Backcountry Trip Planner

Backcountry Permits

The Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore backcountry offers opportunities for solitude, inspiration, physical challenge, and renewal. The North Country National Scenic Trail lies adjacent to Lake Superior through the 42 mile long park. Backcountry camping is available at 14 campgrounds.

A Backcountry Use Permit is required for all overnight trips in the backcountry. The permit is valid only for the dates, locations and party size specified. Permits are not required for day hiking; however, day hikers must observe all backcountry regulations.

All Backcountry Use Permits must be obtained in person and not more than one day before your departure. When obtaining your permit, you will receive important information on current trail and campsite conditions, hazards, regulations, and restrictions.

The key to a successful trip is careful planning and preparation. Please read this publication thoroughly. When planning your itinerary, keep in mind the time of year, terrain, weather, and the physical condition of everyone in your party. Remember you can only travel as fast as the slowest person in your group.

Each campsite has restrictions on group size, water access, wood fires and length of stay. Campsite information is listed on pages 5-12.

Reservations

Backcountry campsite reservations may be made, but reservations are not required. The reservation fee for each trip is $15. Reservations are accepted beginning January 1 of each year. Reservation requests must be received at least 30 days before the start of the trip. For detailed reservation information, see page 10.

Where to get your permit

Permits are available at the Interagency Visitor Center in Munising Oct-May. From June to Sept, permits are available at the Munising Falls Visitor Center or Grand Sable Visitor Center.

If arriving after business hours, you must wait until the next day to obtain your permit and begin your trip. Only people in the camping party may obtain the permit.

The Lakeshore backcountry is very popular, especially in July, August and holiday weekends. Advance planning and having an alternate itinerary are important when requesting a permit.

Camping at Lowney Creek - Beaver Basin Wilderness

Kayaking along the Pictured Rocks Cliffs

A user fee of $5 per person, per night is required when you pick up your permit. There are no refunds.

Individual campsites are available for camping parties of 1-6 people (2 tent/hammock limit). Groups of 7-20 people must camp in des-ignated group sites. Maximum consecutive day stay at a camp-ground is three.

Winter Camping

Lars Jensen photo

Winter camping regulations permit camping outside of designated sites. A snow depth of 6 inches or more is required for winter camping rules to take effect.

A backcountry permit is required year-round. The fee is $5 per person, per night ($15 reservation fee). Winter camping information and backcountry regulations are listed on page 7.

Black Bears and *YOU*

To protect yourself and the bears, follow these simple steps.

Don't let your actions cause a bear or other animal to be relocated or destroyed. A bear has an acute sense of smell. If you leave food out and unattended, you are inviting a bear into your camp. Why? A bear conditioned to human food is more likely to be aggressive and, subsequently, to injure or kill people in an attempt to obtain this easy source of food. When such a bear poses a risk of injuring someone, it is often necessary to destroy that bear.

Photo: Northwest Passages LTD

Store

Store food in the food storage locker or hang on the food storage poles located in each backcountry campground. Store anything possibly edible by a bear such as food, food scraps, trash, toothpaste, medications, lip balm and cosmetics. When using the food storage pole, hang only a food bag - not the entire pack (which may bend the pole and make it unusable).

Clean

Keep your campsite clean. Take food out of the food locker or down from the pole only when actively engaged in preparing, eating, or cleaning up your meal. At all other times, store those items including food scraps and trash. Never take food in your tent.

Noisy and BIG

If a bear challenges you for your food, make noise, assume a "large" stance, and get others to help you. If the bear shows aggressive behavior (e.g. growling, "chuffing" or physically challenging you) slowly back away from the animal, maintaining your stance and noise.

Report

Report any bear/human interactions to park staff at 906-387-3700 or 906-494-2660.

Food storage locker and pole

Be Prepared

Weather

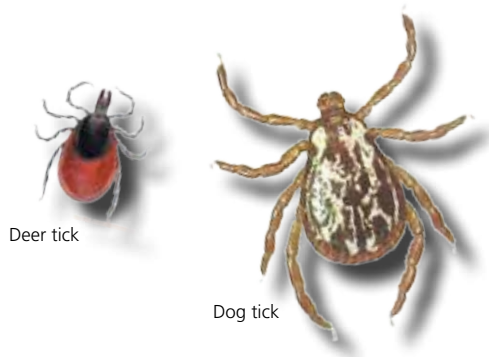
The weather at Pictured Rocks can be unpredictable. High winds and storm conditions on Lake Superior are common. The area is the second-most cloudy region of the United States, characterized by an annual mean cloud cover of 70 percent. Much of the cloudiness occurs in autumn and winter, and can be attributed to cool air flowing over Lake Superior being warmed along the shore and forming clouds. This often results in rain, fog, and snow. Spring is relatively clear due to the cold water surface of the lake. The average summer daytime temperatures are in the low 70s.

Month	Avg. high temp.	Avg. low temp.	Avg. precip.	Avg. snowfall
January	25.1 °F -3.8 °C	10.7 °F -11.8°C	3.03 inches	41.6 inches
February	27.5 °F -2.5 °C	11.5 °F -11.3°C	1.59	19.2
March	35.3 °F 1.8 °C	19.8 °F -6.7°C	2.16	16.3
April	46.3 °F 7.9 °C	29.9 °F -1.1°C	1.83	6.1
May	61.2 °F 16.2 °C	40.0 °F 4.4 °C	2.85	0.7
June	70.2 °F 21.2 °C	49.7°F 9.8 °C	2.68	0
July	74.1 °F 21.8 °C	55.6°F 13.1 °C	3.36	0
August	74.1 °F 23.3 °C	55.6°F 13.1 °C	3.20	0
September	65.7 °F 18.7 °C	48.4°F 9.1 °C	3.60	0
October	53.6 °F 12 °C	37.9°F 4.2 °C	3.99	2.9
November	39.4 °F 4.1 °C	27.2°F -2.6 °C	3.26	16.3
December	29.1 °F -1.6 °C	16.4°F -8.6 °C	2.99	37.6

Mosquitoes and Flies

In mid-spring to early summer, mosquitoes and black flies are the most prevalent insects in Pictured Rocks. Deer flies and horse flies appear by mid-summer, generally when the mosquitoes and black flies decrease in number. In mid to late summer, the stable fly appears on Pictured Rocks beaches, and tends to bite legs and ankles.

It is always best to play it safe and avoid being bitten by mosquitoes and biting flies. Use protective clothing or insect repellant, and carry an allergy medicine or antihistamine in case of an allergic reaction.



Deer tick

Dog tick

Ticks

While it is a good idea to take preventive measures against ticks year-round, be extra vigilant in warmer months (April-September) when ticks are most active. A few things to remember:

- Avoid wooded and bushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.
- Walk in the center of trails.
- Repel ticks with DEET or permethrin. Use repellents that contain 20% or more DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide) on exposed skin for protection that lasts up to several hours. Always follow product instructions. Parents should apply this product to their children, avoiding hands, eyes, and mouth.
- Use products that contain permethrin on clothing. Treat clothing and gear, such as boots, pants, socks and tents. It remains protective through several washings. Pre-treated clothing is available and remains protective for up to 70 washings.
- Other repellents registered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) may be found at http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/.

Find and Remove Ticks from Your Body

- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors (preferably within two hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks.
- Conduct a full-body tick check using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body upon return from tick-infested areas. Parents should check their children for ticks under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist, and especially in their hair.
- Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and day packs. Tumble dry clothes on high heat for an hour to kill remaining ticks.

Be Prepared

Regulations

- A backcountry permit including payment of fee is required.
- A backcountry permit allows occupancy of the campsite until noon of the day the party is scheduled to leave.
- No pets.
- Store food in a food storage locker or hang only your food bag from the bear pole.
- Camp only in designated sites and follow permit itinerary.
- Six people maximum per site.
- Parties of 7 to 20 people must use group sites.
- Camp within 15 feet of a numbered post.
- Maximum of two tents/hammocks per numbered individual site.
- Campfires allowed only in communal metal fire rings. Use only dead and down wood.
- Wood fires are prohibited at Chapel and Mosquito campgrounds.
- No axes or hatchets.
- All trash must be carried out.
- No bikes or wheeled or motorized vehicles allowed in the backcountry.
- Follow Leave No Trace ethics. Bury human waste.
- Glass bottles and containers are prohibited in backcountry campsites.
- Hammocks are allowed in replace of a tent but you must stay within 15 feet of the numbered post. Keep in mind not all sites have trees. Remember to Leave No Trace; if your hammock straps cause tree damage, do not use it.

Emergency Communication and Cell Phones

Backcountry cell phone users should not count on their cell phones as a reliable means of emergency communication because many areas do not offer reception. Satellite phones typically have better coverage, but are not 100% reliable due to varying satellite coverage. Regardless of whether you carry a phone, all backcountry visitors should have a plan for what to do in case of an emergency.

Winter Regulations

- A Backcountry Permit including payment of fee is required.
- A snow depth of six inches is required for these rules to take effect.
- Winter camping is permitted at drive-in campgrounds without charge; no permit required.
- Winter camping must be at least 100 feet off park roads.
- Winter camping must be at least 100 feet from any creek, river, or lake.
- Campfires are not permitted. Backpack stove use is permitted.
- Camping is not permitted in areas shown as closed to hunting on the approved Lakeshore Hunting Closure Map. Refer to the lakeshore's website to view the closure map. http://www.nps.gov/piro/plan-yourvisit/wintercamping.htm

Water Treatment

Backcountry water may look clean and refreshing, but contaminants such as the microscopic protozoan *Giardia lamblia* may be present. Ingesting giardia can cause giardiasis, an intestinal disorder that may appear weeks after your trip. As a safeguard, boil water for one full minute or filter it through a one micron filter before using. If staying at Trappers Lake, ask visitor center staff for current water quality information.

Hiking through Chapel Beach campground

Trailheads and Shuttles

Trailheads

There are 15 trailheads in Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. When obtaining your Backcountry Permit at the Interagency Visitor Center or Grand Sable Visitor Center, you will choose your starting and ending trailheads. Trailhead locations from west to east:

1. Munising Falls	2. Sand Point
3. Miners Castle	4. Miners Beach West
5. Miners Beach East	6. Little Beaver Lake
7. Beaver Basin Overlook	8. Chapel and Mosquito
9. Twelvemile Beach	10. Hurricane River
11. Log Slide	12. Grand Sable Lake Overlook
13. Grand Sable Lake picnic area	14. Grand Sable Visitor Center
15. Sable Falls	

Entering the Park from the North Country Trail

Backcountry permits must be obtained in person. The Interagency Visitor Center in Munising is to the west and is open year around. The Grand Sable Visitor Center is near Grand Marais to the east and is open during the summer months. For further information, please contact the Interagency Visitor Center at 906-387-3700.

Hiking Tips from a Park Ranger

When hiking in the backcountry, most people will average about 2 to 3 miles per hour. Hiking on a backcountry trail can be more strenuous than walking on a paved or gravel path in your neighborhood park.

The trail system in Pictured Rocks has varying terrain including fairly level trail with few obstacles, narrow and root covered trail, hills with rustic stairs, and hard pack or soft sand. Depending upon the trail, the hike may take longer than expected. Allow yourself time to enjoy the trail, park and nature. After all, you are on vacation!

Shuttle Service Information

As of 2012, there are two shuttle services to serve your transportation needs. Call or visit their websites for schedule times, prices and additional information.

ALTRAN – Alger County Transit
530 E Munising Ave., P.O. Box 69
Munising, Michigan 49862
Phone: 906-387-4845
E-mail: info@altranbus.com
Web: http://www.altranbus.com/backpack.html

Pictured Rocks Shuttle Service
Phone: 989-954-2424
E-mail: trailspotters@gmail.com
Web: http://www.trailspotters.com.

Shuttle Service Tips from a Park Ranger

1. If you are going to use a shuttle service, always make a reservation.
2. Park your vehicle at your ending location and ride the shuttle to your starting location. That way you will not have to be in a hurry to catch the shuttle at a specific time on your last day. Your vehicle will wait for you; the shuttle will not.
3. Make sure you have your car keys and keep them in a safe place during your trip.

Pets

Can Our Pet Hike With Us?

No. Pets are not permitted on trails in the Lakeshore backcountry. They may become lost or injured by porcupines or other wildlife; intimidate other visitors; harass, injure, or kill wildlife and disturb other hikers or campers.

Your pet is permitted along roads and in designated, developed visitor facility areas at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. Pets must be kept on a six-foot leash at all times.

MUNISING AREA

Munising Falls
Pets are permitted on the trail to Munising Falls. Pets are not permitted on the former Becker farm entrance road and fields or on the North Country Trail.

Sand Point
Pets are permitted on the beaches of Sand Point and on Sand Point Road. Pets are prohibited on the Sand Point Marsh Trail and all inland areas of Sand Point.

Miners Falls
Pets are permitted in the picnic area and parking lot, but are prohibited on the trail to Miners Falls.

Miners Castle
Pets are permitted in the Miners Castle picnic and overlook area. They are prohibited on the North Country Trail to Miners Beach. Pets are prohibited on the North Country Trail west of Miners Castle to Sand Point and on the North Country Trail beginning at the east end of Miners Beach.

Miners Beach
Pets are permitted on Miners Beach.

Little Beaver Lake Campground
Pets are permitted in the campground. Pets are prohibited on the White Pine interpretive trail.

Beaver Basin Overlook
Pets are permitted in the parking area and road. Pets are prohibited on the trail into Beaver Basin.

Chapel Falls
Pets are prohibited on all trails in the Chapel area, including the trail to the falls.

GRAND MARAIS AREA

Twelvemile Beach Campground
Pets are permitted in the campground, picnic area, and Lake Superior beach areas directly in front of drive-in campgrounds and picnic areas. They are prohibited on the White Birch interpretive trail.

Hurricane River Campground and Au Sable Light Station
Pets are permitted in the campground, picnic area and trail between campgrounds, and Lake Superior beach areas directly in front of drive-in campgrounds and picnic areas. They are prohibited on the North Country Trail to and beyond the Au Sable Light Station and west of Hurricane River on the North Country Trail.

Log Slide
Pets are permitted in the parking lot and picnic area only. They are not permitted on the trail leading to the overlook platform. Pets are prohibited on the Log Slide and the beach below, and the North Country Trail east and west of the Log Slide.

Grand Sable Lake Overlook
Pets are permitted in the picnic area and parking lot.

Grand Sable Visitor Center
Pets are permitted in the parking areas. They are not permitted on the trail to Sable Falls.

Grand Sable Lake Boat Ramp
Pets are permitted in the boat ramp area.

Sable Falls
Pets are permitted in the parking lot and picnic area. They are not permitted on the trail to the falls.

Endangered piping plovers nest on the wide sandy beaches in the Grand Marais area from May through July. Any disturbance to the birds during this time greatly reduces nesting success. Please walk your pet on a leash within 30 feet of the water's edge.

Pet food can attract bears and other wildlife into your camp. Keep pet bowls in your vehicle when not in use. Clean up any spilled food. Dogs can be territorial – avoid approaching campsites where dogs are present. Please report aggressive or barking dogs to the Campground Host or a Park Ranger. Failure to properly leash or physically control your pet may be subject to a fine. Please clean up after your pet.

Hunting dogs are permitted on Lakeshore lands during legal hunting periods, when accompanied by a licensed hunter engaged in hunting. During these periods, hunting dogs may travel unrestrained in all backcountry and non-developed areas of the Lakeshore. Dogs accompanying legal hunters, but not actively engaged in hunting, must be on a six-foot leash in all backcountry and non-developed areas. Hunting dogs must be on a six-foot leash in developed areas.

Backcountry Campsites

Campsite Name	Size	Site Information and Restrictions
Cliffs	3	One designated fire ring, no water
Cliffs Group		*One designated fire ring, no water*
Potato Patch	3	One designated fire ring, no water
Mosquito River Group		*No fires, toilet, water source is Mosquito River and Lake Superior*
Mosquito River	5	No fires, toilet, water source is Mosquito River or Lake Superior
Chapel Beach	6	No fires, toilet, water source is Chapel Creek and Lake Superior
Coves Group		*One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior*
Coves	5	Two designated fire rings, water source is Lake Superior
Beaver Creek	6	One designated fire ring, water source is Beaver Creek or Lake Superior
Pine Bluff	5	One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior
Trappers Lake	5	One designated fire ring, water source is Trappers Lake
Trappers Lake Group		*One designated fire ring, water source is Trappers Lake*
Lowney Creek	4	One designated fire ring, water source is Beaver Lake and Lowney Creek
Lowney Creek Group		*One designated fire ring, water source is Beaver Lake*
Sevenmile Creek	5	One designated fire ring, water source is Sevenmile Creek or Lake Superior
Sevenmile Creek Group		*One designated fire ring, water source is Sevenmile Creek or Lake Superior*
Benchmark	6	Two designated fire rings, water source is Lake Superior
Au Sable Point East	6	One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior
Au Sable Point East Group		*One designated fire ring, water source is Lake Superior*
Masse Homestead	3	One designated fire ring, no water
Masse Homestead Group		*One designated fire ring, no water*
Grand Sable Lake	1	Boat-in only, one designated fire ring, toilet, water source is Grand Sable Lake

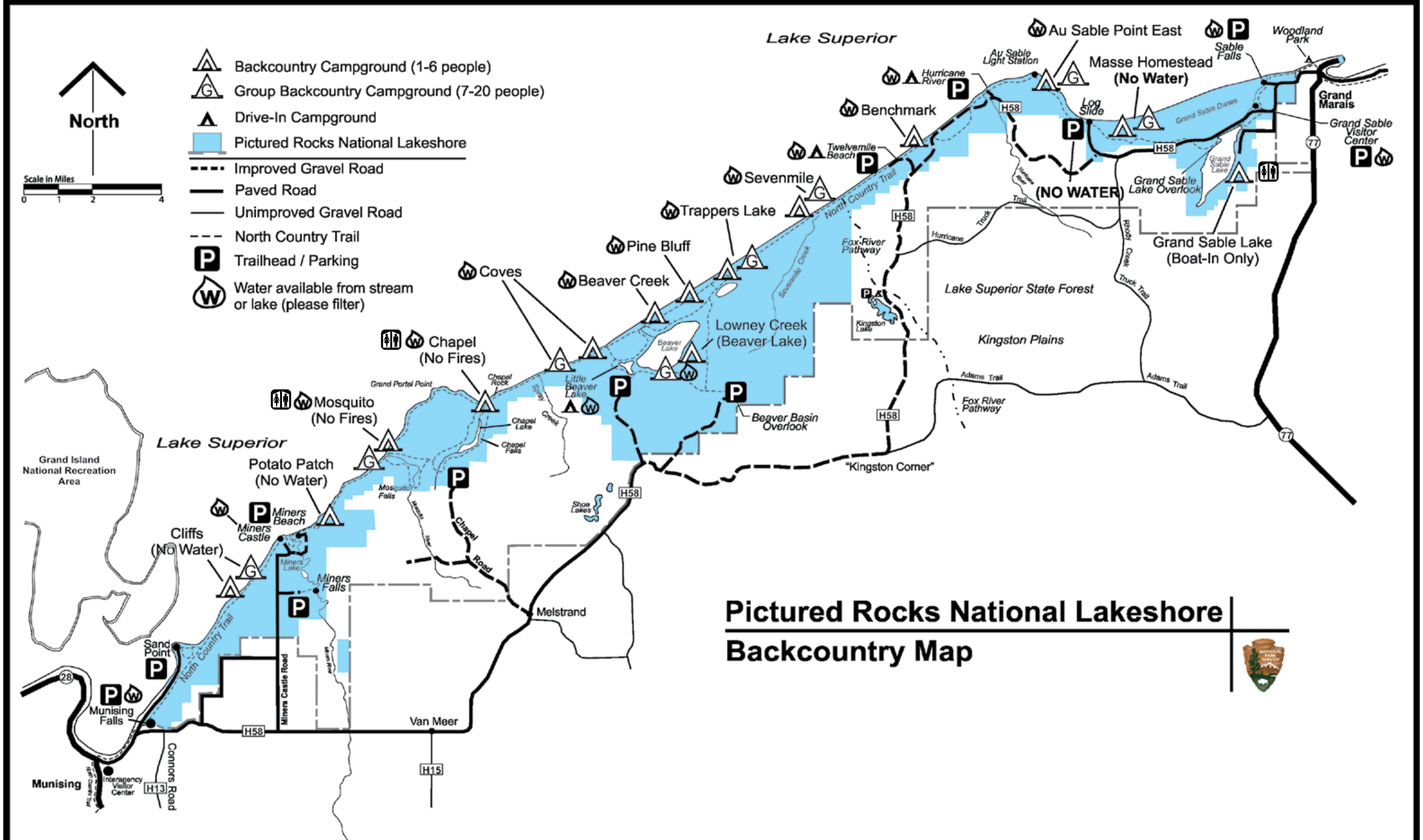
Trail Mileage

	Grand Sable Visitor Center	Masse Homestead *	Log Slide	Au Sable Point East *	Au Sable Lighthouse	Hurricane River C.G.	Benchmark *	Twelvemile Beach C.G.	Fox River Pathway Jct.	Sevenmile Creek *	Trappers Lake Trail	Pine Bluff *	Beaver Creek *	Little Beaver Lake Trail Jct.	Coves *	Coves Group *	Chapel Rock	Chapel *	Mosquito *	Potato Patch *	Miners Castle	Cliffs Group *	Cliffs *	Sand Point Junction	Munising Falls
Grand Sable Visitor Center		4.1	5.3	7.1	7.5	8.7	11.2	11.5	14	14.4	18	18.9	20.4	21.5	21.7	23.2	25.7	26	30.4	33.5	35.4	36	37.3	39.5	42.4
Masse Homestead *	4.1		1.2	3	3.4	4.6	7.1	7.4	9.9	10.3	13.9	14.8	16.3	17.4	17.6	19.1	21.6	21.9	26.3	29.4	31.3	31.9	33.2	35.4	38.3
Log Slide	5.3	1.2		1.8	2.2	3.4	5.9	6.2	8.7	9.1	12.7	13.6	15.1	16.2	16.4	17.9	20.4	20.7	25.1	28.2	30.1	30.7	32	34.2	37.1
Au Sable Point East *	7.1	3	1.8		0.4	1.6	4.1	4.4	6.9	7.3	10.9	11.8	13.3	14.4	14.6	16.1	18.6	18.9	23.3	26.4	28.3	28.9	30.2	32.4	35.3
Au Sable Lighthouse	7.5	3.4	2.2	0.4		1.2	3.7	4	6.5	6.9	10.5	11.4	12.9	14	14.2	15.7	18.2	18.5	22.9	26	27.9	28.5	29.8	32	34.9
Hurricane River C.G.	8.7	4.6	3.4	1.6	1.2		2.5	2.8	5.3	5.7	9.3	10.2	11.7	12.8	13	14.5	17	17.3	21.7	24.8	26.7	27.3	28.6	30.8	33.7
Benchmark *	11.2	7.1	5.9	4.1	3.7	2.5		0.3	2.8	3.2	6.8	7.7	9.2	10.3	10.5	13	14.5	14.8	19.2	22.3	24.2	24.8	26.1	28.3	31.2
Twelvemile Beach C.G.	11.5	7.4	6.2	4.4	4	2.8	0.3		2.5	2.9	6.5	7.4	8.9	10	10.2	11.7	14.2	14.5	18.9	22	23.9	24.5	25.8	28	30.9
Fox River Pathway Jct.	14	9.9	8.7	6.9	6.5	5.3	2.8	2.5		0.4	4	4.9	6.4	7.5	7.7	9.2	11.7	12	16.4	19.5	21.4	22	23.3	25.5	28.4
Sevenmile Creek *	14.4	10.3	9.1	7.3	6.9	5.7	3.2	2.9	0.4		3.6	4.5	6	7.1	7.3	8.8	11.3	11.6	16	19.1	21	21.6	22.9	25.1	28
Trappers Lake Trail	18	13.9	12.7	10.9	10.5	9.3	6.8	6.5	4	3.6		0.9	2.4	3.5	3.7	5.2	7.7	8	12.4	15.5	17.4	18	19.3	21.5	24.4
Pine Bluff *	18.9	14.8	13.6	11.8	11.4	10.2	7.7	7.4	4.9	4.5	0.9		1.5	2.6	2.8	4.3	6.8	7.1	11.5	14.6	16.5	17.1	18.4	20.6	23.5
Beaver Creek *	20.4	16.3	15.1	13.3	12.9	11.7	9.2	8.9	6.4	6	2.4	1.5		1.1	1.3	2.8	5.3	5.6	10	13.1	15	15.6	16.9	19.1	22
Little Beaver Lake Trail Jct.	21.5	17.4	16.2	14.4	14	12.8	10.3	10	7.5	7.1	3.5	2.6	1.1		0.2	1.7	4.2	4.5	8.9	12	13.9	14.5	15.8	18	20.9
Coves *	21.7	17.6	16.4	14.6	14.2	13	10.5	10.2	7.7	7.3	3.7	2.8	1.3	0.2		1.5	4	4.3	8.7	11.8	13.7	14.3	15.6	17.8	20.7
Coves Group *	23.2	19.1	17.9	16.1	15.7	14.5	12	11.7	9.2	8.8	5.2	4.3	2.8	1.7	1.5		2.5	2.8	7.2	10.3	12.2	12.8	14.1	16.3	19.2
Chapel Rock	25.7	21.6	20.4	18.6	18.2	17	14.5	14.2	11.7	11.3	7.7	6.8	5.3	4.2	4	2.5		0.3	4.7	7.8	9.7	10.3	11.6	13.8	16.7
Chapel *	26	21.9	20.7	18.9	18.5	17.3	14.8	14.5	12	11.6	8	7.1	5.6	4.5	4.3	2.8	0.3		4.4	7.5	9.4	10	11.3	13.5	16.4
Mosquito *	30.4	26.3	25.1	23.3	22.9	21.7	19.2	18.9	16.4	16	12.4	11.5	10	8.9	8.7	7.2	4.7	4.4		3.1	5	5.6	6.9	9.1	12
Potato Patch *	33.5	29.4	28.2	26.4	26	24.8	22.3	22	19.5	19.1	15.5	14.6	13.1	12	11.8	10.3	7.8	7.5	3.1		1.9	2.5	3.8	6	8.9
Miners Castle	35.4	31.3	30.1	28.3	27.9	26.7	24.2	23.9	21.4	21	17.4	16.5	15	13.9	13.7	12.2	9.7	9.4	5	1.9		0.6	1.9	4.1	7
Cliffs Group *	36	31.9	30.7	28.9	28.5	27.3	24.8	24.5	22	21.6	18	17.1	15.6	14.5	14.3	12.8	10.3	10	5.6	2.5	0.6		1.3	3.5	6.4
Cliffs *	37.3	33.2	32	30.2	29.8	28.6	26.1	25.8	23.3	22.9	19.3	18.4	16.9	15.8	15.6	14.1	11.6	11.3	6.9	3.8	1.9	1.3		2.2	5.1
Sand Point Junction	39.5	35.4	34.2	32.4	32	30.8	28.3	28	25.5	25.1	21.5	20.6	19.1	18	17.8	16.3	13.8	13.5	9.1	6	4.1	3.5	2.2		2.9
Munising Falls	42.4	38.3	37.1	35.3	34.9	33.7	31.2	30.9	28.4	28	24.4	23.5	22	20.9	20.7	19.2	16.7	16.4	12	8.9	7	6.4	5.1	2.9	

Chapel Rock

Heading out at Miners Castle

Backcountry Map



Trail Descriptions

Munising Falls to Mosquito River

The North Country Trail gradually climbs up the hill/escarpment and leads you near Sand Point. The trail continues to the east overlooking Lake Superior. Past Sand Point, the trail travels on top of the cliffs in a dense forest. The trail can be wet in this area, though there is boardwalk in the wettest locations. You will hike past Cliffs group and Cliffs backcountry campgrounds before reaching Miners Castle. The North Country Trail delivers you to the paved trail at Miners Castle Overlook and Information Center. Hike towards the parking lot and around the information center. The trail picks up again on the east side of the information center. The paved path turns to dirt as you start your descent to Miners River. Once you cross over Miners River, follow the trail along the Miners Beach bluff. The trail is sandy and pine needle covered. You will have a view of Miners Beach and Lake Superior for about a mile until crossing through the Miners Beach trailhead parking lot and back up the escarpment. At the top of the hill, you will pass by the Potato Patch backcountry campground entrance. Continuing on, the trail wanders along the cliff line until near Mosquito River where it slowly descends until you follow the bridge over the river.

Mosquito River to Spray Falls

Crossing over the Mosquito River, you can choose to head south to the Mosquito River backcountry campground or head east on the North Country Trail. The trail from the Mosquito River to the Chapel River is the most popular section of the North Country Trail. You will follow the cliffs, through the trees, over sandy windblown sections and are rewarded with views of Grand Portal Point and Lake Superior. The trail drops in elevation and travels over the Chapel Beach bluff and past the Chapel backcountry campground. Just past Chapel Beach is Chapel Creek and Chapel Rock. The stairs will lead back up on the cliffs towards Spray Falls.

