

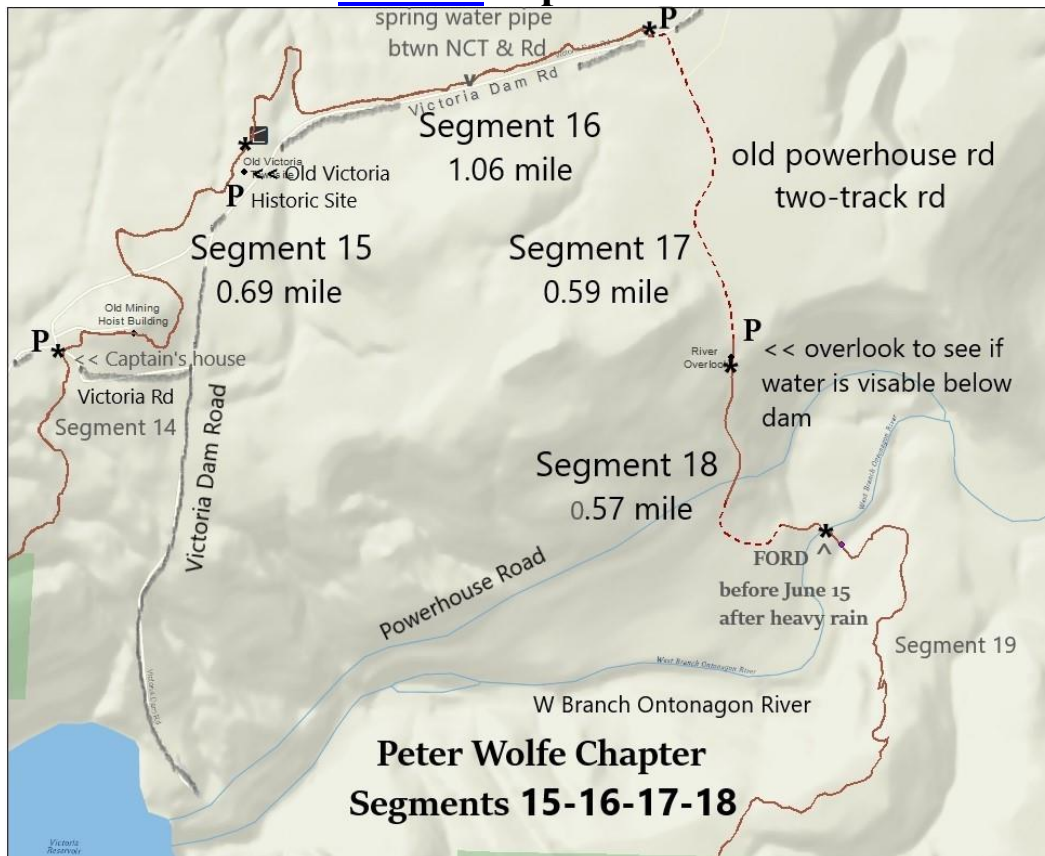
Last updated April 2024

Peter Wolfe Chapter Guide from Old Victoria Settlement to Forest Highway 16 (just east of Bob Lake Campground) PWC Segments 16-32

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.

[Link to NCTA map](#) for Segments 16-32

[Avenza maps # 19-24](#)



Segment 16

Trail from NCT Shelter near Old Victoria to Victoria Dam road

[Avenza map # 19](#), Drive map [here](#)

We have a screened NCT shelter on west end of Segment 16!

Length: 1.06 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: Private landowners, including the [Society for the Restoration of Old Victoria](#)

Responsible for maintenance: Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

IMPORTANT!! At the east end of Segment 16, you will need to determine if you will be able to FORD the river at the east of Segment 17. If you are not going to ford the river, turn north at the east end of Segment 16 onto Victoria Dam road and walk into Rockland and around to the O Kun de Kun trailhead on US45 on this route: tinyurl.com/Highwater-route . See details below.

Shelter: The NCT Hikers Shelter is located on the NCT trail in the woods, on land owned by the Historical Society. The Shelter is just northeast of the Old Victoria historic restored log buildings, on the west end of Seg 16. Segment 16 is all on private property; please do not camp on this private property other than in the screened in NCT shelter with 4 bunk beds that is just out of site, NE of the historic buildings.

Provisions: If you need supplies, you can hike into the tiny community of Rockland about 4 miles NorthEast from the shelter 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, in other words, convenience store items. *They **may** be willing to take an order by phone and deliver it to you at the Old Victoria site by the NCT shelter parking area or pick you up there at the Old Victoria area and bring you to the store and/or bring you back if they are not too busy.* Rockland Depot phone number is 906-886-2650. Also in Rockland, is a popular unique restaurant with great 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, in the past, packages can be picked up M-F 2:30 to 4:30pm or Saturday 9:15-10:45am. The lobby only can be accessed more hours. phone 906-886-2972 but verify this info here: [Post Office](#)

Developments along trail: On the west end, [Old Victoria Restoration Site](#) please donate to the Old Victoria Historic Site if you care to view any of their buildings. There is no electricity or water or functioning outhouse here.

General description of segment: Generally, follows close to Victoria Dam Road. It is a fun trail that crosses a stream several times in gullies with high uncut ferns.

Trail conditions Can be muddy at the east end, just before the road crossing. Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: If hiking eastbound, there is dependable water at the pipe (a spring) about 0.6 mile east of NCT shelter at Old Victoria on PWC segment 16 and marked by a small SPRING sign and a toy bucket on a tree. It is a pipe next to the road. There is no water source at Old Victoria.

Parking: West end: there is parking at Old Victoria, on both sides of Victoria Dam Road in

front of the Old Victoria site. They ask us to park on one end or the other of the parking area, but not park right in front of their main cabin that is used by Old Victoria customers. If you park there for an extended time, it is good to leave a note in your car with your hiking plans and estimated date of arrival back to your car and a contact phone number. Please consider leaving a donation for Old Victoria if leaving the car overnight.

East end: there is informal parking near the trailhead where the trail crosses the road in snowless conditions, do not block the private two-track road there.

Winter: Victoria Dam Road is plowed in winter to access both E and W ends of Segment 16. They may have a wide spot plowed in front of the Old Victoria log cabins. There prob no parking on the east end of Segment 16.

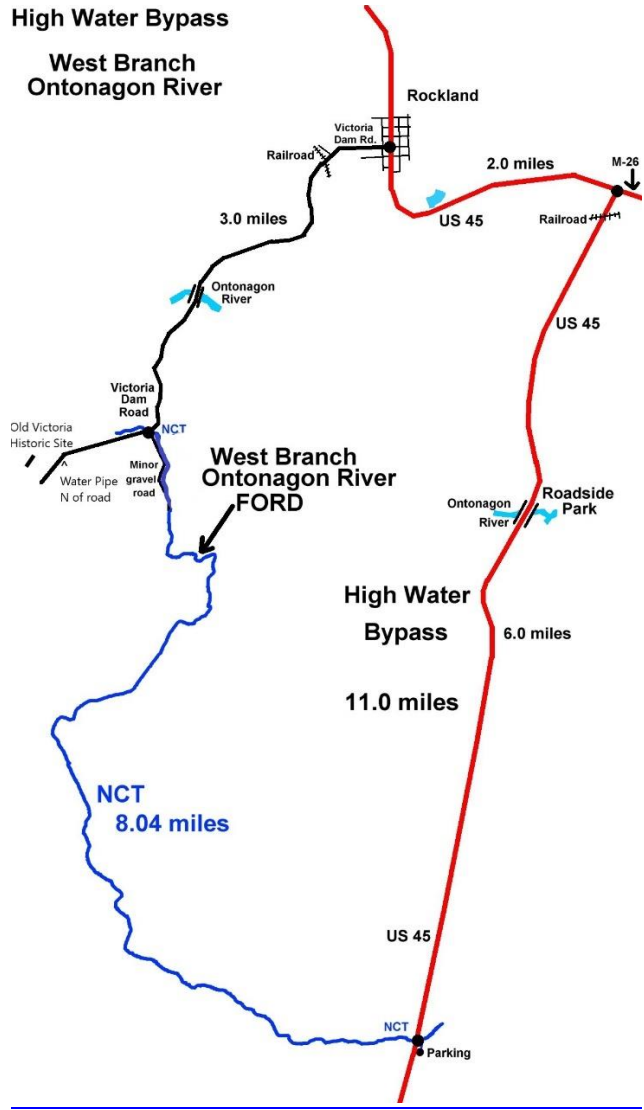
IMPORTANT DECISION at the east end of Segment 16 you must decide if you will FORD the West Branch of the Ontonagon River. [Downstream from the Victoria Dam](#): The river crossing can become impassable at times when significant water is being released from the Victoria Dam reservoir. The dam releases water until June 15 for fish migration. Dam also releases water when there has been significant rain in the day(s) before. 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 if water is 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 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 is shown [on the NCT map here](#). It follows Victoria Dam Rd and US 45 on this route: tinyurl.com/Highwater-route 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 at Mile 118.3 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 at mile 110.8 and walk NE on Victoria Dam Road into Rockland then south on US-45 to Mile 118.3 where the trail continues east to O Kun de Kun Falls.

