

Peter Wolfe Chapter (PWC) answers to FAQ:

Updated January 2024

Welcome to hiking the Peter Wolfe Chapter of the North Country Trail this summer!

Abbreviations used here: CG = campgrounds, FAQ = Frequently Asked Questions, FR= Forest Road, LD= Long Distance hiker, LNT= Leave No Trace! ONF=Ottawa National Forest

We are the Peter Wolfe Chapter in the Western UP from highway M-64 in the west to Long Lake area west of Craig Lake State Park, that is Michigan mile Mi-83.8 to Mi-204.6 [on this map](#). And Map #13 to #32 on Avenza [here](#). The PWC trail is in mostly remote forests; including about 85 miles of trail on the Ottawa National Forest (ONF), 12 miles on State land, and the remainder on private holdings. We are proud to have three enclosed/screened NCT shelters ready for our hikers.

NOTE! The PWC trail in the Western UP of Michigan, **is best hiked between early June and mid October**. If you plan to hike before or after that, you may encounter difficult trail conditions! In the spring, the trail will likely be quite wet from spring melt of 200-300 inches of snowfall over winter and the maintainers may not find the access roads open yet that could still have soft surface and winter fallen trees blocking those roads. In October, we can get an early winter wet heavy snowfall and strong winds that bring many trees down on the remote access roads and on the trail after the trail was cleaned up for the last time of the season. Most commercial campgrounds close by the end of October. We recommend not hiking the trail during the busy rifle hunting season of Nov 15-30 each year. If you are hiking the Trap Hills, note there is no *vehicle* access to the trail for the 12 miles between Norwich road and the Victoria DAM road except for the 0.7 mile newly opened logging road between PWC Segments 11 and 12. There are some *hiking only* spur trails north of the NCT to Victoria road and a 0.23 mile trail going south of the NCT to the Norwich Mine trail parking lot on FR627 off of Norwich Road [on this map](#). The Victoria Road is a gravel logging road that is narrow, very rough and can have long puddles. If you meet another vehicle, one of you might have to back up a long way to be able to pass; logging trucks will not back up for a vehicle on this road. We advise that regular street vehicles without high clearance and good tires not drive on the Victoria Road between the Victoria and Norwich Roads.

This is remote country so be prepared! There are only a few small towns with supplies, and they are several miles off the PWC Trail section that have a café, post office, lodging, etc. See Lodging and mail drop info below. Our closest towns big enough to have a hospital is L'Anse on US41 about 9 miles north of the Canyon Falls NCT trailhead; **L'Anse hospital** [here](#). In **Ontonagon**, there is weekday 8am-5pm UGL [health clinic](#) and a weekday 8am-5pm [Aspirus clinic](#) next door about 15 miles north of the NCT from 2 road crossings, Ontonagon clinic driving location is [here](#). If you plan to use a smart phone or device, you will need to **bring a solar charger** attached to your

backpack as there is no where on the trail to charge up unless you leave the trail and go to the towns several miles off the trail or go to Alberta Michigan Tech campus one mile north of Canyon Falls trailhead. Be sure to have the most recent NCT trail map loaded [FREE NCTA Avenza maps](#) or [FarOut App](#) with subscription when you still have service for the day. **NCT maps are updated in March and September so download those maps after March or September.**

TRAIL GUIDE for the PWC: Please read our detailed mile by mile trail guides with our maps at the *very bottom* of our website page, it should answer most of your questions, including parking, water sources, etc.

www.northcountrytrail.org/trail/michigan/pwc/

GPS locations on the PWC are on a separate doc on our chapter website linked [here](#).

Our new route from Canyon Falls to the eastern terminus does not have the gps on that doc yet. However you can determine the GPS reading for anywhere on the [online NCTA map here](#): click on the triangle in the legend at the top left of that map, then click on the compass in the legend at the top right that pops up and you will see the Latitude and Longitude in that legend box for anywhere you click your cursor on that map.

Maps: FIRST off, be sure you have a compass and paper map with you, even for a day hike. [Here is a link](#) to the free PWC map on the NCTA online map, You can print any part of the map you want from there. If you have a smart phone, please download the [FREE Avenza map](#) or the [FAROUT APP](#) to have on your phone before you hike; NCTA updates both those App NCT maps in March and September. [Instructions here](#).for the FAROUT app, starting about 9 minutes in on that video. The apps will show your location as a blue dot anywhere you are on or near the NCT! It can even help you find the trail crossings on roads if you are driving and looking for a trailhead. NOTE! The NCTA will enter updated NCT maps online and with these Apps both in March and September each year. So if you are looking at older maps, please discard and view the new maps! Other Apps like Onx etc will not have the most recent NCT map.

The PWC trail had a significant change east of Canyon Falls in the fall of 2022 and again further east in September of 2023 to take the trail off the busy US-41 highway! So be sure you have the most up to date NCT and App maps.

