



# Porcupine Mountains Visitor

2021 Printed by the Friends of the Porkies

www.michigan.gov/porkies

## WELCOME TO THE PORCUPINE MOUNTAINS

Last year was a challenging year, but also a record attendance year at the Porkies. With indoor activities closed or canceled due to COVID-19, many people chose to get outside. In addition to the regular local visitors and returning visitors from outside the area, we had an influx of first timers which meant our attendance hit a record high at nearly 600,000.

We welcomed both first-time campers and backpackers. With so many people in the park, including many who were inexperienced, we also experienced a record number of lost and injured hikers. In 2020, Porkies rangers responded to 52 rescues or emergencies. Historically, this number typically ranges between 6 and 18 per year.

As the name implies, wilderness is inherently "wild." Trails can be steep and slippery. Weather can change quickly, accidents happen and nobody is to blame. Overexertion, lower-leg injuries and a lack of pre-trip planning were among the primary causes for the record rescues. Due to restrictions for wilderness areas, topography and the size of the park, the majority of rescue efforts last many hours. They require a team of 6-10 rangers to hike to the injured person's location, provide First Aid, then load them onto a wheeled rescue litter and haul them out to a trailhead at the speed of 1 mile per hour.

We want you to enjoy the trails, experience the shoreline, feed your need for adventure, connect with friends and family.



Park Rangers training with the rescue litter at the Lake of the Clouds.

We also want you to pack appropriately and plan accordingly prior to your visit. Please wear appropriate footwear, tread lightly, bring and drink water, have the 10 Essentials and know how to use them, grab a map, do not overload your pack, and if you have any questions, please ask a ranger.

Safe Travels and Happy Trails,



Michael J. Knack  
Park Supervisor  
Porcupine Mountains  
Wilderness State Park



Map on pages 4-5

## #RecreateResponsibly

<b>PLAY IT SAFE</b> 	<b>KNOW BEFORE YOU GO</b> 	<b>PLAN AHEAD</b> 	<b>LEAVE NO TRACE</b> 
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## THE WILDERNESS VISITOR CENTER



The Wilderness Visitor Center is open through mid-October. Daily hours 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. EST.

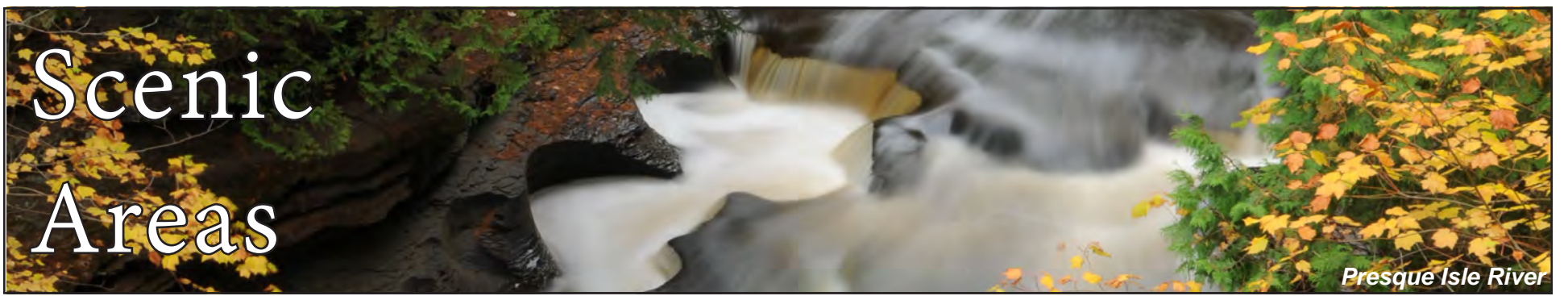
The Wilderness Visitor Center is located along South Boundary Road, one quarter mile from the CR-107 Junction. This should be your first stop when visiting the Porcupine Mountains. Here you can check trail conditions, register for backpacking, purchase fishing/hunting licenses, get directions to scenic sites and more.

During busy times of the day, please keep your party size within the building to a minimum. There is plenty of beauty outside to enjoy while you wait, including a 1-mile self-guided trail that winds through giant eastern hemlocks and over majestic streams.

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*The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the State's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations.*



### Lake of the Clouds

Standing along the top of the steep escarpment you look out over the beautiful Lake of the Clouds, surrounded by lush forests and dramatic mountains. On clear days, you can see over 20 miles away. It is easy to see why this is the most visited site in the park.

Located at the end of CR-107, only a short 100-yard walk up a paved trail or accessible boardwalk will bring you to this amazing view. Due to limited parking, it is recommended visitors drop trailers and campers off in the middle ski hill parking area on summer and fall days.



