

Last updated March 2024



**Peter Wolfe Chapter Guide
in the Trap Hills from M-64
to Old Victoria Settlement
PWC segments 1-15**

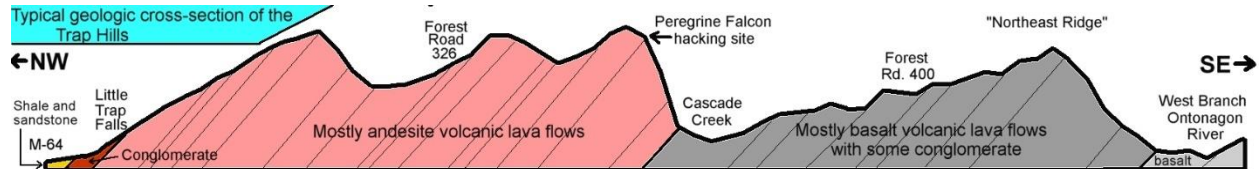
The Peter Wolfe Chapter has SEGMENTS that were determined years before we had this website. The segments are mostly from one road or spur access to the NCT to the next for easy maintenance access. We try to have a volunteer adopter for each of these 67 segments across 121 miles of trail.

[NCTA map](#) of Segments 1-15

[Avenza](#) maps including # 14-18

(West of our chapter here is the [Ni-Miikanaake Chapter](#) of the NCTA)

This is the western end of the Peter Wolfe Chapter at M-64
This area is known as the Trap Hills. Trap is a term for basalt rock. (Basalt is a dark, dense, fine-grained igneous rock formed from solidified lava in the earth's crust.) The Norwich mine was the location of one of the earliest copper mines on the Keweenaw Peninsula. Under a War Department permit issued in 1845, The Ohio Trap Rock company leased (and eventually purchased) over 1,700 acres of land for the purpose of exploring and developing deposits of pure copper. The Copper Country, now commonly called the Keweenaw Peninsula, is one of the few places in the world where native copper has been found in commercial quantities.

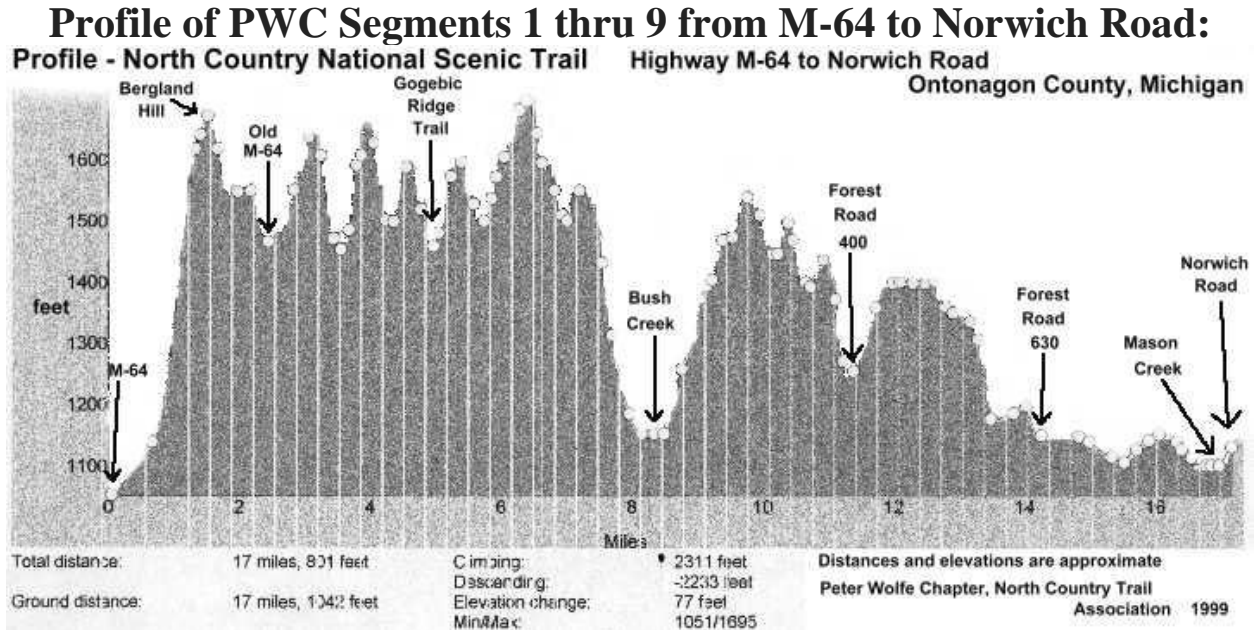


Note: Hiking season here is generally between June 1st and 14th of November.

We commonly get between 200-300 inches of snow a season which starts with some storms in November and melts in April/May. Many of our access roads to our trail are not plowed all winter so they *need time after snowmelt in May to dry out* enough to drive on. Volunteers cannot start trail work until mid-late May in the spring because they cannot drive on those roads until the roads are dry. Volunteers do not work after October, especially after rifle deer hunting starts; November 15 thru the 30th.

(The far east end of our trail in Herman/Summit area, got over 4 feet of new snow in one storm the beginning of May in 2023. A late snow like that is wet and heavy and bends and brings down many trees across the trail.) **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. There are some hiking only spur trails north of the NCT to Victoria road and a 0.6 mile trail going south of the NCT from mile 104.5 to the Norwich Mine Trail parking lot on FR627 off of Norwich Road

[on this map](#). A street vehicle is not recommended to be used on the narrow, rough Victoria road; a high clearance vehicle and a driver is needed who can back the vehicle up to the last wide part of the road for oncoming logging trucks to pass.



Segment 1 M-64 to Old M-64

[Avenza](#) map # 14, driving map [here](#)

Length: 2.54 miles [on this NCT map](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Trailheads and signs at M-64 and Old M-64, various transmission/relay towers, hiker registration box at M-64 trailhead. There is a Welcome to the Peter Wolfe Chapter sign at the western terminus of the Peter Wolfe Chapter including a sign that says: <- 1704 miles West to N.Dakota. 3062 miles East to Vermont ->

General description of segment: This segment is quite hilly, with a long climb from M-64 to summit of Bergland Hill, elevation 1752 feet; a vertical climb of 700 feet from trailhead. Nice hardwood/hemlock forest.

Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers. please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

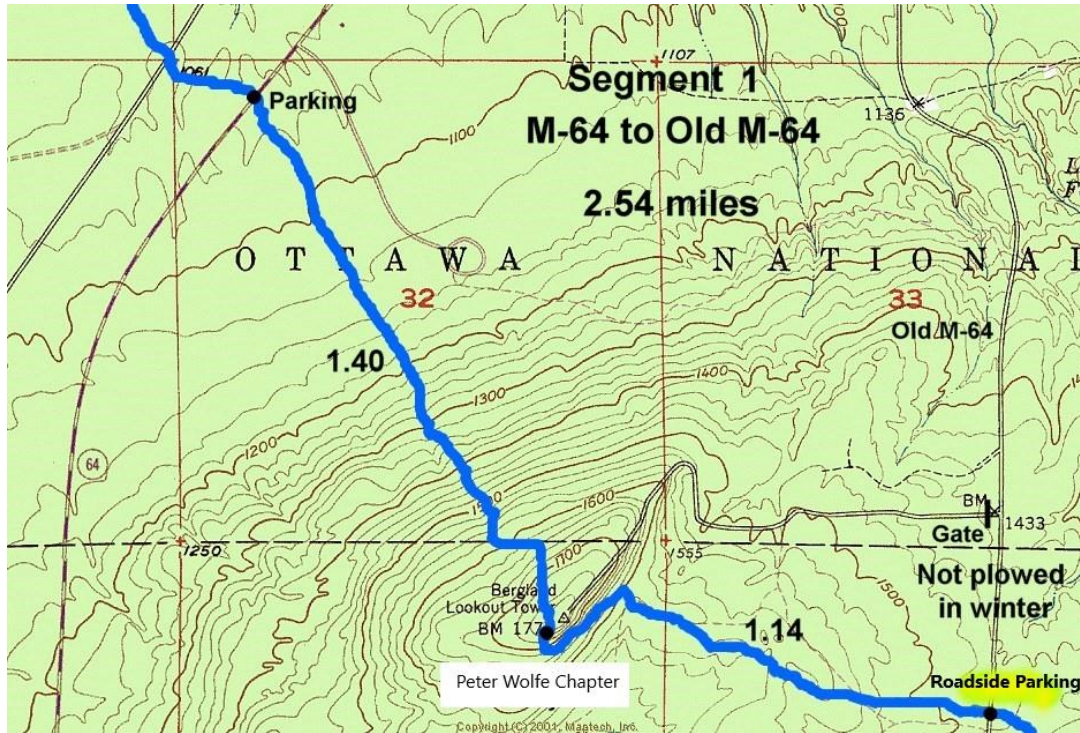
Water: No water

Parking: West end: There is a parking area on M-64 for about 2 cars only; leave room for

another car. So this is a good place to be shuttled to start your longer hike, but not a good place to leave a car overnite in this small space.

East end: There is no designated parking on Old M-64, just on the side of the narrow gravel road, not a good place to park for more than a few hours. Most Trap Hills hikers leave their car at the Old Victoria Historical site on Victoria Dam road and shuttle to this end.

Winter: West End: M-64 is plowed in winter, but the parking spot may not be plowed out. A space for one car during the winter is sometimes plowed on M-64. East end: Old M-64 is not plowed in winter and is used as a snowmobile trail, it remains closed to traffic in the spring until the road is drivable.



Segment 2

Old M-64 to Forest Road 326

[Avenza](#) map # 14

NCT map [here](#), Drive map [here](#)

Length: 1.17 miles [on this NCT map](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Trailheads, parking, and signs at Old Michigan 64 and FR 326, possible primitive camp sites at east end of segment 2; LNT.

