Current trail conditions on the Kekekabic Trail

As of 5/20/2024

The Kekekabic Trail Chapter of the North Country Trail Association annually organizes a number of clearing trips on various sections of the trail. Several clearing trips were completed in May 2024. Details on trail conditions are noted below.

- The Kek is currently open **for both day and overnight use.**
- Permits are required year round for all overnight use.
- The season switches from quota to self-issued permits on 10/1. Find all the rules and regulations here.
- **Hikers should check for the latest updates here.**
- Find additional valuable information about the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness here.

Current conditions:

Overall, the Kekekabic Trail / NCT is in good hiking condition, it should provide you with a great wilderness hike and experience. The Kekekabic Trail Club Chapter received numerous reports from hikers and runners from this past hiking season, this report is the most up to date information available and will be helpful as you plan your hike for 2024.

Here are things that hikers of the Kek are likely to experience trail:

- Random blowdowns in places – trees are always falling.
- Moderate to medium brush that obscures the tread in places, especially in the mid-to-late summer. Currently, Harness Lake to the Travois Overlook has moderate brush and the west end of Warclub to the Fay Lake portage, moderate brush. A clearing trip for the Harness Lake/Travois Overlook is planned for May 24-28.
- Beaver dam crossings – there are several spots where the Kek crosses atop beaver dams. Pay special attention to the trail and flagging in these areas.
- Wet spots in the trail – including the potential for beavers flooding longer stretches of the trail – e.g. by the Bingshick-Fay portage and Seahorse Lake sections. Seahorse Lake: Hikers in 2023 encountered several instances of water on the trail in excess of two feet in the Seahorse area. A reroute has been flagged and lightly brushed near the stream crossing on the north side of the lake. Final work on the reroute is scheduled June 10-18, 2024. The reroute is flagged and can be used prior to the June work.

- Work on new trail connecting the Kekekabic Trail to the Border Route Trail was completed May 9-13, 2024. The new trail is on the west side of the Gunflint Trail and measure .31 miles, this new connector trail eliminates a short road walk between the two trails.
- The trail has worn tread and the trail corridor is almost always discernible. Blue flagging has been posted in areas where there might be a question on trail direction.
- During the summer you will find ferns on the trail, the tread may be obscured.
- Trail conditions change as you enter various sections of the trail depending on the last time a crew was working in that particular area.
- The best times to hike the Kek are May, late August, September and October.

Specific questions on trail conditions? Send an email to the Chapter at kek@northcountrytrail.org.

How can you help?
- Enjoy the trail! Hike the trail. Share your adventures with others. Help us spread the word about the Kek.
- When hiking the Kek, please take note of particular problem areas (with GPS coordinates, brief descriptions, and photos if possible) and send them to us at kek@northcountrytrail.org or share your photos on our Facebook group. *Note: If you are using the Avenza app with the NCTA-produced maps you can drop a Placemark at problem area and attach photos to the Placemark. Learn more here.*
- Volunteer on one of the Fall clearing trips (September 2024). Send an email to: kek@northcountrytrail.org for more information.
- **Donate/join the Kekekabic Trail Club Chapter and support our work!** (Select "MN – Kekekabic" in the dropdown to support the Kek.)
- **Our guidebook, most recently updated September 2023**, is available for purchase via the NCTA shop and the Superior Hiking Trail Association. Retailers and outfitters that stock our guide include: REI's Twin Cities locations, Gunflint Outfitters at the Gunflint Lodge, and Piragis Northwoods in Ely.