© Northwoods Exposure

### Summit Peak

At 1,958 feet tall, Summit Peak is the highest point in the park. From the parking area, there is a half-mile packed dirt trail that winds through huge hardwood trees, with benches stationed along the route. The trail leads to wooden stairs, walkways and a viewing tower that access two breathtaking panoramic vistas.

The turn-off for this site is located half-way down South Boundary Road. A turn-around and parking area is situated at the end of the entrance road. It is recommended visitors drop trailers and campers off in the designated lot located as you exit South Boundary Road before heading up the mountain.



© Michael Knack

### Presque Isle River

The Presque Isle River is located at the very west side of the park. Here, there is a rustic campground, pavilion in the day use area and three of the biggest waterfalls in the park. From the day-use area, the hiking trail leads to wooden stairs and walkways that take you to the falls. At the river mouth, a beautiful suspension bridge spans the fast-flowing water. The trail leads to Lake Superior, the perfect spot for sunsets.

Take the flat gravel trail behind the DNR's Presque Isle contact booth for the shortest and easiest access to view one of the waterfalls, Nawadaha.



## NEW PARK NAVIGATION



New confidence markers

The Porkies is Michigan's largest state park, almost 60,000 acres in size with over 90 miles of hiking trails branching throughout the park. Navigating the Porkies can get a little confusing at times. Park staffers are excited to introduce our visitors to our new trail maps and confidence markers.


Each trail intersection will have a map marking the hiker's current location. As a path is chosen and the hiker goes a short distance down that trail there will be a confidence marker. This marker will state which backcountry campsites, cabins, yurts, and next trail intersection is ahead on this trail, as well as the distance to each. Use these markers as a way to confirm you are heading down the correct trail.

The Park will continue to use the blue trail markers to show the path while hiking.



Follow the blue markers.

© Northwoods Exposure



**Dispersed camping is not allowed in the Porcupine Mountains for spring, summer or fall backpackers. A backcountry permit is required. Camping without one may result in a civil infraction.**

**Register for backcountry camping in the Visitor Center: Open everyday from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. EST.**

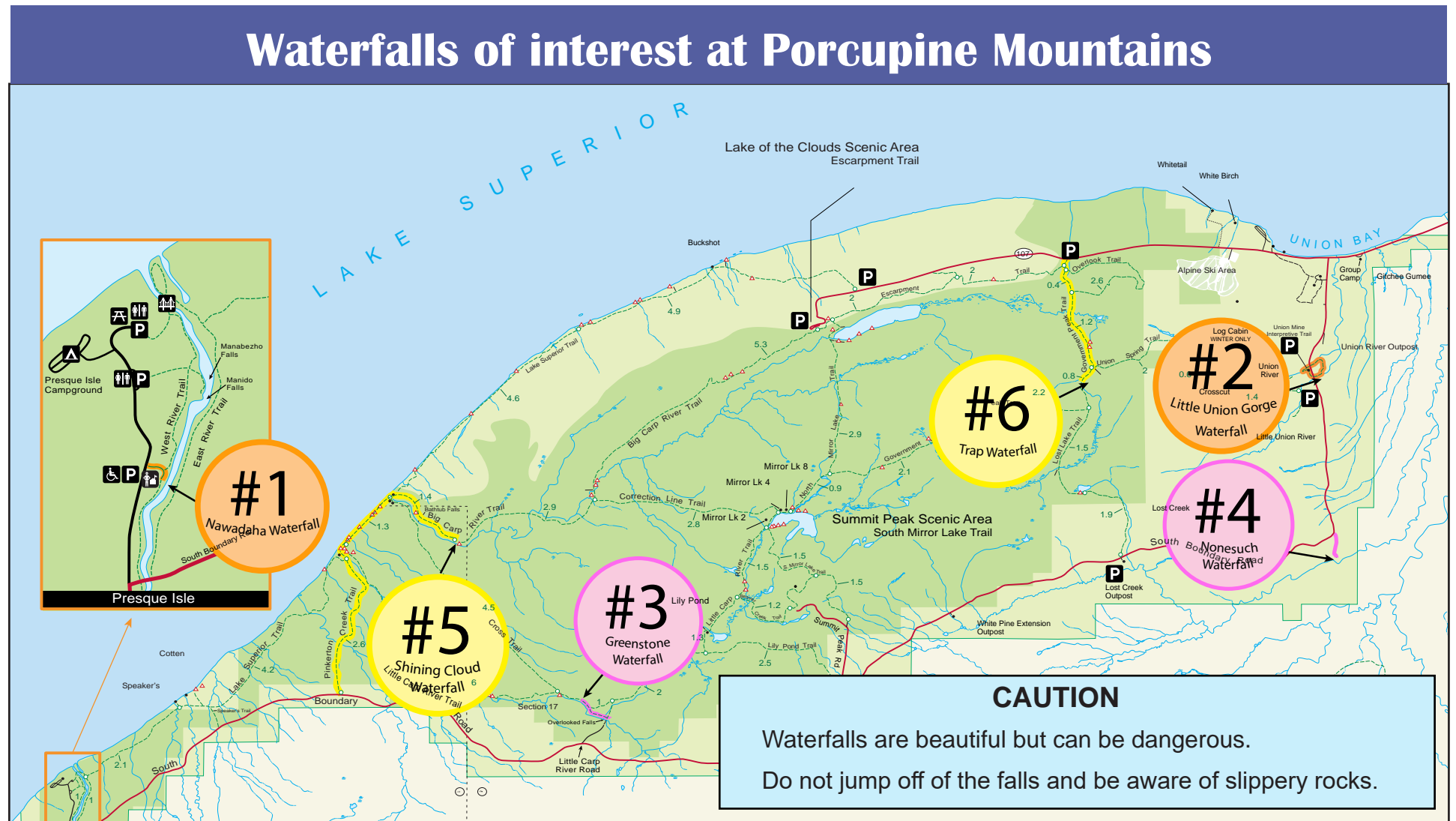
**Due to increases in park visitation, we highly recommend making a reservation ahead of time at:**

