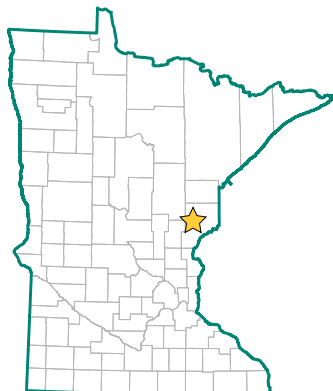


# THE WILLARD MUNGER TRAIL SYSTEM

## BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO A HISTORIC MINNESOTA TRAIL



The Willard Munger State Trail between Finlayson and Hinckley.  
Photo credit: Dave Auchter.



 **\$8 MILLION**

 **RESTORING THE TRAIL**

Local project partner:  
 **FRIENDS OF MUNGER SOUTH**

Management Agency:  
 **MINNESOTA DNR**

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

This project will rehabilitate a critical 13-mile section of trail between Finlayson and Hinckley, which has been degraded over time.

### WHY THIS PROJECT IS IMPORTANT

The Willard Munger State Trail is a popular 70-mile, multi-use trail from Hinckley to Duluth that is deeply submerged in the picturesque scenery and rich history of East Central Minnesota. All of the cities on the trail benefit economically from the bikers, runners and hikers that use the trail and spend money at local businesses. In recent years, however, the southernmost 13-mile section from Hinckley to Finlayson has deteriorated rapidly with underlying culvert separations and sinkholes having combined with significant horizontal and longitudinal cracking and heaving and slumping pavement to make it unsafe in many places. The degraded riding experience and safety concerns have resulted in riders frequently leaving the trail to ride on the shoulder of nearby Highway 61. The perils of biking in proximity to motorists was highlighted in 2021, when a local school official was struck from behind by an inattentive driver while on her bicycle. Fixing this stretch of trail is of paramount importance, both for the personal safety of visitors and residents and for the economic health of the community.

### THIS PROJECT IS READY TO GO!

The engineering and design plan for this stretch of the trail is being performed “in house” by DNR staff engineers and will be ready for construction toward the end of 2024. This project is considered a priority by the DNR.

### WHO SUPPORTS THIS PROJECT

- City of Finlayson
- City of Hinckley
- City of Moose Lake
- City of Sandstone
- City of Sturgeon Lake
- City of Willow River
- Finlayson-Giese Lions Club
- Hinckley Convention & Visitors Bureau
- National MS Society
- Pine County
- Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota