



Recreation Opportunity Guide

Short Hikes

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.

05/2015

Bessemer Ranger District

Black River Harbor Falls Trails

Potawatomi/Gorge Falls – Easy to strenuous short hiking trails will take you from a paved double loop parking lot to a series of stairways and observation platforms for views of the beautiful falls. An asphalt surface trail connects the parking area at Gorge Falls to the viewing platform overlooking Potawatomi Falls. The trail, restroom and viewing platform at Potawatomi are fully accessible, providing a unique opportunity to view one of our areas most beautiful waterfalls.

Conglomerate Falls – The trail is $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile in length with a paved parking lot at the trailhead. It is easy to strenuous at times. The hiking trail drops steadily as you near the river. At the falls, the river separates into two sections, falling 40 feet around an island of conglomerate rock, which gives the falls its name.

Sandstone Falls – A $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile hiking trail will take you from a paved parking lot down a series of steps to the falls. The trail is short, but there is a steep series of steps. Not a large falls, but has varied rock formations and hollows carved out of sandstone and conglomerate rock by stream erosion.

Rainbow – The $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile hiking trail will take you from a paved parking lot to a stairway dropping down to an

observation platform overlooking the scenic Rainbow Falls. With the right angle of sunlight, it produces a rainbow effect that gives the falls its name.

Each of the Black River Falls listed can be viewed individually or can be hiked starting at one end and going to the other end. The falls are located about 12 miles north of US-2 on County Road 513. There are directional signs posted.

Portions of North Country Trail – The Black River Segment on the Bessemer Ranger District parallels the Black River for five miles with its scenic rapids and waterfalls from just north of Copper Peak to beautiful Black River Harbor on Lake Superior. From here it crosses the footbridge at the mouth of the Black River, then turns south and again parallels the river to a point just upstream of Rainbow Falls. It then turns eastward for five miles to Gogebic County Road 519. The trail runs north on this road into the Porcupine Mountain Wilderness State Park's Presque Isle Campground.

This is located about 12 miles north of US-2 on County Road 513. There are directional signs.

Wolf Mountain Hike – This is a beautiful, gradual hike through lush northern hardwood foliage. It's rather steep as you near the end, but worth the climb: a breathtaking view awaits you at the top. It is located off

US Hwy 2 at the end of FS Road 9300, approximately 18 miles east of Ironwood.

Iron River Ranger District

Ge-Che Trail by Lake Ottawa - Several different options are available. Scenery is primarily hardwoods, forested, no vistas except for a segment along ridge line adjacent to Ottawa Lake. The length of the trail is approximately nine miles on a dirt trail. The trail is moderate to strenuous, mostly hills with some flat stretches.

This trail is accessible from Ottawa Lake Campground boat landing and also from the campground. Travel South on Highway 73, just west of Iron River, MI, off of US Highway 2, approximately ¾ mile to Lake Ottawa Road then 4 miles to the campground entrance.

Cooks Run - The trail is accessed along FH16, heading south off of US2. Take FH16 approximately 2 miles to the junction of FR 3210. Head west and continue for approximately 1 mile. There is a sign that reads “Hunter Trail,” on the south side of the road, announcing the road that leads into the trail. Follow the road that heads to the north until you see a small parking area on the north side of the road, before the gate.

Cooks Run consists of several miles of trails that take you through aspen, hardwood and conifer stands. The majority of the trail is flat with some small slopes to walk up. The trails go on for many miles with the option to loop back around to the main gate. In the fall, hunters and their dogs take advantage of bird hunting, but all are welcome to come and enjoy the beauty of Cooks Run Hunter Walking Trail. Motorized vehicles of any kind are prohibited.

Morrison Creek - This hunter walking trail will take you through predominantly aspen with some hardwood and conifer stands. The terrain is flat and the trail is easy to walk. The hike is short and can be accomplished in 45 minutes or less.

To access the hunter walking trail follow US2, heading west out of Iron River for approximately 2 miles. Turn north onto 657/Gibbs Road, stay on Gibbs for approximately 7 miles, turn east on FR 3480. The first of two trailheads will be a little over a mile from 657. Both trails head off to the south side of FR 3480. Motorized vehicles of any kind are prohibited.

Stateline – Mile Post Zero National Recreation Trail. Scenery is hardwood, forested with two destination points on Brule River. The trail is easy, with relatively flat surfaces on a dirt trail. Length is approximately 4/10 of a mile.