**[www.MiDNRreservations.com](http://www.MiDNRreservations.com) or call 1-800-44PARKS**

# WHAT ABOUT THE WATERFALLS?

The Porcupine Mountains have many beautiful attractions. Waterfalls are one of the features that seem to capture the attention of all visitors. Big or small, water trickling or roaring over rocks is an almost mystical sight to behold. Here at the Porkies we have over 70 waterfalls throughout the park. Some are more difficult to get to than others and to get to each one could take over a week of exploring.

If you are looking for some recommendations check out what some of the park staffers suggest.



**Less than 2 hours**  
**Easy hikes**

### 1. Nawadaha Waterfall

Easy to get to on a short, packed gravel trail, it's one of the biggest falls in the park. Breathtaking and the view never gets old!

-Whitney Rule, Summer Ranger



**2-5 hour**  
**Medium hikes**

### 3. Greenstone Waterfall

This hidden falls is a 2-mile round-trip hike. On a hot day this is one of my favorite places to wade in, but look out for leeches!

-Steve Negovan, Park Officer



**5 hours or more**  
**Difficult hikes**

### 5. Shining Cloud Waterfall

This is an all day 11 mile hike but worth the effort. The Big Carp River is packed full of waterfalls and wonder.

- Michael Knack, Park Supervisor



### 2. Little Union Gorge Waterfall

This waterfall is located on the interpretive mine 1-mile loop. This short hike offers a lot of waterfall views as a reward.

- Séamus D. Heaney, Park Officer



### 4. Nonesuch Waterfall

It is worth the 2-miles round trip it takes to explore them. Hidden in the rocky remains of an old mine there is no fall such as it.

- Katie Urban, Park Interpreter



### 6. Trap Waterfall

This is a 5-mile round trip hike that follows the Upper Carp River. The bank of this waterfall is a great place for lunch.