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

- Please make a donation to the Old Victoria site if visiting their facilities or leaving a car overnight in their parking area.
- The parking spots directly in front of the museum complex and cabin are for day use visitors. NCT hikers can park on either end, not in the middle. There is also parking across the road from there.
- The NCT Hikers Shelter near the Old Victoria complex is in the woods just northeast of the developed area at Old Victoria. It is screened on one side and has four bunks; for use by NCT hikers only.
- Old Victoria volunteers offer seasonal informative tours of the site, for a fee.
- The sauna exhibit there is Not available for NCT hikers, without prior permission from Old Vic.
- The outhouses have been closed due to health regulations so do not attempt to use.
- There is no formal water source at Old Victoria. If hiking in from the west, there is dependable water is at the pipe (a spring) about 1/2 mile east of Old Victoria. See info above.
- Old Victoria is a Cooperating Site of [Keweenaw National Historical Park](#).
- Victoria Dam Road is plowed in winter, so NCT Hiker winter camping in the NCT Shelter at

Old Victoria is an option. Sometimes there may be a wide space snow plowed to park in front of the closed Old Victoria Historical Site.



Segment 17

Victoria Dam Road Intersection with old powerhouse rd to gate at top of hill north of Victoria Powerhouse

[Avenza](#) map # 19, Drive map [here](#)

Length: 0.59 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: Private landowners

Responsible for maintenance: Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Sign at Victoria Dam Road

General description of segment: This section of trail is a walk on an old two track dirt road called Powerhouse Road and runs north and south.

IMPORTANT: If you have determined you will not be FORDING the river at the eastbound end of Segment 18, do not walk on Segment 17 thru 21. See details above.

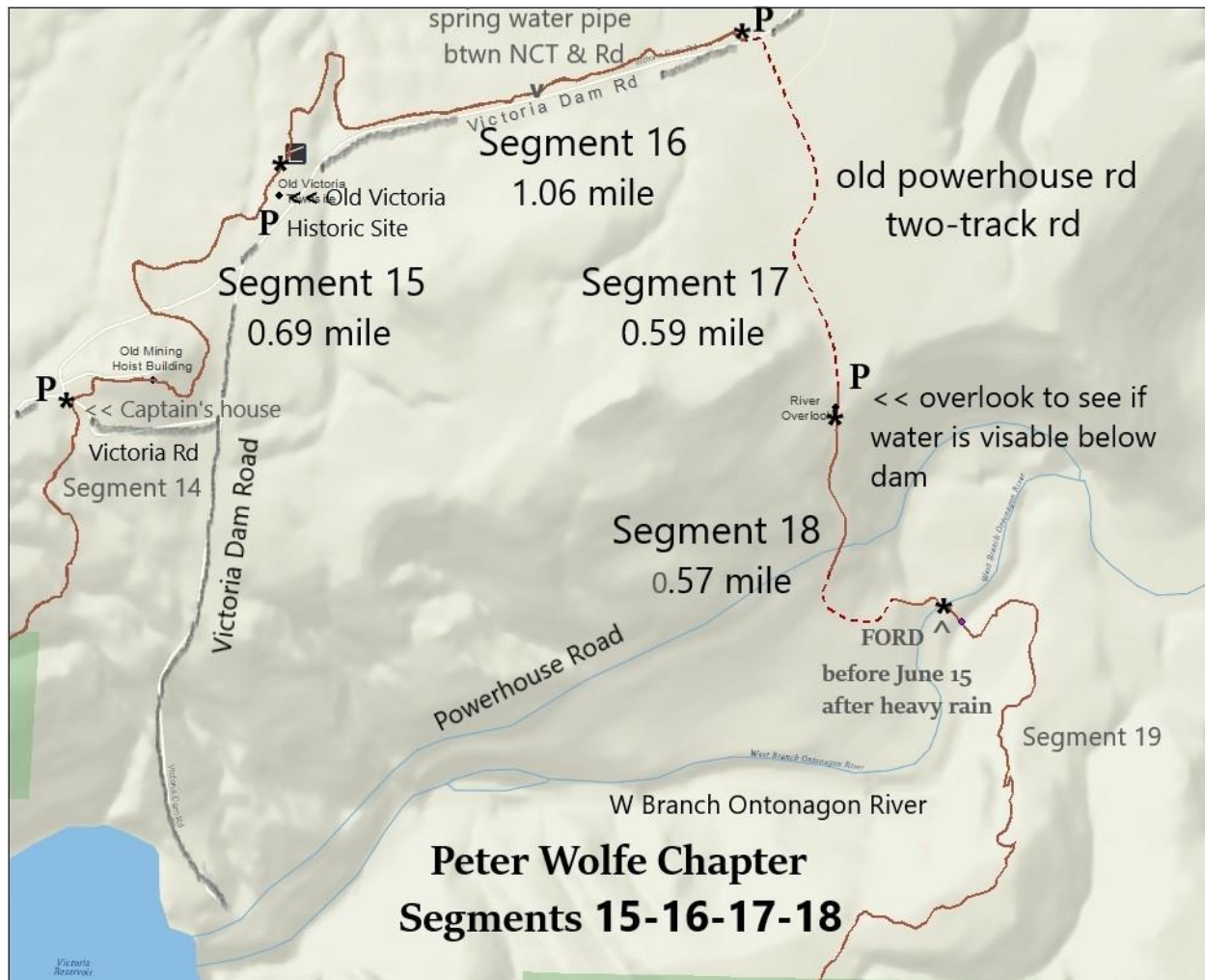
Water: No water sources on this segment.

Parking: West end: There is informal summer parking on the westbound (north) end of this segment, near the west side of the road crossing, do not block the private road there.

East end: There is informal summer parking on the eastbound (south) end of this segment, near the locked gate.

POI: Directly east of the locked gate, there is a short spur with a great view of the riverbed. If you see water in the riverbed DIRECTLY below this overlook, the dam is releasing water and you need to hike up to Rockland and over to US-45 to the O Kun de Kun NCT trailhead. You will be able to always see water East of this overlook; that is the diverted water merging back into the riverbed.

Winter: On the westbound end, the public road, Victoria Dam Road, is plowed in winter but will not be plowed. On the Eastbound end, this old two track dirt road, once called Powerhouse road, is Not plowed in winter.



Segment 18

Top of hill north of Victoria Powerhouse to West Branch Ontonagon River Ford

[Avenza](#) map # 19, Driving map [here](#)

Length: 0.57 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: Private landowners

Responsible for maintenance: Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Power Line, Dirt road to powerhouse. Hydropower flume from Victoria Dam.

General description of segment: Trail drops down hill to south (eastbound) on dirt road, then follows powerhouse or Flume Road, turns right, goes on trail down the bluff, and crosses rocky floodplain ford below the dam. This floodplain is usually dry or very shallow except in spring melt or after heavy rain when water is released over the dam.

Portion on road is easy walking and well marked. Going east, watch for blazing to turn off road, towards river. On rocky river bed, look on far side for cairns and large tree post with blue blaze.

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

Water: There can be puddles of water where the hiker is crossing the rocky river bed when they are not releasing water from the dam. If you need running water, you can hike downstream from the river bed crossing until you encounter the flume water coming out of the powerhouse into the river bed.

Parking: West end of Segment 18, there is informal parking at the top of the hill just before the gate. East end, there is no parking at the river/powerhouse due to this gated locked road.

Winter: The old powerhouse dirt 2 track is not plowed in winter.

