent stretch for novices and quiet water paddlers. We are planning to do the portion from Underhill (past Pulcifer, at 5 mile mark) to city BB, which is total of 8.5 miles.

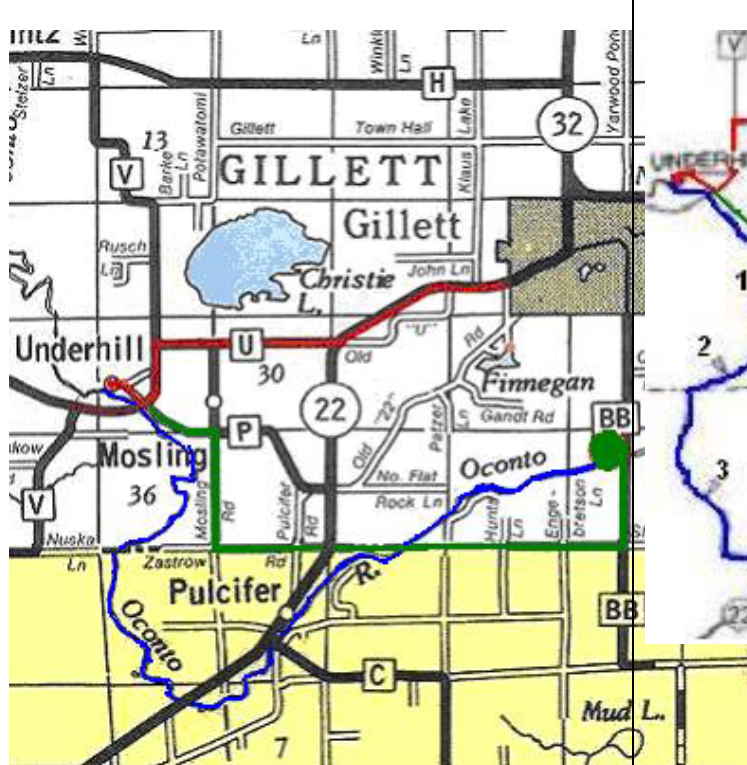
Boat Landing:

- From Gillett, take hwy 22 toward Cecil.
- Turn right on city U towards Underhill.
- At intersection with city V, turn left.
- Turn right at Cardinal Lane. Boat Landing is in the City Park.
- If that does not have a boat landing, continue on city V after Cardinal Lane; turn right on Downtown Lane (at intersection with city VV) and go to the river.

Everyone should wear a PFD (personal flotation device).

Key to maps: **Red indicates route to Boat Landing.**
Green indicates shuttle route to the Take-out point.
Blue indicates the Oconto River.

Area Map:



Detail Map:



From *Paddling Northern Wisconsin* by Mike Svob:

Oconto River O-2 Underhill to county BB (8.5 miles)

An excellent stretch for novices and quietwater paddlers, with many convenient access points.

The river is heavily wooded on both sides (hemlock, birch, maple, cedar, alder, elm, etc), and there are many pleasant riffles to add a bit of excitement. Homes and cabins dot the shoreline here and there, but are not plentiful enough to take away the feeling of isolation. Fishermen are frequently encountered, angling for bass, northern and panfish. On hot, humid days, boaters and inner-tubers enjoy swimming in the deeper pools.

Water levels are usually adequate for enjoyable paddling. If the riffle underneath the Pulcifer bridge (cty C) is too shallow to be canoeable, you will find yourself scraping in other riffle areas between Underhill and cty BB. Stay off the river when the water is high. For water conditions, call DNR office in Oconto Falls (920-846-2980).