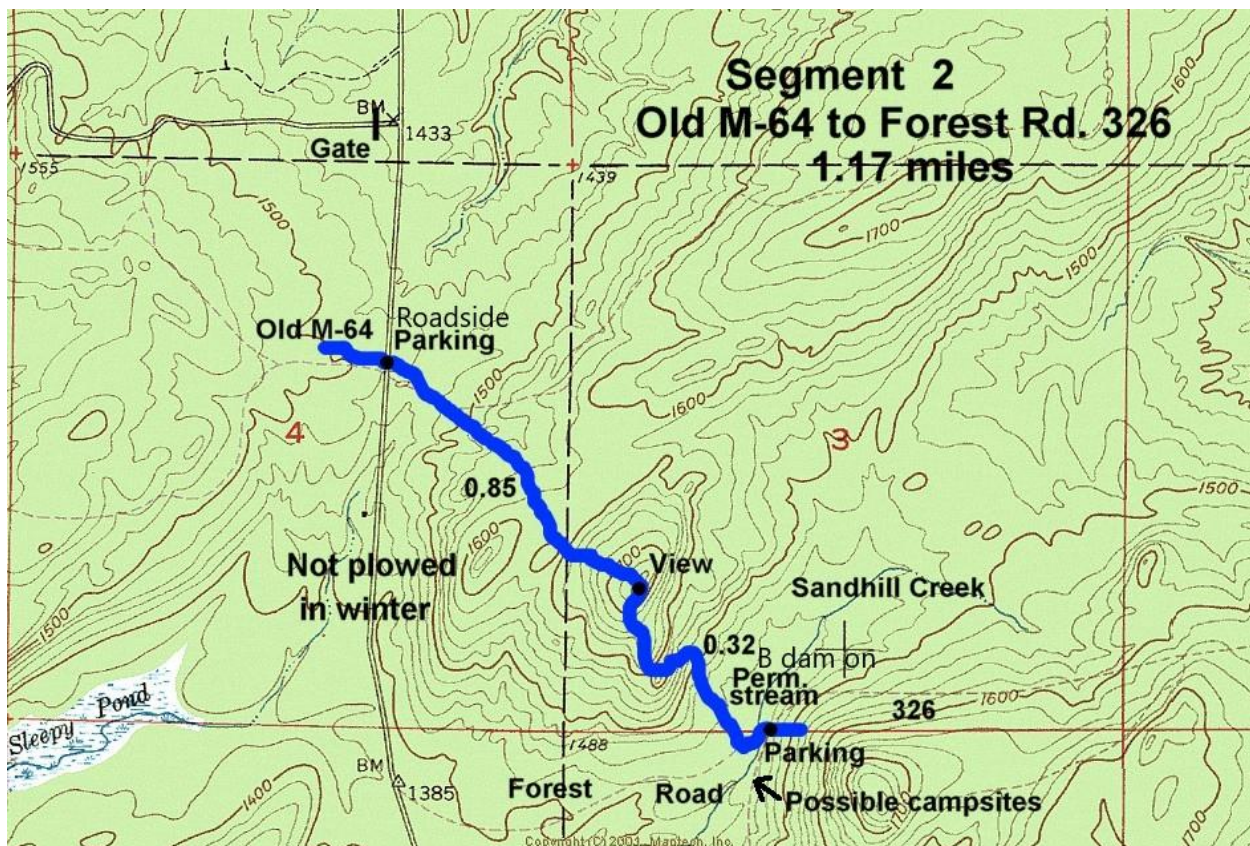
General description of segment: Mostly quite hilly. There is about 160 foot walk on FR 326 between segment 2 and 3. Mostly hardwood/hemlock forest. Excellent view at high point.

Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers. please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Sandhill Creek should be permanent water source. There is a new beaver dam at FR326 that holds the Sandhill Creek water stagnant.

Parking: There is no parking area on Old M-64, just on the side of this narrow gravel road. There is seasonal parking on FR 326 for 2 cars with a larger parking area one mile further east towards the end of FR 326.

Winter: No roads in this area are plowed in winter. Old-M-64 is used as a snowmobile trail and remains closed in the spring until the road is drivable and the road barriers are lifted.



Segment 3 Forest Road 326 to Gogebic Ridge Trail

[Avenza](#) map # 14, Drive map [here](#)

Length: 1.55 miles on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Trailhead and parking at FR 326. Signs at FR 326 and Gogebic

Ridge Trail junction.

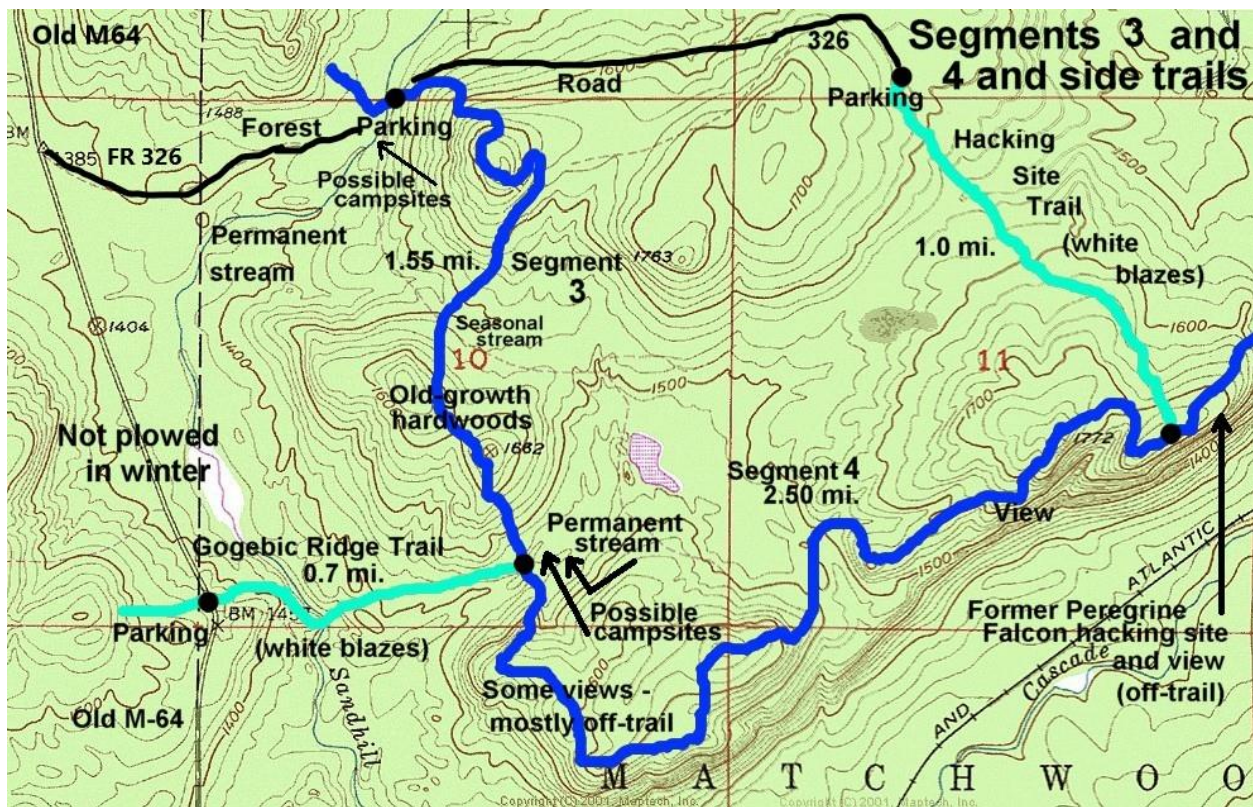
General description of segment: The trail is quite hilly. There is about 160 foot road walk on FR 326 between segment 2 and 3. Mostly hardwood/hemlock forest. Decent camping potential near southeast end of segment or possibly in the large parking area near the end of FR 326. Old growth hardwoods in saddle northwest of Gogebic Ridge Trail.

Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers. please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Several streams should have permanent water.

Parking: West end: There is seasonal parking area on the 2 track FR 326 for 2 cars; park perpendicular to the road in the small parking area to leave room for another car and not get blocked in. East end, need to park off Old M64 and hike in on the Gogebic Ridge Trail. Do not block gate, even if it looks like it is not used; landowners need 24/7 access to their property!

Winter: No roads in this area are plowed in winter. Old-M-64 is used as a snowmobile trail.



Segment 4 Gogebic Ridge Trail to Hacking Site Trail

[Avenza](#) map # 15, Drive map [here](#)

Length: 2.5 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers, ONF sometimes maintains the spur trails: Gogebic Ridge Trail and the Hacking Site Trail.

Developments along trail: Sign at Gogebic Ridge Trail junction.

General description of segment: Mostly quite hilly. Nice hardwood/hemlock forest. Several off-trail overlooks south and west of trail (see map). Spectacular viewpoint just south of trail as indicated by "View" on map.

Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers. please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Stream at west end should have permanent water.

Parking: West end, park along Old M-64, then hike into NCT on Gogebic Ridge Trail for 0.7 mile. Do not block gate, even if it looks like it is not used; land owners need 24/7 access to their property!

East end, the Hacking Site Trail is a white blazed trail that runs north from the NCT for 1 mile to a larger parking area on FR 326. Park perpendicular to FR326 and leave room for other cars.

Winter: No roads in this area are plowed in winter.



Segment 5 Hacking Site Trail to Bush Creek Bridge

[Avenza](#) map # 15, Driving map [here](#)

Length: 1.9 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers. ONF sometimes maintains the Hacking Site Trail spur trail.

Developments along trail: Bush Creek Bridge, 31 feet long, broken down in the middle. Abandoned railroad.

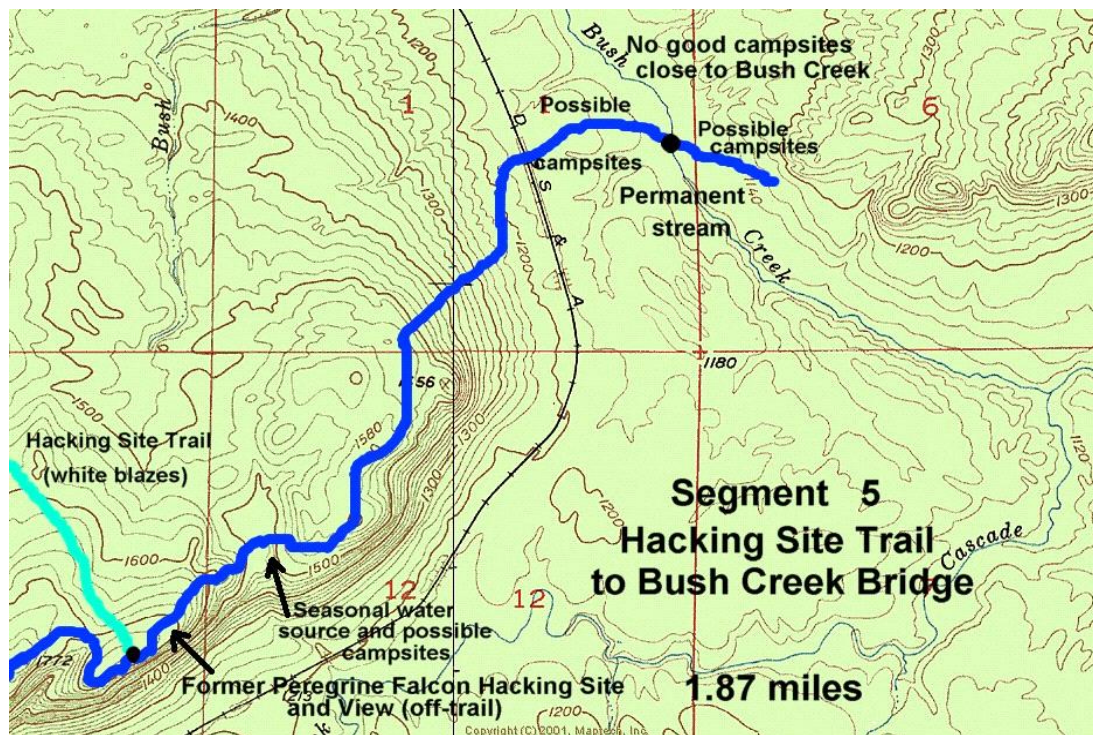
General description of segment: Mostly quite hilly. Nice hardwood/hemlock forest. Spectacular views. Permanent stream (Bush Creek) in somewhat brushy valley. Open valley east of Hacking Site has seasonal stream and good camping potential. Also good camping potential west of Bush Creek Bridge. Rail line is no longer used since about 2014(?)

