

I. National Parks and Wilderness Areas

Voyageurs National Park (Minnesota)

Voyageurs National park spans approximately 900 km² (340 mi²) with over 40% of that water. This park lies along the Minnesota-Canada border and encompasses all or part of four major lakes: Rainy Lake, Kabetogma Lake, Namakan Lake, and Sand Point Lake. A popular destination for boating, canoeing, camping and fishing.

4 hour drive from Ashland, 2½ hour drive from Duluth

Website: <https://www.nps.gov/voya/index.htm>

Isle Royale National Park (Michigan)

Isle Royale National Park lies in Lake Superior and is accessible by boat or ferry. Isle Royale is the largest island in Lake Superior and is the largest wilderness area in Michigan. The island is over 75 km long and 15 km wide (45 by 9 miles). This is a popular location for hiking, camping, backpacking, and fishing.

Two locations offer ferry rides to Isle Royale:

Copper Harbor, Michigan: 4½ hour drive from Ashland, 6½ hour drive from Duluth. Approximately 3-hour ferry ride to the island.

Grand Portage, Minnesota: 4½ hour drive from Ashland, 3 hour drive from Duluth. Approximately 2-hour ferry ride to the island.

Website: <https://www.nps.gov/isro/index.htm>

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore (Michigan)

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore spans 68 km (42 mi) of coastline. Its name comes from the 24 km (15 mi) of colorful sandstone cliffs just northeast of Munising. It offers the opportunity to explore miles of pristine beaches, 160 km (100 mi) of hiking trails, and beautiful northern hardwood forests. Popular location for hiking, camping, and fishing.

5½ hour drive from Ashland, 7 hour drive from Duluth

Website: <https://www.nps.gov/piro/index.htm>

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore (Wisconsin)

Considered the Jewels of Lake Superior, the Apostle Islands offer a unique experience where water meets land. With 21 islands and 20 km (12 mi) of mainland it hosts a unique blend of cultural and natural resources, including 9 historic lighthouses on 6 islands and more than 240 species of birds breeding in or migrating through the area. Visitors can hike, paddle, sail, or cruise to the island.

A field trip will be offered to explore these islands. See the conference website for more details.

30 minutes drive from Ashland, 1½ hour drive from Duluth,

Website: <https://www.nps.gov/apis/index.htm>

Boundary Water Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCA; Minnesota)

The BWCA is a large (>4,000 km², >1,500 mi²) wilderness area within the Superior National Forest in northern Minnesota. The BWCA, which lies in the border lakes region along the Minnesota-Ontario border (USA-Canada border), is a popular destination for canoeing, fishing, and hiking. Taking a canoe trip to the BWCA requires advanced planning and permits. If you are considering a trip to the BWCA and want to talk with someone with extensive experience in the BWCA, contact Roger Powell (rpowell@ncsu.edu).

About 3 hour drive from Ashland, 2 hour drive from Duluth

Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/superior/specialplaces/?cid=fseprd555184>

McCormick Wilderness (Michigan)

The McCormick wilderness area lies within the Ottawa National Forest in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. McCormick offers hiking, backpacking, and wildlife viewing opportunities.

About 3.15 hour drive from Ashland, 4.75 hour drive from Duluth

Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/ottawa/recarea/?recid=12361>

Sylvania Wilderness (Michigan)

Sylvania is a wilderness area within the Ottawa National Forest in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Sylvania includes old-growth forest interspersed with 34 major lakes and is a popular destination for hiking, camping, canoeing, and wildlife viewing.

About 1.75 hour drive from Ashland, 3 hour drive from Duluth

Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/ottawa/recarea/?recid=12331>

II. National Forests

National forests are managed for the multiple uses (wood production, wildlife habitat, recreation, watershed protection) and are great places for outdoor recreation such as camping, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

Superior National Forest (Minnesota)

2½ hour or more drive from Ashland, 1 hour or more drive from Duluth

Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/superior>

Chippewa National Forest (Minnesota)

3½ hour drive from Ashland, 2 hour drive from Duluth,

Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/chippewa>

Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (Wisconsin)

1 hour drive from Ashland, 2 hour drive from Duluth

Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/cnfn>

Ottawa National Forest (Michigan)

1½ hour drive from Ashland, 3 hour drive from Duluth

Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/ottawa/>

Hiawatha National Forest (Michigan)

Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/hiawatha>

4½ hour drive from Ashland, 6 hour drive from Duluth

III. State Parks

Gooseberry Falls State Park (Minnesota)

Gooseberry Falls State Park is the gateway to Minnesota's North Shore of Lake Superior. It is known for its spectacular waterfalls (5 in total), river gorge, and Lake Superior shoreline. The park includes buildings built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and a display provides historical information on the CCC. A popular location for hikers and a great place for wildlife and bird watching.

2½ hour drive from Ashland, 1 hour drive from Duluth

Split Rock Lighthouse State Park (Minnesota)

Split Rock Lighthouse State Park is located on the North Shore of Lake Superior. It is best known for its historic lighthouse overlooking the lake. It offers many km of hiking trails.

2½ hour drive from Ashland, 1 hour drive from Duluth

Tettegouche State Park (Minnesota)

Tettegouche State Park overlooks Shovel Point, with many rocky, steep cliffs and inland bluffs. The park contains around 1½ km² (400 acres) of old growth forest, with some yellow birch aged at 300 years old. Hike to the High Falls of the Baptism river or camp at the historic Tettegouche Campsite. One of only 4 parks in Minnesota that offer rock climbing.