The trail can be reached from Iron River west on US2 to Highway 73, south approximately ¾ mile to Lake Ottawa Road then approximately 6 to 7 miles to Brule Lake Road take a left and travel 1 to 1 ½ miles to the end of the road.

Timber Lake Trail is a non-loop trail 8/10 mile each way. The trail will take you to beautiful Timber Lake.

The trail can be reached from Iron River by traveling west on US2 approximately 12 miles to FR 3905.

Ottawa Lake Recreation Area – Paved roads through the campground, and a short accessible trail through the picnic area to the fishing pier in the day use area.

This area can be reached west from Iron River on US2 to Hwy 73 south approximately ¾ mile to Lake Ottawa Road, then approximately 4 miles to Lake Ottawa Recreation Area.



Kenton Ranger District

Pine Bluff Trail – The trail is accessed along Highway M28, approx. 1/4 of a mile east of Sidnaw. Take FR 2200 north for approximately 9 miles to its junction with FR 2240. To the west of the junction you will find the

access road to the Pine Bluff Trailhead. The trail is located within the Sturgeon Wilderness so motorized or wheeled vehicles are not permitted. Pine Bluff Trail is approx. 3/4 of a mile long on mostly even, sandy ground. It takes you through jack pine and northern hardwood type forest to the edge of the Sturgeon Gorge. While the trail is only maintained to the edge of the Gorge, it does continue down into the Gorge and is used by both fishermen and hunters. The Gorge is very deep and the climb back out is strenuous. Going down into the Gorge is **not** recommended.

Bears Den Trail - As you leave the Pine Bluff Trailhead and return to FR 2200, turn left, for approximately 3 more miles and you will see the sign for Bears Den Trail. Turn left to access the parking area. Bears Den Trail is approximately 1/4 of a mile long loop trail on mostly even, sandy ground. It takes you through northern hardwoods to a scenic view of the Sturgeon Gorge (nicest in the fall).

Sturgeon Falls Trail - As you leave the Bears Den Trail and return to FR 2200, turn left, go approximately 1/2 mile (300 feet) until you come to the junction with FR 2270. Turn left on FR 2270 and go approximately 1 1/2 mile until you see the sign for Sturgeon Falls Trail. The trail will be on your left but the parking area is on the right. Sturgeon Falls Trail is approximately 3/4 of a mile long on rather steep, sandy ground. The trail has two switchbacks to lessen the grade but is still a strenuous climb back out. The trail takes you on a nice hike through northern hardwoods to one of the tallest falls around.

Sturgeon Falls, Bears Den, and Pine Bluff Trails can also be accessed from the north via highway M38. You would turn south on Prickett Dam Road for approximately 2 1/2 miles until it junctions with FR 2270, turn right on FR 2270 and follow it for approximately 9 miles until you see the sign for Sturgeon Falls Trail. The trail will be on your right but the parking area is on the left. From here you reverse your drive back to Sidnaw and the Bears Den and Pine Bluff Trails.

Approximately 1/8 of a mile north of the parking area for the Sturgeon Falls Trail a spur trail to the North Country Trail leaves FR 2270. This spur is approx. 4/10 of a mile long. Once on the North Country Trail, an individual can go for miles!! The North Country Trail here is about medium difficulty but is a very nice walk through northern hardwoods. A special site to see is the overstory oak with an understory of white pine.

Jumbo Falls Trail - Along highway M28, approximately 1 1/2 miles west of Kenton, take Golden Glow Road south for approximately 1 1/2 miles, to the first intersection and turn left. Stay on the main road (veer right) and follow it all the way through the Jumbo Pit until you come to the parking area for Jumbo Falls Trail. The trail is approximately 1/10 of a mile long on even, common ground. There are two puncheon foot bridges along the trail. The trail takes you through northern hardwoods along the west bank of

the Jumbo River, upstream, to the Jumbo Falls. Nice, short walk, to a nice little falls.

Sparrow Rapids Campground Trail - From M28 in Kenton, take FH 16 north approximately 1/4 of a mile to the junction of FR 1100. Turn left and follow FR 1100 for approx. 3 1/2 miles to Sparrow Rapids Campground. The campground will be on your left. Upon entering the campground you will see the parking area for Sparrow Rapids Campground Trail. The trail is approximately 3/10 of a mile long and takes you through northern hardwoods along the East Branch of the Ontonagon River and provides for excellent trout fishing opportunities. This loop trail is circular and is rather steep at both ends. There are several steps (about 50) that have to be negotiated along the trail.