Note, you can print up to date NCTA map(s) yourself for FREE for the area you are hiking here: [Trail Maps and Downloads - North Country Trail Association](#).

There are some old, printed maps that the NCTA used to have, but those are obsolete with the changes each chapter makes to the trail, so please do not rely on those maps!

Trail Alerts! These are found on the NCT maps as a little triangle, click on that triangle and read the alert. And you can check on NCTA [trail alert page](#) for Michigan: PWC passes thru Ontonagon, Houghton, and Baraga Counties.

Note: There are places where the NCT crosses or walks on private roads. We have signed permission from the various owners and companies who own along private roads for *hikers* (not for camping.) Should you encounter anyone other than another hiker, it may be one of those owners or company employees. Please keep that conversation as pleasant and cordial as you possibly can. Please no arguments about having a "right" to be there. It could take just one uncomfortable situation between a

hiker and the owner or their rep to cause them to terminate the permission that was granted the NCT which allows hikers on their private road. Thank you for your kindness!

Note: Always stay clear of any active logging operations near the trail. Any trees marked with diagonal blue blazing are trees that have been marked for logging; watch carefully for NCT blue rectangle blazes.

Caution! There can be stinging insects along the trail like wasps, ground hornets or bees etc. So be absolutely certain your first aid kit includes a fast acting antihistamine capsule like Benadryl and also a topical sting relief like StingEze or After-Bite or other brand. Also bring along a Poison Ivy soap or wipe or ointment etc. Be familiar with what [Poison Ivy](#) looks like! It has 3 leaves and the middle leaf's stem is longer than the other two stems. We didn't use to see poison ivy by the trail, but have noticed a couple places in recent years. There are no poisonous snakes listed in the Western UP.

Trail Condition:

The PWC trail volunteers do our best to have the entire 121 miles of PWC trail maintained, and blazing checked for the first time each spring *by the end of May*. Note, we get an average of 200+ inches of snow each winter (300+ inches the winter of 2021-22) so if you hike before Memorial Day, there could possibly still be snow/ice/trees/branches on the trail and the water crossings would be high due to spring snow melt. In fact, some trailheads in the western part of the PWC are on roads that can still be snowbound on unplowed roads on Memorial Day and into mid-June, so the trail cannot be maintained there until road access has opened up. But as has been noticed, the snowmelt is happening sooner than in the recent past it seems. However, we can get snow in May (May 2023, we had over 4 feet of wet, heavy snow fall on our trail that caused hundreds of trees to come down on the trail that needed to be cut off; and the subsequent quick melt, caused flooding on the trail that lasted weeks before drying up.) We maintain the trail later in the season after May too of course.

Note, in wet conditions, the boardwalks can be very slippery; get your poles out and use extreme caution when walking on the boardwalks when they are wet, we are working on putting wire mesh on these slippery boards. Most of our volunteer maintainers are not chainsaw certified, so our other volunteers will remove limbs from down trees so you can step over them, then they let us know where these trees are if they still need chain sawing for hikers to get over. Windstorms can bring down trees in the forest that we do not know about until hikers tell us. So if you see trees that do not already have the limbs removed for easy stepovers, please [report to us](#) including any other trail issues with a photo and a screen shot of your map app or mile number or name the closest road to the issue if possible so we can fix them asap. In July, we mow in the fairly flat Baraga Plains area including parts, or all of, PWC segments 40 thru 56. But we cannot easily get equipment into the rest of the PWC to mow so tall seasonal greenery can be encountered on the rougher parts of trail in the summer on some of the other segments. *We are always looking for volunteers to help brush/mow!* We have over 120 miles of trail and our small population base for volunteers live an hour or more away from the nearest trail head so overall maintaining this trail is a big task for just a

few folks! Please [let us know](#) if you care to help us maintain the trail!! Because your help, especially with trail brushing in July, would be greatly appreciated!

Blazing: Our PWC trail is well blazed with NCT blue. Please keep your eye on the blue rectangle blazes about 5 feet high on the trees, **do not just follow a tread!** There are many critter trails and old logging roads that you might think is the NCT, but you **MUST** follow the blue blazes, not your feet! Note, our volunteers sometimes use blue ribbons as a backup when they are working the trail and see a need for a blaze but do not have a paint blaze kit with them. Or blue ribbons will be also used in places where a blaze is needed, but there are no large trees to paint a blaze on. You may see some older diamond shaped plastic blue blazes still in place along the trail; those get replaced as they deteriorate. You may see some red ribbons or red paint on trees; red means the land owner is warning their loggers to *stay away* ie the red paint tells loggers not to cut that tree, such as near a pond, steep hill, or on the NCT itself.

