



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Lake of the Clouds (Photo Credit: Henry Roeters)

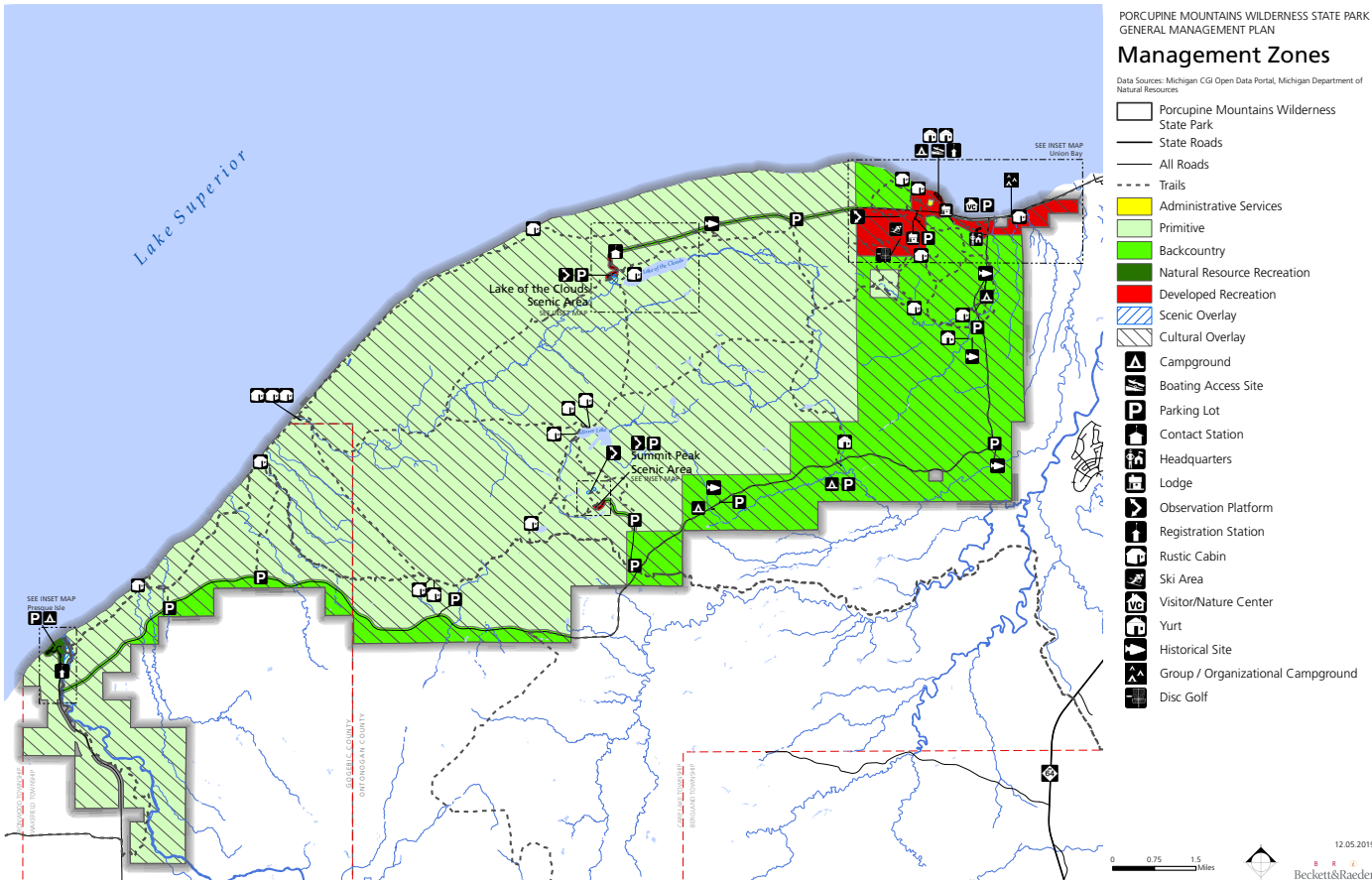
# Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park

## GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

APPROVED SEPTEMBER 28, 2020

Prepared with the assistance of

B R   
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This project was directed by Deborah Jensen, Management Plan Administrator, Department of Natural Resources, DNR Parks & Recreation Division with assistance from Beckett & Raeder, Inc.

PLAN APPROVALS:

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Chief, Parks & Recreation Division

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DNR Director, Department of Natural Resources

9-17-2020  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

9-18-2020  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

9-28-2020  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## PLAN APPROVALS

### PLAN APPROVAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following dates reference when the plans were presented for recommendation. In some instances, additional time was allotted for plan review following the presentation with subsequent approval received by email or at a later meeting.

PRD- Section Chiefs	<u>December 9, 2019</u> Date
DNR- Resource Management Bureau	<u>January 14, 2020</u> Date
MSPAC- Stewardship Subcommittee	<u>January 23, 2020</u> Date
NRC- Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee	<u>February 13, 2020</u> Date

**RESOLUTION NO. 02-2020-02****MICHIGAN STATE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSPAC)****RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE  
“PORCUPINE MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT  
PLAN”****ADOPTED: May 26, 2020**

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources’ (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division has completed the General Management Plan for Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park; and

**WHEREAS**, the planning process reflects sensitivity to natural resource values, historic and cultural resource values, recreation and education opportunities, and is inclusive of all DNR programs and representative of eco-management; and

**WHEREAS**, the planning process was further inclusive of stakeholder, constituent, and public input; and

**WHEREAS**, the General Management Plan represents sound guidance for future planning phases that will be consistent with the mission of the DNR and the Parks and Recreation Division, and reflective of the purpose and significance of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park; and

**WHEREAS**, the General Management Plan is consistent with the recommendations of the Michigan State Parks and Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel and the Parks and Recreation Division’s strategic plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the General Management Plan has been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Parks and Recreation Division and the MSPAC Stewardship Subcommittee.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park General Management Plan; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee further recommends that the DNR Director approve the General Management Plan for Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park;

