



Recreation Opportunity Guide

Hiking

Ottawa National Forest
Supervisor's Office

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The best way to experience the Ottawa National Forest is to immerse yourself into the forest itself. Take the morning, afternoon or an entire day exploring the Northwoods.

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Hiking trails on the Ottawa National Forest offer something to everyone. More than 196 miles of hiking and backpacking trails vary widely in character. Some provide short easy walks to points of interest, such as waterfalls and historic sites. Cross-country travel is also another challenging opportunity that is offered. This brochure summarizes the Forest's major trails.

Black River

Harbor - Some of the Forest's most popular trails are located in the Black River Harbor area; approximately 15 miles north of Bessemer and Ironwood in Gogebic County. These trails provide access to Great Conglomerate, Gorge, Potawatomi, Sandstone, and Rainbow Falls and range in length from 1/4 to 1-1/2 miles. All trails descend rather steeply from the rim of the Black River Gorge to overlook points. **To ensure your safety, stay on designated trails and observe all regulations.**

Because of its unique character, the trail that serves Potawatomi and Gorge Falls was designated a National Recreation Trail in 1978. Developments

along it include stairways and observation platforms that overlook the Black River and the two waterfalls. **A barrier-free access leading from Gorge Falls parking lot to Potawatomi Falls, provides a unique viewing opportunity for people with disabilities.** There is also a picnic area. Large, old growth hemlock, white pine, and hardwood timber add to the area's beauty. See the Waterfalls brochure for trail information.



North Country National Scenic Trail – There are 116 miles of this National Scenic Trail that crosses

the Ottawa in an east-west direction. When completed, the North Country Trail will extend for about 3,200 miles and will link the Appalachian Trail in Vermont to the Lewis and Clark Trail in North Dakota. See the North Country Trail brochure for details on location. East and west trail maps are available. The North Country Trail is challenging. It traverses areas of very rugged topography and is often several miles from the nearest motor vehicle access point. Most stream crossings are without bridges. There are no developed campsites outside of Black River Harbor Campground. However, trailside camping is permitted.

Gogebic Ridge Trail - An interesting side trip from the Bergland portion of the North Country Trail is the Gogebic Ridge Trail. It begins from a point along Forest Road 250, one mile north of M-28 at Merriweather, or on M-64, 3 miles north of Bergland. The trail leads east from Forest Road 250 along the north and east shore of Weary Lake to a ledge overlooking Lake Gogebic, and then northward where it intersects M-64. The trail crosses M-64 and continues east over Cookout Mountain to Old M-64. After crossing Old M-64, the trail leads to Sandhill Creek, and finally ends at its junction with the North Country Trail.

Cascade Falls Trail - This one-mile trail offers two alternative routes to reach a small waterfall on Cascade Creek. To reach the trailhead parking lot, go 7 miles northeast of Bergland on Forest Road 400 to the junction with Forest Road 468. Two routes depart from the parking lot. The scenic Twin Peaks route climbs a bluff overlooking the West Branch of the Ontonagon River and the Trap Hills. The Valley route avoids the steep path of the higher route but reaches the same destination.

Sylvania Wilderness - In addition to its canoeing and water access camping opportunities, the Sylvania Wilderness near Watersmeet contains nearly 30 miles of foot trails. These trails traverse old growth forests and the shores of several lakes. They are well suited for both day hiking and overnight trips. Overnight campers must stay at one of the area's designated wilderness campsites. A permit for camping is required. See the Sylvania Wilderness trip-planning guide for details.

Interpretive Trails - The Ottawa National Forest contains four trails that feature interpretive signs explaining the sights and sounds along the way. All are 1 to 2-1/2 miles in length and are easy walking. They are located at the Ottawa Visitor Center in Watersmeet, the Beaver Lodge Trail at the Bob Lake Campground, the Deer Marsh Interpretive Trail at Lake Ste. Kathryn and a trail at the Norway Lake Campground.

Scenic Trails - Short trails to waterfalls and scenic vistas are located at Sturgeon Falls and Silver Mountain, north of Sidnaw; Wolf Mountain, east of Wakefield; Yondota Falls, north of Marenisco; and Kakabika Falls between Marenisco and Watersmeet. There are numerous other short hikes to waterfalls and vistas on the Ottawa National Forest. For information on these opportunities, please contact the District Ranger office nearest the desired area. The Norway Lake, Teepee Lake, Perch Lake, and Lake Ste. Kathryn campgrounds also feature short lakeshore trails. A 1/2-mile trail at Brule Lake features the Stateline Historic Treaty Tree Site. Nearby, the Ge-Che & Hagerman-Brule trail doubles as a winter cross-country ski route.

Printed materials, videos and general program information on 'Leave No Trace' land ethics may be obtained by calling 1-800-332-4100.

Additional information can be obtained at any time of the year by contacting any of the District Ranger Offices or Visitor Center.

Ottawa National Forest information is available in large print upon request from the Forest Supervisor's Office in Ironwood, MI (906) 932-1330, TTY 771.

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