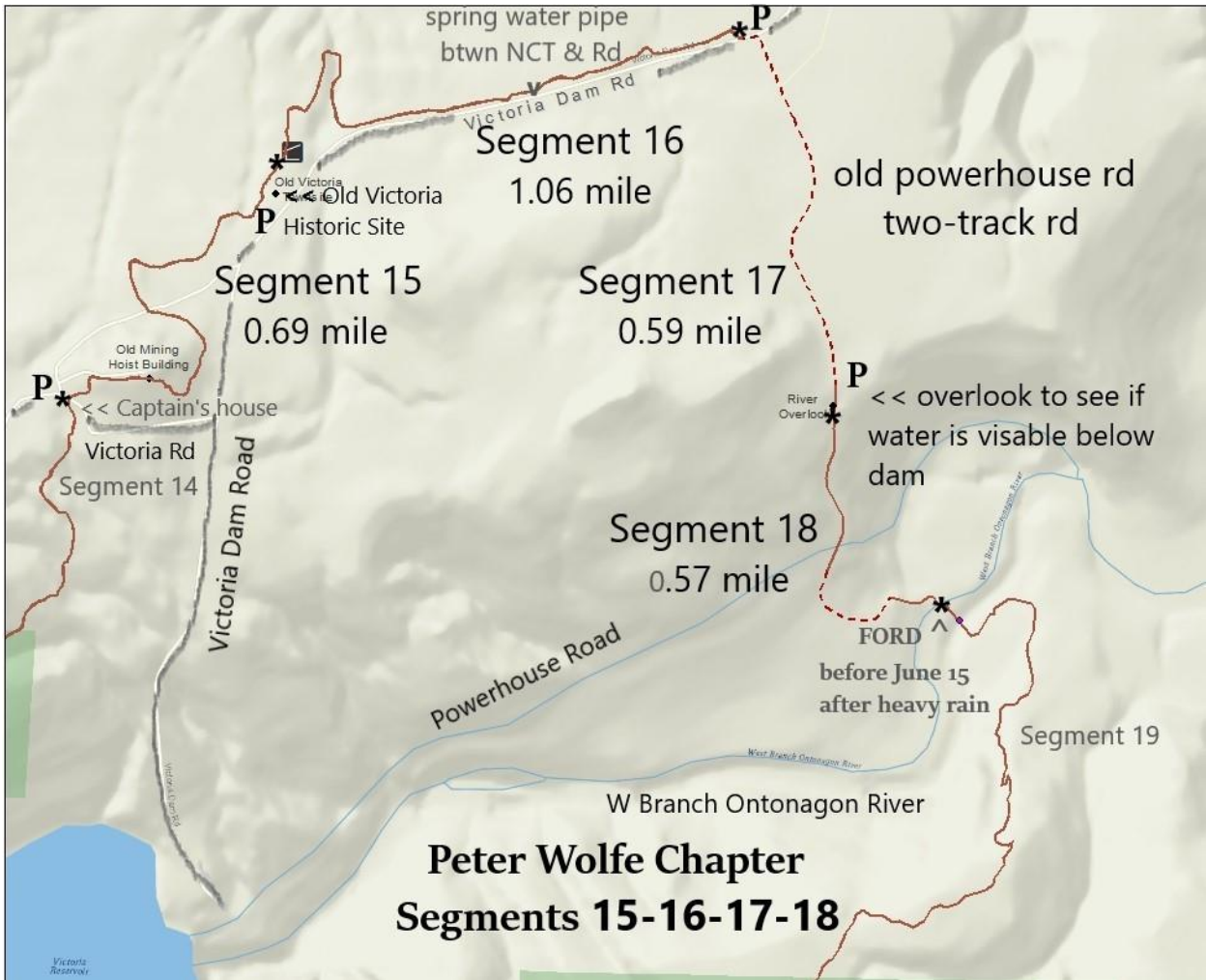
FORD: You are not likely to walk in water at this FORD that is below the Victoria dam unless you arrive before June 15 or after significant rains. Usually before June 15, they will be releasing water from the dam and the FORD will have deep water, over 6 foot deep. The water level in the West Branch of the Ontonagon is normally fairly low because most water is channeled through the flume to the powerplant. In normal conditions, the rocky riverbed here is dry or less than knee deep. However, if water is being spilled in large quantities from the dam upstream, crossing is hazardous, and it might be necessary to use the bypass route indicated on the map below this trail map here and here: tinyurl.com/Highwater-route

Note: If you hear a siren go off, they will start releasing water from the dam, do not start crossing during or after siren. High water is expected in the riverbed when lots of water is being spilled at the dam,

The riverbed is seldom too high to cross except during snowmelt runoff in early spring before June 15, or after heavy summer rains.

Read details above at the end of description for Segment 16.

Easy Ford over W. Branch of Ont River when no water is being released over Victoria Dam:

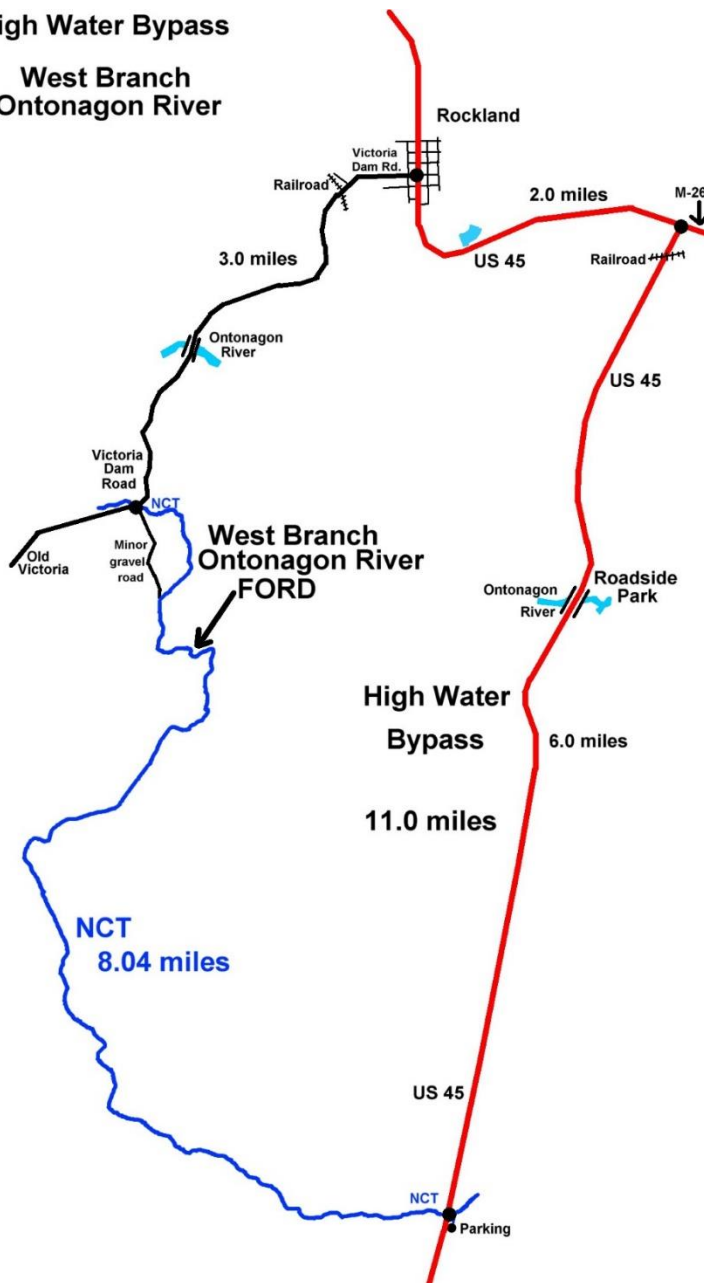


HIGHWATER BYPASS ROUTE to hike when water is being released from the dam:

Going east, backtrack to the intersection of Powerhouse road and Victoria Dam Road, hike north on the road to Rockland, hike east on US45, then South (east) on US45 to the trail head at O Kun de Kun Falls. Enter back on NCT at that point. Note: Rockland contains a small convenience store, great food in the cafe, Post Office, rental rooms. Going thru Rockland is only 3 miles longer than staying on trail and FORDING the river.

High Water Bypass

**West Branch
Ontonagon River**



Segment 19

West Branch Ontonagon River Ford to Forest Road 733-F

[Avenza](#) map # 19, Driving map [here](#)

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

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service and private landowners

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Victoria Dam upstream from FORD but dam unseen from trail. There is a sign and bench on the M Dempsey Reserve owned part of this segment.

General description of segment: The eastbound trail generally goes southwest on Segment 19. Directly south of ford, the trail heads east a short distance along river, with many potential campsites in open woods. LNT! It then heads south and uphill to FR 733-F. Near the East end of this segment is the 40 acre Michael Dempsey Reserve, about a half mile of the NCT passes thru this reserve. The preserve hopes to put a spur off the NCT to a nice view of the valley below.