Submitted by: MSPAC Stewardship Subcommittee

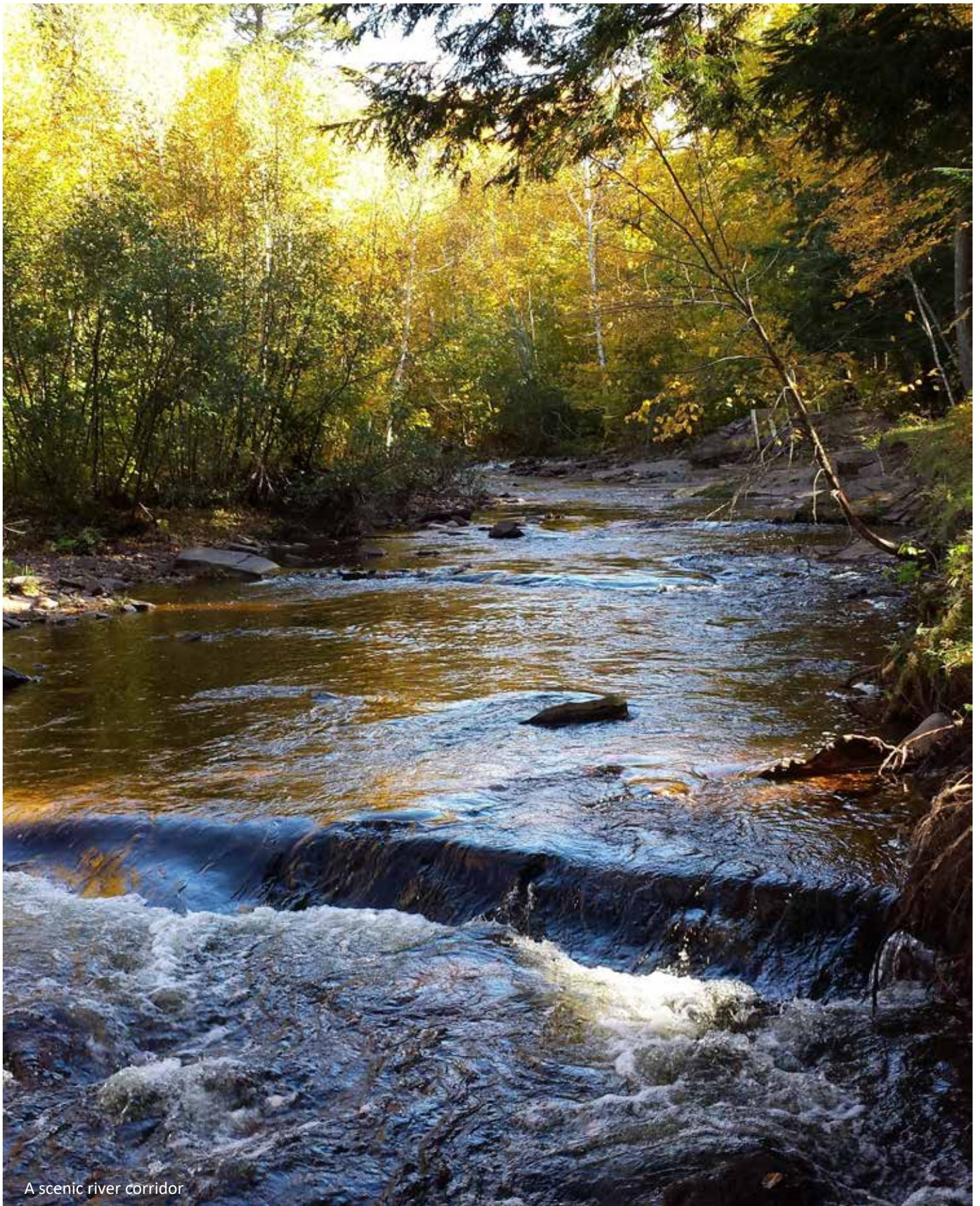
<b>Yeas:</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Nays:</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Abstained:</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Absent:</b>	<b>1</b>

*This Resolution was adopted by the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee at their meeting on May 26, 2020 as Resolution No. 02-2020-02.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>General Management Plan Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Executive Summary .....	1
Significance of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park .....	2
Twenty-Year Management Zones .....	3
Ten-Year Action Goals .....	5
<b>Chapter One: Core Values &amp; Guiding Resources .....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 Mission Statements .....	7
1.2 Guiding References .....	7
1.3 Summary of Legal Mandates .....	10
<b>Chapter Two: Plan Process Overview .....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Planning Objectives .....	11
2.2 Planning Process .....	12
2.3 Planning Team .....	12
2.4 Summary of Input Opportunities .....	13
2.5 Resilience Planning.....	14
<b>Chapter Three: Purpose and Significance .....</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 Park Purpose .....	15
3.2 Statements of Significance .....	16
3.3 Public Affirmation of Significance.....	18
3.4 Community Connection.....	20
<b>Chapter Four: Management Zones.....</b>	<b>21</b>
4.1 Primitive Zone .....	25
4.2 Backcountry Zone .....	27
4.3 Natural Resource Recreation Zone .....	28
4.4 Developed Recreation Zone .....	29
4.5 Administrative Services Zone .....	30
4.6 Cultural Landscape Overlay .....	31
4.7 Scenic Overlay .....	32
<b>Chapter Five: Ten-Year Action Goals.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Chapter Six: Implementation Strategy .....</b>	<b>39</b>
6.1 Implementation Toolbox .....	39
6.2 Documentation of Changes .....	40
6.3 Documentation of Accomplishments .....	40
6.4 Five-Year Review Process.....	40