Trail conditions The bridge over Bush Creek is scheduled to be replaced in the fall of 2024. The FS signed this bridge closed, use caution when crossing the narrow slow creek that can be up to about 2 feet deep. Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Bush Creek is a permanent stream towards west end.

Parking: West end: Parking area on FR 326 off Old M-64, then hike the one mile, on white blazed Hacking Site Trail to NCT. East end: No road access on east end of Segment 5.

Winter: No roads in this area are plowed in winter.



31 foot Bush Creek bridge is broken down in the middle and signed closed by the ONF:



Segment 6

Bush Creek Bridge to Forest Road 480

[Avenza](#) map # 15-16, No vehicle access to seg 6

Length: 0.8 mile, on this NCT [map](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Bush Creek Bridge

General description of segment: Mostly quite hilly. Mostly hardwood/hemlock forest.

Permanent stream (Bush Creek) in somewhat brushy valley.

Possible campsites east of Bush Creek Bridge

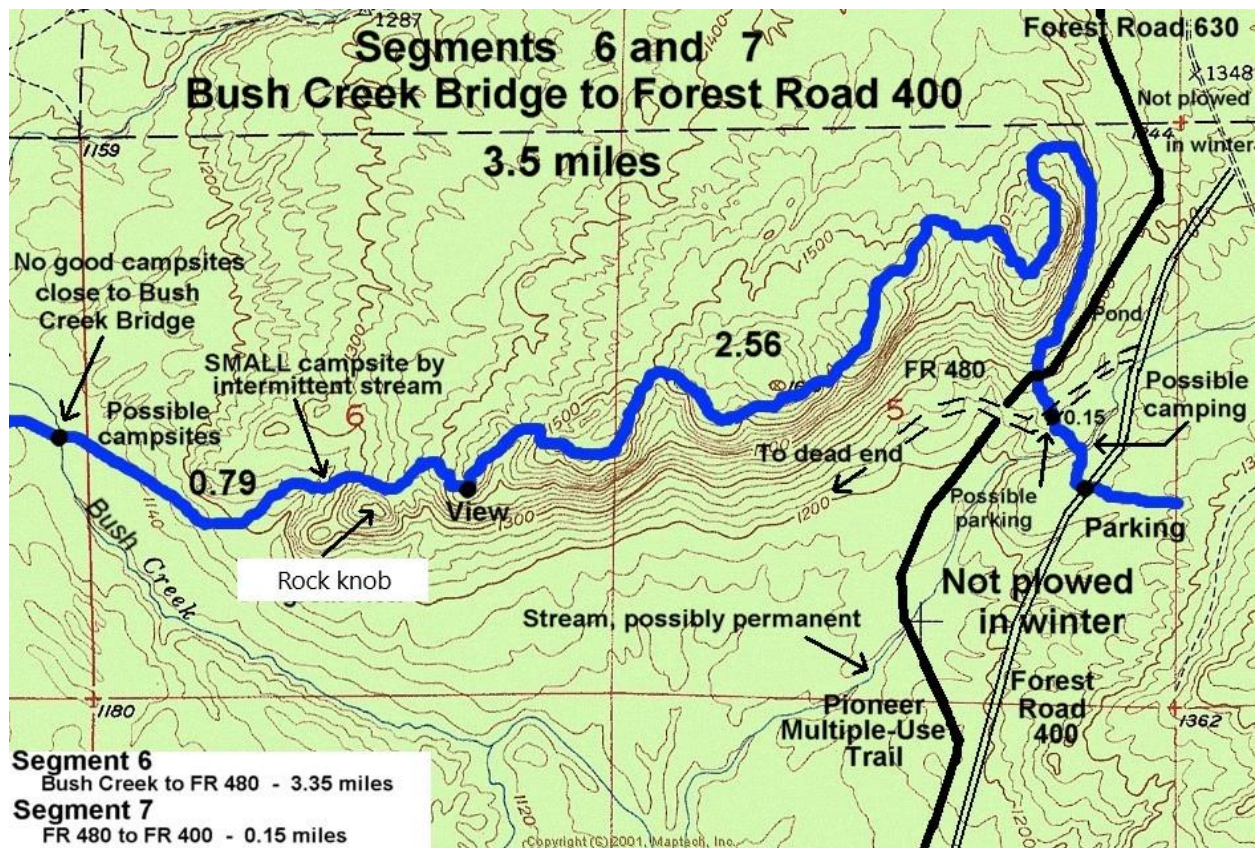
Trail conditions: The bridge over Bush Creek is scheduled to be replaced in the fall of 2024.

The FS has signed this bridge closed, use caution when crossing the creek. Trail maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Bush Creek

Parking: No parking, segment 6 is all off road

Winter: No roads in this area are plowed in winter.



Segment 7

Forest Road 480 to Forest Road 400

[Avenza](#) map # 16

Length: 2.6 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Sign at FR 400

General description of segment: Slightly hilly to almost level. East end of segment has steep trail then crosses the Pilgrim Multi-Use Trail (ATV/Snowmobile trail). Small nice campsite along seasonal stream farther east (see map) just before FR 400.

Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Small, probably permanent rocky stream about tenth of mile west of FR 400 and campsites might be found near the stream.

Parking: West end: No road access. East end parking on FR400 or on old FR480.

Winter: No roads in this area are plowed in winter.

Segment 8

Forest Road 400 to Forest Road 630

[Avenza map # 16](#), [Driving map here](#)

Length: 3.3 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Sign at FR 400

General description of segment: Mostly hilly to rolling, with several very steep areas, especially at southeast corner. Nice hardwood forest with mixed conifers. Excellent viewpoints at the two points on the trail that are shown on the map.

Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Possible water source in seasonal stream on ridge (head southwest from the center of land section 9 (red 9 on map) along the south side of the valley, to a rocky area in the streambed with possible water pools well into the summer).

Parking: West end: park along FR400. East end: park on a pull-off on the gravel FR630.

Winter: No roads in this area are plowed in winter

Cascade Falls Trail (spur not yet connected to NCT)

Length: one mile (approximate) from NCT to Cascade trail

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service: Ottawa National Forest

Responsible for maintenance: Ottawa National Forest

Developments along trail: Parking area and sign on FR 468.

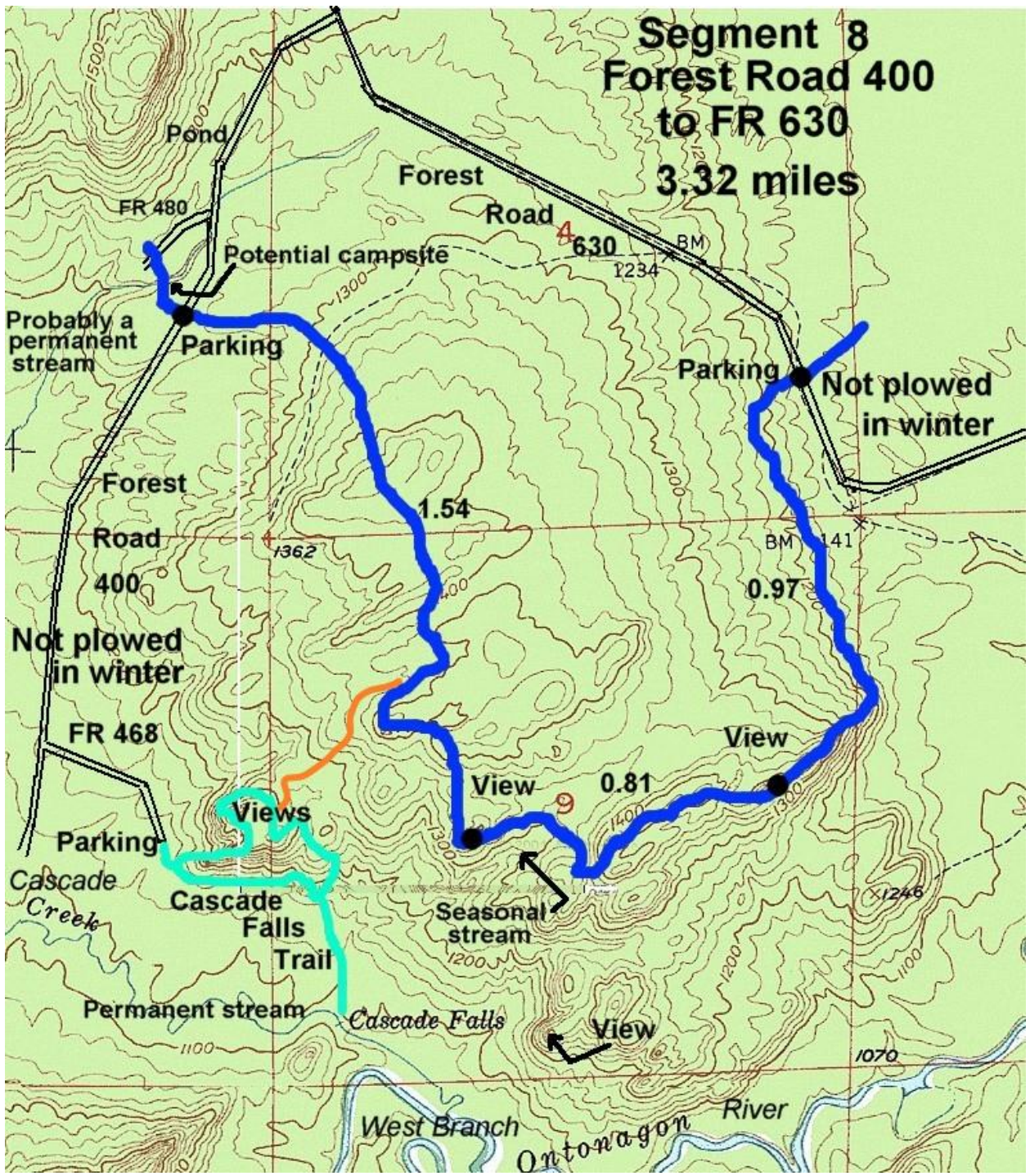
Note: Signs for the Cascade Falls turnoff are found on FR 400.