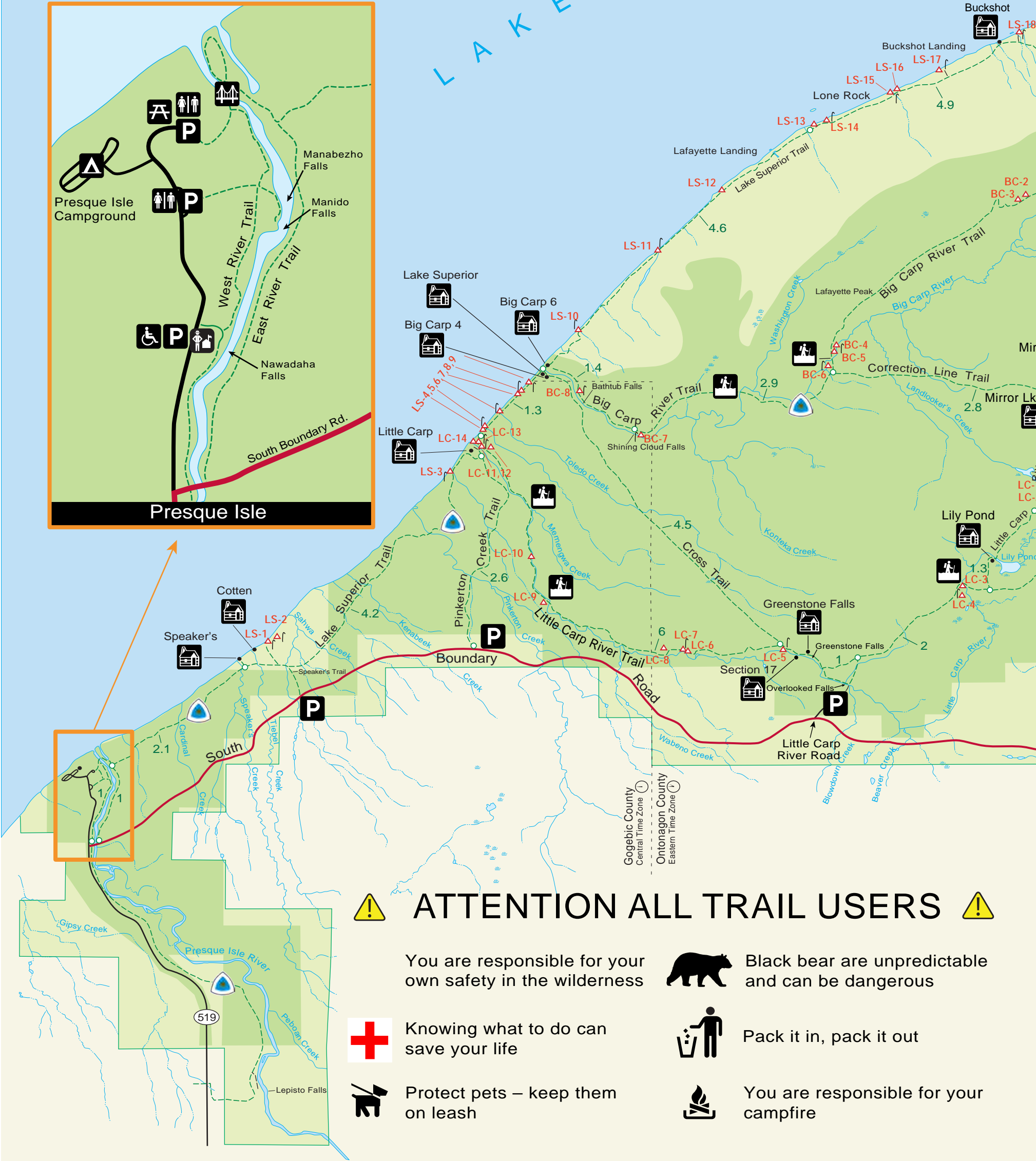
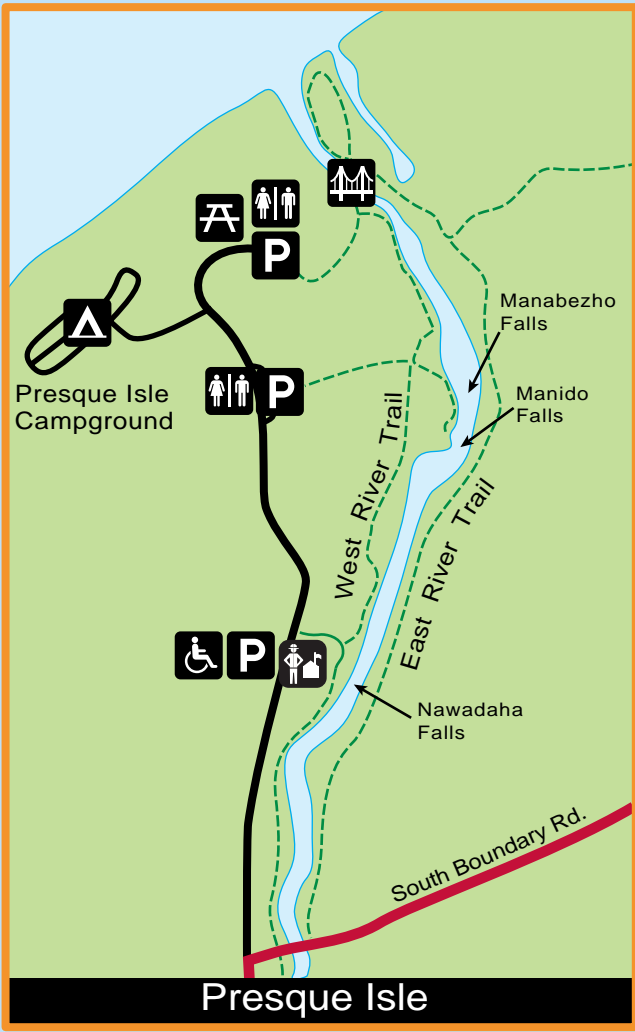
- The Park's Interior Crew



# Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park



L A K E S U P E R I O R



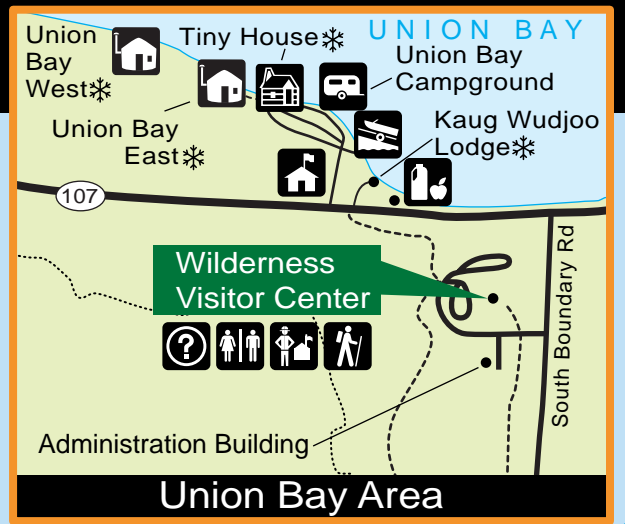
## ⚠ ATTENTION ALL TRAIL USERS ⚠

-  You are responsible for your own safety in the wilderness
-  Black bear are unpredictable and can be dangerous
-  Knowing what to do can save your life
-  Pack it in, pack it out
-  Protect pets – keep them on leash
-  You are responsible for your campfire

**Plan Ahead and Prepare**  
Know the rules for the area and always be prepared.

**Be Considerate of Others**  
Respect other visitors by maintaining appropriate noise levels.

Lake of the Clouds Scenic Area  
Escarpment Trail



- |                    |                           |                   |                         |
|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Accessible area    | Lookout tower             | Scenic area       | Cross country ski trail |
| Backcountry cabin  | Modern campground         | Suspension bridge | Hiking trail            |
| Backpack campsite  | Parking                   | Toilets           | North Country Trail     |
| Bear pole location | Picnic area               | Warming shelter   | Primary forest          |
| Boat launch        | Ranger station            | Winter lodging    | Park land               |
| Hiking trailhead   | Un-bridged river crossing | Yurt              | Distance in miles       |
| Information        | Rustic campground         | Camp store        |                         |

**Respect Wildlife**  
Never feed or approach any wild animal.

**Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces**  
Stay on the trail and camp at designated camp sites.

**Leave What You Find**  
Never move natural or historic objects.

Cabin/Yurt (*available for rent in winter)	Number of Occupants	Trailhead Parking	Route	Distance	Distance in Winter	Fee/night
Big Carp 6	6	Pinkerton Creek	Pinkerton to Lake Superior Trail East	4 mi		\$68
Big Carp 8	4	Pinkerton Creek	Pinkerton to Lake Superior Trail East	4 mi		\$68
Buckshot	4	Lake Superior Trailhead	Lake Superior Trail	3 mi		\$68
Cotten	8	Speakers Creek	Speakers Creek Trail	1 mi		\$125
Crosscut*	2	Union Spring	Union Spring Trail	2 mi	3 mi	\$68
Gitche Gumees*	8	Gitche Gumees	East of south Boundary on M107	Drive In	Drive In	\$68
Greenstone Falls	4	Little Carp River Road	Little Carp River Trail	1 mi		\$68
Lake of the Clouds	4	Overlook at Lake of the Clouds	Escarpment trail to North Mirror Lake Trail	1 mi		\$68
Lake Superior	4	Pinkerton Creek	Pinkerton to Lake Superior Trail East	4 mi		\$68
Lily Pond	4	Summit Peak Parking	Beaver Creek to Little Carp Trail S.E.	1.5 mi		\$68
Little Carp	4	Pinkerton Creek	Pinkerton to Lake Superior Trail Intersection	3 mi		\$68
Little Union River Yurt*	4	Union Spring	Little Union River Yurt Trail	1 mi	3 mi	\$68
Lost Creek	4	Lost Lake Trail	Little Union River Yurt Trail	1 mi		\$68
Mirror Lake 2	2	Summit Peak Parking	Beaver Creek to Little Carp Trail N.W.	2.5 mi		\$68
Mirror Lake 4	4	Summit Peak Parking	Beaver Creek to Little Carp Trail N.W.	2.75 mi		\$68
Mirror Lake 8	8	Summit Peak Parking	Beaver Creek to Little Carp Trail N.W.	2.75 mi		\$68
Section 17	4	Little Carp River Road	Little Carp River Trail	1 mi		\$68
Speakers	4	Speakers Creek	Speakers Creek Trail	1 mi		\$68
Tiny House*	4	Inside Union Bay Campground	West end of Union Bay Campground	Drive In	250 yds	\$95
Union Bay East*	4	Inside Union Bay Campground	West End of Union Bay Campground	Drive In	250 yds	\$68
Union Bay West*	4	Inside Union Bay Campground	West End of Union Bay Campground	Drive In	250 yds	\$68
Union River*	8	Union Spring	Union Spring Trail	1 mi	3 mi	\$68
White Birch	2	Deer Yard	Deer Yard Trail	0.75 mi		\$68
Whitetail*	8	Deer Yard	Deer Yard Trail	1 mi	1 mi	\$68