Some sections of forest along the NCT have many trees marked for logging such as in the Ottawa National Forest; their long blue slash marks are the exact same color as the NCT blue blazes, but they will be diagonal blue slashes often near the bottom of the trees, not the rectangular NCT blue blaze that are about 5 foot off the ground. And the State Lands have the exact color of blue paint to mark their property boundaries! **So be careful to watch for the NCT dollar sized rectangle blue blazing about 5 feet up!**

Campfires: There are no fire rings for dispersed camping in the PWC, suggest you use small camp stoves instead. Do not build a fire or camp on the edge of the cliffs! There is No water for extinguishing a fire near a cliff so do not start fires near a cliff! Never start a fire unless you have plenty of water first to put out the fire; so camp only near water sources with water filled buckets before you start a fire! Please check the [Fire Danger level here](#) before starting a fire while camping.

From the DNR: Fire Danger Level:

“When the fire danger is "high", fires can start easily and grasses/needles will ignite readily. Unattended campfires and brush fires are likely to escape. Fires will spread easily, with some areas of high intensity burning on slopes or concentrated fuels. Fires can become serious and difficult to control unless they are put out while they are still small...”

Camp spots: (See Lodging below) Click here [for a map of Campgrounds](#) near the PWC trail. Also see below about our 3 NCT screened in shelters on the trail!

Camping

There are only two official campgrounds near the PWC trail: there is the [Bob Lake CG](#), in the Ottawa NF, with drinking water from and hand pump etc and less than a mile north off the NCT from this gps:46.6503 -88.9047 and the [Big Lake CG](#) a Michigan State Campground on the NCT, with potable water from a hand pump etc, located at 46.6119 -88.5688

If you have a vehicle to drive away from the trail: [Courtney Lake CG](#) and [Sturgeon River CG](#). And [King Lake CG](#) None of these have power or showers or reliable internet service. They have seasonal hand pump water.

There is a [Stannard Township camp](#) area in Bruce Crossing with a shower house and it is next to the grocery that has a good hot deli and bakery goods; this is just 7.5 miles south of the O Kun de Kun trailhead on US45. There is the [L'Anse Township CG](#) with internet and showers that is [12 miles north on US41](#) from Canyon Falls trailhead.

There are a number of places where the NCT walks on or crosses private roads. We have permission to *hike* on that private road but we do not have permission to camp on the road or to leave the trail and camp on private property. If you are not sure about ownership: on the [NCT map here](#), click anywhere on the trail and a box will pop up with lots of info including ownership and what is allowed on that section of trail that lights up when you click on it.

Remote Camping: There are possible remote camp spots noted on our PWC drawn maps that are with [our website trail guide](#). Do not start fires at remote camps unless you are near a water source for fire suppression, and you have a water filled bucket before you light the fire! The [National Park Service](#) recommends setting up your cooking area around 100 yards away from your sleeping area whenever you are in the backcountry. NPS hints on cooking in camp are [here](#).

To determine if camping is allowed anywhere on the trail, click [on this map](#). and click anywhere on the NCT and a box will pop up with lots of info about that exact spot, slide the side bar down on that box and/or click on the > arrows at the top right of the pop up box to see the next box with more info including land ownership, whether camping is allowed or not in that area and other info. Please do not camp or leave the blue blazed trail on private property. Note all other camping, where allowed on the PWC, is dispersed camping. Pick a spot where your campsite is not visible after you pack up and leave it, ie out of sight of the trail and **LNT = leave no trace!** There are no fire rings for dispersed camping on the PWC, suggest you bring a small camp stove. *Do not camp or build fires near cliffs*; there is No water for extinguishing a fire on a cliff and you may not see the cliff edge in the dark! And do not camp in spots where hikers enjoy walking off trail to see the view.

Camp [Permits are Not needed](#) on the [Ottawa NF](#) to disperse camp.

PWC has three Shelters for NCT hikers:

Some hikers like to pitch their tent inside the shelters especially in winter, or just stop and have a rest or snack. LNT! Write us a note in the registration logbook inside the firesafe box in the shelter; our trail volunteers love to read about you hiking the NCT! All of our shelters have the same design, screened in with 4 bunks, None of our shelters have power or potable water.

We have a **NCT shelter at Old Victoria** just northeast of the restored village which has no power, no outhouse and no water supply at this shelter. This screened in shelter for NCT hikers is just out of sight eastbound of the Old Victoria Restoration log cabins. (Those log cabins are privately owned by the Old Victoria Restoration Society and do not have power or water and they are not available for hikers to explore without permission from that Society.) There is no water there but there is a pipe with artesian water about a half mile eastbound from the NCT shelter, about 40 feet south of the trail.

Look for a small white sign on a tree with an arrow that points to the water pipe.