Spray Falls to Sevenmile Creek

Once you hike over the Spray Creek bridge, you have entered the Beaver Basin Wilderness. Just beyond the bridge you will have an opportunity to view Spray Falls cascading into Lake Superior. Beyond Spray Falls, you will hike up and down rustic stairs and in and out of coves. The scenery is picturesque, but the hiking can be strenuous in this section. The trail passes by Coves group campground, which is still along the cliff line. Before reaching Coves campground east of the group site, the terrain changes. The coves and cliffs make way to many miles of beach. The North Country Trail stays along the bluff with sand and pines leading the way to Beaver Creek. The sandy trail dips down to cross over Beaver Creek then leads back up into the pines. The trail follows the bluff and parallels the beach to pass by Pine Bluff backcountry campground. If your destination is Trappers Lake or Trappers Lake Campground, take the trail about 0.5 miles east of Pine Bluff campground. If you remain on the North Country Trail, it will wind in and out of the forest and lead to Sevenmile Creek backcountry campground. Past the campground, cross the bridge over Sevenmile Creek and hike through Sevenmile group backcountry campground.

Sevenmile Creek to Au Sable Light Station

The hike from Sevenmile Creek to Twelvemile Beach Campground is fairly level through the forest and provides views of the beach and Lake Superior. The North Country Trail leads through Twelvemile Beach Campground and picks up again before the day use parking area for Twelvemile Beach. Between the drive-in campground and H-58, the trail is soft sand and follows the shoreline. Once you cross over H-58, the trail leads into an old growth hemlock forest until crossing back over H-58. Upon crossing H-58 for the second time, the North Country Trail follows the shoreline and leads through the Hurricane River Campground. Hike through the drive-in campground and past a gate. As you pass by the gate, the Au Sable Light Station is only a mile and a half away on a level path. Note the signs on the North Country Trail that guide you to the beach to see remnants of a shipwreck. For more shipwreck information visit http://www.nps.gov/piro/historyculture/upload/Shipwrecks.pdf. As you near the Au Sable Light Station, the large buildings will begin to appear through the trees.

Au Sable Light Station to Grand Sable Visitor Center

The North Country Trail guides you through the Au Sable Light Station grounds with views of the Grand Sable Dunes. It leads to the entrance to Au Sable Point East group and Au Sable Point East backcountry campgrounds. If neither of those campgrounds is your destination, continue east to the Grand Sable Dunes. The trail guides through the forest and past the Log Slide. The Log Slide viewing platform provides views of the Au Sable Light Station and the dunes. East of the Log Slide, the trail guides around the dunes and is fairly level. You will pass the trail for Masse Homestead and Masse Homestead group backcountry campgrounds. Continuing east, cross H-58 and remain inland. The North Country Trail leads to Grand Sable Lake and the day use picnic area. Travel through the picnic area to H-58 then follow H-58, which is sandwiched between Grand Sable Lake and Grand Sable Dunes. At the east side of Grand Sable Lake, there is a small trailhead where the North Country Trail leads back into the forest for a short time. The trail opens up into an old apple orchard and passes by the Grand Sable Visitor Center.

Grand Sable Visitor Center to the east boundary of Pictured Rocks

Most visitors start or end their backpacking journey at Grand Sable Visitor Center. However, if you are continuing your journey, the North Country Trail continues east through the forest to Sable Falls and beyond. The trail leads down the walkway and steps to Sable Falls and to the shoreline of Lake Superior. In less than a mile, you will come to the eastern boundary of the park.

Backcountry Fishing

Pictured Rocks has fishing regulations and bait restrictions that are not posted in the Michigan state fishing guide, but they are posted on the lakeshore's website. If you plan to fish while you are staying in the backcountry of Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, please visit our website http://www.nps.gov/piro/planyourvisit/fishing.htm. Also, be on the lookout for Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS).

Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) is a fish disease that can cause large-scale mortality and has been detected in 32 species of fish in the lower Great Lakes since 2003. VHS does not pose a threat to human health. Refer to or our website http://www.nps.gov/piro/naturescience/vhs.htm for photos of diseased fish and further information.

Hiking Tips from a Park Ranger

When hiking in the backcountry, most people will average about 2 to 3 miles per hour. Hiking on a backcountry trail can be more strenuous than walking on a paved or gravel path in your neighborhood park.

The trail system in Pictured Rocks has varying terrain including fairly level trail with few obstacles, narrow and root covered trail, hills with rustic stairs, and hard pack or soft sand. Depending upon the trail, the hike may take longer than expected. Allow yourself time to enjoy the trail, park and nature. After all, you are on vacation!

No one likes to see toilet paper or smell human waste near a trail or campsite. Find a spot away at least 200 feet away from a trail and campsite, dig a small hole 6 to 8 inches deep for solid human waste, and pack out toilet paper and hygiene products. It is simple to Leave No Trace and future hikers will thank you for it!

Backcountry Campground Descriptions

From West to East

Cliffs campground rests high above Lake Superior inland from the North Country Trail. The three campsites are in an open area with little cover between sites. During the summer months when the foliage is at its peak, you cannot see Lake Superior from the campground. There are places along the trail where to sneak a peek of Grand Island and the lake.

Cliffs group campground is one mile east of Cliffs campground. It too lies high above Lake Superior and inland from the North Country Trail. You will not be able to see the lake from the campground in the summer. There are spots along the North Country Trail near the campground to get a glimpse of Grand Island and Lake Superior.

Potato Patch campground is inland from the North Country Trail. Follow a trail through an open field with the sounds of a waterfall at your back. The fire ring is at the entrance to the campground. Follow the trail to the right and to reach each of the three sites. Within the campground, the view of Grand Island and Lake Superior is blocked during the summer by the birch and maple leaves.

Mosquito River group campground is on the west side of Mosquito River just a few steps away from the North Country Trail. There is a bluff near the campsite overlooking Lake Superior, which provides easy access to Mosquito Beach and River.

Mosquito River campground is on the east side of the Mosquito River high above the lake. Depending upon which of the five sites you choose, you can hear the waves crashing on the cliffs or the Mosquito River flowing into Lake Superior.

Backcountry Campground Descriptions

Chapel Beach campground sits on the sand bluff above Chapel Beach and Lake Superior. As you wind your way through the campground trail, the first three sites are hidden in the trees and offer a bit of privacy. The fourth site provides a view of Lake Superior and the cliff line. The fifth site is hidden among the ferns and pine trees.

Coves group campground is three miles east of Chapel Beach. You are still up on the cliff line, but have started your descent towards Twelvemile Beach. There is no water access at the campground. Hike east on the North Country Trail about a quarter mile to find a trail to a small cove and beach on Lake Superior.

Coves campground is inland from the North Country Trail, hidden behind the pine trees and ferns. There are two entry points to the campground. The campground trail leads through the forest where you will find five campsites and two designated metal communal fire rings. There is Lake Superior and beach access from the bluff along the North Country Trail.

Lowney Creek group campground is one mile from Little Beaver Lake Campground and two and a half miles inland from Lake Superior. Lowney Creek group site is in the Beaver Basin Wilderness. The trail to the campground follows the Beaver Lake shoreline. There is access to Beaver Lake.

Lowney Creek campground is one and a half miles from Little Beaver Lake Campground and three miles inland from Lake Superior. Lowney Creek campground is in the Beaver Basin Wilderness. The five sites are in a meadow scattered with big trees on the south shore of Beaver Lake. Lowney Creek is the east side of the campground.

Backcountry Campground Descriptions

Trappers Lake campground is in the heart of the Beaver Basin Wilderness. The five campsites are on the north shore of Trappers Lake. This campground is a quiet hideaway located about one mile inland from the North Country Trail.