General description of segment: Pleasant to very scenic. The trail heading directly to the Falls goes through mostly flat areas. The northern loop, which ascends steeply onto a ridge at each end, wanders around the dry rocky ridge past several spectacular viewpoints. The rocks at the Falls provide a great area for a break or for lunch.

SPUR Trail conditions: There is no official trail to the Falls from the NCT yet, but there is **an old orange ribbon flagged spur** trail to it that should be an easy bushwhack! The ONF intends to put a spur off the NCT to Cascade Falls.

Segment 8 map below:

Segment 8 Forest Road 400 to FR 630 3.32 miles



Segment 9

Forest Road 630 to Norwich Road

[Avenza](#) map # 16, [Driving map here](#)

Length: 3.7 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter volunteers

Developments along trail: Sign at both gravel road FR 630 and paved Norwich Road. Foot Bridge over Mason Creek.

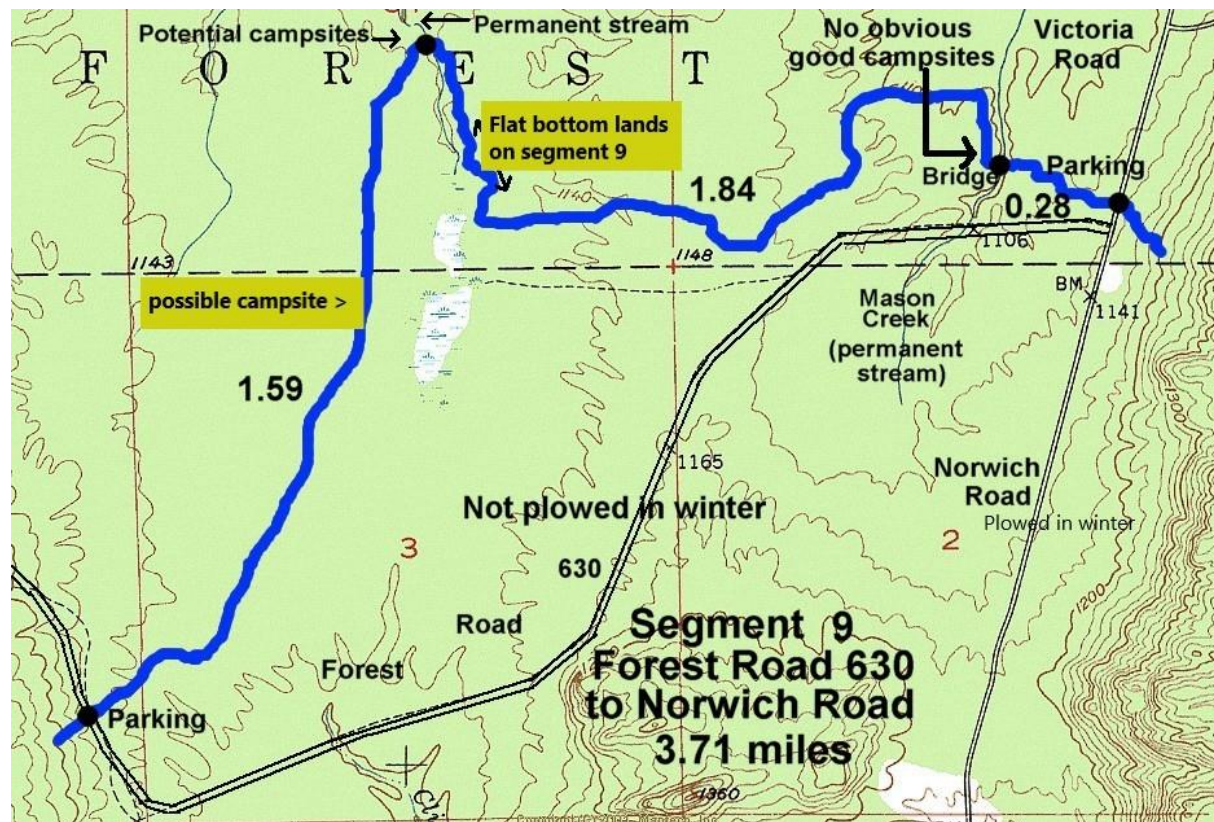
General description of segment: Mostly level to gently rolling. Some hardwoods and conifers but aspen is dominant. Trail is generally low and passes beaver floodings and wetlands. Possible camping near small but permanent stream at northwest tip of trail map. Possible camping near Mason Creek, but no obvious desirable campsites near the bridge. LNT!

Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Small but permanent stream at northwest tip of trail map and Mason Creek.

Parking: West end: park at a road side wide spot on FR630 where Segment 9 crosses FR630. East end: Parking area on Norwich Road just north of the gravel FR 630.

Winter: West end: FR630 is not plowed, East end: Norwich Road is plowed, but not the parking area. This is a heavy snow area so roadside parking may be very difficult.

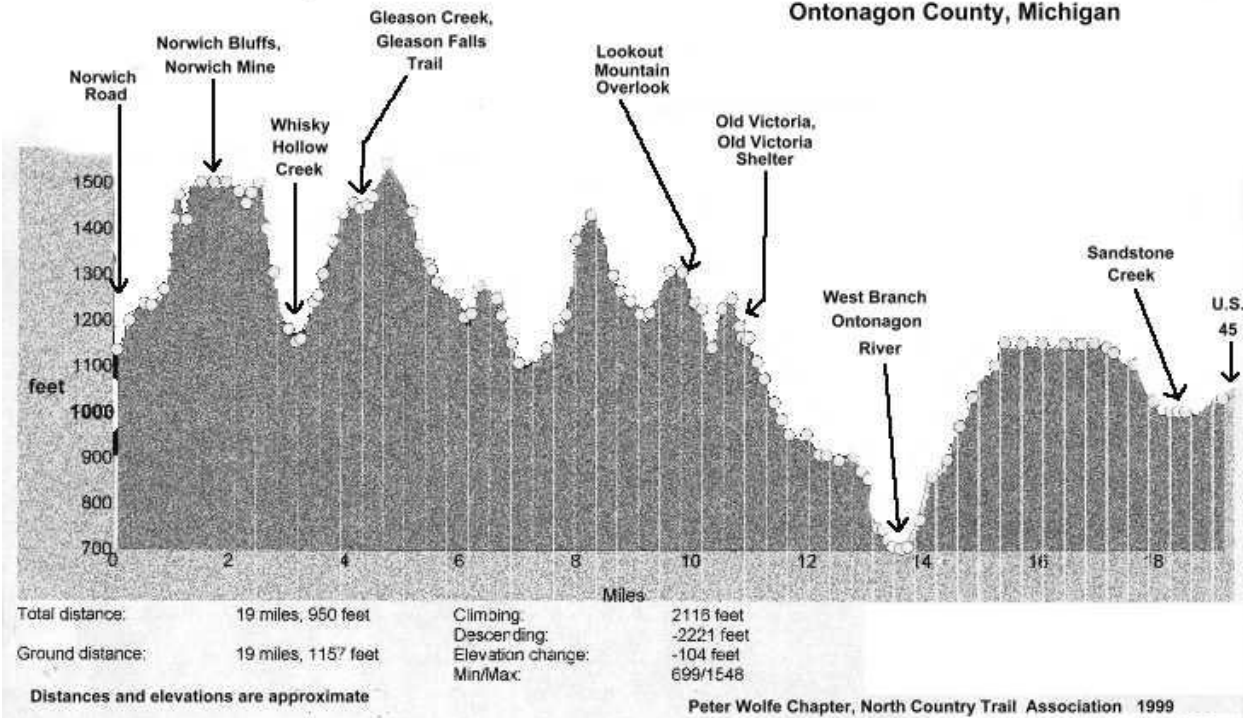


Profile of PWC Segments 10 thru 21; from Norwich Road to US 45:

Profile - North Country National Scenic Trail

Norwich Road to U.S. 45

Ontonagon County, Michigan



Segments 10

Norwich Road to Side Trail to Victoria Road, with comments on that side trail (Segment 10A)

[Avenza](#) map # 16, driving map [here](#)

Note: The 12 miles on Victoria Road between Norwich road and Victoria DAM road, has no vehicle access to the trail; just hiking-only spur trails that are gated or bermed by the USFS; some are old 2 tracks, others just narrow hiking paths. It is not recommended to use a street vehicle on Victoria Road, a narrow rocky logging road; a high clearance vehicle is suggested. Watch for wider spots on the road in case you meet other vehicles and one of you needs to back up (a logging truck will not back up). Park well off Victoria Road, it is too narrow for big trucks to pass cars parked on the side of the road.

Length: 3.9 miles, on NCT map [here](#) (map below has incorrect math showing 3.31 miles)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service and some on Lyme Timber Co.

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter volunteers

Developments along trail: Signs at Norwich Road, at side trail to FR 642, and where the NCT turns sharply at the junction of the NCT with the white blazed trail that heads southward toward the base of Norwich Bluffs and public parking off Norwich road. Registration box at the east junction of the NCT and the interpretive trail. Post sign at intersection of NCT and white-blazed spur trail going north to Victoria Road.

General description of segment: Mostly hilly, with about 7 up and downs with many great viewpoints along the trail and off-trail. Nice hardwood / hemlock / pine forests. Access to Forest Service Norwich Mine Interpretive Trail at two points.

Limited seasonal water sources, and no obvious great campsites near dependable water sources. One suggested place to camp is near where the trail heads north near the east end of Norwich Bluff. The valley just north of where the trail leaves the bluff edge has water at times (shown as "Seasonal stream" on the map), and while there are level enough sites to camp near the great views on the bluff, caution is needed near the bluffs so please do not camp near the bluffs. LNT! The area has many old horizontal mine entrances ("adits"), as well as several off-trail mine shafts (pits). **Use extreme caution around pits; do not attempt to climb down into them. The bottom depth is unknown; it may not be "solid" and pit edges may be unstable.** The Ottawa National Forest has closed many mine shafts in the area, putting wooden fencing around them and a metal grate barricade across their openings to keep people out and allow bats to move in and out freely. If you want to see what one of these mine closures looks like, hike about 500 feet north from the NCT at the sign on the side trail to FR 642; you'll see the wooden fencing around the mine shaft.

Note that FR 642 is gated near Victoria Road. There are some hiking only spur trails north of the NCT to Victoria road and a 0.6 mile trail going south of the NCT from mile 104.5 to the Norwich Mine trail parking lot on FR627 off of Norwich Road [on this map](#).

Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Whiskey Hallow Creek just east of this segment, is a dependable source of water.