We have a **NCT shelter near Tibbets Falls**: This is the Oren Krumm screened in shelter, for NCT hikers about 1.8 miles west of the Plains road parking TH. The shelter overlooks the Sturgeon River and has a rustic privy and benches around a fire ring; it does not have power. **Westbound this is the last chance for water for about 12 miles!**

We have a **NCT shelter in the Summit area** NCT close to the eastern end of our Chapter. The shelter is at the end of about 600 feet spur off of the trail. This is the Matt and Luke Manger-Lynch screened in shelter. The shelter overlooks the pond and has a privy with a view! The shelter is about a half mile NE of the bridge over the headwaters of the Sturgeon where the NCT enters the forest at the junction of PWC segments 65-66. Note **Westbound, this is the last chance for water for about 10 miles!**

Cell Reception: Note, the PWC is remote with no nearby trail towns that have cell towers. There is surprisingly lots of coverage in the western UP, but it is spotty along the trail. If a call will not go out, try texting. But do not count on cell reception. EMS would need your location, so Please put the awesome FREE [Avenza App](#) or the [FAROUT APP](#) on your smart phone with the most recent NCT maps downloaded so you know where you are. The app will show where you are on the NCT *even without cell service* if you have the free NCT maps downloaded already to the app. Those maps are updated by NCTA every March and September so be sure you have downloaded the most updated [FREE NCTA maps](#) for the western UP. **There is nowhere on the trail to charge your devices; charging requires a hike off-trail. See lodging and dining below for nearest towns.** In an emergency, the power station at the Victoria Dam *may* let you charge your phone. Note, for a quicker charge on your device, change it to “Airplane Mode” in your Settings; it will charge much faster, in minutes instead of hours. You can hike with it in Airplane mode too and still see where you are with the Apps listed above. If you have an emergency, call 911, if a call does not work, try texting 911. Before you call 911, make sure your phone is not in Airplane mode, and the Privacy and Security settings allow Location Services, so 911 can try to see where you are.

Food storage while camping the UP: Use your best judgement in picking how you want to handle your [food storage](#), always cook and store your food overnight away from your tent and not in the NCT shelters, and store in plastic that will not be so easily smelled by critters. (That includes salty snacks; porcupines and other salt loving critters can smell salt a very long way away and will find it.) Note: Squirrels can still climb a tree and crawl down a rope so have a container that is also squirrel proof!

Food Supplies: See below info on nearby cities, all towns are 4+ miles off the trail if you need to pick up food. The last store eastbound staying on the NCT from Canyon Falls is 91 miles away so if you need food at Canyon Falls eastbound, you will need to get it before hiking towards Marquette.

FORDS over water in the PWC: maybe strap a light pair of crocks to your pack for fords or bring feather light sturdy large seed/feed bags to put over boots and hold up or

tie up with a bungee above the knee. See two stream crossing options [here on FB](#). A few of our streams that are normally easy step overs, might need to be waded thru after heavy rains or spring melt conditions.

We are seeing new beaver activities every year that are flooding the trail with water. *Look for blue ribbon reroutes or look for a big dam to cross on.* It takes several years to get permissions/permits/funding to bridge those, check the NCTA [trail alert page](#) for Michigan: the PWC is in Ontonagon, Houghton, and Baraga Counties.

The [bridge over Bush Creek](#) at 46.671223 -89.490898 has failed and the current bridge is signed closed by the Ottawa National Forest. Please use caution when crossing; the narrow creek is a slow moving maybe 2-foot-deep creek. We hope to have that bridge removed and rebuilt in 2024 when we find a contractor to build it! Please help us find a contractor to build this remote bridge using the Engineers new design!

Sandstone Creek, about one mile west of US-45, has had beaver flooding; we have a good path there; look for flagging for the path and/or beaver dam to cross if path is flooded (it changes each year).

About 1 mile southeast of Victoria Dam Road, is the CROSSING of the West Branch of the Ontonagon River, [Downstream from the Victoria Dam](#): After June 15 and after spring melt runoff, the dam seldom releases water the rest of the summer, unless there has been a significant rain.

*The dam is supposed to release water until June 15 every spring for fish migration, so you can not Ford this crossing before about June 15. Dam also might release water when there has been significant rain in the last couple of days. You can call the dam operators office (906-886-2637) and leave a message for a return call explaining you are a NCT hiker wanting to cross the river and want to know about water being released from the dam; **their answer is rain dependent, so they will not know many days ahead of time.*** Or go to <https://www.uppco.com/hydro-water-levels/> and scroll down to Ontonagon River - Victoria - Total Flow. The flow rates on that website are updated every 10 minutes. In general, if both generators are running as they usually are, when the Total Flow is greater than 650 cfs they will usually be releasing water from the dam. If the Total Flow is close to or over 1,000 cfs, you need to hike the highwater bypass rather than cross the river bed.