Trappers Lake group campground is a little over a mile inland from the North Country Trail and 0.2 miles east of Trappers Lake Campground. It too is on the north shore of Trappers Lake in the Beaver Basin Wilderness.

Beaver Creek campground is on the bluff above Lake Superior and Beaver Creek in the Beaver Basin Wilderness. The six campsites are dispersed throughout the sandy grounds, shaded by pine trees. There is one communal fire ring with a view of Lake Superior. Beaver Creek and Lake Superior are easily accessible from the campground.

Pine Bluff campground is on a sandy bluff above Lake Superior just off the North Country Trail. The five campsites are on a sandy open area covered in ferns with pine trees scattered throughout the area. Access the beach and Lake Superior from a trail on the bluff at the entrance to the campground.

Sevenmile Creek campground is on the west bank of Sevenmile Creek. The North Country Trail wanders through the campground and past the communal fire ring. The sites are separated by trees, which offer a bit of privacy. Three of the five sites are along the creek. Lake Superior access is on the east side of the creek through the Sevenmile Creek group campground.

Backcountry Campground Descriptions

Sevenmile Creek group campground is on the east side of Sevenmile Creek. The North Country Trail guides you over a foot bridge, through the woods and opens up into the group site. It is a wide open area with access to Lake Superior.

Benchmark campground is on a sandy bluff above Lake Superior. The sites are sandy and open. There are social trails that lead down to Lake Superior, but it is a steep climb back to your campsite. When hiking from the west, walk through Twelvemile Beach Campground to the trailhead and day use area to connect back to the North Country Trail.

Au Sable Point East group campground is 0.2 miles west of the Au Sable Light Station and inland from the North Country Trail. The group site is surrounded by a coniferous forest. There is access to Lake Superior with a view of the Grand Sable Dunes.

Au Sable Point East campground is next to the Au Sable Point East group campground. Due to the dense forest, you are unable to see the neighboring campground. The six campsites are scattered throughout the trees.

Masse Homestead campground is at the base of the dunes (south side) and sheltered due to the thick forest canopy. The three campsites are close together at the base of the dunes.

Backcountry Campground Descriptions

Masse Homestead group campground is to the west of the regular campground. It too is at the base of the dunes in a thick forest canopy.

Grand Sable Lake campground is the only campsite in Pictured Rocks that is boat-in only. Put your vessel in at the Grand Sable Lake boat launch and travel east to this site. It rests on the east shore of Grand Sable Lake.

Human Waste in the Backcountry

The Lakeshore backcountry serves some 15,000 overnight hikers annually, plus thousands of day hikers. With this many visitors, human waste is a public health, ecological, and aesthetic concern. To minimize impact to the landscape and other hikers, please follow these methods

<u>Urinating</u>: Select a location at least 200 feet from the trail or water. Think of the "next person" who may visit that area.

<u>Fecal matter</u>: Follow the steps below.

1. Select a location at least 200 feet from the trail or water.

2. Dig a "cathole" 6 inches deep in the soil.

3. Bury all paper and human waste. Scatter leaves and duff on top.

Hiking During Hunting Season

When you are enjoying the Lakeshore during the fall and winter months you may see a few hunters on the trails. Hunting is allowed after Labor Day weekend through April 1 of each year. For safety reasons, we recommend you wear a visible blaze orange piece of clothing such as a vest or hat to be easily identified to others.

Backcountry Reservations

Backcountry Permit Reservation Instructions

Reservations for backcountry camping are not required, but are recommended if you are planning a trip. Reservations will be accepted beginning January 1 of each year. The park holds a random drawing on the third Thursday in January for all reservations received before this date. Reservation requests received on or after the third Thursday in January are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Fill out the application form. Please print legibly

Reservations are accepted by mail, fax or in person (do not email). Reservations must be postmarked or faxed at least 30 days prior to the first day listed on the backcountry itinerary. There are no phone reservations. Include reservation payment only (do not include the per night use fee).

Include $15 reservation fee with your application. Payment may be made by credit card (Visa, MasterCard or Discover), check (US funds) or money order. Make checks payable to the National Park Service. The fee is for the service of making a reservation, so once your reservation application has been reviewed and accepted, the fee cannot be refunded. After a reservation is issued, any changes will be an additional $15.

The user fee of $5 per person, per night is required and payable only when you pick up your permit (no refunds).

Backcountry camping at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore is limited to designated sites within 14 backcountry campgrounds. Groups consisting of 7-20 people must camp in designated group campsites. Individual campsites are available for camping parties of 1-6 people (2 tent limit). There is a 3 consecutive night limit at each campground.

All campsites are available for advance reservations. Before you make your trip plans, please read the entire backcountry camping brochure. (No reservations are available for the drive-in campgrounds: Little Beaver Lake, Twelvemile Beach, and Hurricane River.)

The backcountry use permit must be obtained in person (by a member of the camping party) and not more than 24 hours in advance of the first camping date at either the Visitor Information Center, Munising, Munising Falls Visitor Center, or the Grand Sable Visitor Center, Grand Marais. Please plan your trip in accordance with visitor center hours. If you arrive after permit hours, you must wait until the next day to obtain your permit and begin your trip. NOTE: If you do not arrive on the first day of your scheduled trip, your entire itinerary may be cancelled unless you notify us! Reservations are held until 4 p.m. the first day on your itinerary.

Because the demand for reservations often exceeds the availability, please call us as soon as possible if you need to cancel a reservation.

We are unable to provide detailed trip planning services over the phone. It is your responsibility to plan and prepare your trip. Study the backcountry camping brochure to decide which campgrounds you want to reserve.

Once you have developed specific plans for your trip:

(1) Fill out the Backcountry Campsite Reservation Form (on reverse side). For each night, fill in the date (spell out the month) and campground you want to reserve (list down, not across.) Please list your preferred choice and two alternates. This allows us to choose an alternate request if your first request is not available. We choose only your first, second or third choice. We do not mix between choices. Listing alternate dates is helpful as well.
(2) Include reservation payment ($15)
(3) Mail the form to: Backcountry Office/Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
P.O. Box 40
Munising, MI 49862-0040
or fax to 906-387-4457
(4) Confirmation of your reservation will be made by return mail.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
PO Box 40
Munising, MI 49862
906-387-3700

BACKCOUNTRY CAMPING PERMIT APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION							
When approved by NPS park official, this single-visit permit authorizes:							
Last Name:		First Name					
Street Address							
City		State		Zip Code		Country	
Day Phone		Evening Phone		Fax			
Email Address							
No. of People Per Trip		Is this an organized or guided trip?	☐ Yes ☐ No				
Group/organization name		Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) Permit #					

METHOD OF TRAVEL			
☐ Foot/Backpacking	☐ Snowshoe	☐ Ski	☐ Stock Quantity
☐ Canoe Quantity	☐ Kayak Quantity		☐ Motorboat Quantity

EQUIPMENT		
☐	Tent or Shelter (Including hammock) Quantity	Notes: Maximum of 2 tents per site (excluding group sites). 1 Hammock = 1 tent. Tents & hammocks must be kept within 15 feet of campsite post. Most sites will not accommodate hammocks.

