

Zumbro River



Water characteristics - check the river level report.

Canoeists expecting to drift down the Zumbro may be taken by surprise. At even moderate levels the river has a lively current and travelers must keep a lookout to avoid the many snags they're liable to encounter.

The Zumbro's original name aptly describes this aspect of the river. The French called it Rivere des Embarras, meaning river of difficulties. The snags, caused by widespread bank erosion, hindered the canoes of the French voyagers engaged in the fur trade. Erosion has also obliterated a small waterfall which was once located just above the town of Zumbro Falls. At the site of the falls the river now flows rapidly over a sandstone rubble bed. A stretch of mild rapids at Jarrett presents a rocky obstacle course during low water. Usually a very shallow, muddy river, the Zumbro's water level depends largely on the flow at the Rochester power dam. The dam operators generally release water on weekends, raising the level sufficiently for canoeing.