Trail conditions Cross the riverbed rocks carefully. Watch for slippery clay on steep section a short distance before the trail reaches flat ground on the hilltop above the river. Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: No water sources except at the Ford, which is normally muddy puddles.

Parking: There is currently no parking area for this segment. (river on west end, forest road on east end). A small parking area is being discussed for the east (south) end of this segment off FR 733-F. If you park on FR 733-F before a parking area is built, please do not block the road! Note these Forest Roads are rough for a street vehicle and seldom used, be prepared to have to saw fallen trees off the road.

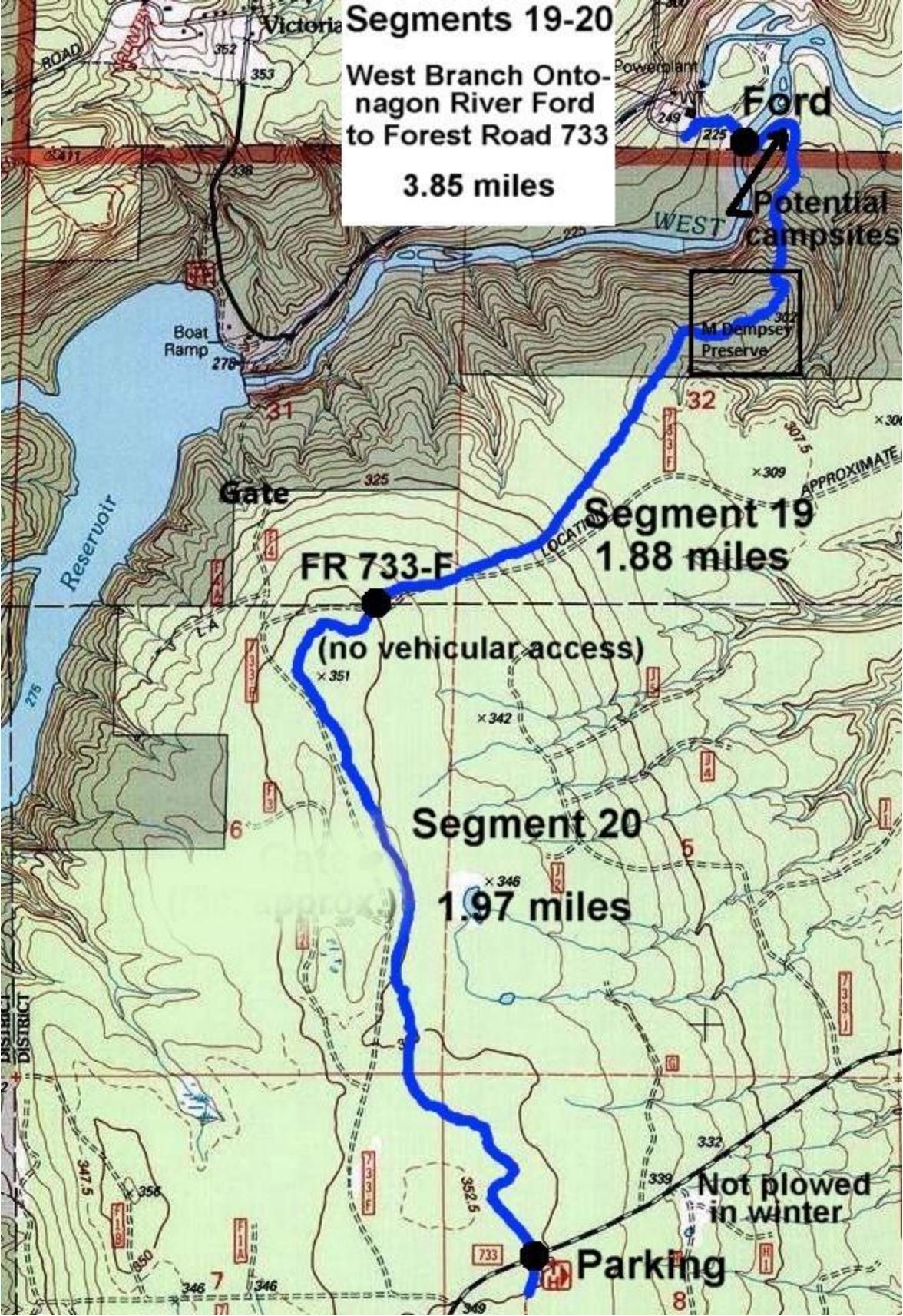
Winter: No roads in this area are plowed in winter.

FORD: Caution if hiking from the east: You are Not likely to walk in water at this FORD that is below the Victoria dam unless you arrive before June 15 or after significant rains. Before June 15, they will be releasing water from the dam and the FORD will have water. Look for the blue blaze on the west side of the river to aim for the NCT. The water level in the West Branch of the Ontonagon is normally fairly low because most water is channeled through the flume to the power plant. In normal conditions, the river is dry or less than knee deep. However, if water is being spilled in large quantities from the dam upstream, crossing can be hazardous, and it might be necessary to use the bypass route indicated on the map above and here:

tinyurl.com/Highwater-route .

Note: If you hear a siren go off, they will start releasing water from the dam, do not start crossing during or after siren. High water is expected in the riverbed when lots of water is being spilled at the dam,

Map below of Segment 19 and 20:



Map above for Segment 19 and 20.

Segment 20

Forest Road 733-F to Forest Road 733

[Avenza](#) map # 19, 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

Developments along trail: Sign and parking area at FR 733. The gate on FR 733-F will be locked, trail is within view, east of that gate and can park there off road; don't block gated road even if it looks like the road is not being used.

General description of segment: Note the trail is almost a north-south trail on Segment 20. Generally flat, with some rocky and wetter areas. There are normally no water sources on this trail segment. No good campsites are in this often wet area.

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

Water: No water on this segment.

Parking: West end, a small parking area is being discussed for the west (north) end of this segment off FR 733-F. If you park on FR 733-F before a parking area is built, please do not block the road!

East end, there is a small parking area off FR 733. Note these Forest Roads are rough for a street vehicle and seldom used, be prepared to remove branches and/or trees that have fallen on the road.

Winter: This road is not plowed in winter.

Segment 21

Forest Road 733 to US 45

[Avenza](#) map # 20, Driving map [here](#)

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

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Sign and parking area at FR 733. Intermittent wire mesh covered boardwalk on this segment.

General description of segment: Flat, with a few hilly areas along streams. The east end has wire mesh boardwalk over the wet areas, but west of Sandstone creek can be quite wet and slippery due to the clay soils to walk thru. The Sandstone Creek, has been recently flooded by a beaver dam. Follow ribbons on a reroute to get over the Creek. (let us know with photos if the reroute is now underwater too!) Possible campsites on higher ground west, and perhaps also east, of Sandstone Creek, but nothing outstanding. LNT!

Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) if you encounter any problems in this area. When conditions are wet, use caution walking on the slippery trail, especially on the boardwalks due to the slippery clay soils in this area.

Water: Sandstone Creek will have beaver dam water in it.

Parking: West end: Parking area on FR 733 on the west end of segment. Note FR 733 is a rough gravel two track road that is seldom driven on, so be prepared to remove branches and/or trees that have fallen on FR 733.

East end, there is parking at O Kun de Kun Falls trailhead, on the east side of US45. This is a very popular trailhead with many visitors a day hiking to the falls, so please park accordingly to let many cars, some with trailers, access to parking there. Cars parked on US45 could get tickets.

Winter: West end: FR 733 is not plowed East end: US 45 is plowed in winter, and the O Kun de Kun Falls trailhead is usually plowed out too.



O Kun de Kun Falls Trail!

Segment 22

US 45 to Baltimore River Bridge

[Avenza](#) map # 20, Driving map [here](#)

Length: 1.4 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Signs at junction of spur trail to parking lot and NCT, just east of US

45. Parking lot on spur trail, just east of US 45. Suspension bridge over Baltimore River below O-Kun-de-Kun Falls. Register box at north end of bridge.