## RUSTIC LODGING

If you are looking to stay at one of the park's 23 backcountry cabins or yurts there are a few things you should know.

The rustic lodging is spread out throughout the park. Use the chart above to find a place to stay that is located at an appropriate distance for your group.

The park is open year-round and so are some of our rustic lodging options. Renters enjoy snowshoeing or cross-country skiing to their lodging in the winter.

Trees that are dead and laying on the ground can be collected for firewood. In the winter months (December-March) firewood is provided for the use of heating the cabins.

**Check-in must occur during regular business hours and at designated check-in stations:**

**May 15- Oct. 14:**

**Check in at the Visitor Center, open every day 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. EST.**

**Oct. 15 - May 14:**

**Check in at Park Headquarters, open everyday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. EST.**



*Porcupine Mountain yurt covered in snow.*

## Pets at the Porkies

- Friendly pets are welcome to join you on the trail
- Clean up after your pets
- Must remain on a 6-foot leash at all times
- Bring lots of water, for you and your pet
- Non-service animals are not allowed in park buildings (including cabins and yurts)
- Do not leave your pet unattended
- While planning your trip, consider the physical abilities of you and your pet

## Bear Behavior

Black bears are normally afraid of humans and will leave the area in a hurry. If you see a bear near you, retreat slowly. Do not turn and run. Always allow the bear to have a clear and unobstructed escape route. Give bears with cubs plenty of room. For your safety and the safety of the bear, never feed or approach bears.

**A bear is studying you if...**



- it stands on its hind legs to get a better view.
- it waves its nose around smelling the air.
- it makes non-aggressive grunting sounds.

**A bear may be getting upset if it...**

- clicks its teeth.
- gives a loud blowing sound.

**A bear is telling you to leave when it...**

- blows loudly.
- makes short lunges.
- hits the ground or nearby objects.
- gives a bluff charge that stops short of you.



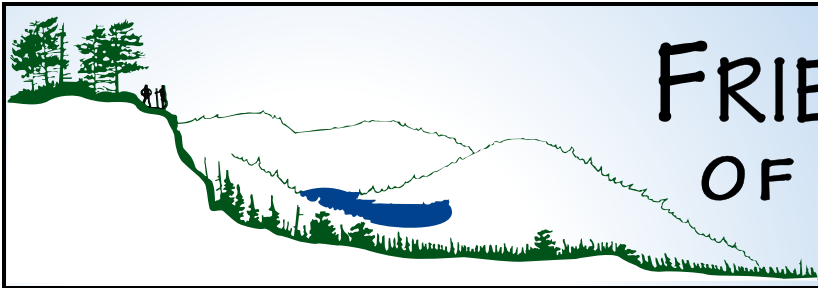
## Attention Cabin and Yurt Users

**Starting Dec. 1, 2021**

Items that will be provided at each cabin and yurt include:

- Water-boiling pot
- Wash basin
- Cooking pot and pan
- Can opener
- Percolator coffee pot
- Bow saw
- Splitting ax

All other items will be removed due to difficulty in providing proper sanitization between lodging stays.



# FRIENDS OF THE PORKIES

PO Box 221  
Ontonagon, MI 49953  
906-884-7443 • [Porkies.org](http://Porkies.org)

## SUPPORTING THE PARK IN 2021

In 2021 the long-awaited playground will become a reality. Using funds raised by the Friends, the DNR will prepare the site and purchase the playground equipment. With guidance from the equipment vendor, Friends volunteers and park personnel will install the playground equipment in time for use by summer park visitors.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, and a matching grant from Portage Health Foundation, the Friends has purchased three sets of Sit-Skis. These skis will help make selected cross-country ski trails accessible. Each Sit-Ski set includes a molded chair mounted on custom-designed Nordic skis, ski poles, outriggers and push-pull handles that a helper can use to assist the skier. The Friends will donate the Sit-Ski sets to the park for use at the Winter Sports Complex. Using this equipment, disabled skiers will now be able to join family and friends in experiencing the Porkies in winter.