<b>Appendix A: Supporting Analysis .....</b>	<b>A-1</b>
A.1 Park Setting .....	A-1
A.2 Demographics .....	A-2
A.3 Regional Recreation Resources .....	A-3
A.4 History of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park.....	A-6
A.5 Land Ownership .....	A-9
A.6 Legal Mandates .....	A-13
A.7 Landscape Context and Natural Resources .....	A-16
A.8 Recreational Resources .....	A-20
A.9 Historic and Cultural Resources .....	A-22
A.10 Programing, Events and Volunteers .....	A-25
A.11 Park Use Statistics .....	A-26
<b>Appendix B: Public and Stakeholder Input .....</b>	<b>B-1</b>
B.1 Project Website .....	B-1
B.2 Summary of Public Input Survey .....	B-1
B.3 Summary of Stakeholder Input Workshop .....	B-9
B.4 Tribal Engagement.....	B-17
B.5 Public Input Survey Data .....	B-19
B.6 Summary of Draft Plan Public Input .....	B-65
<b>Appendix C: Opinion of Probable Costs.....</b>	<b>C-85</b>
C.1 State Park Funding.....	C-85
C.2 Estimated Cost of Proposed Developments .....	C-85
<b>Appendix D: Legislation .....</b>	<b>D-1</b>
D.1 NREPA - Act 451 of 1994 (Excerpt) .....	D-1
D.2 DNR Wildlife Division Wilderness And Natural Areas .....	D-2



A scenic river corridor



Hiking on the Big Carp Trail

# General Management Plan

## Executive Summary

### Executive Summary

Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park is Michigan's largest state park, covering 59,020 acres, and the only one to have a Wilderness designation, which protects over 41,200 acres in a primitive state. The park is home to 35,000 acres of old-growth forest, roaring waterfalls, numerous rivers and streams, more than 90 miles of hiking trails, over 25 miles of Lake Superior shoreline and some of the best vistas in the Midwest.

Near the east park entrance, the Wilderness Visitor Center orients park visitors and offers interpretive programs, an exhibit hall, information on trail conditions, WiFi, a gift shop and more. The park features many popular scenic landmarks including Lake of the Clouds overlook, the Summit Peak observation tower, and the Presque Isle River corridor. Visitors can stay overnight at modern, rustic or backcountry campsites, cabins, or a modern lodge and can enjoy fishing and hunting in this vast wilderness. Scattered throughout the park are physical remnants of the area's mining history such as the Nonesuch Mine and Townsite. Other attractions include the Porcupine Mountains Ski Area and an 18-hole disc golf course.

The purpose of this general management plan (GMP) is to guide the future long-term management of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. Overall, this plan seeks to uphold the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Parks & Recreation Division's (PRD) Mission: "to acquire, protect, and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan's unique resources, and to provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities." The management plan brings together DNR staff, stakeholders, and the public into a process that defines the following for the state park:

- Purpose and significance that captures the unique identity of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park
- Twenty-year management zone plan reflecting the resource protection goals and level of development appropriate for different areas of the park
- Ten-year action goals that address the desired future condition within the park as a whole and within each of the designated management zones

The supporting analysis, included as Appendix A of this plan, provides important background information on Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park that informs this planning initiative. It includes a comprehensive review of the park setting, area demographics, history, land ownership, legal mandates, and cultural, natural, and recreation resources. Furthermore, several existing planning documents, including the Michigan State Parks Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel Report, the Managed Public Land Strategy, and the Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan were used as guiding references (see chapter one).

### Significance of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park

This general management plan developed by the DNR PRD is derived from the property's significant features that make it distinct from other parks in the state park system. Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park was determined significant due to the aspects that follow below in summary form. The full statements of significance can be found in chapter three.

- The park's wilderness character, rugged beauty, and acclaimed scenic landmarks draw visitors from across the globe. The Wilderness Visitor Center and full-time interpreter provide year-round programming and interpretation to help visitors appreciate all that the park has to offer.
- Efforts to preserve the park's dramatic scenic value, wilderness recreation, and the last remaining large stand of virgin hardwood-hemlock forest in Michigan, date back to the 1920s. The majority of the park is protected by its dedication under special Wilderness and Natural Area designations (the only dedicated Wilderness Area in the Michigan state park system) and is recognized as a National Natural Landmark.
- The remote, untamed character of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park presents a high level of challenge, adventure, and wilderness recreation opportunities rare in the Michigan state park system.
- This resource-rich land has long attracted settlers and prospectors. Physical reminders of past land use within the park are protected for future generations to enjoy.
- Over 90 miles of trails, that include the North Country National Scenic Trail and the Iron Belle Trail, as well as backcountry overnight accommodations, create excellent wilderness hiking experiences.
- The park's unique combination of geography, geology, water resources, and natural communities support species infrequently found in other Michigan state parks.
- The striking geologic and topographical features, panoramic vistas, waterfalls, and springs found within the park are integral to the visitor experience.
- At over 59,000 acres, this is the largest state park in Michigan and supports the largest contiguous tract of forest between the Mississippi River and the Adirondacks, as well as the largest tract of virgin hemlock forest in the Midwest.
- The park is a destination for winter recreation and camping, with the only downhill ski slopes in the Michigan state park system, an extensive non-motorized multi-use trail system, and scenic destinations for snowmobilers such as the iconic Lake of the Clouds scenic overlook.
- A passionate, long-standing, and active community group, the Friends of the Porkies, provide support and programming year-round, enhancing the visitor experience.