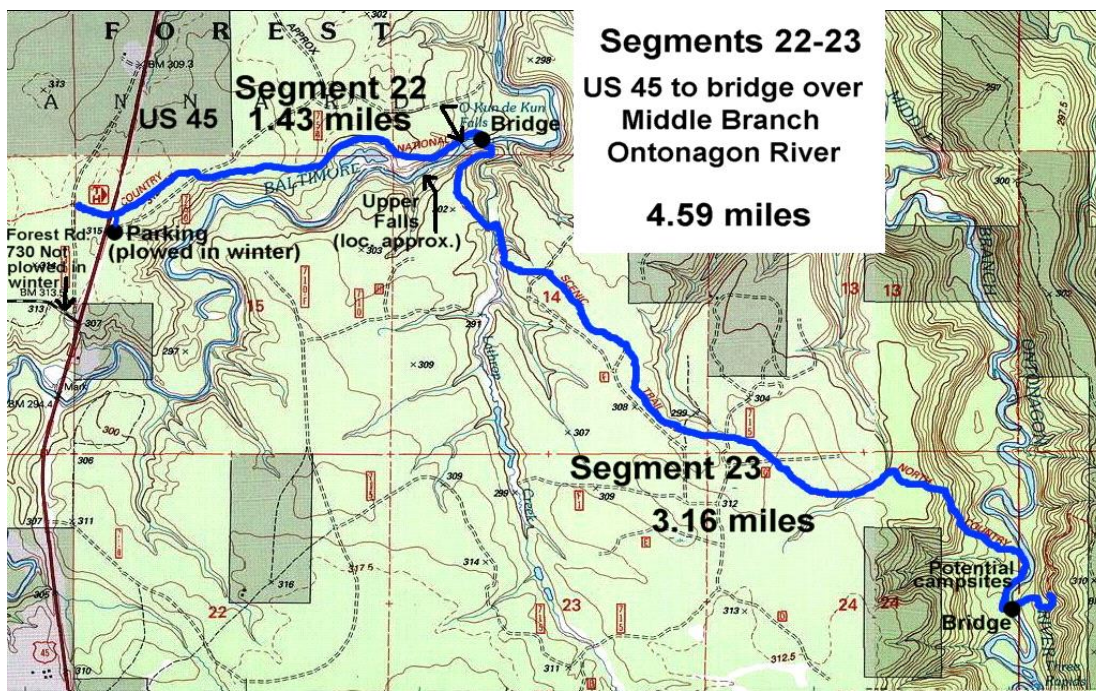
General description of segment: Very good trail, starting with a short graveled spur trail at the parking trailhead to the intersection with the NCT. A boardwalk was installed on the NCT in 2019 intermittently from US45 to the river. Gently rolling, but steeper along Baltimore River near Konteka Falls then the O-Kun-de-Kun Falls. The smaller Konteka Falls, is located several hundred feet upstream from O-Kun-de-Kun Falls and is visible from a short steep spur trail. O Kun de Kun Falls is a much larger falls and is visible from the huge suspension bridge. An ice curtain forms over the falls in winter, making this a popular winter hike trail also. Named for Chief O Kun de Kun, aka [Konteka](#), who was an [Ojibwa Chief in the Ontonagon area](#).

Water: Baltimore River is a dependable water source, but has much suspended clay due to the clay soils in the area.

Parking: West end, there is parking at O Kun de Kun Falls trailhead, on the east side of US45. This is a very popular trailhead with many visitors a day hiking to the falls, so please park accordingly to let many cars, some with trailers, access to the trailhead.

East end there is No access or parking on the east end of segment at the river.

Winter: O Kun de Kun Falls trailhead off US 45 is usually plowed in winter.



Segment 23 see map above

**Baltimore River Bridge to Middle Branch
Ontonagon River Bridge**

[Avenza](#) maps # 20-21

we call this Segment 23 “between the bridges”

Length: 3.1 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Suspension bridge over Baltimore River below O-Kun-de-Kun Falls and Suspension bridge over Middle Branch Ontonagon River.

General description of segment: We call this segment "between the bridges". Gently rolling, then steeper along Baltimore River towards the O-Kun-de-Kun Falls, and steep on the hillsides both east and west of the Middle Branch. Nice forest in Middle Branch valley, with many possible campsites. LNT!

Trail conditions *This is the PWC most remote segment for maintenance, please let us know if you care to help brush cut the trail on this remote segment!* It is maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Baltimore River, the Middle Branch of the Ontonagon River (both have silt). Lathrop Creek is permanent water source, but sometimes quite low.

Parking: No parking for this remote segment. (hike across Segment 22 on west end, and 1.25 mile walk on locked gated FR 859 on east end.)

Winter: No roads in this area plowed in winter

Segment 24 Middle Branch Ontonagon River Bridge to Forest Road 850

[Avenza](#) map # 21, Driving map [here](#)

Length: 2.11 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: Ottawa National Forest and private properties

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Spectacular Suspension bridge over Middle Branch Ontonagon River.

General description of segment: Gently rolling to flat, can be muddy. But on the west side of this segment, steep and can be slippery. Private property at the top of the valley, east of the suspension bridge so stay on trail, do not camp on their locked access road! (Most good campsites are on the west side of the big suspension bridge on Seg 23. LNT!) We built a new bridge across Spring Creek in the fall of 2022, just east of the camp access road.

Trail conditions On the west side of this segment, going down to the Ontonagon River is steep and can be slippery. Eastbound from the river is a walk on the old service road (now just a grassy two track) used to build the suspension bridge, however it has washed out in several places so watch where trail goes up steep hillside on east side of old service road. At the top of the river

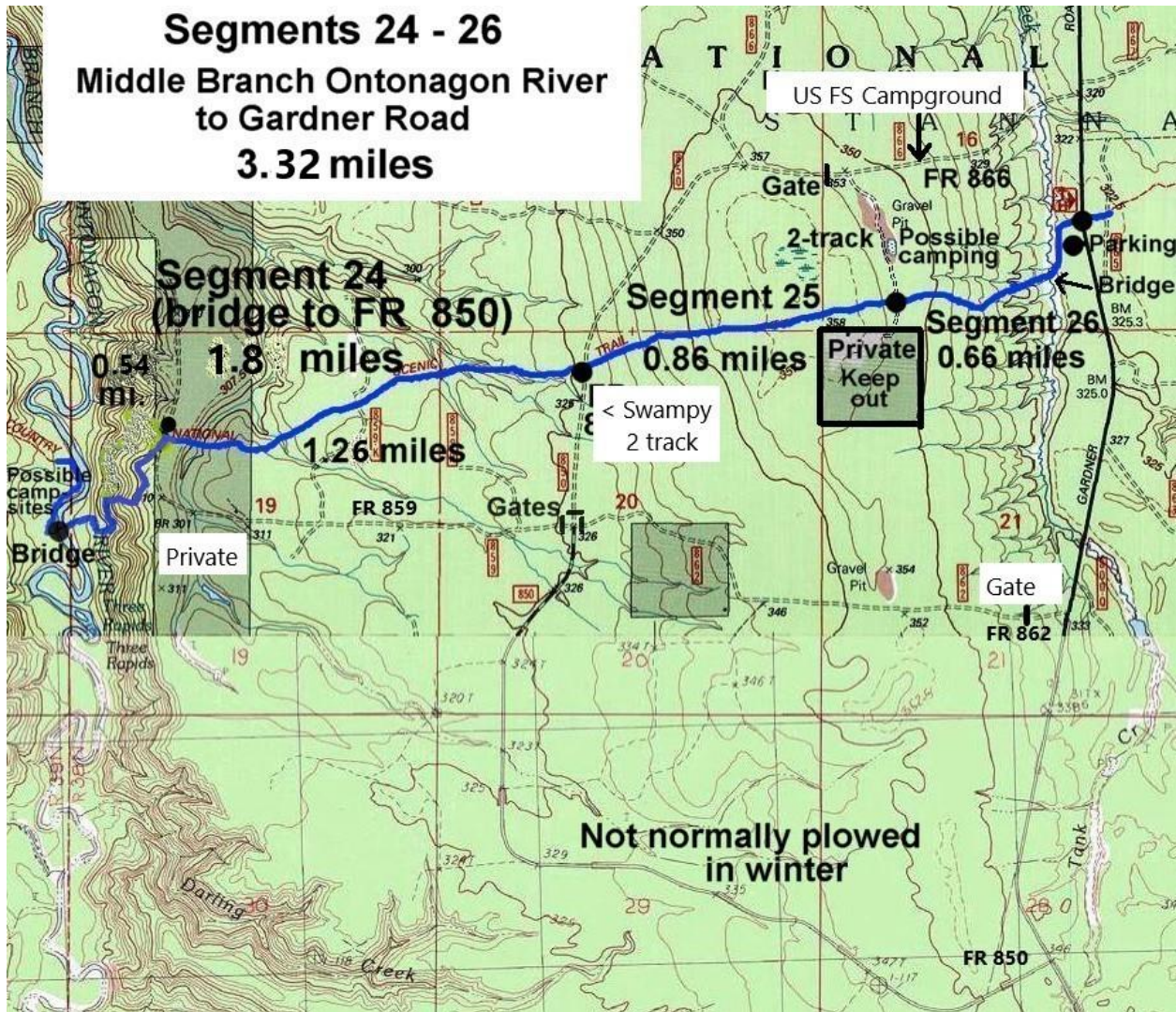
valley, there is a short road walk on FR 859 for a couple hundred feet before the trail goes back in the forest on the east side of the road. There is private property along that road, so please follow NCT blazes to stay on trail. Do not camp along road!

