

Help shape the future of Grand Island National Recreation Area!

To address growing visitation, changes in use, and resource impacts, the USDA Forest Service is developing a comprehensive plan to ensure that Grand Island is a safe and sustainable recreation destination.

Grand Island is one of the most popular and visible areas of the Hiawatha National Forest. Its unique natural and cultural landscape and its proximity to Munising, Michigan, and Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore make it accessible and popular for tourists and locals alike. Visitation has increased from approximately 2,000 visitors each year in the 1990s to over 20,000 visitors annually in 2025. In an effort to continue to provide a safe and exceptional outdoor recreation experience for visitors to the island, the Forest Service is requesting input from the public on how to best manage for these opportunities and many other interests into the future.

We would love to hear from you!

There will be multiple opportunities to connect, provide your feedback, and ask questions. The information gathered through this planning process will inform desired conditions for recreation and visitor experience strategies in the Grand Island area. The USDA Forest Service welcomes your input by June 27, 2025. This is the first of multiple opportunities to engage in the planning process.



- We know that Grand Island is a popular and well-loved area. For generations, people have been drawn to this area to live, play, and connect to nature. **We want to know more about why this place is so special to you. What characteristics, qualities, activities, or other conditions would you like to see maintained for present and future generations?**
- Lifestyle changes, shifting demographics, and technological advances are influencing recreation activities, visitation, and preferences. We want to know more about how to better serve you now and into the future. **What changes would you like to see at Grand Island?**

Please join the conversation by going to https://parkplanning.nps.gov/USFS_GrandIsland to learn more about this planning process and to provide your comments.



Key Issues and Opportunities



CHANGES IN VISITOR USE

Visitor use on Grand Island has increased significantly in recent years, which has created a variety of safety and resource concerns. Changes in types of use, such as the emergence of e-bike use, provide both challenges and opportunities to consider.

TRIBAL ACCESS

The Anishinaabe have lived on the island, hunting, fishing, and following their lifeways since time immemorial, and they continue to do so today. Ensuring Tribal access to Grand Island is a key component of this planning effort.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Much of Grand Island's infrastructure requires substantial maintenance and upgrades. Historic and recreational infrastructure is increasingly strained due to deferred maintenance and desired future uses.

LAND AND FACILITIES ACQUISITION

Land and facilities acquisition is a key component of the Grand Island National Recreation Area's enabling legislation and continues to shape the transition of private lands and infrastructure to USDA Forest Service management.



COMMERCIAL USE

Ensuring access to Grand Island from the mainland for both visitors and residents is critical. Broadening the types of use currently authorized and addressing challenges around other commercial uses and requests are key opportunities.

RESOURCE PROTECTION

The island's natural and cultural resources are increasingly vulnerable to trail and shore erosion, trampling of sensitive habitats, threats to rare plants, and ground-disturbing activities related to unauthorized camping and visitor-created fire pits. Improper food storage has led to more frequent bear encounters.

For more information on these key issues and opportunities, visit the project StoryMap at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/df638b34451b44c1a651624f29a6cb1b>.