Parking: [Click here](#) for the Driving road between the spur trails to the West and East ends of Segment 10 on Victoria and Norwich Road.

West end: parking area for several cars on west side of Norwich Road just north of the gravel FR 630.

Middle: there is parking at the base of Norwich Bluff on FR 600N just north of the bridge over the West Branch of the Ontonagon River; then walk the gated FR627, past the southbound Cemetery spur south and on to the Signed steep northbound Mule Trail white blazed spur that connects to the NCT.

East end: there is a rough parking area for a number of cars off Victoria Road then hike a fun white blazed spur trail on the Whiskey Hallow Creek spur trail (labeled 10A on map below). Note: Victoria road between Norwich Road and Victoria Dam Road is a narrow, rocky logging road that is not recommended for regular low clearance cars to drive on.

Winter: West end: Norwich Road is plowed, but not the parking area. This is a heavy snow area so roadside parking may be very difficult. East end: Victoria Road is not plowed; the road is blocked off, and used by snowmobiles. And in early spring, there is sometimes water all across the road about midway thru the Victoria Road. There will be a winter barricade across the west end of Victoria road until the road is dry enough to be opened in the spring.



Norwich Mine area

The "Norwich Mine area" may be defined in many ways, but for the purposes of this web page it will be called the area in the vicinity of several mines that were centered around a high rock bluff, known as Norwich Bluff, that is located northeast of where Norwich Road crosses the West Branch of the Ontonagon River.

Below is a map of the general area. In addition to the mines that are in the area shown by the map, there are several west of Norwich Road and several east of Whisky Hollow Creek.

Brief history of the Norwich Mine area

The copper-bearing ridges and bluffs of northern Ontonagon County were initially explored and mined by Indigenous People, the Ojibwe/Anishinaabe/Chippewa (the distinction among the three names will not be addressed here). Undoubtedly the Norwich Bluff attracted their

attention, and they had an active trail running east-west along the West Branch. But those of European descent had their eyes on the area after their "discovery," ca. 1840, of copper along and near Lake Superior. However, French explorers knew of these copper deposits in the 17th Century, if not before, as they were aware of the famous Ontonagon Copper Boulder. See [link](#) and [link](#).

By 1843 exploration for copper was in full swing in the Norwich area. At first, access was via the original Ojibwe trail, and then by the "Miner's Road" which closely followed the trail route. While called a "road" it was still a long and arduous journey from the mouth of the Ontonagon River to Norwich Bluff, first by small boat and then overland.

Once copper was found in promising quantities, a flood of mining companies came to the area, and opened over a dozen underground copper mines, many of which were associated with other nearby mines. Most successful was the Norwich Mine, which operated steadily from 1850 to 1860, under the ownership of several mining companies, and intermittently by others until 1916. However almost all copper removed (~500 tons) was taken out by 1860.

The town of Norwich developed at the base of the bluff to support the mine. Today that townsite has little remaining, though the area may be explored by parking at the Forest Service parking lot accessed by a short gravel road that goes NNE from Norwich Road a short distance north of the bridge over the West Branch. Most of the town was west and northwest of the parking lot.

Remaining, though, is the town's cemetery, accessed from the parking lot by going north toward the bluff and then east along an old road at the base of the bluff for about 1000 feet, and then right (south) on a side trail for about 600 feet. There are still several families who have relatives buried in the cemetery, so the cemetery continues to receive maintenance. It's worth the side trip.

Norwich Mine to the NCT

A trail connects the former Norwich townsite to the NCT. *To reach the NCT from the Forest Service parking lot at the blocked end of FR 600N is about 0.6 mile:* follow the path that goes north to the edge of the bluff and then east on the old road along the base of the bluff for about 1700 feet (700 feet past the southbound trail to the cemetery), and then head NNE steeply uphill from the Mule Trail sign on the white blazed trail. The route follows a rocky gully, very steep in places. You'll pass an old adit (horizontal mine entrance), which is closed off. Eventually the trail levels out somewhat and intersects the NCT at a sign on the right. From the old road to the sign is about 1200 feet. If you continue north of the NCT you'll reach the southeast junction with the Norwich Mine Interpretive Trail, which angles sharply back to the left (SW). A registration box on a post is found at this junction, which is only 200 ft. or so (?) north of the sign mentioned above.

For more info, here are some references:

The Norwich Mine: An Historical Journey Across Time, Or, A Dream of Copper Riches Lost : 150 Years, West of the Ontonagon, 1841-1991 : a Timeless History of One Copper Mine in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, by Joseph R. Papineau (1995). Printed by the Ontonagon County Herald Company, Ontonagon MI.

The Mining Ventures of this Ontonagon Country, by James K. Jamison (1950), though a later edition, "Ontonagon County Historical Society Edition," was printed ca. 1996.

Note that neither of the above two books seems to be currently available from the Ontonagon

County Historical Society, though they have a number of great options. See [Gift Shop](#).
[Minerals](#) found at Norwich Mine (undoubtedly an incomplete list)

[Pittsburg Mine](#)

[Ohio Trap Rock Mine](#)

[Archaeology field trip](#)

[Norwich Mine Interpretive Plan](#) Huge pdf file! Note that the interpretive trail actually covers the adjacent Ohio Trap Rock Mine site (part of the Norwich Mine complex).

See also

Hamka, Terry Kaminiski, 2011. The Copper Mines of Ontonagon County, Michigan. Jackson, Michigan, Copperlady Press. 154 pp. Spiral-bound. This book may be very difficult to find!

Various books available from the Ontonagon County Historical Society. [Museum](#) [Gift Shop](#)

Segment 11

Side Trail to Victoria Road

Logging road to Victoria Road

[Avenza](#) map # 17

Segments 11 thru 13 have spurs to Victoria Road, but Victoria Rd is a narrow rocky logging road that needs a high clearance vehicle and you may need to back up to a wide spot if you meet a logging truck or other vehicle. Park off of Victoria Road, it is too narrow for big trucks to pass cars parked on the side of the road.

Length: 2.1 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service, Lyme Timber Co., Longyear (Longyear is east and west of Gleason Creek NCT crossing)

Responsible for maintenance: Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Post at west end of segment coming from the spur that crosses Whisky Hollow. White ribbon at east end at side trail to the sometimes-wet 0.55 mile long logging road.

General description of segment: Mostly hilly, with numerous, sometimes spectacular overlooks. Small, pretty, rocky rapids in Whisky Hollow Creek downstream from where NCT crosses. Possible campsites in Whisky Hollow Creek valley. LNT!

Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Whisky Hollow Creek is a dependable water source, and Gleason Creek with short spur to Falls.

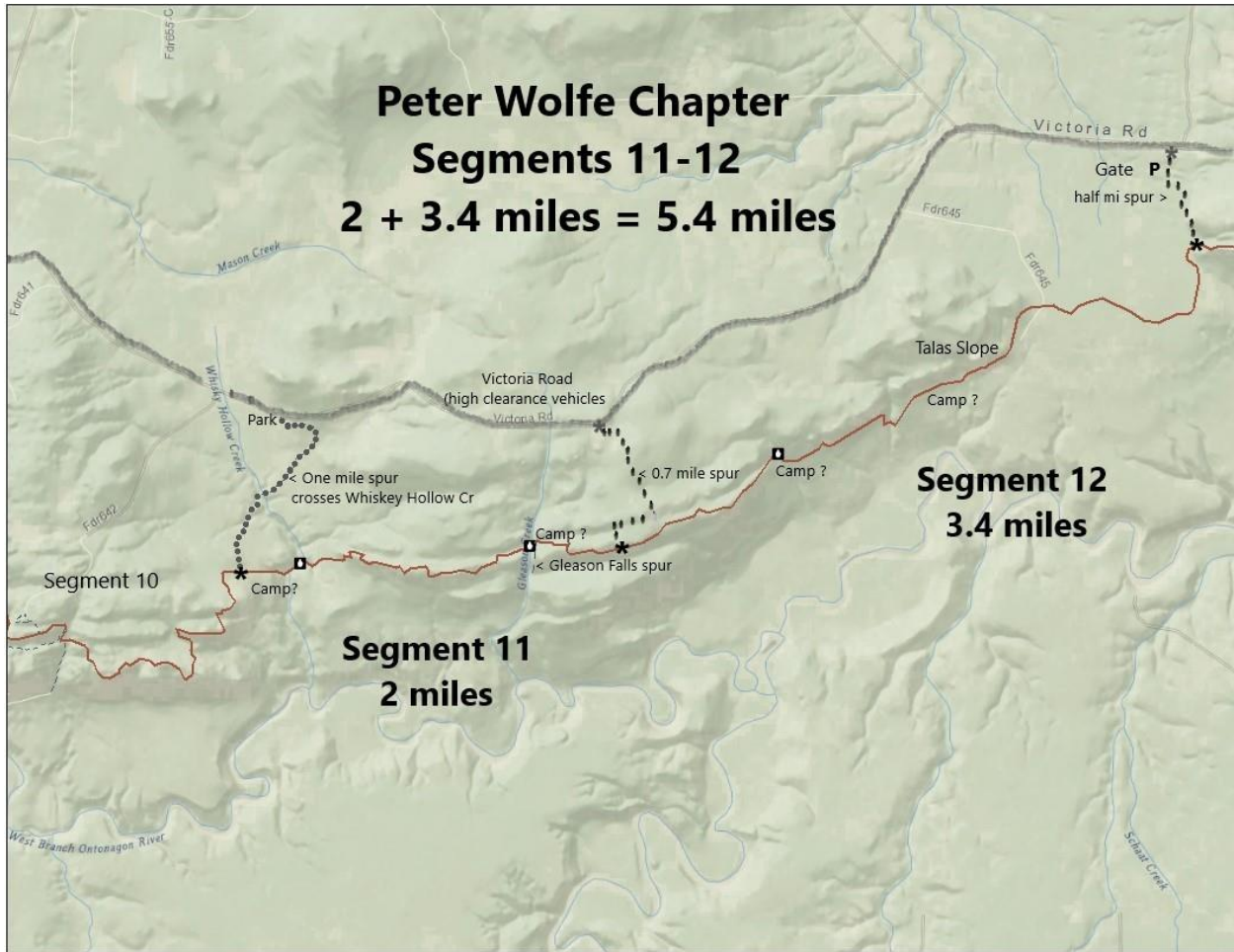
Parking: This NCT segment has no road crossing. [Click here](#) for the Driving road between the spur trails to the West and East ends of Segment 11 on Victoria Road.

West end, there is a nice big parking lot on the south side of Victoria Road. (This parking lot is not always mowed by the ONF; it can be uneven so check out the parking lot before driving in to avoid hidden dirt mounds or ditches from big vehicles going on parking area when it is too soft.)

There is a sign at start of white blazed trail which is one mile hike to the NCT that includes a fun hike thru Whiskey Hallow.