One of the Sit-Skis purchased by the Friends.

Support the park by joining, donating to the Friends and volunteering to help with projects at [porkies.org](http://porkies.org).

FriendsOfThePorkies 

### New to the Porkies



The Outdoor Skills Academy is a Michigan DNR program that focuses on the same goals as the Friends' Outdoor Adventure Program, including support of area youth. Park Interpreter Katie Urban is very enthusiastic about developing a robust OSA program in the Porkies. The Friends is using funds raised for the OAP to support the Porkies' Outdoor Skills Academy.

For more information visit:  
[michigan.gov/OutdoorSkills](http://michigan.gov/OutdoorSkills)

## BUILD A PORKIES' TRAILS FUND


In January 2021, the Friends kicked off an innovative way to raise funds to help build, repair and restore trails in the Porkies. We are "selling" an annual Trails Supporter decal to build a Trails Fund. For a donation of \$25 or more, supporters will receive a 2021 Trail Supporter decal.



All money raised through sale of decals will grow a Trails Fund to support projects to repair and maintain hiking, cross-country skiing, interpretive and biking trails. The fund will be used to improve accessibility where possible.

For the Friends, this is an opportunity to support the largest visitor group to the Porkies – trails users. The Friends will enhance annual Trail Supporter donations by writing grants for specific trail projects and working with the park to identify volunteer opportunities to work on trails. Each year, the Friends will inform the public of identified projects and report on work completed.

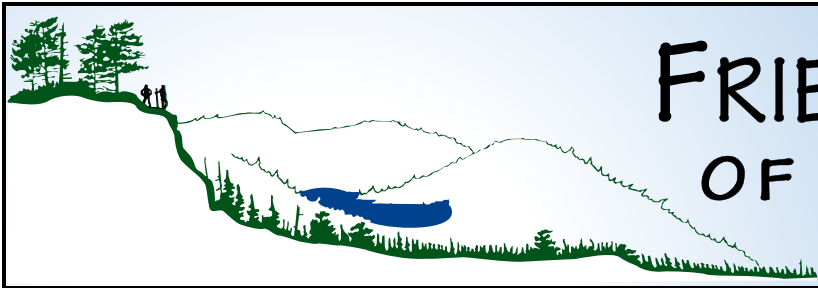
Stickers can be purchased in park gift shops or online at [porkies.org](http://porkies.org) or mail a check designated to the Trails Fund to: Friends of the Porkies, P.O. Box 221, Ontonagon, MI 49953.

	Individual	\$25
	Household	\$40
	Business	\$50
	Lifetime	\$300
	Pet**	\$10
<b>Membership includes:</b>		
• Subscription to the monthly <i>E-Quill</i> and the <i>Quill Annual Report</i> featuring Friends' yearly accomplishments and plans for the future.		
• Invitation to the annual membership meeting.		
• A collective voice with park users to express your ideas.		

One of the worlds most popular nature apps, iNaturalist is happening in the Porkies. This app will help you identify the plants and animals found in the Porkies while connecting you with a community of over a million scientists and naturalists who can help you learn more about nature!

Take a look at the "Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park Project" in iNaturalist and join the fun at [www.inaturalist.org](http://www.inaturalist.org)





# FRIENDS OF THE PORKIES

PO Box 221  
Ontonagon, MI 49953  
906-884-7443 • [Porkies.org](http://Porkies.org)

## ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM

The Friends of the Porkies Artist-In-Residence Program, established in 2007, hosts artists for two or three-week residencies. While living in Dan's Cabin in a secluded wilderness, artists have an opportunity to explore and absorb the vast wilderness of the park.

They capture their creative impressions in a variety of mediums, and each artist donates a completed piece of art to the Friends' permanent collection. Enjoy a glimpse of the varied seasons and hidden treasures of the Porkies found in the selection of artwork displayed in the Visitor Center and in the complete collection found in the on-line gallery at [www.porkies.org/artist](http://www.porkies.org/artist).