ITINERARY			
Start Date		End Date	
Entry Location		Exit Location	
Length of Stay			

	Date	Campground Name – 1st Choice	Campground Name – 2nd Choice	Campground Name – 3rd Choice
Night 1 -				
Night 2 -				
Night 3 -				
Night 4 -				
Night 5 -				
Night 6 -				
Night 7 -				
Night 8 -				

Additional Choices: If all choices above are unavailable, the backcountry office will retry using options selected below:		
☐ Similar/Nearby Campsites	☐ Reverse Itinerary	Flexible Itinerary? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Alternate Start Dates	Earliest Start Date	Latest Start Date
Length of Stay (# of nights)	Entry Location	Exit Location

****

Privacy Act Statement: The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a) provides that you be furnished with the following information in connection with information required by this application. This information is being collected to allow the park manager to make a value judgment on whether or not to allow the requested use. Information from the application may be transferred to appropriate Federal, State, local agencies, when relevant to civil, criminal or regulatory investigations or prosecutions.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: A Federal Agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. This information is being collected to allow the park manager to make a valued judgment on whether or not to allow the requested use. All the applicable parts of this form must be completed. Public Reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 1 minutes per response, including the time it takes for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form should be sent to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 12201 Sunrise Valley Dr. (MS-242), Reston, VA 20192.

The $15 reservation fee must accompany the reservation request (non-refundable). Reservations must be postmarked or faxed at least 30 days prior to start of trip. Payment, in US funds, may be made by check, money order or credit card. Denied requests will not incur a charge. Changes to your reservation will result in an additional $15 fee.

The reservation fee does not apply towards the permit fee of $5 per person per night, which must be paid when you pick up your permit (non-refundable).

METHOD OF PAYMENT							
☐ Check (payable to National Park Service)		☐ Money Order		☐ MasterCard		☐ Visa	☐ Discover
Name on Card							
Billing Address							
City		State		Zip Code		Country	
Billing Phone Number		Credit Card Number					
CVC Code # (3 digits)		Expiration Date					
Total Amount		Signature					

MISCELLANEOUS			
Remarks			
Special Instructions			
Visitor's Signature		Date	
Issuing Officer's Signature		Date	

Mail completed Backcountry Camping Permit Application to:

Backcountry Office
Pictured Rocks NL
PO Box 40
Munising, MI 49862

…or **FAX** the completed form to Backcountry Office at: **906-387-4457**

Please be patient. You will receive a confirmation notice by mail as soon as your application is processed. If we are unable to process your request we will contact you to discuss alternate options. Please allow 30 days to receive your confirmation letter. If you have questions or concerns, call the backcountry office at 906-387-3700.

For NPS Use:

Date _____ Received by _____ Confirmation sent _____

To be filled out when permit is picked up:

Emergency Contact Information Trip Itinerary Point-of-Contact			
☐ Family ☐ Friend	*Name*	*Phone Number*	*City/State*

METHOD OF TRAVEL							
Vehicle				**Vehicle**			
State		Plate #		State		Plate #	
Make		Model		Make		Model	
Color		Rental?	☐ Yes ☐ No	Color		Rental?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Parking Location				Parking Location			

Date _____ Received by _____ Payment _____ ☐ Cash ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card

Kayaking the Lakeshore

Miles of colorful sandstone cliffs from 50-200 feet high rising directly from Lake Superior's rugged shoreline and long stretches of white sand beach invite kayakers to explore the beautiful Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. Within the national lakeshore, put-in points for kayaks are located at Sand Point, Miners Beach, Twelvemile Beach and Hurricane River. Additional put-in points in the Munising area include Grand Island Landing, Munising City Marina, Munising/Brown's Addition boat ramp, and the Anna River. In Grand Marais, you may launch at the Grand Marais harbor beach and marina.

A backcountry camping permit is required for overnight stays at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. Reservations are possible, and there is a fee for backcountry camping. Pets are not permitted in the lakeshore's backcountry. Campgrounds easiest to identify from Lake Superior are Mosquito Beach, Chapel Beach, Beaver Creek, and Sevenmile Creek. Other campgrounds such as Coves, Pine Bluff, Benchmark, and Au Sable Point East are also accessible but a little more difficult to identify. Backcountry campgrounds NOT accessible from Lake Superior are Cliffs, Potato Patch, Coves group site, Lowney Creek, Trappers Lake, and Masse Homestead.

Weather/ Marine Forecast

Lake Superior is unpredictable! Kayakers must be prepared for cold temperatures, high winds, fog, and rough seas that may occur at any time. Be constantly alert to changing conditions and should consult the current marine forecast before starting any trip (NOAA 906-475-5212 or Marine Band Radio Channel 16).

Summer storms are common on Lake Superior. Most storm systems come from the northwest -- you are fully exposed to the winds when paddling on Lake Superior. There are no protected anchorages at any backcountry or front country campgrounds.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when your body's core temperature is reduced below normal levels. Cold water conducts heat away from your body 25 times faster than cold air. Uncontrollable shaking, slurred speech or difficulties moving are all warning signs -- you must be warmed immediately. If submerged in Lake Superior, it is important to conserve body heat to increase your chances for survival. Wear your flotation device, huddle with others or pull legs together and up to chest to help conserve heat. Do not attempt to swim long distances.

Water accessible backcountry campsite

Hiawatha Water Trail

The Hiawatha Water Trail is 120 miles long with 42 miles in Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. The trail runs from Big Bay to Grand Marais, Michigan, on Lake Superior's south shore. The Hiawatha Water Trail follows a shoreline paddled by Native Americans, voyageurs and early European explorers. There are eight backcountry campgrounds easily accessible from Lake Superior, shown on the map on page 17.

Special Considerations

The Pictured Rocks cliffs extend for 15 miles and include sheer walls all the way to the water line. These exposed cliffs offer no way off the water if wind and waves increase.

Pictured Rocks Cruises

Be aware of boat tours that leave Munising on a regular basis during the summer months. Tours run fairly close to the shoreline with a turnaround point at Chapel Beach. Give them plenty of room.

Wet or dry suits are recommended due to Lake Superior's cold water. U.S. Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) and noise making devices such as a whistle are required for each person.

Be prepared with provisions for at least one extra day. In your gear, include a first aid kit, emergency signal device, self-contained stove, an extra paddle, compass, maps, insect repellant, tow line, rain gear, waterproof matches, and dry storage containers.

Kayak Safety

Weather and Lake Superior
Lake Superior can become hazardous for any size vessel even in moderate weather. The weather can suddenly change, exposing you to cold temperatures, wind, fog, lightning and rough seas. Except for shallow beaches, Lake Superior's temperatures rarely reach above 55 degrees. Hypothermia can happen in as little as 15 minutes. Before you go, check the marine forecast. ***PFD's (personal flotation devices) should be worn at all times on Lake Superior.***

Kayak rescue

Pictured Rocks Cliffs
Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore has 15 miles of cliffs including sheer walls all the way to the water line offering no escape from the elements and the wake from other vessels. Boat tours leave Munising on a regular basis during the summer months. They run fairly close to the shoreline with a turnaround point at Chapel Beach. Give them plenty of room and be prepared for their wake.

Recreational kayak

Sea kayak

Sea Kayaks vs. Recreational Kayaks
Sea kayaks with a spray skirt are recommended because they are safer on Lake Superior. Recreational kayaks are designed for inland waters and can be dangerous in high winds and big waves. Sea kayaks for single person use are generally 16 to 19 feet long, with hatches and bulkheads providing floatation in the front and back. Recreational kayaks are usually 10 to 14 feet long with a large open cockpit and at most one hatch and bulkhead.

Instruction and Trip Planning
Instruction and competence on proper techniques including rescues or using a guide are recommended for beginners or those who have never kayaked on Lake Superior. Refer to our website **www.nps.gov/piro/planyourvisit/commercial-services.htm** for further information. A backcountry permit is required to stay overnight in Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore **www.nps.gov/piro/planyourvisit/backcountry.htm**.