East end of Seg 11: there is a 0.7 mile newly re-constructed logging road from Victoria Road south to the NCT with white blaze or ribbon. After the bend at the south end of that logging road, there is a small clearing where the road appears to end. Look for a white blaze or ribbon short trail south to the NCT about 50 feet long. The approximate location of the junction of the NCT and the spur trail might be 46.67044, -89.3281. The north end of the spur trail on Victoria Road is about 46.67779 -89.33064

Winter: Victoria Road is not plowed in winter, it is used by snowmobiles, and usually blockaded until sometime in May when the road has dried out enough to drive.



Segment 12

Logging Road to Victoria Road

0.5 mile Spur Trail to Victoria Road

[Avenza](#) map # 17-18

Segments 11, 12, 13 have spurs to Victoria Road, but Victoria Rd is a narrow rocky logging road that needs a high clearance vehicle. You may need to back up to a wide spot if you meet a logging truck or other vehicle. Park off of Victoria Road, it is too narrow for big trucks to pass cars parked on the side of the road.

Length: 3.2 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service and Lyme Timber Co.(Lyme=1.27 miles on the western end of seg 12)

Responsible for maintenance ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Future signs at east and west end of spurs to Victoria Rd.

General description of segment: This segment 12 is accessed from Victoria Road by a 0.7 mile spur to the NCT. Mostly hilly, and has several great overlooks and rocky streams. Possible campsites on level areas. LNT! There is an interesting Talus Slope POI; on top of it is a fantastic off-trail 360-degree viewpoint. However, use caution up on the slippery talus slope if you get off the trail to climb to the view; and the greenery you see higher on the talas rocks is large-leafed poison ivy. The [United States Mine](#) exploration spot is not signed and not easily located.

Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Numerous water sources, some of which are seasonal

Parking: This segment has no road crossing.

West end of Seg 12: there is a 0.7 mile newly re-constructed logging road from Victoria Road south to the NCT that is white spur blazed. After the bend at the south end of that logging road, there is a small clearing where the road appears to end. Look for a white blaze or ribbon trail south to the NCT about 50 feet long. The approximate location of the junction of the NCT and the spur trail might be 46.67044, -89.3281. The north end of the spur trail on Victoria Road is about 46.67779 -89.33064

East end, there is a half mile spur trail that has white blaze or white ribbon to follow between the NCT and Victoria Rd. Just out of site of the Victoria Rd is a gate, if you park here, do not block this gate; south of the gate, the 2 track is somewhat grown in. This spur starts from Victoria Rd about 325 feet west of an unnamed road that goes north. [Click here](#) for the driving map between the west and east spurs to segment 12 on Victoria Road.

Winter: Victoria Road is not plowed in winter when it is a snowmobile trail. It is blockaded and closed all winter until sometime in May/June when the road is dry enough to drive.

SEE MAP ABOVE for Segment 12

Segment 13

0.5 mile Spur Trail to Victoria Road to 0.2 mile Spur Trail to Victoria Road

[Avenza](#) map # 18

Segments 11, 12, 13 have spurs to Victoria Road, but Victoria Rd is a narrow rocky logging road that needs a high clearance vehicle. You may need to back up to a wide spot if you meet a logging truck or other vehicle. Park off of Victoria Road, it is too narrow for big trucks to pass cars parked on the side of the road.

Length: 2.2 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Lookout Mtn sign on trail; best view from Lookout Mtn is about 100 feet NE of the NCT.

General description of segment: This is hilly with several great view overlooks! Segment 13 has a stream crossing and a signed short spur to a small waterfall about a mile west of Lookout Mtn. Possible campsites northwest of stream crossing. LNT! Do not build a fire or camp on the edge of the cliff! There is No water for extinguishing a fire on a cliff!

Trail conditions: Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Several water sources, some of which are seasonal

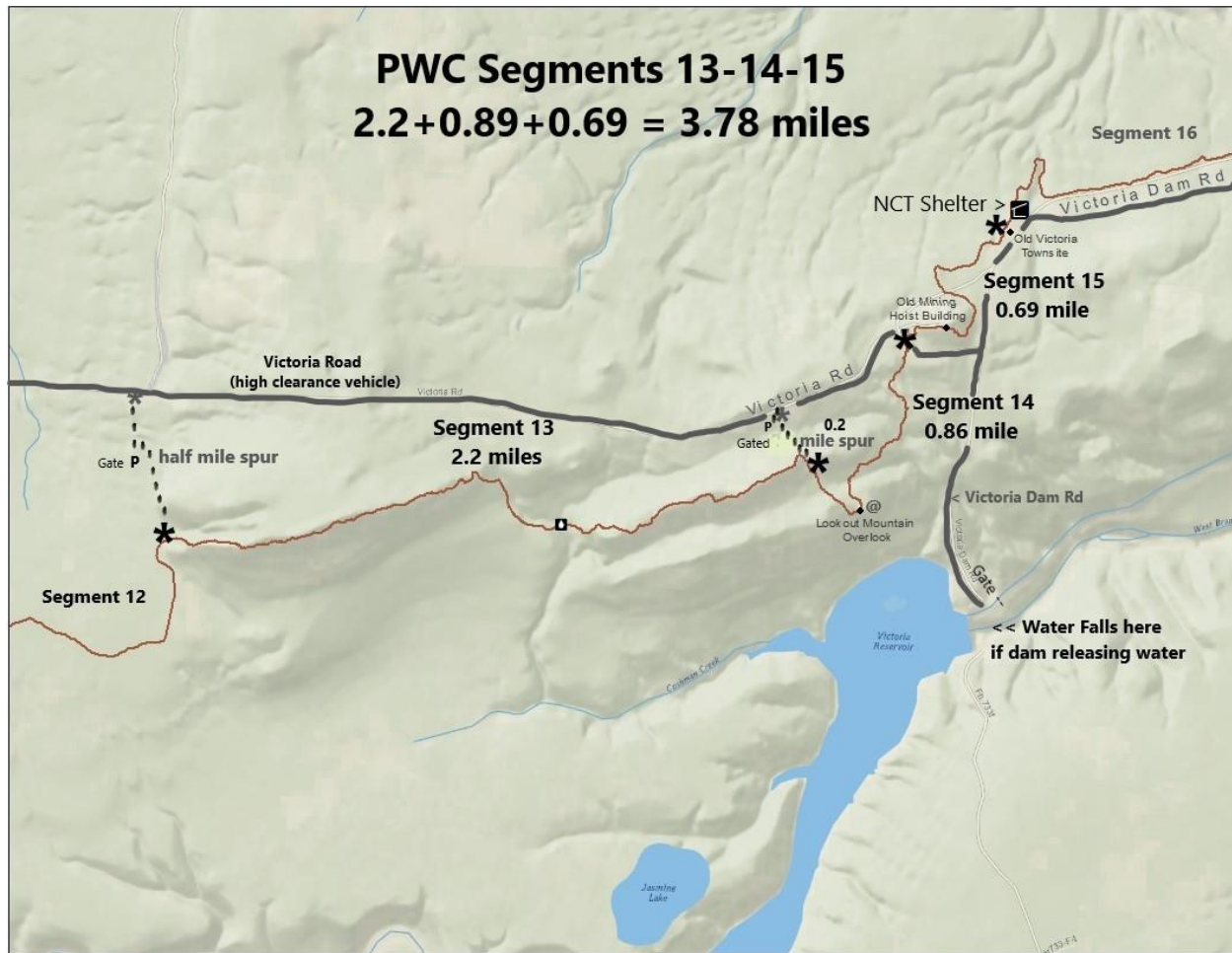
Parking: This segment has no road crossing, have to park and walk in on spur trail. Park off the road, Victoria road is too narrow for big trucks to pass parked cars.

West end, there is a half mile spur trail that has white blaze or white ribbon to follow between the NCT and Victoria Rd. Just out of site of the Victoria Rd is a gate, if you park here, do not block this gate; south of the gate, the 2 track is somewhat grown in. This spur starts from Victoria Rd about 325 feet west of an unnamed road that goes north.

East end, park off of Victoria Road; there is a gated white blazed 0.2 mile long spur trail between the NCT and Victoria Road. This spur starts on the NCT at about 46.6937 -89.2398 deg and comes out to Victoria Rd at about 46.6960 -89.2409 .

Here is [the driving map](#) on Victoria Road between the spurs to east & west ends of Segment 13.

Winter: Victoria Road is not plowed in winter.



Segment 14

From the 0.2 mile Spur Trail to Victoria Road to the Victoria Rd crossing near the Captain's House

[Avenza](#) map # 18

Length: 0.86 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: ONF and Lyme Timber Co (Lyme=0.4 mile ~115.8 to~116.2)

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Signs pointing to the Lookout Mountain view. From that lookout you can see about where the famous [Ontonagon Copper Boulder](#) was found that started the copper rush in this area. Sign at "interpretive trail" junction. The interpretive trail was built by the [Society for the Restoration of Old Victoria](#) on their property, but they no longer maintain it. The trail crosses a wide open powerline about a half mile NE of Lookout Mountain.

General description of segment: Hilly with a spectacular view!

The segment starts just a quarter mile west of the spectacular Lookout Mtn overview. The best view from Lookout Mtn is about 100 feet off the NCT to overlook the Victoria Dam reservoir area. Please do not camp on the cliff top and no fires because there is no water source on top of cliffs for extinguishing a fire. About a half mile NE of Lookout Mtn, the Trail crosses the power line at a slight angle. Look for blue blazes at tree line on far side of power line as the power line crossing may be grown up with tall grass; this area is too remote for equipment to mow that grass. (Let us know if you can help cut that grass by hand!) The east end of this Segment is where it crosses Victoria Road, about 150 feet NW of the big white "Captain's House" which was built in 1899.

Trail conditions: Fun hilly, easy to follow trail. The new part of this trail will be leveled and benched when permission is received for treadwork from the ONF. Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: No water sources on this segment.

Parking: West end, park off Victoria Road; there is a gated white blazed 0.2 mile long spur trail between the NCT and Victoria Road. This spur starts on the NCT at about 46.6937 -89.2398 deg and comes out to Victoria Rd at about 46.6960 -89.2409

East end of Segment 14, there is parking near the Captain's House along Victoria Road both winter and summer. Do not block the road! The big white privately owned Captain's House is about 150 feet southeast of the NCT road crossing. You can see the historical Captain's House and surrounding buildings named on [this aerial photo](#) taken in about 1937. Most of those buildings are no longer standing except Captain Thomas Hooper's house, which was built in the 1890s.