Lake Superior shoreline

## Twenty-Year Management Zones

A key goal in the development of this general management plan is to continue to protect the park's natural and cultural resources, while providing recreation and education opportunities. Taking this into account, the planning team, with stakeholder and public input, established appropriate management zones for the park from a palette of nine standard zones. The management zone map and a thorough review of each management zone are found in chapter four of this plan. A condensed description of each of the applied management zones is as follows:

### Primitive Zone

This zone reflects a desired condition that emphasizes the natural resources. It is managed to allow only dispersed and low frequency use for low impact recreational purposes and allows foot traffic only. This zone covers 73.8% of the park and includes most of the areas within the park that are designated Wilderness and Natural areas or a Natural National Landmark. This zoning encompasses the majority of the Lake Superior shoreline and the interior of the park, featuring virgin forest, lakes, streams, geological features, much of the park's hiking trail system and many of the backcountry cabins. The Lake of The Clouds scenic overlook, Summit Peak scenic area, the Union Springs Scenic Site, and the Presque Isle River Scenic Site are within the primitive zone.

### Backcountry Zone

The character of the backcountry zone is natural with minimal evidence of human impact. This zone allows for a slightly higher level of use than the primitive zone including non-motorized trails and low-impact modifications of the landscape to accommodate that use. This zone is 23.5% of the park and includes the 400-foot-wide road corridors excluded from the designated Wilderness Area along County Road 107, South Boundary Road, and Summit Peak Road; lands to the south of South Boundary Road; and the majority of land east of the Wilderness Area. Prominent features in this zone include Nonesuch Falls, the Nonesuch Mine and Townsite, and the Lost Creek, Union River, and White Pine Extension Outpost campgrounds.

### Natural Resource Recreation Zone

The natural resource recreation zone allows for active recreation with medium- to high-density use conducted in natural settings. There is still an emphasis on resource quality over recreation, but in this zone, higher levels of use are allowed. The natural resource recreation zone makes up approximately 0.13% of the park and includes the Presque Isle Campground area.



Union Bay Campground



Park store



Wilderness Visitor Center

### Developed Recreation Zone

This zone allows for active recreation with high-density use conducted in areas where the natural resources are not the primary emphasis. In this zone, recreation dominates with natural resource attributes enhanced as possible. The developed recreation zone constitutes approximately 2.55% of the park land and includes the Union Bay Campground and day-use area, the Kaug Wudjoo Modern Lodge, facilities used by the Friends of the Porkies for programs, the Porcupine Mountains Ski Area and facilities, the disc golf course, a boat launch on Lake Superior, the park concession/store, the Sportsman's Club area, the parking areas for Lake of the Clouds and Summit Peak scenic overlooks, the Wilderness Visitor Center, and a zone surrounding the Wilderness Visitor Center to provide for the possible future relocation of County Road 107.

### Administrative Services Zone

This zone encompasses areas required for the administration and operations of the park. It makes up 16 acres of the park and includes existing maintenance facilities, sanitary and water infrastructure, and the park's headquarters.



Disc golf

### Cultural Landscape Overlay

The cultural landscape overlay is used to highlight not only historic structures, but also non-structural evidence of the traditions, beliefs, practices, arts, crafts, and social institutions of any community. This overlay is applied to the entire park, which has a long history of pursuits involving Native Americans, fur trappers and traders, and miners and loggers. The park contains numerous reported historical and archaeological sites and has a high potential for new sites to be discovered, as no formal archaeological survey has been conducted.

### Scenic Overlay

The scenic overlay recognizes that there are aesthetic qualities to be preserved and protected in Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. While acknowledging that the entire park has some level of scenic quality, this overlay specifically includes scenic site areas with developed accommodations such as overlooks at Summit Peak and Lake of the Clouds, as well as the Presque Isle River Scenic Site (Natural Area).



A winter trail



Lake of the Clouds

### Ten-Year Action Goals

Once the planning team has established management zones to guide Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park for the next 20 years, a series of action goals are identified. The planning team limited action goals to those that could realistically be accomplished in the next ten years, recognizing that all goals may be funding dependent. The action goals are broken down into categories pertaining either to an area of management and operations, infrastructure and development (capital outlay or small projects), or partner projects. Below is a summary of the action goals for the park. The full list of ten-year action goals can be found in chapter five.

#### Management and Operations

Goals for the management and operations of the park focus on a balance between planning for the park's improvements and maintaining the quality of the wilderness experience. This includes continuing to explore land and mineral right purchases, detecting and controlling invasive species, maintaining appropriate staffing levels, creating plans for the stewardship of natural and cultural resources, working with partners to improve on the park's transportation infrastructure, assessing parking lot capacity, and reviewing the overnight lodging options and seasonal availability.

#### Infrastructure and Development: Capital Outlay

Goals to complete larger construction projects involving capital improvement funds include replacing critical infrastructure, the realignment or armoring of County Road 107 in response to shoreline erosion, renovations to historic cabins, the park headquarters, and the bunkhouse; improving drainage and preparing a redevelopment plan for the Union Bay Campground; re-routing the Iron Belle/ North Country Trail, and replacing aging sewage infrastructure.

#### Infrastructure and Development: Small Projects

Smaller infrastructure and development projects involve re-striping parking lots to increase their capacity without paving more area, maintaining historic cabins, replacing the shoreline yurts, and renovations to the newly acquired Cotten Cabin.

#### Partner Projects

The DNR proposes to improve the shooting complex in partnership with The Lake Superior Sportsman's Club and work with external partners to install solar lighting at the boat launch.



Fall color near the Lake of the Clouds Overlook



Waterfall at the Presque Isle River Scenic Site

## Chapter One:

# Core Values & Guiding Resources

### 1.1 Mission Statements

Throughout the planning process, the core values of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) were the foundation of the planning team's decisions. These include the mission statement of the DNR, the DNR Evergreen Goals, and the DNR Parks & Recreation Division (PRD) Mission Statement. These values set the protection of natural and cultural resources and the provision of recreational and educational opportunities at the forefront of the plan.

#### DNR Mission Statement

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.

#### DNR Evergreen Goals

- **Protect** natural and cultural resources
- **Ensure** sustainable recreation use and enjoyment
- **Enable** strong natural resource-based economies
- **Foster** effective business practices and good governance
- **Improve** and build strong relationships and partnerships, internally and externally

#### PRD Mission Statement

The Parks & Recreation Division's mission is to acquire, protect, and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan's unique resources, and to provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities.