The highwater bypass follows Victoria Dam Rd and US 45 on this route: tinyurl.com/Highwater-route and shown on the NCTA online map and the Apps. This route is only 3 miles longer than staying on the trail and takes you into Rockland where there is dining, supplies, a post office (limited hours) and lodging and a possible ride back to the NCT from where you buy supplies at the store *if they are not too busy*. **If you are westbound**, get off the NCT onto US45 at the O Kun de Kun Falls trailhead, go north on US-45 to Rockland then go SW on Victoria Dam Road to the Victoria Historical Village and the NCT shelter and get on the NCT there. **If you are eastbound**, get off the NCT where the NCT crosses Victoria Dam Road about 1 mile NE of the Old Victoria Historical Restoration and shelter. Walk NE on Victoria Dam Road into Rockland then south on US-45 to the trailhead for O Kun de Kun Falls, which is the NCT trail.

Lodging, Dining, Mail etc off trail: (See campgrounds above)

Lodging and Dining listed from West to East:

White Pine on M-64, is 4.7 miles north of the NCT has [lodging](#), dining, shopping, mail

Bergland on M-64, is seven miles south of the NCT has dining, shopping, mail, lodging: www.lakegogebicmotel.com/

Silver City on M-64, on Lake Superior, about 12 miles North of NCT has lodging with dining in the [AmericanInn](#) and other small lodgings along the road.

Ontonagon on M-38, is about 15 miles north of the NCT (both from the Norwich Road crossing and the Victoria Dam road crossing NE of Old Victoria) and has a weekday [out-patient clinic](#).

[Rockland](#), on US45, [3 miles North of NCT](#) (NE of Old Victoria Restoration village) has store, dining, limited hours Post Office, lodging: there is "Da Bunkhouse" lodging 906-390-0808. There is a great bar and grill to eat in Rockland called [Henry's Inn](#) and a little convenience store "Rockland Depot" 906-886-2650 down the block from cafe.

Bruce Crossing on US45, [is 8 miles south](#) of O Kun de Kun Falls trailhead has dining, shopping, lodging.

The [Rousseau Bar and Grill](#) (906) 883-9952 with good food, no lodging; it is about 6 miles north of where the NCT crosses [FR 1100](#) and also [FR 1470](#) west of Bob Lake. They have varied open days/hours so call for current info.

Watton on M28, near Tibbets Falls is four miles south of the NCT, no lodging, but a [country store](#) for supplies, mail, and the nearby great Hardwood Steakhouse [bar/grill](#).

Alberta Michigan Tech's remote campus on US 41, just one mile north of Canyon Falls NCT trailhead [on this map](#). Lodging is sometimes available if not filled with students. Info about the Alberta Ford Center that has a tiny gift shop, dorms, cabins, cafeteria, showers etc:

<http://www.mtu.edu/forest/fordcenter/>

Here is Alberta lodging info:

<http://www.mtu.edu/forest/fordcenter/conference/lodging/>

Alberta Dining: <http://www.mtu.edu/forest/fordcenter/conference/dining/>

You can ask about possible overnight parking on campus while hiking LD on the NCT. 906-487-3673 fordcenter@mtu.edu

A video by [Alexis Dahl](#) all about the [Alberta Ford Center](#) that Henry Ford built.

NOTE: Hikers staying on the NCT will find the closest store eastbound from Canyon Falls is a 91 mile hike on the NCT. However, L'Anse is a 9 mile road walk north of the NCT from both the Canyon Falls Trailhead parking and the NCT junction on Herman-

Nestoria road. L'Anse is our closest larger town with grocery, lodging, mail and has a [hospital](#) on this driving map [here](#).

Or hikers can **go southeast to places along US41** from the NCT junction with the Herman-Nestoria road: walk 7.1 miles south east on the Herman-Nestoria road to Highway US-41, go east 0.8 mile [on this google map](#) to The [Cozy Inn and Bar and Grill](#) ph906-272-2675 on US41 which has varied open days/hours, so call ahead if you hope to eat there. There is No lodging here but good food. If you want to walk *another 3 miles* on US41 there is the community of Michigamme at Three Lakes with Seasonal lodging at [Bear Paw Inn](#) 906-353-6256 located at 27672 US-41, Michigamme, MI. If you want to walk *another 4 miles further east* of the Bear Paw Inn, there is the [Michigamme Market](#), with good supplies [on this map](#) (15.5 miles SE of the NCT-Herman-Nestoria junction.) There is the [Mount Shasta Restaurant](#) on US-41 which is 8.5 miles on US-41 from the Cozy Inn. Mt Shasta is the building that the 1959 movie Anatomy of a Murder was filmed. There is a campground at [Van Riper State Campground](#), which is 15 miles from the Cozy Inn.

