

The Ni-Miikanaake (NMK) Chapter of the NCT is responsible for 75 miles of trail at the western tip of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. At the western end, the segment crosses to Wisconsin. The eastern end is at Michigan Hwy M-64. The neighboring chapters are the Wisconsin Heritage Chapter to the west, and the Michigan Peter Wolfe Chapter to the east.

The westernmost 29 miles of the trail in the NMK chapter are a roadwalk. The NCT has long-term plans to develop the trail in this area. The remaining parts of the trail are in the Ottawa National Forest and the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park (Porkies), with a small part on private land. The NMK segment is in Gogebic and Ontonagon Counties.

Most of this segment is classified as primitive, and is in a remote area. Almost all of it is out of cell phone range. In summer, the main concerns are mosquitoes, ticks and the occasional bear. There are beautiful beaches on Lake Superior at Black River Harbor (BRH) and the mouth of the Presque Isle in the Porkies.

The main roads crossed, outside of the roadwalk, are Black River Road (Gogebic County 513), Presque Isle Parkway (Gogebic County 519), South Boundary Road, and M-64 (forms the eastern boundary of our segment.) To get to a store or town from these crossings is at least a 10-15 mile walk.

This write-up is accurate as of Dec 2019. There will likely be reroutes in the future.

Abbreviations used below:

ONF - Ottawa National Forest

PMWSP - Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park (Porkies)

SBR - South Boundary Road (in the Porkies)

CR - County Road

BRH - Black River Harbor

pbr - pedestrian bridge

psbr - pedestrian suspension bridge

Chapter segments:

	Name	Starting Mile on NCT Map	Ending MILE on NCT Map	Lenght (miles)	Landowner	Main Features of Interest	Road Crossings
A	Roadwalk	MI-Start	MI-29	29		Little Girls Point County Park, Copper Peak	
B	Black River Harbor West	MI-29	MI-35.5	6.5	ONF	BRH beach, psbr, campsite, picnic area, waterfalls	BRH Road (CR 513)
C	Black River Harbor East (to Bobolink Creek)	MI-35.5	MI-37	1.5	ONF	Rainbow Falls, large old hemlock trees	
D	519 Trail	MI-37	MI-41.5	4.5	ONF, PMWSP, Great Lakes Forests Inc	washouts-ravines	Presque Isle Rd (CR 519)
E	Lepisto Falls to 519-South Boundary Road	MI-41.5	MI-46	5.5	PMWSP	Lepisto Falls, SBR bridge, Presque Isle River	SBR
F	Presque Isle Mouth Area	MI-46	MI-47.5	1.5	PMWSP	Beaches, Waterfalls, Campsite, psbr	
G	Western Porkies	MI-47.5	MI-58	10.5	PMWSP	Speaker's Cabin, Greenstone Falls	
H	SE Porkies to M-64	MI-58	MI-76	18	PMWSP, ONF	Summit Peak, Big	SBR, M-64

						Iron River pbr	
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Segment - by - segment description:

A - This stretch is the roadwalk at the west end of our segment. It starts at the bridge over the Montreal River that connects WI Hwy 122 with Gogebic County Hwy 505 (Lake Road.) Immediately west of the bridge, in Wisconsin, the NCT also follows a roadwalk.

Walking east along Lake Road, the hiker will find Lake Superior on the left, with occasional vacation properties among the woods. About five miles along, there is a more developed area of vacation cottages, and Little Girls Point County Park. The park features a pebbly beach, water and developed campsites (906-663-4428 for information and reservations.) Continuing along Lake Road, there is a water spring at about MI-10. This water is marked with a health warning, but the locals drink it and think it safe.

About MI-19 the trail turns left onto Airport Rd. There is a bar (maybe food) at this corner. The road continues past the Gogebic Iron Airport, and MI-22 the trail turns left onto Black River Rd. At MI-25 there is a small park with 1-2 campsites and views over the Black River. At MI-28 hikers encounter Copper Peak, a one-time ski jump, now being restored. Visitors can take a chairlift to the top, enjoy the views, and there is a gift shop/visitor center. Down the road on the north side of Copper Peak is the trailhead and the actual start of the trail.

B. There are 5-6 parking spots at the trailhead. The trail goes downhill and to the left (watch for a turn) and runs along the Black River. After about 3 miles the first waterfall appears, Great Conglomerate Falls. The following 3.5 miles feature four more waterfalls. This is a more developed area, with boardwalks in some places and more casual tourists. The trail crosses Black River Rd at about MI-33, running behind some houses. Watch for other intersecting trails in this stretch, and a broken bridge across a stream (easy to get across.) Crossing back over Black River Rd, the hiker will encounter large hemlock trees. The trail goes down a hill to the parking lot for Black River Harbor. This developed area features a pavilion, water fountain, picnic area, beach, and boat docking. Take the pedestrian suspension bridge across the river to continue up the other side of the river valley.

C. The trail goes up the east side of the valley via a series of steps. There are particularly large hemlock trees along this stretch. About a mile up the valley, at Rainbow Falls, the trail turns to the left (east) and continues past Sagaigon Creek. After a couple more ridges-and-ravines the trail comes to the large ravine for Bobolink Creek.

D. Coming up the side of the ravine of Bobolink Creek, one enjoys a nice view across the ravine. Next, the trail runs about four miles along an old forestry road, and comes to Cty Hwy 519. Creeks running north-south have cut some ravines which the hiker will have

to climb through - the biggest ones are within a few hundred feet of 519. Being an old roadway, the trail tends to get muddy here. There is a trailhead and a parking area at the highway. Cross the highway and the trail takes an immediate right, goes a few hundred feet and goes left into the woods (this section was modified slightly in 2019.) The trail enters the PMWSP, and goes to Lepisto Falls on the Presque Isle River.

- E. Continuing north from Lepisto Falls, the trail goes across a footbridge and up a steep slope with a rope to assist the climb. The trail wanders across a knoll, with high-canopy trees, and meanders between the gorge of the Presque Isle and Hwy 519. After 4.5 miles the hiker comes to South Boundary Road. There is a road bridge across the Presque Isle River.
- F. Continue on the west side of the river. The hiker comes to a more developed area, with boardwalks along the river. Coming to the mouth of the Presque Isle, there is a parking area, pedestrian suspension bridge, picnic area, campsite and beach. Note interesting layered rock formations, and 'potholes,' on this lower stretch of river.

There are many trails beside the NCT in this area. Follow the blue blazes up the east side of the river gorge, up from the layered rock formations. The trail continues east, encountering a steep ravine about ½ mile east of the Presque Isle.

- G. The trail goes past Speaker's Cabin. This cabin can be rented - if others are there please give them some privacy. The trail continues through the middle-western section of PMWSP.
- H. At MI-63 the hiker encounters the approach to Summit Peak. The actual peak is up a well-marked path, with stairs, about a mile from the NCT. Summit Peak is one of the highest points in Michigan, and the area has a parking lot at the base, bathrooms, and an observation tower at the top. The trail winds SE from the Summit Peak area and crosses SBR. At MI-64 the trail exits PMWSP and continues in the ONF, winding along the West Branch of the Iron River. There is a footbridge across the Big Iron River at MI-72.5. The NMK segment ends at Michigan Highway 64, MI-76. There is a parking area and trailhead on the east side of the highway, and the NCT continues into the Peter Wolfe Chapter segment.