### 1.2 Guiding References

The general management planning process is guided and shaped by several resources developed to provide recommendations for managing Michigan's parks and recreation system. In particular, these resources have helped shape the ten-year action goals established in this plan.

#### Michigan State Parks & Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel Report (2012)

The Blue Ribbon Panel's report to Governor Snyder identifies a number of recommendations for system-wide changes to programs, management, infrastructure type, and investment strategies that set up the visionary framework for the next 30-50 years of park and outdoor recreation management in Michigan. Recommendations in the report include:

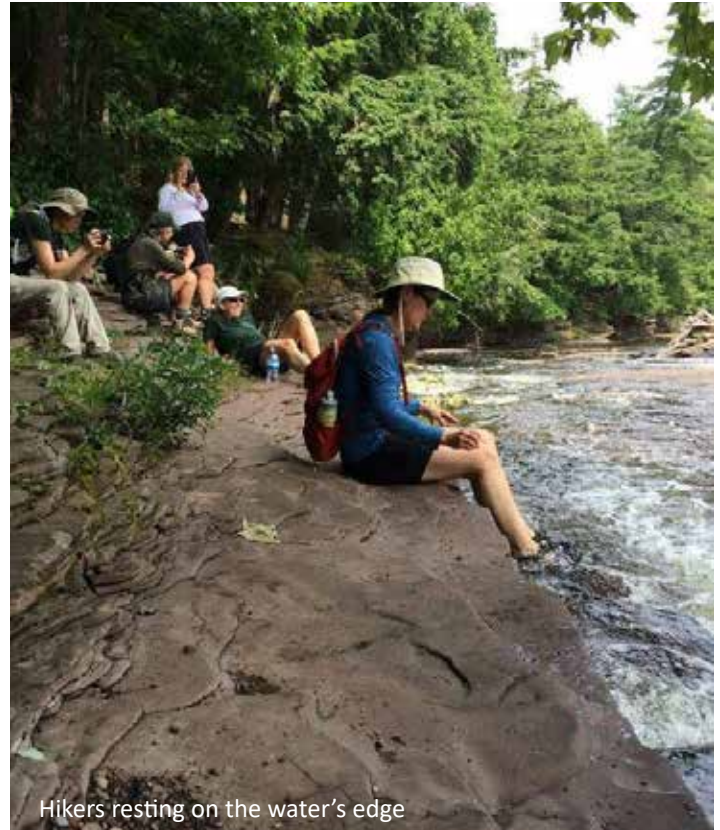
- Identify and protect important natural, cultural, historic, and prehistoric resources

- Diversify funding
- Prioritize development of statewide and regional systems of connected trail networks
- Encourage connections between communities and their recreational assets to strengthen regional identities
- Integrate tourism and economic development marketing
- Prioritize investment in parks and recreation

### Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2018-2022 (SCORP)

SCORP is a five-year strategic plan that shapes investment by the state and local communities in priority outdoor recreation infrastructure and programming. The plan's overarching goal is to "Protect and manage Michigan's diverse and abundant natural and cultural assets to provide relevant, quality experiences that meet the fun, relaxation, and health needs of Michigan's residents and visitors, and support economic prosperity" by meeting the following objectives:

- Foster stewardship and conservation
- Improve collaboration
- Raise awareness
- Improve recreational access
- Provide quality experiences
- Enhance health benefits
- Enhance prosperity

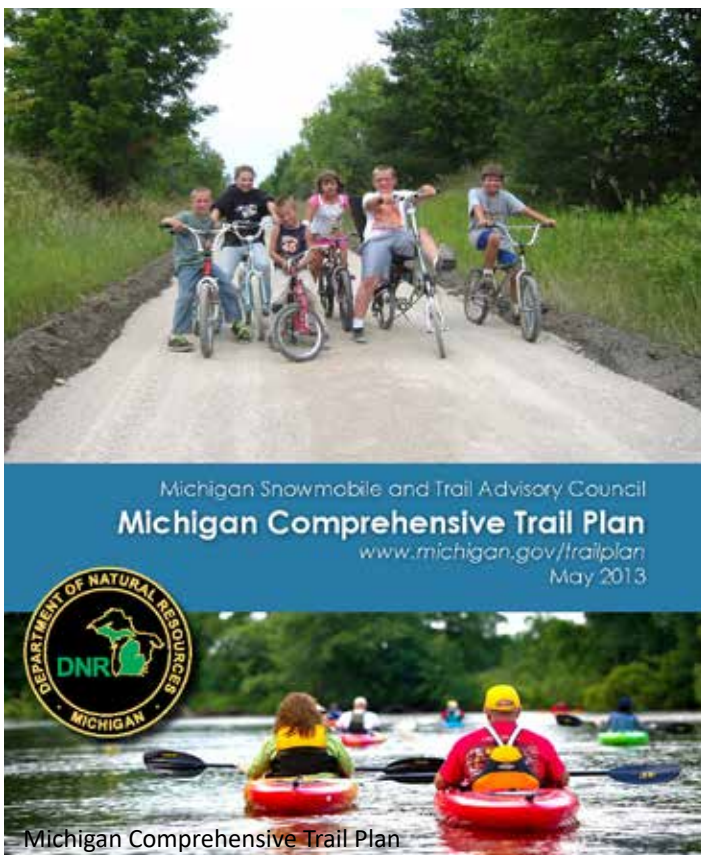


Hikers resting on the water's edge

### Michigan Comprehensive Trail Plan (2013 - 2018)

The Trail Plan, developed by an 11-member committee appointed by Governor Snyder, includes eight priority recommendations with associated key actions that should be implemented to assist in achieving the vision of establishing a high quality, nationally-recognized, state-wide trail system. The eight recommendations are as follows:

- Trails are maintained to ensure a sustainable and quality trail system
- Expand trails, trail experiences, opportunities to ensure accessibility to trail systems, outdoor recreation opportunities, and natural and cultural resources
- The Michigan Snowmobile and Trails Advisory Council leads the effort to maintain and enhance Michigan's reputation as the trail state
- Link trails, trail users and adjoining towns to create memorable trail experiences and enhance economic prosperity
- Develop, enhance and celebrate partnerships and collaborations
- Implement a marketing plan including an electronic portal that allows citizens and visitors to be aware of all trails and related amenities
- Develop funding sources and mechanisms for trail maintenance, acquisition and development
- Ensure that the state's trail system compliments other plans and planning efforts



### Managed Public Land Strategy (2013)

The DNR-Managed Public Land Strategy provides a framework for the continued conservation, use, and management of public lands to provide an enhanced quality of life for Michigan residents, create jobs, and protect the essence of Michigan: its woods, waters, wildlife, and other natural and cultural assets. The Strategy identifies three broad goals with desired outcomes, metrics, and measurable objectives for each. These goals are to:

- Provide quality outdoor public recreation opportunities
- Foster regional economic prosperity
- Protect natural and cultural resources for future generations

### PRD Strategic Plan (2017-2022)

The PRD Strategic Plan is the overarching document that guides the Parks & Recreation Division in carrying out its mission. This plan establishes long-range goals, objectives, and strategies for Michigan's state parks and recreation system for the five-year period beginning in 2017. It identifies the most important issues facing the PRD and helps to define where resources should be focused for maximum benefit. The goals identified in the plan are:

- Be exemplary stewards of Michigan's natural and cultural resources
- Provide users with quality outdoor recreation experiences in balance with resource protection
- Continue to advance Michigan as the "Trail State"
- Provide a relevant gateway to connect people to nature and Michigan's cultural heritage, and foster understanding and support for PRD's mission among future generations
- Improve and maintain strong public, stakeholder and department communication, relationships and partnerships
- Engage in strategies to increase community and state economic prosperity
- Sustainably support PRD programs, operations, and facilities
- Foster and adopt effective and safe business practices



Lady's Slipper



Kaug Wudjoo Modern Lodge

## 1.3 Summary of Legal Mandates

For all park general management plans, legal mandates are identified that serve to further guide the development of the plan, park management, and park operations. For the DNR's planning purposes, the term "legal mandates" refers to not only state law, but also the administrative tools of "Policy" and "Directive" of the Natural Resource Commission, the Department, and the Parks & Recreation Division. The general and site-specific legal mandates applicable to Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park are listed in Appendix A: Supporting Analysis.

The legal mandates that most directly impact planning and management at Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park focus on the following areas:

- Wilderness and Natural Area designation and management
- Federal and state protected species, including the northern long-eared bat and peregrine falcon
- Preservation of natural and cultural resources
- Establishment of a National Scenic Trail and National Natural Landmark
- Water resources, wetlands, Great Lakes submerged bottomlands, and inland streams protection
- Hunting area and shooting range control
- Requirement for a Recreation Passport for entry into the park
- Public health code requirements for campgrounds, swimming areas, and swimmers' itch



Boardwalk to Summit Peak Observation Tower



A rich conifer swamp near Carp River East  
Joshua Cohen, MNFI



Volcanic bedrock lakeshore  
Joshua Cohen, MNFI



Clay bluffs  
Joshua Cohen, MNFI



Hikers on the Big Carp River Trail

## Chapter Two:

# Plan Process Overview

### 2.1 Planning Objectives

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has developed master plans in the past for many of Michigan's state parks; however, most of these plans are now 20-40 years old and do not reflect today's realities or desires of recreational users. Furthermore, past plans put a strong emphasis on development and did not often include stewardship of natural and cultural features or opportunities for education and interpretation.

The state began acquiring land in the Porcupine Mountains in 1944 for its scenic value, public recreation opportunities, and to preserve part of the last remaining large stand of virgin hardwood-hemlock forest in Michigan. Soon after, a trail system, rustic cabins, ski runs and trails, a service area, and a campground were constructed. The majority of the park was dedicated as a Nature Reservation by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) in 1954 amid concerns for preserving natural areas. In 1972, a comprehensive study delineating management policies and zoning plans for the Porcupine Mountains State Park was developed by the Parks Division. One of the recommendations of this plan was to change the official name of the park to Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. A master plan for the park was adopted by the Natural Resources Commission in 1973 (revised in 1974) with the stated goal of providing "the highest quality wilderness recreation experience."

Although many of the principles and policies laid out in this original master plan remain unchanged, there is a need for a new guiding document in line with current state park practices to guide the park for the next 10-20 years. Changes since adoption of the 1973 master plan include the designation of the majority of the park as a Wilderness Area and two Natural Areas in 1976, development of a visitor center, and renovation of the former park manager's residence as a modern lodge. The park has been impacted by major weather events, both historically and recently, such as wind storms causing thousands of downed trees and significant erosion from heavy rain storms. The park has also seen increasing park user numbers in recent years, putting a strain on park resources. This new general management plan supersedes the 1973 master plan.

General management planning sets out a framework for protecting park resources while providing for meaningful visitor experiences. The long-range vision and management objectives for Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park (PMWSP) are derived from the missions of the DNR and the Parks & Recreation Division (PRD), applicable legal directives, the purpose of the park, and the park's significant natural and cultural resources.

The objective of the GMP is to bring together PRD staff, staff from other resource divisions, stakeholders, and the public into a planning process that defines and clarifies the unique purpose and significance of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park.

Collectively, those attributes will be reinforced in the planning and management decisions that impact the park through the implementation of the 20-year management zone plan used to guide park planning decisions and 10-year action goals that establish specific action strategies for the park as a whole and within each of the management zones. Each GMP is reviewed every five years to ensure there have been no major changes that would warrant a revision to the approved plan.