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

Water: The Middle Branch is a permanent river; it has much suspended clay due to the presence of clay soils upstream. Seasonally, water may be found in some of the small streams on the upland in the eastern 1.25 miles of this segment.

Parking: No parking for this segment. River on west, swamp covered access path on east end. Closest parking is near the locked gate at FR 850/859 junction and walk west 1.25 miles to NCT crossing of FR 859. Do not block locked gate.

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



Segment 25 see map above
Forest Road 850
to 2-track south of old gravel pit
[Avenza](#) map # 21

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

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: None

General description of segment: Mostly quite flat to gently sloping, can be muddy, nice Hemlock stand along the NCT about a half mile west after crossing the private 2 track road.

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

Water: No water source on this segment.

Parking: No driving access to this segment on gated roads.

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

Segment 26
2-track south of old gravel pit to Gardner Rd
[Avenza](#) map # 21

Length: 0.66 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Tank Creek Bridge. Signs at trailhead.

General description of segment: Mostly quite flat to gently sloping. Wet area along Tank Creek at beaver dam.

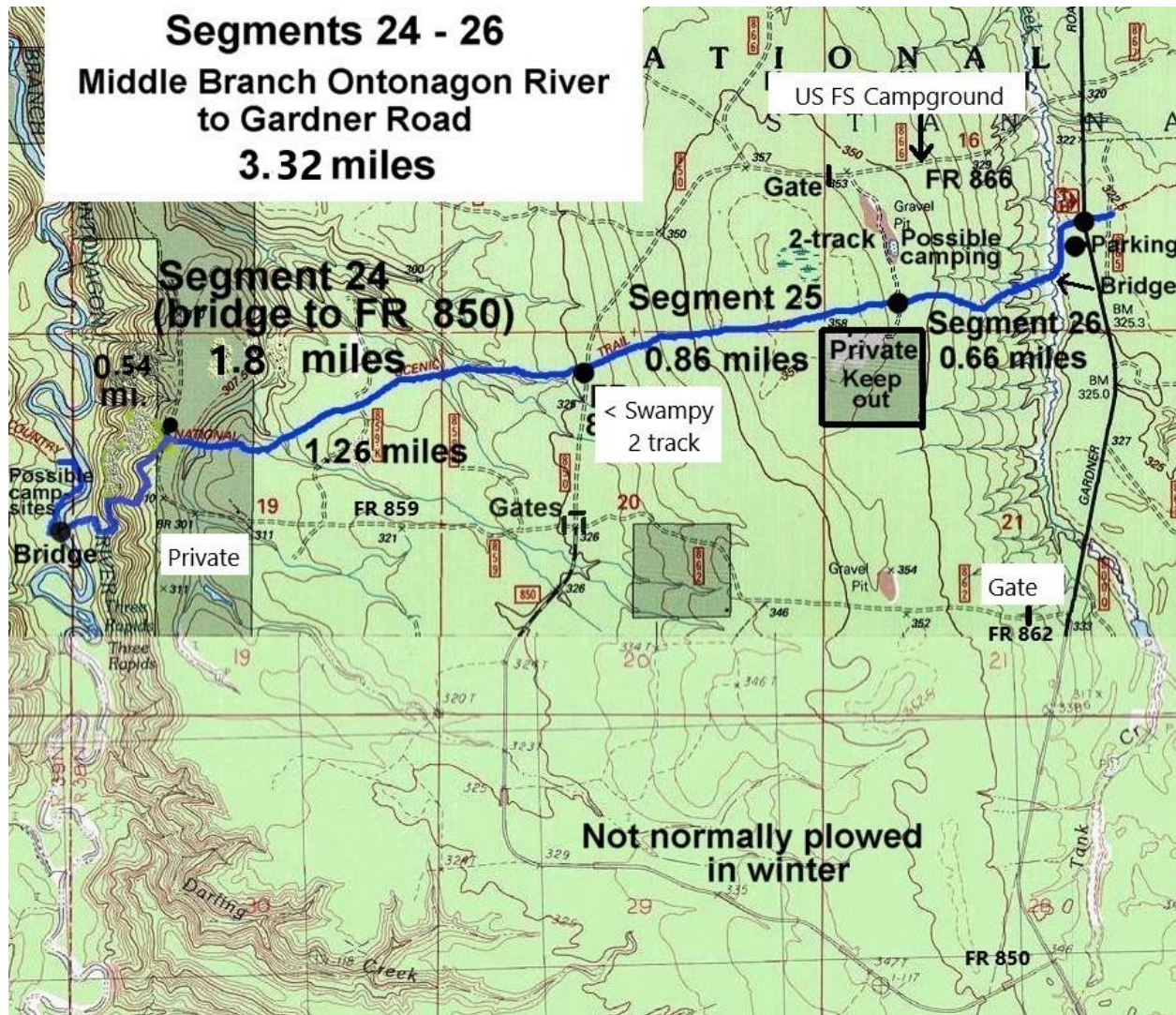
Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; A beaver dam sometimes floods a section of trail so follow the temp blue ribbons on reroute to cross creek. Please [let us know](#) if you encounter any problems in this area. (send photos!)

Water: Tank Creek

Parking: West end there is no driving access.

East end, there is large parking lot on the west side of Gardner Road, please park so other cars can still easily drive in and turn around and have place to park.

Winter: Gardner Road is plowed in winter, but the parking lot and all other roads are not. Expect roadside parking to be difficult on Gardner Road when the snow is deep.



Segment 27
Gardner Road to East Branch Ontonagon River at Mud Creek Road Bridge (aka Gardner Rd)
[Avenza](#) map # 22, Drive map [here](#)

Length: 1.85 mile (has 0.35 on road), on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter

Developments along trail: Signs at trailhead (east and west sides of Gardner Road). Road bridge over the East Branch of the Ontonagon River on Gardner Road-Mud Creek Road bridge.

General description of segment: Mostly flat on top of plateau thru tall red pine which were

logged in 2017. Caution, watch for the sharp rectangle NCT blue blazes, logging blazes are diagonal and also blue! Good camping potential on the west end of this segment 27 on either side of Gardner Road near trail. LNT! Trail enters Mud Creek Road at the top of the hill, bridge over East Branch of the Ontonagon River is visible from there. Trail re-enters woods just east of the road bridge.

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

Water: Water source at the river, but this river water has lots of clay sediment in it.

Parking: Good Trailhead parking area on west side of Gardner Road.

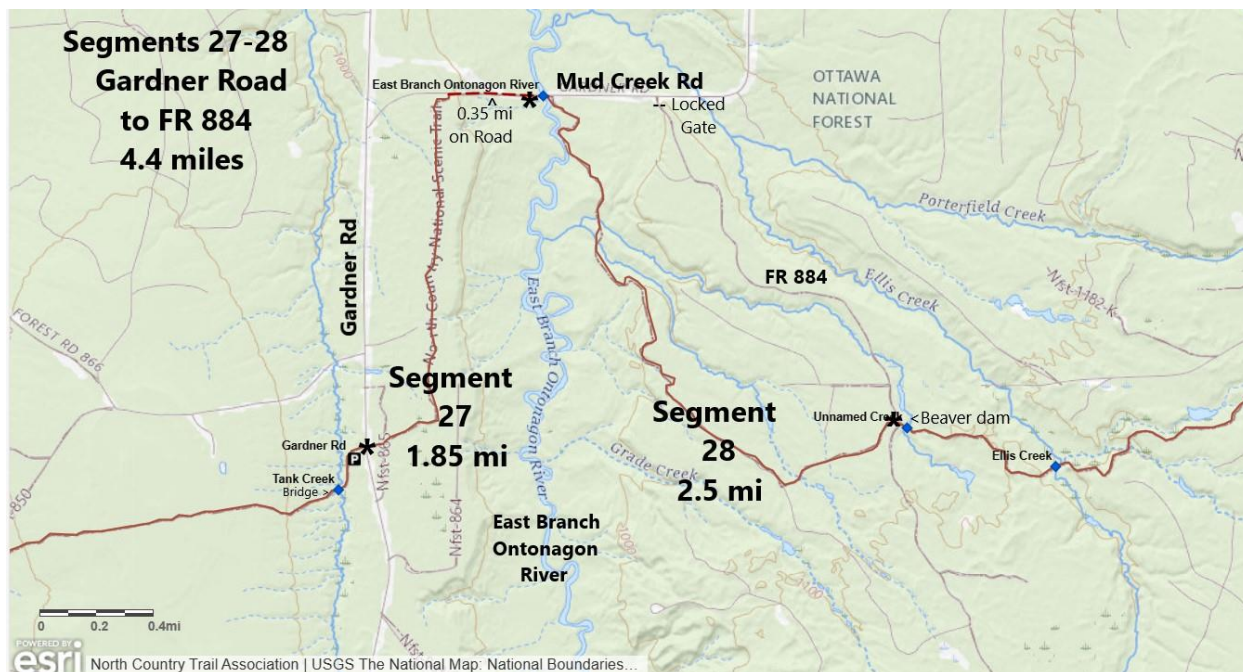
East end: short term roadside parking on north side of road at the river bridge on Gardner Rd/Mud Creek road bridge