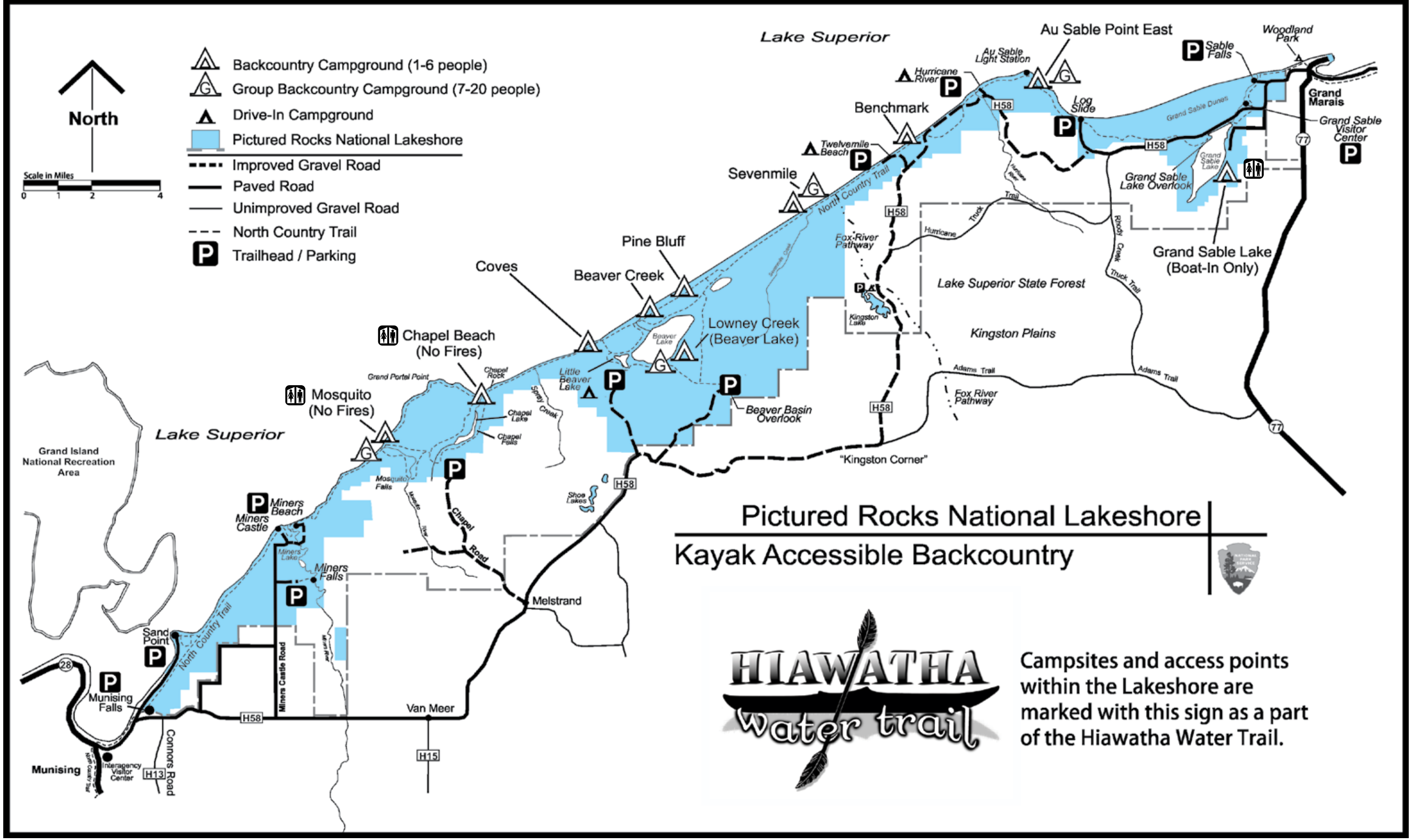
Leave a Float Plan
A float plan contains important information such as your name and address, vessel description, number of people in your group, safety equipment, planned route, length of trip and return date. Leave your float plan with a friend or family member and tell them who to call if you are overdue or an emergency arises. A blank U.S. Coast Guard Float Plan is provided on the back of this brochure.

U.S. Coast Guard Equipment Requirements
All vessels on Lake Superior are required to have a wearable Personal Flotation Device per person on board and a sound providing device that is audible for one half mile for 4 to 6 seconds (such as a horn or whistle). When operating from sunset to sunrise and in or near areas of reduced visibility, use navigational lights that may be seen by others and be equipped with a visual distress signal.

Preparation Checklist

- ☐ Personal Flotation Device (PFD)
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Bilge pump
- ☐ Marine radio
- ☐ Wet suit
- ☐ Sprayskirt
- ☐ Fill out Float Plan
- ☐ Check forecast
- ☐ Bring a partner
- ☐ Paddle float
- ☐ Too rough: go another day
- ☐ Lighting device

Backcountry Kayaking



Beaver Basin Wilderness

The Beaver Basin Wilderness was officially designated by the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009, signed into law on March 30, 2009. Incorporating 11,740 acres, 16% of Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, the wilderness designation fulfills an important element of the park's 2004 General Management Plan and provides permanent legal protection for this spectacular part of the park, under the 1964 Wilderness Act.

The Wilderness Act defines wilderness as "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain; an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements of human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions; which generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticed; has outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined type of recreation; and which may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value."

The Beaver Basin Wilderness:

- Includes excellent examples of glacial geology, including post-glacial melt water channels, escarpments and ancient beach ridges.
- Includes extensive beech-maple upland hardwood forest and wonderful spring wildflowers.
- Has extensive wetlands and clear streams providing habitat for native coaster brook trout, largemouth and smallmouth bass, northern pike and other fish.
- Provides excellent habitat for black bear, grey wolf, fisher and American marten, migrating songbirds, waterfowl and upland game birds.
- Includes 8.4 miles of North Country National Scenic Trail, 8.5 miles of other park trails and 6 designated overnight backcountry campsites.

Entering the wilderness

- Is open for day hiking, overnight backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, ice climbing, hunting, fishing and more. Electric boat motors may be used on Little Beaver and Beaver Lakes. Motorboats on Lake Superior may beach along the waterfront adjacent to the designated wilderness.
- Other forms of motorized recreation or mechanical transport within the designated wilderness are prohibited.
- Offers opportunities for quiet, solitude, physical challenge, education and spiritual renewal forever.

As a visitor to the Beaver Basin Wilderness, you have a special obligation to use and enjoy the area in ways that are consistent with its management as wilderness. Be courteous to others who are seeking a wilderness experience. Travel and camp quietly. Use Leave No Trace camping techniques. Leave nothing but footprints, take nothing but photos. Let the wilderness change you!

Leave No Trace Principles

PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
- *Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.*
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- *Visit in small groups when possible. Consider splitting larger groups into smaller groups.*
- Repackage food to minimize waste.
- *Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.*

TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
- *Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.*
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
- *In popular areas, concentrate use on existing trails and campsites. Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.*
- Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
- *In pristine areas: Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails. Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.*

DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
- *Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.*
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- *To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.*

Hikers near Chapel

LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- *Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.*
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- *Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.*

MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry.
- *Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.*
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings.
- Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
- *Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.*

RESPECT WILDLIFE

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
- *Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.*
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- *Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.*
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

- *Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.*
- Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
- *Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.*
- Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
- *Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.*