### 2.2 Planning Process

The planning team met periodically over an 11-month period to develop the general management plan, beginning in October 2018 and ending in November 2019. Throughout the process, the team sought the input of the public and stakeholders to guide the decisions made in the plan. A stakeholder workshop was held in April 2019 to gather insight from organizations tied to the park. In addition, an online public input survey was available for interested parties to comment on their current use of the park and their priorities for the future. Following the input sessions and survey, the team developed a list of action plan priorities and the draft plan.



Snowshoeing

### 2.3 Planning Team

This plan was developed with the direct assistance, input, and expertise provided by all members of the planning team.

PLANNING TEAM		
DIVISION	TITLE	NAME
PRD	Management Plan Administrator	Debbie Jensen
PRD	Lands Liaison	Matt Lincoln
PRD	Unit Manager (Acting)	Michael Knack
PRD	District Supervisor	Doug Rich
PRD	Regional Planner	Eric Cadeau
PRD	Stewardship Unit Manager	Ray Fahlsing
PRD	Stewardship Ecologist	Glenn Palmgren
PRD	Western UP Trails Specialist	Jeff Kakuk
FD (Fisheries)	Fisheries Biologist	George Madison
FRD (Forestry)	Unit Manager	Brad Carlson
LED (Law)	Conservation Officer	Marc Pomroy
MOD (Marketing)	Park Interpreter	Bob Wild
OMM (Minerals)	Geologist	Peter Rose
WLD (Wildlife)	Wildlife Biologist	John DePue
History Center	Historian	Barry James
MSHDA	Archaeologist (Retired)	Dean Anderson
MSHDA	Archaeologist	Stacy Tchorzynski
PRD	Cultural Resources Analyst	Lisa Gamero



Trap Falls

## 2.4 Summary of Input Opportunities

Public input is a critical part of the planning for Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. Below is a summary of the public and stakeholder input methods that were used to inform the development of the general management plan. Several different methods were used to ensure everyone had an opportunity for input. Full reports for each of the outreach methods are included in Appendix B of this plan.

### Project Website

A public-facing website was maintained throughout the duration of the general management plan process. This website was updated with general information about the park and park maps, results of the public input survey, and the draft of the general management plan. The website contained a contact form so that the public could contact the planning team at any time with questions, concerns, and input.

### Stakeholder Input Workshop

To gather targeted input from governmental, non-profit, and business/tourism entities, the planning team invited a group of stakeholders to participate in a facilitated input workshop held in April of 2019. The stakeholders were initially given a brief overview of the park and the general management planning process. Next, the stakeholders were divided into small-table discussion groups, which completed a series of exercises describing the park, opportunities for partnerships, the park's potential benefit to the larger community, and the stakeholders' vision for the park's future. Each table then reported out to the larger group.

### Online Public Input Survey

One of the methods the planning team used to gather input from park users was an online survey. This online approach provides a convenient way for those who have access to the internet to provide feedback. However, it is not designed to be representative of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park users or uses, as respondents self-select and are not sampled on a random or systematic basis that would ensure a statistically accurate representation of users or uses. Nevertheless, the online survey does provide valuable information about what certain individuals or groups (those who are motivated to comment about the park, those likely to receive DNR communication about the survey, and those who have easy access to the internet) hope to see in the park's future management. This survey was advertised through a press release, sent to those who registered for camping in the last year, shared with park stakeholders, and was also shared on social media.

Eight-hundred fifty (850) individuals responded to the survey. Of those, 804 (95%) have visited Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park in the last ten years. Those who had not recently visited the park were screened out from the remainder of the survey. The survey included questions on what activities the visitors participate in during their visit, their thoughts on the day-use and overnight park amenities, the visitor center, park concessions, special events and programs, fishing and hunting at the park, and their overall satisfaction with their experience.

### Tribal Communication

The department's liaison reached out to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Bay Mills Indian Community, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, and Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians with a letter notifying them of the general management plan process and timeline and asking for any input.

### Public Input Meeting

The public was invited to share their thoughts about the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park Draft General Management Plan at a public meeting that was hosted by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on August 14th, 2019, from 6:00- 8:00 p.m. at the Ontonagon High School in Ontonagon, Michigan. The general public was notified about the meeting through a press release, internet postings, and email notifications. A total of 31 attendees were recorded on sign-in sheets. A full report of the input received can be found in Appendix B.

In response to the input received at the public meeting, the planning team made the following changes to the general management plan:

- Added an action goal to explore modifying or reconfiguring the Wilderness Visitor Center to accommodate changing trends and patterns in its use
- Edited a goal to install a reflective marker at the boat launch to include the possibility of a dark-sky-compliant light
- Added a goal to construct a new pedestrian bridge over the Little Iron River

## 2.5 Resilience Planning

According to *Planning for Community Resilience in Michigan: A Comprehensive Handbook* ([www.resilientmichigan.org](http://www.resilientmichigan.org)), “Resilience has become an umbrella term for the planning and design strategies needed to help communities meet the economic, social, environmental and climate challenges of the future. Community resilience is a measure of the sustained ability of a community to utilize available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations.” A resiliency plan involves assessing vulnerabilities, weighing the relative risks of various hazards, planning for plausible future scenarios, and tracking the progress toward resilience through measurable goals. The Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region has prepared hazard mitigation plans for both Ontonagon and Gogebic counties. Similar to resilience plans, these identify potential hazards, assess vulnerabilities, and develop mitigation strategies for the hazards present ([www.wuppd.com](http://www.wuppd.com)).