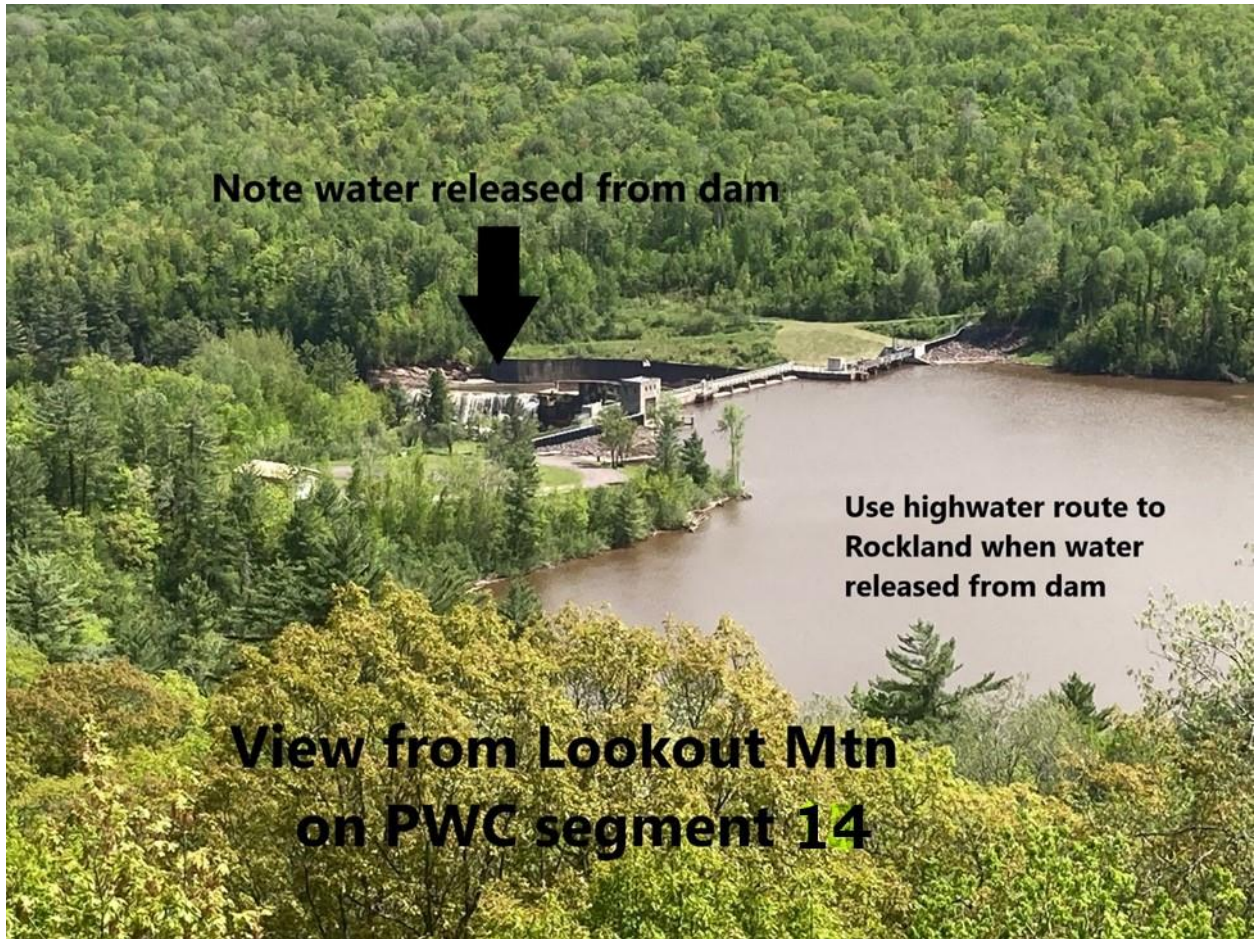
[Click here](#) for the driving map on Victoria Road between the western spur to the NCT and the Victoria Road crossing near the Captain's House on the east end of Segment 14.

Winter: Victoria Dam Road is plowed. Victoria Road, west off Victoria Dam Road, is only plowed as far as the Captain's House. There is a plowed space to park in front of the Captain's house on Victoria Road. This is where the plow turns around. Do not block the long private driveway to the south of the Captain's House which is kept plowed.

View from Lookout Mtn toward Victoria dam and overflow

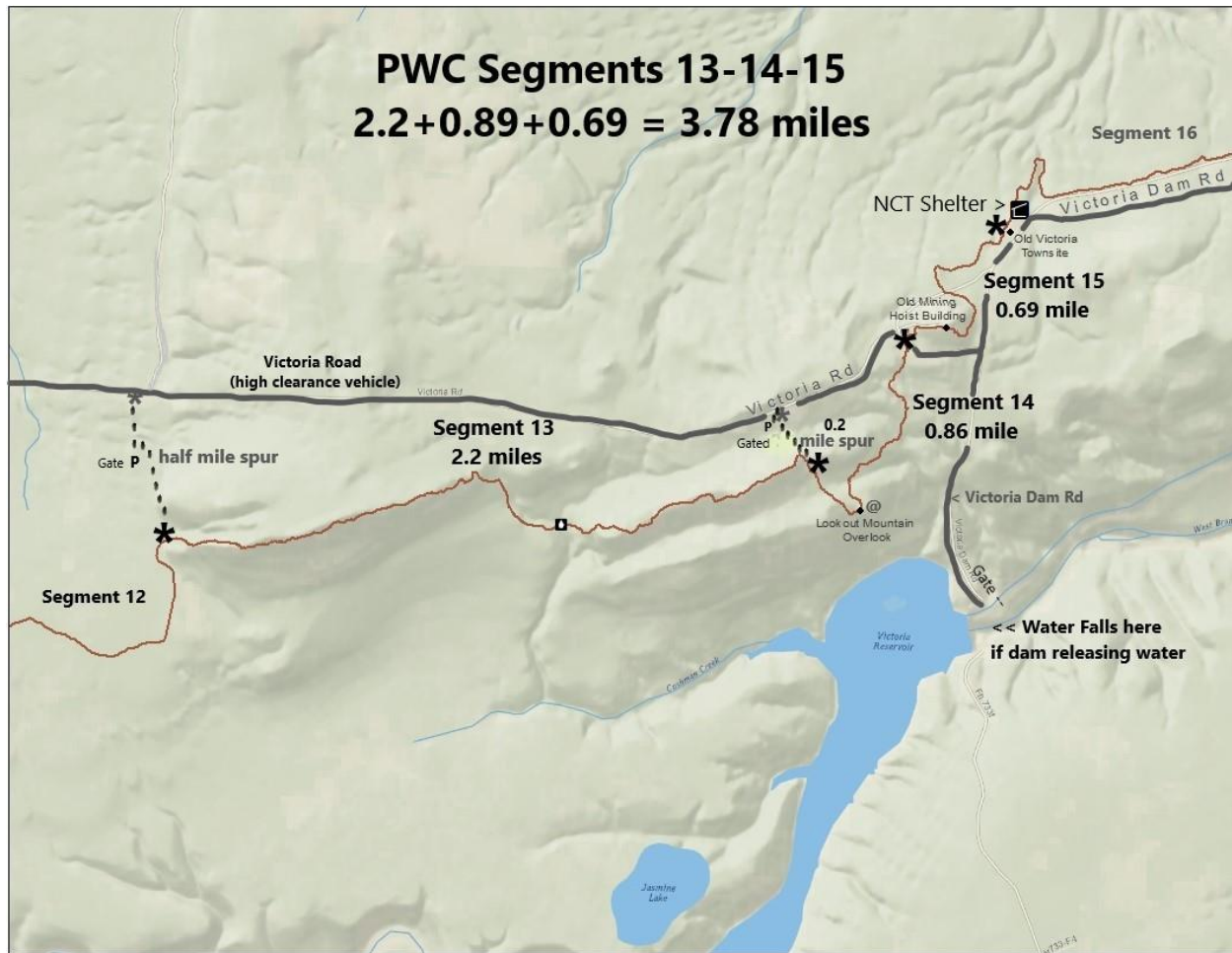
Water is usually released from the dam until June 15 each year or after heavy rains.

When you see water flowing like that, you will need to leave the NCT when you get to the Victoria Dam Road NCT crossing North of the NCT shelter, and hike to Rockland then on US-45 to the O Kun de Kun Falls TH to get back on the NCT there.



Easy Ford over W. Branch Ontonagon River when NO water is being released over Victoria Dam:





Segment 15

Victoria Road crossing near the Captain's House to Old Victoria NCT Shelter

[Avenza](#) map # 18, Drive map [here](#)

We have a screened NCT shelter at the East end of this section!

Length: 0.69 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: Private landowners, including the [Society for the Restoration of Old Victoria](#) and Lyme Timber Co.

Responsible for maintenance: Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers and sometimes a volunteer from the Old Victoria Historic site

Developments along trail: The NCT walks right thru the Hoist House for the Victoria mine. The original Hoist House was built in the 1890s; this Hoist House was built in 1917 and operated until 1921. The cavity in the middle of this building held the huge hoist engine like an elevator

motor that ran cables down into the mine for lifting men and copper out of the mine. It was operated on compressed air gained from the Taylor Hydraulic Air Compressor. See the Hoist House and surrounding buildings named on [this aerial photo](#) taken in about 1937; most of those buildings no longer stand except the Captain's House. You will see many foundations alongside the trail if you want to refer to that photo to determine what those foundations were when built in the mid 1800s-1900. There is a NCT **registration box** just west of the [Old Victoria Restoration Site](#) to sign your comments if you wish. Note: There is a Sauna in the Old Vic site, but it can only be used with PERMISSION ONLY (it is for Society members only). The outhouses owned by the Restoration Society are no longer in operation due to Health Dept regulations. There is no electricity or water or privy at the Old Victoria Historic site.

The **NCT shelter** is at the east end of this segment, just *out of view* from the Old Victoria Historical buildings.

[Here is a short video](#) about Old Victoria town and mine, starting about 17 minutes in.

General description of segment: Eastbound, this segment starts at Victoria Road just 150 feet NW of the big white "Captain's House". The trail passes historic structures, then follows a gravel two track road east. If you go north just a few steps from here, you will see a line of rock, you can get a great view off the top of that rock pile! Continuing east on that gravel road into the interesting roofless Hoist House. It then wanders downhill past a former mine audit, follows a minor road left, crosses "Rock Pile Road," follows old road north, then angles right, heading downhill to the Old Victoria Historical site. The restored historical log buildings here were built in the 1890s. They belong to the Old Victoria Restoration Society. We do not have permission to enter any of those buildings unless you pay a fee to them to take their seasonal tour.

Shelter: There is a screened NCT shelter with 4 bunks on the east end of this section, just out of view of the Old Victoria historic site log buildings. It has no power or water or firepit or privy. The shelter is available for NCT hikers only. Some hikers like to pitch their tent inside the shelter especially in winter, or just stop and have a rest or snack. LNT! You can sign the registration logbook inside the firesafe box in the shelter; our trail volunteers love to read about you hiking the NCT! This shelter is on land owned by the Society for the Restoration of Old Victoria, an all-volunteer organization. So it would be great if you considered making a donation to them at the main log building, especially if you use this NCT designated shelter on their property or park overnight in their parking areas.