2½ hour drive from Ashland, 1 hour drive from Duluth

Jay Cooke State Park (Minnesota)

One of the most visited state parks in Minnesota, Jay Cooke State Park offers a unique landscape with the western part of the park containing part of a rocky, 21 km (13 mi) gorge. The park has over 80 km (50 mi) of hiking trails and many different mountain bike trails. Popular activities include hiking, biking, and kayaking.

2 hour drive from Ashland, 30 minute drive from Duluth

Copper Falls State Park (Wisconsin)

Copper Falls State Park contains sections of the Bad River and its tributary of the Tyler forks, which flow through a gorge and over several waterfalls. The park has 27 km (17 mi) of hiking trails. Loon lake offers swimming, fishing, and canoeing.

30 minute drive from Ashland, 2 hour drive from Duluth

Amnicon Falls State Park (Wisconsin)

Amnicon Falls State Park features a series of waterfalls and rapids along the Amnicon River. These falls can be viewed from foot bridges or from trails along the river. The park offers campsites, picnic areas, and information about the Douglas Fault that created the water falls.

1 hour drive from Ashland, 30 minute drive from Duluth

Big Bay State Park (Wisconsin)

Big Bay State Park is located on Madeline Island, the largest of the Apostle Islands and the only one of the islands not included in the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. Big Bay State Park contains 2½ km (1½ mi) of beach, sandstone bluffs and caves for exploring. It encompasses unique habitat types including dunes, sphagnum bogs, and old-growth forest. Amenities include a campground with running water, picnic areas with grills, and 15 km (9 mi) of hiking trails.

1½ hour drive from Ashland, 3 hour drive from Duluth (NOTE: you need to take a ferry to get to Big Bay State Park).

Pattison State Park (Wisconsin)

Pattison State Park is situated on the Black River in northern Wisconsin. The park contains Big Manitou Falls, the tallest waterfall in Wisconsin (50 m, 165 feet) and Little Manitou Waterfall (10 m, 30 feet). The park has a 90 m (300 foot) sand beach and offers over 60 campsites with running water and electrical hookups. This park also has over 15 km (9 mi) of trails for hiking and biking.

1½ hour drive from Ashland, 30 minute drive from Duluth

Porcupine Mountains State Park (Michigan)

Porcupine Mountain State Park (245 km², 93 mi²) is the largest state park in Michigan. It has 145 km² (55mi²) of hardwood, old-growth forest, numerous waterfalls, many kilometers of rivers and streams to explore, and over 150 km (90 mi) of hiking trails with backcountry campsites and cabins. The visitor center has an 18-hole disc golf course.

2 hour drive from Ashland, 3 hour drive from Duluth

Lake Gogebic State Park (Michigan)

2 hour drive from Ashland, 3 hour drive from Duluth

Lake Gogebic State Park is located within the Ottawa National Forest on Lake Gogebic. This park has many unique sites to explore including Bond and Agate Falls, the Black River and Presque Isle River. This park offers campsites with boat access to the lake, running water, and electrical hookups.

More information on state parks can be found at the following websites:

Michigan: <http://www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/#map-tab>

Minnesota: http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/list_alpha.html

Wisconsin: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/findapark.html>

IV. Local Parks and Natural Areas Near Ashland

Houghton Falls State Natural Area/Houghton Falls Nature Preserve

20 minute drive from Ashland, 1.5 hour drive from Duluth

Enjoy beautiful ravines and sandstone cliffs that overlook Lake Superior and the Apostle Islands. These two protected areas have second-growth yellow birch, hemlock, white cedar, and pine forests.

Websites: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Lands/naturalareas/index.asp?SNA=638>
<http://www.brcland.org/houghton-falls-nature-preserve.html>

Moquah Barrens State Natural Area

30 minute drive from Ashland, 1.25 hour drive from Duluth

Moquah Barrens lies on a large sand plain and features vegetation typical of Pine Barrens including jack and red pine interspersed with oak, aspen, and white birch. Moquah Barrens currently supports sharp-tailed grouse leks.

Website: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/naturalareas/index.asp?SNA=83>

Morgan Falls and St. Peter's Dome

30 minute drive from Ashland, 1.5 hour drive from Duluth

Morgan Falls and St. Peter's Dome can both be accessed from a shared hiking trail in the Chequamegon-Nicolet. Morgan Falls is a beautiful, 20-meter high waterfall at the end of a short, flat hiking trail that is accessible to people with disabilities. St. Peter's Dome offers a scenic view of Chequamegon Bay and the Apostle Islands. The trail to St. Peter's Dome is longer and more rugged than the trail to Morgan Falls.

Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/cnnf/recarea/?recid=27749>

V. Hiking and Backpacking Trails

Backpacking trails are offered at some of the National and State Parks listed above. Additionally, the multi-state North Country Trail winds through this region from Lake Sakakawea State Park in North Dakota to the Adirondack Mountains in New York (website: <https://northcountrytrail.org/>). This long trail is made up of many smaller trail units, including the Superior Hiking Trail in Minnesota.

The Superior Hiking Trail is a 500 km (310 m) long trail that starts 30 minutes south of Duluth and extends to the Canada border. Most of the trail runs along ridges overlooking Lake Superior or the interior of Northern Minnesota. Hikers can enjoy views of boreal forests and waterfalls, and enjoy spectacular wildlife/bird viewing. For more information, visit the Superior Hiking Trail's website: <https://shta.org/>