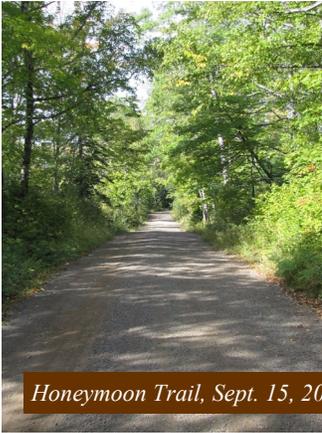


# Superior National Forest



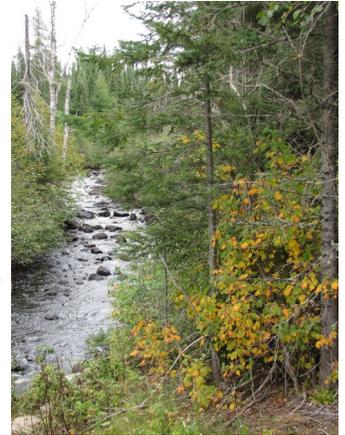
Honeymoon Trail, Sept. 15, 2016



**“We can never know about the days to come  
But we think about them anyway,  
And I wonder if I’m really with you now  
Or just chasin’ after some finer day”**  
- *Anticipation*, Carly Simon



**In some ways, fall is entirely about anticipation.** Trees are anticipating the snow and cold of winter, casting off the leaves that would freeze and lose water during the months of snow and cold. Animals store food or fat, anticipating lean times ahead. People scurry busily washing windows, anticipating times when they will be restricted to the indoor environment looking out. Anticipation can be a great thing: without it, those trees would freeze, the animals would be hungry, and your view of white snow might be shaded gray by dirty glass. Anticipation can change a week-long vacation to several months of planning and reading travel guides, and change one morning of opening presents into an entire season whose decorations take up three large boxes in the basement. But, as the song says, there is a darker side of anticipation. The time you spend “chasin’ after some finer day” is time you’ve lost experiencing the present.



Goldenrod

**The early autumn woods are beautiful this week.** And to be honest, they will be next week and they were last week as well. Goldenrods were wonderful bright spikes of yellow last week, and this week they are warm, brown, fuzzy bundles of seeds - both lovely in their own way, both as worthy of experiencing as whatever next week brings.



Pagami Fire Area

**On a larger scale of years instead of months, this year is the fifth anniversary of the Pagami Creek Fire north of Lake Isabella.** Some people may be anticipating the regrowth of the forest with the tall pines we all knew from before the fire, but they will miss out in participating all the stages the forest will go through in getting there. Right now, the pines are there, but are three to five feet tall. With the abundance of vegetation close to the ground, snowshoe hares think this may be the best phase in the life of a forest. And, with the abundance of snowshoe hares, lynx don’t think it is too bad either.



**So, if you are anticipating the peak of fall color,** and ask me, my reply might be another line from the song: “I’m no prophet, and I don’t know nature’s ways”. No one knows when the peak will be this year, or if it will last a long time, or if it will be as good as last year. Instead of anticipating the peak, participate in the day you’re in. Breathe the air, hear the migrating birds, and see what is out there right now in terms of fall color. You’ll find every day is a peak.

**Our leaves, today, are at around 5% of peak.** Some trees starting to really turn, but mostly still branches, single leaves, and the understory.