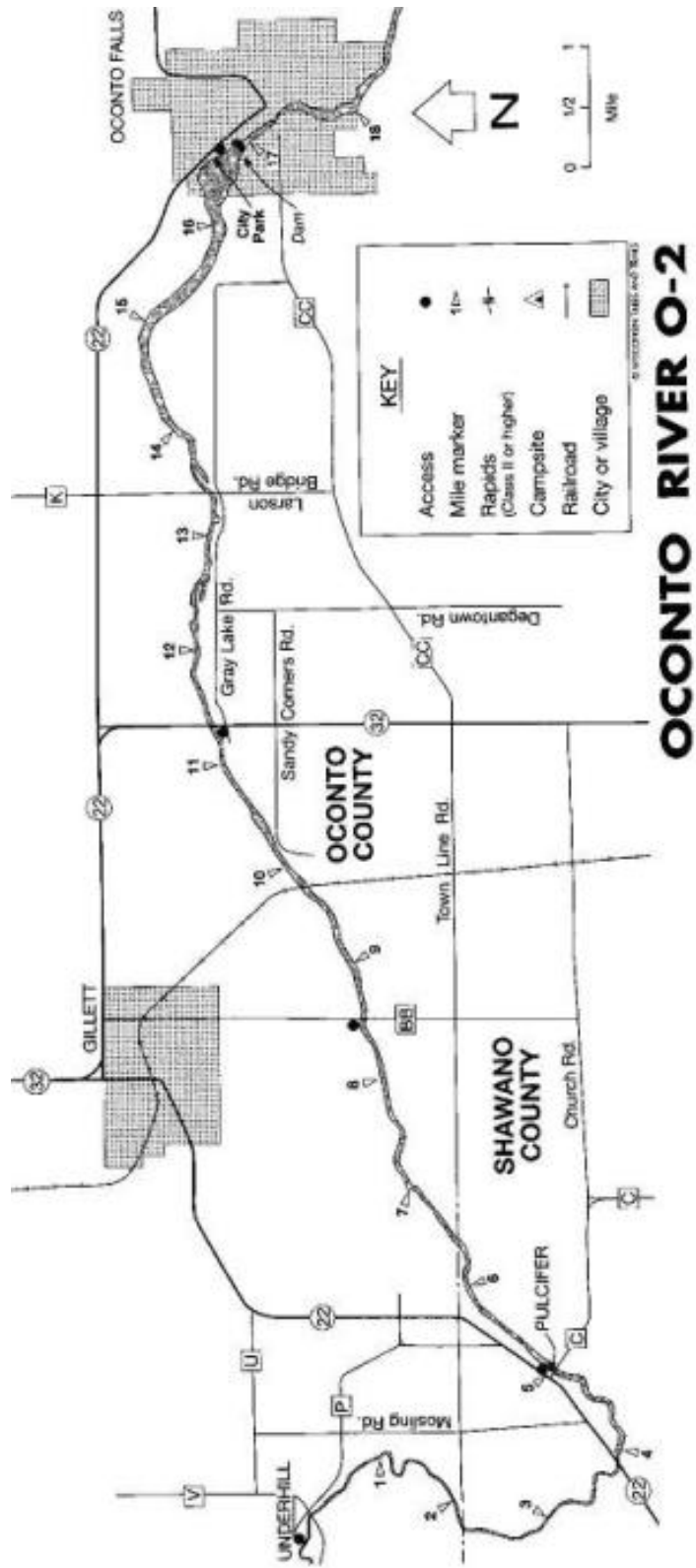
Put in at city park in Underhill, several hundred yards upstream from the cty V bridge. The park (near Underhill baseball field) has a concrete boat ramp, picnic facilities and toilets.

Mud banks line the river, which flows with a steady current. Occasional sand and gravel banks appear about a mile downstream from the bridge, along with the **first of many riffles**. You'll encounter the first houses after Underhill in a left-hand bend at the Shawano/Oconto county line (2.2 miles).

The hwy 22 bridge (3.9 miles) comes into view soon after a couple of big bends in the river and some houses on the right shore. Between the hwy 22 bridge and Pulcifer, several gravel bars just out from the right shore, and hwy 22 parallels the river on the left. Approaching Pulcifer (5 miles), the river is fairly wide and deep, and a high sand bank precedes the S-curve leading to the cty C bridge. There are **pleasant riffles upstream from the bridge and directly under it**.

An excellent access is located at Pulcifer Sportman's Park immediately after the bridge on the left, with picnic facilities and parking. This is a good place to put in, take out, or have lunch. Fortunately, the dangerous old low-head dam that used to be found just downstream has been removed.

For the next 3.5 miles, all the way to cty BB, the river is consistently about 75 feet wide, and there are **many wavy riffles**; here and there a rock needs to be avoided. Homes and cottages are sparse. The current continues to be steady to cty BB. There is an excellent **take-out** upstream left at the cty BB bridge with good parking. The grassy area at the bridge makes this a good place for lunch.



OCOONTO RIVER O-2