

Vermilion Gorge



SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST

LACROIX RANGER DISTRICT

COOK, MINNESOTA



Features

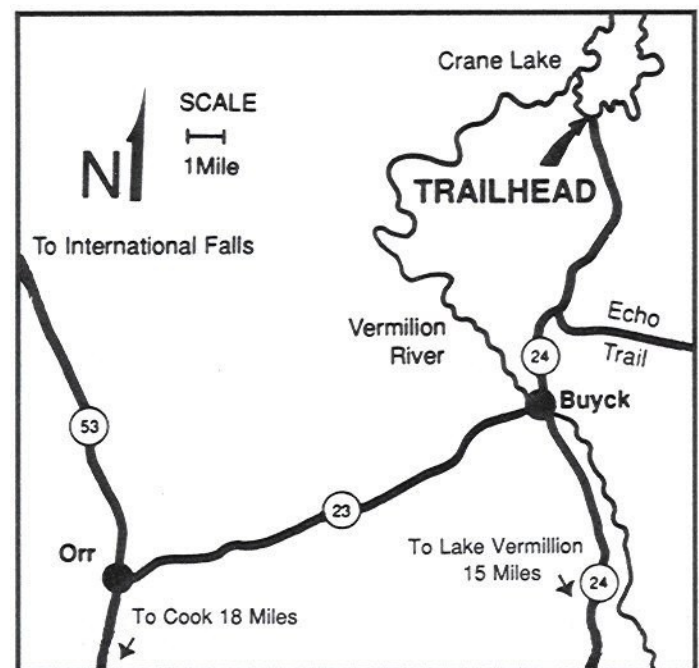
- 1½ mile trail (one-way)
- 3 hours hiking time for round trip
- Scenic overlooks
- Interpretive signs

Location

The Vermilion Gorge trailhead is located in the community of Crane Lake 27 miles northeast of Orr, MN. In Crane Lake, keep left and watch for the Voyageurs National Park office.

Trail parking is on the left in the parking lot past the Voyageurs National Park office. When you drive into the lot the trail begins on your right. Look for the trailhead sign.

Note: Because it is a private parking lot, there may be houseboats and other vehicles or boat trailers obscuring the trailhead. When you park, walk to the edge of the lot and look for the hiking trail sign. Do not get on the snowmobile trail that starts at the back of the lot.



Leave No Trace
on the web at LNT.org

Superior National Forest - Vermilion Gorge

Description

At a leisurely pace, this 1½ mile (one way) trail can be hiked in three hours for a round trip. The last portion of the trail parallels the Vermilion River Gorge, a rugged landscape of sheer granite cliffs and rock outcrops.

From Crane Lake to the Vermilion River the trail is graveled.

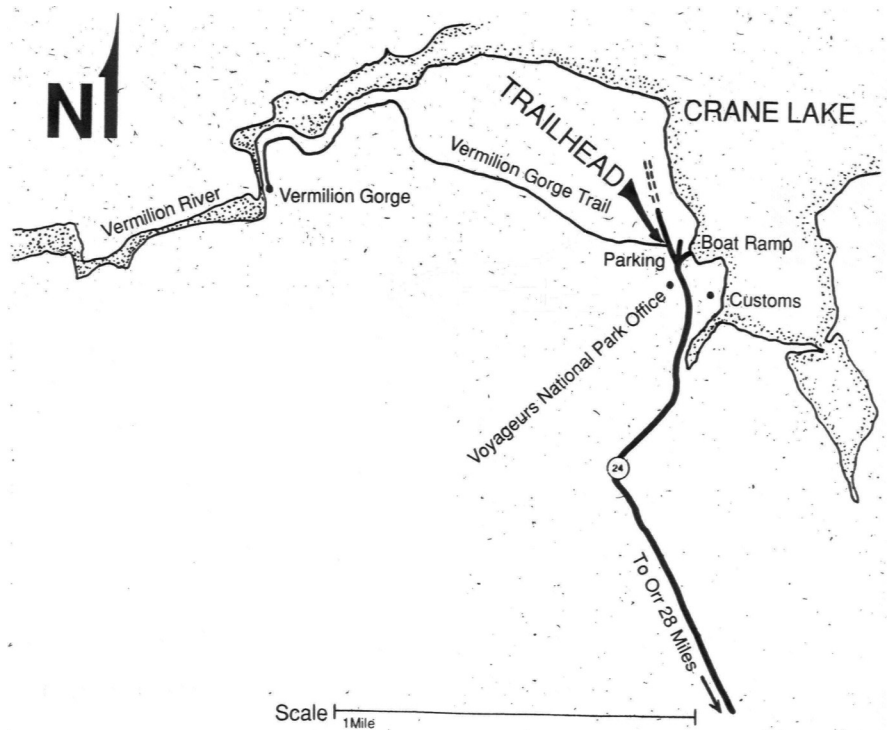
Boardwalks cross wet areas. Near the crest of the first hill, keep right on the hiking trail.

At the river, the trail takes a sharp turn upstream. Here the trail narrows and the surface changes from gravel to native material. This is the steepest part of the trail and, as you climb, notice the change in vegetation. The aspen/birch forest with its dense understory gives way to an open, park-like grove of red pine.

From atop the red pine knoll you can see the Vermilion River entering Crane Lake, completing its 38 mile journey from Lake Vermilion. As you descend from the red pine knob, you will approach the river and the mouth of the gorge.

WARNING:

This section of the trail has steep cliffs nearby. Please keep small children in hand.



History

The Vermilion River and Crane Lake have a rich and colorful history. As you hike along the trail, imagine that you are walking back through time from contemporary Crane Lake to Rene Bourassa's 1736 Trading Post at the mouth of the river.

Interpretive signs describe the logging era of the early 1900's, the Lake Vermilion Gold Rush in the 1920's, and two centuries of fur trade along the Voyageurs Highway. Crane Lake was part of the 3,000 mile waterway connecting Montreal to Lake Athabasca.

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