Lost? Sometimes the tree that holds a blaze falls, or seasonal growth has obscured the blaze. If you do not see the next blaze, look down to see if you see a blaze on a fallen tree, if not, turn around 360 degrees to see if you can find a blaze, even if it is in the wrong direction (the trail is blazed both east and west bound of course). Go back to that blaze and look for the forward blaze. If you do not see it, look for signs of *trail work* like branches cut off the sides of trees or brush, or logs that had been cut or moved on either side of trail, follow those signs until you see a blaze. If these hints do not work, pull out your Avenza or FarOut app and it will show you where you are and if you walk forward some, it will show if your movement is in the correct direction. (Be sure to load your App maps while you are home and still have cell service. You can put your phone in Airplane mode to save battery and it should still find you on the trail!) Or take a photo where you are, then look at the photo on your smart phone and press the option to see the location of the photo. On iPhone, that is the circle with i in the middle at the bottom of the photo you took; click on that circle, then scroll down to see the map of the location you just took that photo if you have Location Service on. If you need emergency, call 911, if a call does not work, try texting 911. Before you call 911, make sure your phone is not in Airplane mode, and the Privacy and Security settings allow Location Services, so 911 can try to see where you are. Try to give them your W3W location then don't move until help arrives! Have the [FREE ///What3Words app](#) already uploaded to your smartphone before you leave cell service.

When you leave the trail to use the green bush (go potty) be sure you tie a bright ribbon around a tree on the trail so you can find the trail when you are done; it is easy to get turned around doing this task.

Mail Drop:

[Click here](#) for info about Post Offices in Michigan. On your package write: "General Delivery for your NAME, Hold for Hiker on North Country trail, will pick up by DATE here". The PO should hold it for you until that date, then it would be returned. Best to call ahead and let them know your plans about sending a package to keep for you and

to verify the days and time they are open to pick up your package. To find a PO, enter a town name, state [on this page](#) to see the map of other nearby locations.

Medical help/Hospital near the PWC: [Map to hospital in L'Anse](#) This hospital is on US41, just 8.4 miles north of Canyon Falls trailhead. There is a weekday 8am-5pm [out-patient clinic in Ontonagon](#), which is 20 miles from the NCT at the O Kun de Kun trailhead on US45.

Miles a day you can hike: How many miles can be hiked each day is totally dependent on the person and the weight of their pack etc. Some folks go thru here quickly (15 mpd maybe even 20 mpd) while it takes the next person twice the time for the same section of trail as LD (long distance) hikers who can go faster, so we can Not determine how many miles a day you can hike. The west end of the PWC trail is quite hilly and will require a lot more exertion than the east end.

Parking while hiking: Please check our mile by mile [trail guide](#) at the bottom of our website page with our PWC drawn maps for specific parking areas. Note, many of those parking areas have room for just 2 cars without blocking in another car, so please park perpendicular to the road in the parking area and leave space for other cars and so you do not get blocked in. Some areas only have parking alongside a remote road. If you leave a car parked overnight, it is good to leave a note on the seat of your car with your name, your intended hike route, when you expect to return, and emergency contact info in case your car is found there longer than you indicate it will. You can print and fill in [this Trail User sign](#) to leave in your car. If you are leaving your vehicle for several days, consider parking in an area that has the most parking spaces, so you are not blocking parking access to cars who are just there with family for a day hike. Do Not block gates or roads or block any parking spaces for others. It is important that landowners have 24/7 access to their roads, even if it looks like that road or gate is not used. Note, most roads in the ONF are not plowed in the winter. In fact, some trailheads in the western part of the PWC may not be accessible sometimes until mid June, which also means the trail cannot be maintained for the first time until after the access roads are dried up from snow melt in those areas. Just because the snow has melted in the forest, does not mean a nearby road is open or drivable. The road needs time to dry out enough to handle vehicles driving on it.

Note, no overnight parking is allowed at the M-DOT parking lot at Canyon Falls trailhead on US41 South of L'Anse. You could contact the Alberta Ford Center, a Michigan Tech remote campus just one mile north of the M-DOT parking at Canyon Falls [on this map](#) to ask about possible overnight parking on their campus.

906-487-3673 fordcenter@mtu.edu

Info about the Alberta Ford Center that has a gift shop, dorms, rental cabins, cafeteria, showers etc:

<http://www.mtu.edu/forest/fordcenter/>

Here is Alberta lodging info:

<http://www.mtu.edu/forest/fordcenter/conference/lodging/>

Alberta seasonal Dining: <http://www.mtu.edu/forest/fordcenter/conference/dining/>

Parking is allowed overnight at the [Old Victoria Historical Restoration](#) site parking area. *Trap Hills hikers* usually leave their car at the Old Victoria Historical village and start their hike from M64 or roads closer and hike to their car at the Old Vic Historical site. (If you park at Old Victoria site overnight, consider leaving a parking donation to the historical site who owns the parking area for their visitors and maintains the historical site all by volunteer work.)