Winter: West end: Gardner Road is plowed in winter, but the parking area is not. Roadside parking is likely to be difficult when snow is deep. East end: Mud Creek Rd is plowed, but no parking area is plowed.

Note of historical interest:

Near the NCT here was an old railway on both sides of the river. Parts of the old raised rail bed can be found on Segment 27 and 28 between the NCT and the river where the NCT makes a sharp turn north on Segment 27. The railway was called **the River Loop from Pori. It crossed the river on one of the steepest grades a train could go!** Read the June 1969 issue in Trains.com an article titled "World's steepest adhesion railroad?" by Clint Jones. This Logging railroad named Porterfield & Ellis used a pair of 1880 vintage 4-4-0's. Steepest grade was 20%, one mile distance often traveled in 50 to 55 seconds. Drop was 200 feet. Line operated for eight years with no serious accidents. There were two "loops", the larger one had a four car capacity spur at the bottom for log loading. After switching the spur, the engineer had to "rock" his train back and forth several times to build enough momentum to get out of the dip. The drop of 200 feet was into and back out of a river valley. Steepest part of the grade was 20%.

A book, [Deep Woods Frontier](#): a history of logging in northern Michigan
By Theodore J. Karamanski has some details of the Porterfield & Ellis. A portion of the book, including a map, is available on [Google Books here](#) page 179-180. We would like to see a spur trail to the railway and place an interpretive sign here at some point about the steep grade. It was called the River Loop from Pori. Parts of the old raised rail bed can be found between Segment 27 and 28 between the NCT and the river where the NCT makes a sharp turn north on Segment 27.



Segment 28 see map above
East Branch Ontonagon River
at Mud Creek Road Bridge to FR 884
[Avenza](#) map # 22, Driving map [here](#)

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

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter

Developments along trail: Road Bridge over the East Branch Ontonagon River bridge on Gardner Road aka Mud Creek Road. Boardwalk downstream from a beaver dam. Remnants of the old 1920s raised bed railway can be found here. See description of this railroad above; at that time, it was the steepest RR grade ever built.

General description of segment: Currently, mostly flat hike. Trail enters the forest immediately east of the Road bridge. Some camp sites could be found off trail on high ground just west of the FR 884 and NCT junction. LNT!

Trail conditions Maintained and blue blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) if you encounter any problems in this area. This segment 28 was logged in 2020.

Water: The water in the East Branch of the Ontonagon River but has lots of clay sediment in it.

Parking: West end: short term roadside parking near the road bridge on Mud Creek Rd aka Gardner Rd, park on north side of road. East end: No driving access on the east end of this segment. However, it is possible that you may find the gate at the north end of Forest Road 884

open or unlocked especially during logging operations. Do not block this gate at any time or drive in on FR 884 as you could get locked in as loggers leave for the day!

Winter: West end: The Mud Creek Rd aka Gardner Rd is winter plowed, but no parking area is plowed. East end: road is locked and not plowed unless current logging is going on. Don't get locked in on wrong side of the gate when loggers leave for the day!

Segment 29 Forest Road 884 to Forest Road 1100 [Avenza](#) maps # 22-23

Length: 3.31 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Trail crosses FR 884.

General description of segment: Mostly gentle terrain, with steeper areas near streams. Beaver dam crossing just east of FR 884 and water on trail near FR1100. Numerous undeveloped sites would make for decent camping. LNT!

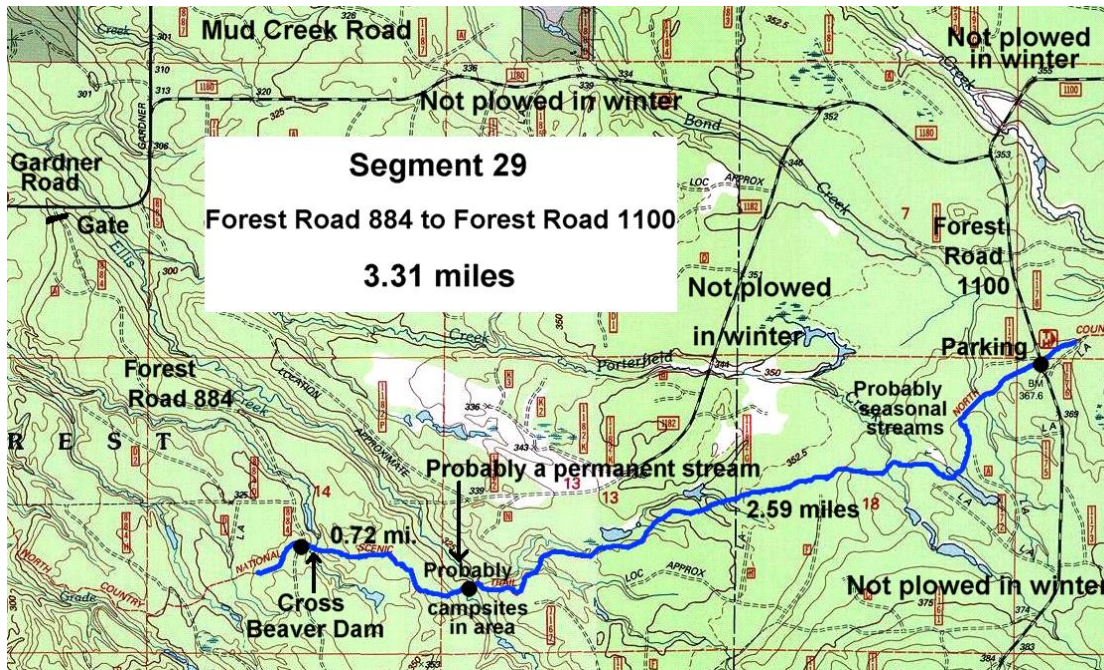
Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Ellis Creek is probably a permanent stream, and many other small streams often contain water.

Parking: West end: No access for the west end of this Segment. However, it is possible that you may find the gate at the north end of Forest Road 884 open especially during logging operations. Do not block this gate or drive in on FR 884; you could get locked in when loggers leave for the day!

East end: Sign and nice parking area at FR 1100.

Winter: No roads here are plowed in the winter unless there is active logging going on. FR 1100 is not normally plowed in winter. Please do not block any roads or gates!



Segment 30

Forest Road 1100 to Forest Road 1470

[Avenza](#) map # 23, [Driving map here](#)

Length: 3.16 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: RR crossing. Bridge over Newholm Creek.

General description of segment: Mostly gentle terrain, with steeper areas near streams. Numerous undeveloped sites would make for decent camping. LNT!

NOTE: There is a Native American Marked Trail Tree identified on this segment just a hundred yards or so east of FR 1100. It has orange and yellow ribbons around it to protect it from logging. Take photos but please do not climb on this old tree. Info about Native marked trees from talk given at the PWC annual meeting Spring 2023 [click here](#) to watch.

Trail conditions The ONF reconstructed a logging road that is on top of the NCT for several hundred yards in 2023, follow the NCT blue blazes. Watch for logging activity on this segment winter of 2023-24. Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) if you encounter any problems in this area.

Water: Newholm Creek is probably a permanent stream, and other small streams often contain water.

Parking: West end: Signs and parking areas at FR 1100.

East end sign and parking on FR 1470.