Deer Marsh Interpretive Trail - From M28 in Sidnaw, take Sidnaw South Road south for approximately 7 miles to its junction with FR 2125 (Martin Lake Road). Turn left and follow FR 2125 for approximately 1/8 of a mile. The trail is looped and approximately 3 miles long, located on rolling, sandy ground. The difficulty of the trail goes from easy, to medium, with a little degree of difficulty. Gravel has been placed on approximately 1/2 mile of the trail. There are several interpretive signs along the trail. There is also a puncheon bridge that crosses a beaver dam and two viewing platforms along the trail. The trail takes you through pine forest and northern hardwoods along the shore of Deer Marsh. The trail can also be accessed at another trailhead located at Lake Ste Kathryn Campground. To access via this trailhead you would continue south on Sidnaw South Road for about 1 1/2 miles until you come to the Lake Ste Kathryn Campground. It will be on your right. Turn right to the campground and the Deer Marsh Trailhead will be on your immediate left.

Davidson Lakes Hunter Trail - From M28 in Trout Creek, take Gardener Road north for about 5 1/2 miles to Five Mile Road. Turn right and follow Five Mile Road, approximately 3 miles, until you come to a gate. Five Mile Road turns into FR 820 when it enters the Ottawa National Forest. Davidson Lakes Hunter Trail is a loop trail, approximately 8 1/2 miles long. The trail can be made shorter by taking different branches. The trail takes you through pine and northern hardwood forests on rolling sandy ground. There are several lakes and ponds to be seen along the trail. Difficulty of walking is between easy and medium. Nice walk with

lots of opportunity to see water fowl and other forest animals.

Ontonagon Ranger District

Beaver Lodge Interpretive Trail - The trail is located near Bob Lake Campground, is about 1 1/4 miles long and takes about 30 minutes to hike. The ground is fairly level with small inclines. The trail can be accessed north of Kenton on Forest Road 1470, then take FR 1478 to Bob Lake Campground. The loop trail begins at the parking lot of the picnic area.

Cycle of Life Trail – This trail is fairly level and takes about one hour to hike. It is accessed about 6 miles east of Mass City off M-38 on Forest Road 1960 at Courtney Lake Campground. It starts across from the day use parking area and ends at campsite 7. There is a bog viewing station on the trail.

O Kun De Kun Trail – The trail is fairly level with slight slopes and takes about 45 minutes to hike. It has pretty waterfalls, an impressive expansion bridge and is fairly easy walking. It is located about halfway between Rockland MI and Bruce Crossing off of US 45.

Cascade Falls Trail – This one mile trail offers two alternative routes to reach a small waterfall on Cascade Creek. 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. To reach the trailhead parking lot, go 7 miles northeast of Bergland on Forest Road 400 to the junction with FR 468. The two routes depart from the parking lot.

Silver Mountain -- Sturgeon River near Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness is north of Sidnaw. There are short trails to waterfalls and scenic vistas. Silver Mountain step hike takes about 45 minutes and is very steep.

Watersmeet Ranger District

Kakabika Water Falls – This trail is difficult with beautiful waterfalls, is approximately 1/4 mile off of county road 527, approximately 13 miles west of Watersmeet on US2.

Meximinee Falls – This is a short, fairly easy trail and follows the river for a good view of the falls. Total length round trip is approximately 1/4 mile. The trail is found at Burned Dam Campgrounds, approximately seven miles northeast of Watersmeet.

Imp Lake Trail – The trail is approximately 1 mile and is a loop trail. It is a nice trail and wheelchair accessible. Part of the trail is boardwalk and at the half-way point, there is decking with wooden chairs. It is particularly pretty with fall colors. The entrance is at the Imp Lake Campground which can be accessed east of Watersmeet on US 2 to FR 3978.

Visitor Center Interpretive Trail – This is a short, paved trail, about 10 minutes long, and loops back to the starting point. There are interpretive signs along the way to explain the variety of plants and trees. The trail is accessed at the Ottawa Visitor Center which is located at the corner of US2 and Hwy 45 in Watersmeet.

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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