The generosity of artists makes possible the sale of giclee art reproductions, books and other Porkies merchandise to support future artists in residence at the Back to Nature shop, located in the park visitor center and on-line at [porkies.org/merchandise/art-prints/](http://porkies.org/merchandise/art-prints/)

### Selected for 2021

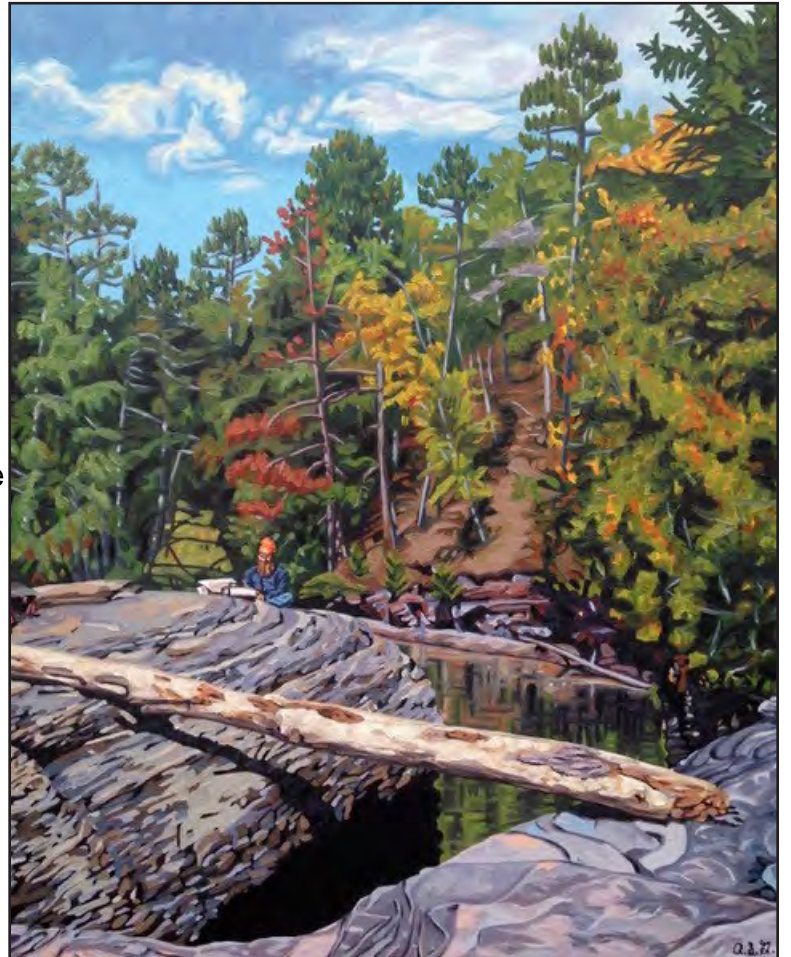
Lee LaVanway, singer and songwriter, Van Nuys, CA

Andre Venter, photography, and Martha Councill-Vargas, flutist, Kalamazoo, MI

Carol Socks-Parker, clay and mixed media, Rochester Hills, MI

Catherine Danae, needle felting, Prospect, PA,

Dawn Russell, watercolor and pastels, Suttons Bay, MI



*Sketching at Presque Isle River, by Alex Gilford*

## FOLK SCHOOL CLASSES ARE BACK



*A Leopold bench along the shore at Union Bay.*

The Friends of the Porkies are excited to welcome students back to classes at the Porcupine Mountains Folk School. Classes are held in the Old Carpenter Shop/Folk School taught by instructors who are experts in their fields. From bead work to basketry to journaling to blacksmithing to dyeing and painting, we've chosen a diverse range of classes to appeal to a diverse mix of students.

Record your impressions of Lake Superior following a short, pre-writing hike. Paint your impressions of the park on silk and transform your painting into a quilted wall hanging. Create applique bead work earrings, weave with willow or barks, explore eco-printing using natural dyes. Awaken your inner blacksmith. Build a Leopold Bench, ideal for use in your garden. Expand your personal boundaries by learning a new craft.

In the summer of 2020, we welcomed the 107th National Guard Corps of Engineers to the Porkies. The Guard replaced the weather-worn roof on the Old Carpenter Shop and provided safe use of the east entry by building a sturdy new banister and railing for its steps.

Check us out at [www.porkies.org/events](http://www.porkies.org/events)

## PORCUPINE MOUNTAINS MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Porcupine Mountains Music Festival, presented by the Friends of the Porkies, remains on "hiatus" for 2021 due to issues related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The Festival made state history in 2005, becoming the first music festival to be held in a Michigan state park. Performers bring to the Porkies' stage a diverse selection of musical styles: blues, country, bluegrass, rock, folk and more. The pairing of quality performers and the intimate natural surroundings of the state park offers a unique musical experience.

Organizers are already hard at work charting the course for the future of the Porcupine Mountains Music Festival. They are planning a strong return of great live music at the Porkies. The 16th Porcupine Mountains Music Festival is tentatively scheduled for Aug. 26-28, 2022.

Please visit our website [porkiesfestival.org](http://porkiesfestival.org) and our Facebook page for the most up-to-date information.



*The Porcupine Mountains Music Festival will be back in 2022.*