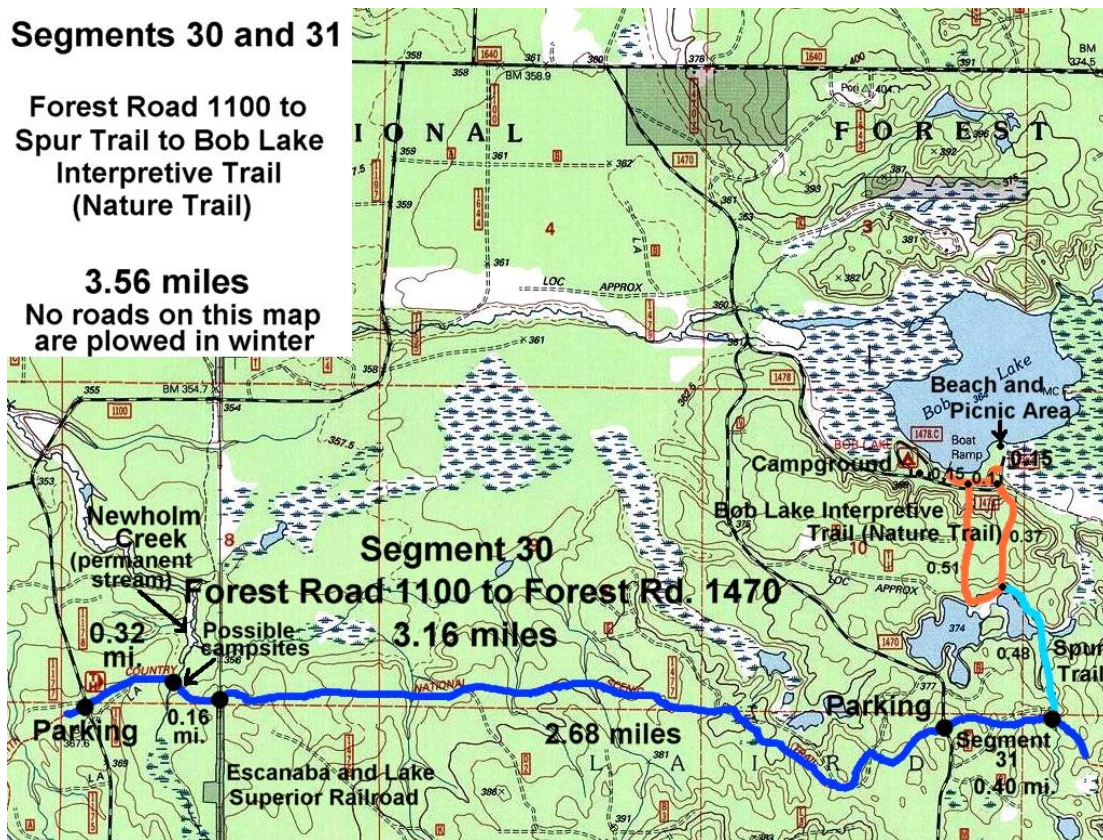
Winter: No roads in this area are plowed in winter. There may be logging equipment on FR1100

the winter of 2023-24, be very careful.

Segments 30 and 31

Forest Road 1100 to
Spur Trail to Bob Lake
Interpretive Trail
(Nature Trail)

3.56 miles
No roads on this map
are plowed in winter



Segment 31 see map above

Forest Road 1470 to Spur Trail to Bob Lake

[Avenza](#) map # 23, Driving map [here](#)

Length: 0.40 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter Volunteers

Developments along trail: Signs at FR 1470 and at Spur Trail to [Bob Lake beach and campground](#). Registration box at junction of NCT and spur trail to Bob Lake Nature Trail.

General description of segment: Mostly gentle terrain, with steeper areas near streams. Occasional water in stream near east end of segment. Be prepared for mosquitoes or black flies in this area

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

Water: Newholm Creek is probably a permanent stream.

Parking: West end: Parking area at FR 1470. East end is mid forest, spur to Bob Lake.

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

Segment 32

Spur Trail to Bob Lake to Forest Highway 16

[Avenza](#) map # 24

Length: 1.32 miles, on NCT map [here](#)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service

Responsible for maintenance: ONF and Peter Wolfe Chapter volunteers

Developments along trail: Signs at Spur Trail to Bob Lake beach and campground and at Forest Highway 16. Registration box at junction of NCT and spur trail to Bob Lake Nature Trail.

General description of segment: Mostly gentle terrain, with steeper areas near streams.

Water: Occasional water in stream near west end of segment.

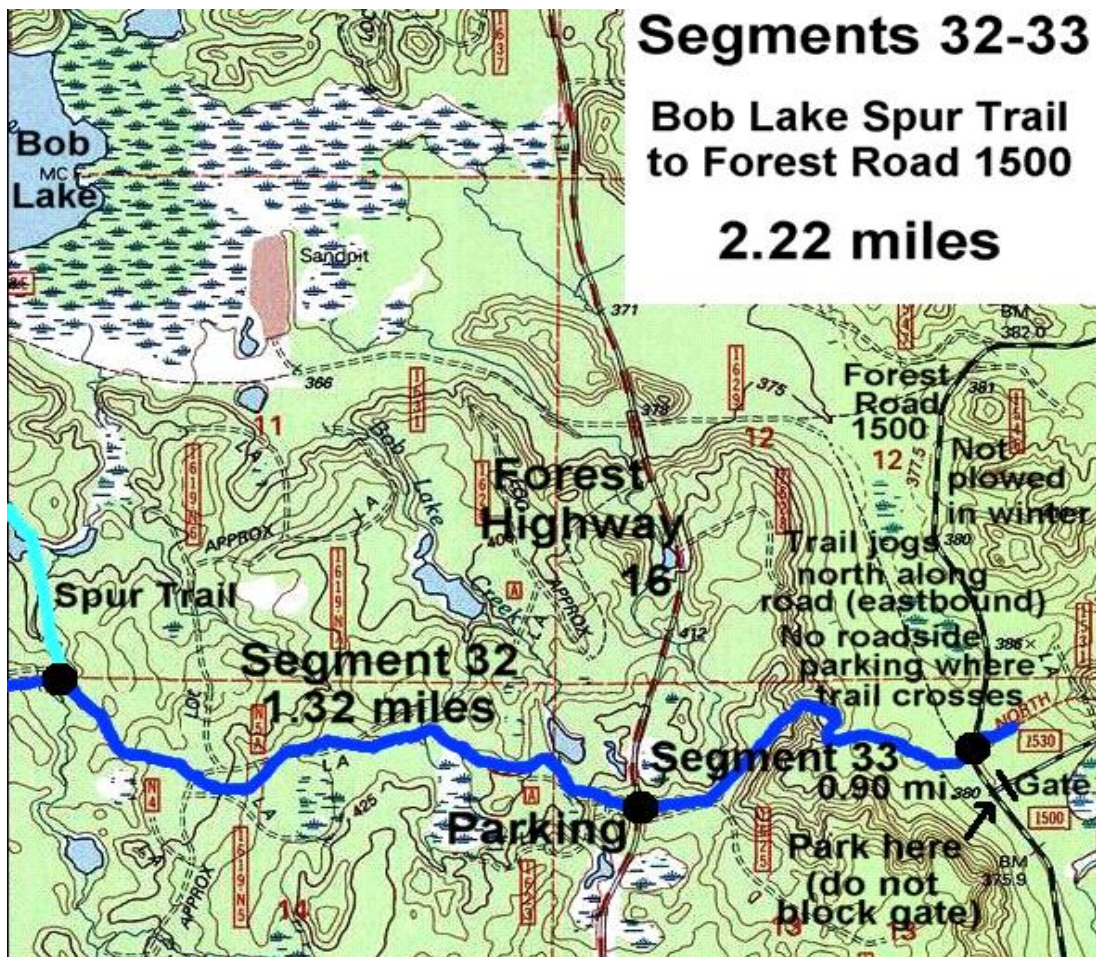
Trail conditions Maintained and blazed annually by PWC volunteers; please [let us know](#) if you encounter any problems in this area.

Parking: West end is mid forest spur to Bob Lake. East end: Parking area at FH 16.

Winter: FH 16 is plowed in winter, but the parking area there is not. This area receives quite a bit of snow, so roadside parking in winter may be difficult.

Note: There are often swans in a pond on the east side of FR 16, just north of S Laird Rd.

See map of Segment 32 below



End of PWC Segments 16-32 trail guide

Go to the next trail guide for PWC segments 33-46: [click here](#)

then scroll to the bottom of that page.