There is only one way to get to Old Vic, and that is through Rockland and Ontonagon, so do not let google maps take you on a dirt ORV 2 track road, as they often do here in the UP! Most folks do NOT want to drive Victoria Road between Victoria and Norwich road with a street vehicle. You need to drive a high clearance vehicle with good tires and be prepared to back up a long ways if you encounter a logging truck on that narrow very rough road! Where ever you are coming from, [here is the driving map](#) between Norwich Road and Old Victoria Historical village and their parking area. Or if you are hiking from M-64 or Old M-64, you still want to drive thru Ontonagon and Rockland to get to the Old Victoria Historical site on Victoria DAM road rather than drive the rocky narrow 12 mile Victoria Rd unless you have a high clearance vehicle and can back up.

Road Driving: Most of the gravel roads crossing or accessing the PWC are either State or Forest Service roads (FR) or privately owned roads and are not plowed in the winter so are not open to drive on until mid-late May or June when they have dried up enough from muddy snow melt conditions to drive on. Any of these remote roads could have trees fallen across them, so bring a hand saw in your vehicle in case you need to clear a tree off the road. The 12 mile Victoria Road between Victoria and Norwich road in the Trap Hills is a narrow, rough logging road that needs a high clearance truck with heavy duty tires, it should probably not be driven with a street car. If you meet another vehicle on it in a narrow part of the road, one of you will likely have to back up to a wide spot in the road to let the other vehicle pass; logging trucks on Victoria Road will not back up for any other vehicle.

Road Walks on the PWC: There are very few road walks on the PWC. Most of the road walks are on remote natural surface narrow roads where you are more likely to see critter tracks than vehicles. There is very little blazing on these roads because there are very few accesses off them, so stay on the road and do not camp off the blue blazed route on private roads. Do not walk off the blue blazed route onto private drives to camps along these roads. Some of the remote road walks are on public roads, others are on PRIVATE roads, and if hikers wander onto their camp driveways and near their camps, the landowner could easily deny access for all NCT hikers to use of their road!! At the few intersections, look for the blue blaze or if a bigger tree is not available to paint, look for blue ribbon on roadside branches for the correct road to stay on. Sometimes a driveway will look better than the road you will be hiking on, so look for the blue blazes to stay on the NCT route!

Shuttles for NCT hikers: We are not aware of any business that offers hiker transport in the remote western UP. [Contact us](#) about the option of a PWC volunteer to shuttle you if

you wish. Or, you can consider leaving an old bicycle locked up out of sight near a trailhead where you plan to end your hike. Then park at your start and hike towards your bike and ride the bike back to your parked car! Leave a note on the hidden bike with your plans to pick it up and [a note](#) on the seat of your car with your info.

We sometimes have a PWC volunteer who can help with transport for hikers, perhaps for gas \$ and/or a [donation to our chapter here](#); To make online donations to the chapter, be sure to indicate in the chapter selection box MI-Peter Wolfe or give a check to the volunteer made out to the North Country Trail, Peter Wolfe Chapter. [Contact us](#) about the option of a PWC volunteer to shuttle you if you wish.

If you do get a shuttle, it is highly suggested they meet you where you will park your car *at the end* of your hike and they will bring you in their vehicle to the start of your hike. That way, you can take your time and get back to your car and not be concerned that your cell reception cannot reach the volunteer to change your arrival time/day etc. If you do arrange a shuttle, remember we are on EASTERN TIME when setting a time to meet your driver; be clear with them what time zone your meeting time is set for! Let them know how many are in your group and does it include kids, dogs etc. You may be asked to wear a mask in their car.

Leave [a note](#) on the seat of your car indicating your plans and emergency number in case your car is there days after your plan written on the note.

Another option for other transport info between towns or trailheads, you can post on Facebook: [Trail Angels of the NCNST here](#). Include what state and approx. date etc you need a shuttle.

What to wear: For [bug protection](#), wear loose fitting, light colored, long sleeve clothing. Bugs are attracted to dark colors and ticks can be seen easier on light colors to remove. You can wear your pants tucked inside your socks and your shirt tucked into your pants to prevent bugs getting to your skin, and boot gaiters to keep them out of your shoes and legs. Permethrin works well sprayed on lower part of slacks, boots, socks (not skin). Black flies are not much affected by sprays so you can use a head net over a wide brimmed hat for black flies. [Here is](#) research summary about mosquitoes. "The study also found mosquitoes are only attracted to certain colors when the presence of carbon dioxide is around. Because humans breathe carbon dioxide out, that attracts the mosquitoes to us... Researchers found that mosquitoes are most attracted to the following colors: Black, aqua, red and orange. ... Mosquitoes really like dark black colors ... they want to find dark, shady areas to rest.... The reason they love the colors red and orange is that that's what human skin looks like to them..."

Starting in July, the biting deer flies come out in some places; you can use [these disposable strips](#) on the back of your hats for deer flies (but you must prevent long hair from getting tangled up in the very effective sticky strips.)