Provisions: If you need supplies, you can hike into the tiny community of Rockland about 4 miles NorthEast on Victoria Dam Road to US45 in Rockland. There is a small General Store called the [Rockland Depot](#). The Rockland Depot carries food and drinks, batteries, ice cream cones, OTC meds, sandwiches, postcards, ie convenience store items. *They **may** be willing to take an order by phone and deliver it to you at the Old Victoria Historical parking area or pick you up at the Old Victoria Historical area and bring you to the store and/or bring you back if they are not too busy.* Rockland Depot store phone number is 906-886-2650. Also in Rockland, is a popular unique restaurant with awesome food called [Henry's Inn](#); 906-886-9910. There are lodging units at the R&B Lodge next to Henry's, 906-886-2874 or 906-250-9281. Other accommodations, mostly for larger groups [here](#). There is a Post Office on the main street (US45) in Rockland, with variable hours. In the past, packages can be picked up M-F 2:30 to 4:30pm or Saturday 9:15-10:45am. The P.O. lobby only can be accessed M-F 8am-5pm, Sat 9am-11am but verify this info from link: [Post Office](#)

Shuttles: The Old Victoria Historical Site is a common place for hikers to start/end their hike. If you plan to leave a car at the Old Victoria Historical site, please consider giving a donation to the historic site. Some hikers spot a bicycle in the woods, then park at the Victoria Historical site then hike to their bicycle and back to their car on roads after their hike (no bicycles on the NCT). Or you can [contact PWC](#) well ahead of your hike and see if any members might be available to shuttle you from your parked car to your start point, usually for a donation for gas/compensation and/or a donation to the PWC; that donation is up to the volunteer driver and you to decide. We are not aware of any shuttle service in the Western UP.

Trail conditions: The trail can be very slippery, muddy just west of the Old Victoria site, use caution on that muddy section! The trail in the back of the Old Vic complex ie just west of the NCT shelter can have tall grass to walk thru; so keep your eye on the blue NCT blazes. Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) asap if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: No water sources on segment 15, including no water at Old Victoria Historical complex. The only dependable water is at the pipe (a spring) about a 1/2 mile east of the NCT shelter. The pipe is between the NCT and the road, and marked by a small white sign on a trailside tree. It is a pipe with artesian water about 40 feet towards the road. Watch for a plastic bucket permanently nailed to a tree at the short spur to the spring water pipe that indicates to look for the pipe off trail by the road.

Parking: West end of Segment 14, there is parking near the Captain's House along Victoria Rd both winter and summer. Do not block the road!

East end, there is dependable summer and winter parking at Old Victoria Historical site. In the summer, park perpendicular to the road. They ask overnight hikers to park on one end or the other, but not park right in front of their main historical cabin that is used by their customers. Inform the volunteers at the main cabin of your plans and leave a note in your car with contact info and when you plan to return. If you park there over night or for an extended time, please consider leaving a donation for Old Victoria historic site.

Winter: Victoria Dam Road is plowed in winter.

On the West end, Victoria Road, west off Victoria Dam Road, is only plowed as far as the Captain's House. There is a plowed space to park in front of the Captain's house on Victoria Road. This is where the plow turns around. Do not block the long private driveway to the south of the Captain's House which is kept plowed.

On the East end, they usually plow a wide spot that can be used to park along side the Victoria Dam Road in front of the Old Victoria Historical area.

SEE MAP ABOVE for Segment 15

Notes on the [Old Victoria Restoration Site](#)

-Please make a donation to the Old Victoria site if you want to see inside their buildings.

-The NCT Hikers' Shelter near the Old Victoria complex is in the woods just northeast of the developed area at Old Victoria on land owned by the Society to Restore Old Victoria, so please consider leaving this all-volunteer Historical Society a donation at the main building here. The shelter is screened on one side and has four bunks; for use by NCT hikers only. LNT! The funding for building the shelter came from Tom Ellenbecker of Madison, Wisc, a long-time hiker

and friend of the NCT who wanted to give back to the hiking community after enjoying many miles of hiking.

- There are parking spots in front of the museum complex and historical cabin

-Old Victoria volunteers offer seasonally informative tours of the site, for a fee to support the complex.

-The sauna exhibit there is Not available for NCT hikers, without prior permission from the historic site. There is no water or electricity or privy on site.

-The outhouses there are decommissioned due to health regulations, do not use them please.

-There is No formal water source at Old Victoria. See info above for water from the pipe ½ mile eastbound from shelter.

-This Old Victoria complex is a Cooperating Site of [Keweenaw National Historical Park](#).

-Victoria Dam Road is plowed in winter, so NCT Hiker winter camping in the Old Victoria NCT Shelter is an option.

See many good photos at <http://ontonagonmi.org/oldvictoria.html>

Victoria Area

Victoria is the name of the small community that still has occupied houses. It's just west of the junction of Victoria Road and Victoria Dam Road.

Check out [these maps of the Victoria Mine site](#), georeferenced and made available courtesy of [Keweenaw Time Traveler #MapYourHistory](#)

Victoria is also the name of one of a former underground copper mines near that community.

The community of Victoria was named for the Victoria Mine. Victoria Mine was so named in 1858 by new investors, perhaps in honor of the reigning queen of England at the time. Prior to that, the mine had been called the Forest Mine.

Old Victoria is located just northeast of the community of Victoria. It's the site where the Society for the Restoration of Old Victoria has preserved several log cabins, has an annual Craft Fair, gives interpretive tours to the public, etc.

Like many mining areas, the Victoria area had its succession of mines and mining companies. They are chronicled in Bruce Johanson's 104-page book **Victoria: The Gem of Forest Hill**, which was published by the Society for the Restoration of Old Victoria in 1996. Another book on Victoria: **Old Victoria, forest queen of copper mines, 1841-1991: 150 years west of the Ontonagon**, by Joseph Papineau (1998) Both these books might be out of print.

Brief history of the Victoria area

The ridges and bluffs of northern Ontonagon County were initially explored and mined by Indigenous People, the Ojibwe/Anishinaabe/Chippewa (the distinction among the three names will not be addressed here). The existence of copper in the area was known to the French in the 17th Century if not before. The first attempts by Europeans to remove copper from the Ontonagon County area were in the 1770s, but those attempts were largely unsuccessful. However, by the 1840s, the copper deposits of the western Upper Peninsula were

becoming quite well-known, thanks in part to the "discovery" of the famous Ontonagon Copper Boulder along the bank of the West Branch of the Ontonagon River. See [link](#) and [link](#). Exploration for copper and the formation of mining companies and mines began in earnest by 1850.

The Victoria Mine and its predecessors operated from ca. 1850 to ca. 1920, though production was intermittent. Many tons of native copper were removed over the years, but the mine was not the most productive or economically viable in the area. One engineering innovation, though, did enhance the viability of the mine, and the Victoria area is famous both for the Ontonagon Boulder and, in some circles, for the Taylor Air Compressor.

Energy for mining operations, lighting, etc. is hard to come by in a remote area like 19th-Century Ontonagon County. However, the local geology and hydrology were very conducive to a unique source of power, compressed air. After learning of a unique way of creating compressed air, the Victoria Copper Mining Company hired Canadian inventor Charles H. Taylor to construct a unique compressed air system for the Victoria Mine in 1902. From Bruce Johanson's book, mentioned above, pp. 41-42:

...River water, held at (a dam,) was run down the sluice-way which gradually became an eighteen foot wide canal. The canal suddenly terminated where three vertical shafts, five feet in diameter and 334 feet deep, were drilled down into the solid rock. These three shafts opened into an underground cavern that was also cut out of solid rock. This "cavern" was really the air chamber itself and was eighteen feet wide and about 170 feet in length. The depth of the air chamber varied from twenty to twenty-five feet. The roof of the chamber was arched upward, and at the opposite end of the intake shafts, there was a large single shaft at a seventy degree angle ascending back to the surface which allowed the water of the river to return to its merry course to Lake Superior.

As the water of the river fell down the intake tubes, air from the atmosphere was drawn down the tubes with the water by venturi action..., with air being trapped in the water in the form of countless bubbles. The bubbles would rise to the roof of the air chamber underground, and by the weight of the columns of falling water, be compressed to 117-1/2 pounds per square inch...The compressed air would be bled off in a large diameter discharge pipe... The pipe would conduct the powerful stream of compressed air to the stamp mill, the mine, and to other places where power was needed.

An important feature of this operation was a safety pipe to remove excess compressed air. At times compressed air, as well as water, would erupt from the pipe as an "artificial geyser." In winter the water from the geyser would freeze when hitting the ground, and a mountain of ice sixty feet high or more was sometimes created.

The efficiency of the Taylor Air Compressor was responsible for the fact that the Victoria Mine was the last to close in Ontonagon County. Go to this [link](#) for more details on the compressor, including a cross-section. Here is a [photo](#) from the base of the intake tubes.

For an early article with considerable detail on the Taylor Air Compressor, including many photos and illustrations, see Woodbridge, D.E. (1907). The Hydraulic Compressed-Air Power Plant at the Victoria Mine. *The Engineering and Mining Journal*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 3, pp. 125-130. Most libraries will not likely have that journal, but may be able to get the article for you. You may also view it [here](#). Scroll down to page 125.

The Captain's House on Victoria Dam Road, some other private buildings in Victoria, and the restored cabins at Old Victoria date from the general period of 1900-1920, when the mining was in its heyday. At that time, buildings covered the mine site. Now, few remain. See [this aerial photo](#) of the mine site in 1937.

The site where the Ontonagon Boulder was found has been beneath the waters of Victoria Reservoir since the construction of Victoria Dam in 1930. Water from the reservoir drops nearly 200 vertical feet through a large flum [pipe](#) to a powerhouse 1.2 miles downstream. It is because normally almost all the flow of the West Branch of the Ontonagon River runs through the pipe that hikers can normally ford the river easily where the NCT crosses it 1 1/4 miles below the dam. In 2013, the reservoir was drained for repairs to the dam, allowing access to the lake bottom and the site where the boulder was estimated to be found.

Links to Old Victoria and the mine

[Old Victoria](#)

[Society for the Restoration of Old Victoria Facebook page](#)

-Old Victoria is a Cooperating Site of [Keweenaw National Historical Park](#).

[Victoria Mine](#) (wikipedia entry)

[List of minerals](#)

[Nice photos](#)

End of PWC Segments 1-15 trail guide

Go to the next trail guide for PWC segments 16-32: [click here](#)

then scroll to the bottom of that page.