You can tie light weight shoes like crocs to the back of your packs for water crossings and wearing in camp at night. Or large seed/feed bags are feather light and work great to pull over your boots and legs to stay dry with your boots on when crossings streams. Hikers generally do not wear cotton clothing, as cotton takes a long time to dry.

You can have a little jingle noise on your pack to alert wild critters of your presence, so you do not startle them. Have quick access to a very loud whistle. In the fall, always wear a bright hunter orange colored vest and/or hat. The very busy rifle deer season

here is Nov 15-30 so we encourage hikers to not use the trail the last weeks of November. But keep in mind, some sort of critter hunting is allowed most of the fall season, not just Nov 14-30 so good to wear hunter's orange all fall.

Water sources: Please be prepared to filter your water! See our mile by mile info and maps [in our PWC trail guide](#) at the bottom of our website, which includes water sources. Also, streams are shown on the [NCTA map](#). Some waters can be silt filled, others are clear. Some of our permanent and seasonal streams are getting beaver dams on them so the nice flowing water in the recent past, is now flooded beaver dam water. In summer heat, always fill up your spare container to filter when needed every time you come to water (If you come to a better water source later, you can always dump out and replace the old water, but best not to pass an opportunity to fill with water especially in dry seasons where streams that normally have water may have gone dry. Note: There are **12 miles with NO WATER source** between the Oren Krumm shelter (PWC segments 43/44) and the bridge over the Sturgeon River on FR 1170 (PWC segments 37/38). There are **8 miles with NO WATER source** across the mostly open Baraga Plains between Plumbago Creek (west of Canyon Falls on PWC seg 56) and the Big Lake campground (PWC seg 51/52). There are **10 miles with NO WATER source** between the bridge on Little Spruce Lake Road (PWC segments 65/66) and a stream a mile north of the Sturgeon River (PWC segment 62/63) If you are hiking in summer heat, consider bringing electrolyte powder to put in your water.

Weather: The link below is historical weather data for August 2023 at the nearest weather record station to the PWC (change last number in this link for the month you are interested in ie 8 = August):

<https://www.wunderground.com/history/monthly/us/mi/calumet/KCMX/date/2023-8>

Wildlife on the PWC: There are bears/wolves/cats/moose all across the UP to stay clear of. That being said, as one of our volunteers says: "in all the years, days and hours I have spent working/walking on the NCT in our segment in the western UP, I have only seen one bear family, but have seen lots of large critter scat from large critters. I always wear some noisy, light weight, dangly metal on the outside of my pack so any wild critter hears me and darts away from me long before I would see them. (dangly metal is a tick key, a tiny fishing bell, a metal whistle, and a small bear spray) Those make a little jingle each step I take, as I do not want to surprise any wild critter. I have used my loud whistle attached to the front of my pack once, when we heard large rustling in the brush not far off the trail and could smell something stinky like a bear. We didn't see the critter, so not sure what it was, but the critter kept away, maybe at the sound of that loud whistle." A good article on how to keep wild critters away from your remote campsite: [link here](#).

The fall is popular [hunting in the UP](#) on public and private lands! So please **wear a hunter orange vest or hat in the fall and carry a whistle**. Our trail volunteers do not work on the trail during firearm deer hunting season, which is the last 2 weeks of November. Snow is often on the ground by then anyway.

Be Bear SMART: Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources
“If you encounter a bear in your yard or on a trail, remain calm and be bear
SMART:

S - Stand your ground. Do not run or play dead.

M - Make loud noises and back away slowly.

A - Always provide a clear, unobstructed escape route for the bear.

R - Rarely do bears attack, if they do, fight back.

T - Treat bears with respect and observe them from a distance.”

After you have read [our trail guide on our website](#) and this FAQ sheet, let us know if you have any other questions.

Have a great hike and let us know how it goes! We would love to post some pics of your hike on our Facebook page! And we want to fix any problem areas if you encounter any; please let us know where/what the problems are! Try to include a photo of the issue and closest road or a mile marker from your phone app of the NCT. Mile markers are [on this NCT map](#).

Thank you! Have a wonderful hike!

Connie Julien, President, Peter Wolfe Chapter of the NCTA

northcountrytrail.org/trail/michigan/pwc

facebook.com/NCT.PWC.Mlchigan

Donate or Join PWC-NCTA [here](#). In the chapter box, click Mi-Peter Wolfe

Appendix to FAQ on the PWC:

Our most popular spots on the PWC are the in/out hikes to the waterfalls at Canyon Falls described on PWC segment 58, and O Kun de Kun Falls described on PWC segment 22. There is no camping within sight of either of those falls, and no overnight parking at the Canyon Falls MDOT parking lot.

The chapter **west of the PWC**, ie west of M-64 is the [Ni-Miikanaake Chapter](#) (means “I make a trail” in Ojibwa)

The chapter **east of the PWC**, east of Long Lake is the [Marquette Area Chapter](#).