Resilience planning is critical for communities and facilities, such as the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park, that encounter risks due to rising lake levels, increased storm intensity and frequency, wildfire, extreme temperatures, flooding, erosion, and other hazards. The park has experienced several destructive events including:

- 1953: a wind storm destroyed over 5,000 acres of old-growth forest
- 1983: a torrential thunderstorm resulted in heavy flooding, leading to the loss of bridges, denudation

and erosion of hillsides, washout of a section of South Boundary Road and other damage

- 2016: heavy storms led to similar damage as 1983, including heavy beach erosion

The park has taken some actions to mitigate hazards such as relocating a cabin away from a riverbank that had experienced heavy erosion and armoring of Co. Rd. 107 to address lakeshore erosion. During the planning process, the planning team discussed previous damaging events as well as future concerns. These discussions led to specific management zoning decisions and action goals such as:

- Providing for the stabilization or relocation of County Road 107, in recognition of the continuing erosion along the Lake Superior shoreline
- Replacing shoreline yurts with lodging able to withstand shoreline conditions
- Assess and address erosion at Presque Isle high bank along campground and adjacent to Speaker’s Cabin
- Continue to work with partners and increase the number of permanent skilled staff for ongoing maintenance
- Exploring summer recreation opportunities for the ski area to increase economic resilience of the surrounding communities

Increasing resilience and mitigating hazards will continue to be an important goal for the park management staff. Though this plan addresses some of the issues present, a full hazard mitigation plan or resilience plan for the park would be a useful tool for the future.



Erosion near the Presque Isle campground



Manabezho Falls on the Presque Isle River

## Chapter Three:

# Purpose and Significance

### 3.1 Park Purpose

Park purpose statements are based on park legislation, legislative history, special designations and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) policies. These statements reaffirm the reasons for which Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park was included as part of the state park system.

The overarching purpose of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park is to be used as a public park, “for the purposes of public recreation or the preservation of natural beauty or historic association” in accordance with Act 218, Public Acts of 1919, that created the Michigan State Park Commission. PA 451 of 1994, the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA), states that the Department of Natural Resources shall “create, maintain, operate, promote, and make available for public use and enjoyment a system of state parks to preserve and protect Michigan’s significant natural resources and areas of natural beauty or historic significance, to provide open space for public recreation, and to provide an opportunity to understand Michigan’s natural resources and the need to protect and manage those resources”.

Specific to the Porcupine Mountains (Wilderness) State Park, Act 27, Public Act 1944, in extra session, appropriated \$1,000,000 to purchase land in the Porcupine Mountains area for:

- scenic values
- public recreation
- preservation of part of the last remaining large stand of virgin hardwood-hemlock forest in Michigan

In addition, the dedicated Wilderness Area at Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park recognizes an area that, in accordance with NREPA Part 351, Wilderness and Natural Habitats:

- generally appears to have been affected primarily by forces of nature with the imprint of the work of humans substantially unnoticeable.
- has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.
- contains ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, scenic, or natural history value.

### 3.2 Statements of Significance

Each general management plan (GMP) developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) is derived from the park's significant features that make it distinct from other parks in the state's system. Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park was determined significant due to the following:

#### Renowned Destination

Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park is a major tourist destination, drawing visitors from across the globe. Visitors are attracted by the park's wilderness character and its rugged beauty, including the Lake Superior shoreline, brilliant fall color displays, and acclaimed scenic landmarks such as Lake of the Clouds, the Presque Isle River, Union Bay, and Summit Peak. One of only six in the state park system, the park's Wilderness Visitor Center welcomes and orients park guests while a full-time interpreter provides programing and interpretation to help visitors appreciate all that the park has to offer.

#### Wilderness Designations and Landmarks

Efforts to preserve the wild and panoramic beauty of the Porcupine Mountains began in the 1920s and resulted in the acquisition of the land for its dramatic scenic value, recreation offerings, and preservation of the last remaining large stand of virgin hardwood-hemlock forest in Michigan. However, the drive for preservation of this land has frequently been at odds with the desire for development. The majority of the park is protected under special Wilderness and Natural Area designations—the only dedicated Wilderness Area in the Michigan state park system. A large swath of the park is also recognized by the National Park Service as a National Natural Landmark in recognition of its outstanding biological and geological resources.



Hunting at the park



A boardwalk on Beaver Creek Trail

#### Wilderness Recreation

The untamed character of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park presents a high level of challenge and adventure rare in the Michigan state park system. Visitors can test their wilderness skills in this park that is geographically remote, presenting extremes of weather and terrain. National publications, such as Backpacker Magazine, have recognized this park's appeal, endorsing it as one of the best first-time backpacking experiences. Hunters have traditionally enjoyed the wilderness hunting and trapping experience, seeking white-tailed deer and black bear. A testament to the park's remoteness is its multi-agency search and rescue team at the ready for emergencies that arise dozens of times per year.

#### History of Resource Abundance

The story of the Porcupine Mountains is not only of untouched wilderness, but also of a resource-rich land that has long attracted both settlers and prospectors. Over the centuries, the land has seen Native American settlements and surface mines, European fur trappers, underground copper mining operations, logging crews, hunters, and wilderness seekers. Physical reminders of past land use can be seen throughout the park and include mining sites, townsites, homestead sites, and historic cabins. Today, the remaining structures and trail system are protected historic and cultural resources for future generations to enjoy.

#### Extensive Backcountry Trails

Excellent wilderness hiking experiences abound, with such significant trail mileage (over 90 miles) that visitors can hike for days in a backcountry setting. Accommodation for overnight hikers consists of rustic trailside cabins—a nationally rare find within a Wilderness Area—and numerous backcountry campsites. The North Country National Scenic Trail and the hiking route of the state's Iron Belle Trail traverse the park, while backcountry skiing and snowshoeing provide for year-round adventure.



The Boardwalk at Lily Pond Cabin

## Biodiversity

The park's unique combination of geography, geology, water resources and climate, supports 66 exemplary occurrences of 20 different natural communities and their constituent diversity of plant and animal species. This is amazing biodiversity at the ecosystem level. An immense exemplary Mesic Northern Forest occurrence of over 30,000 acres covers the majority of the dedicated Wilderness Area. This is the iconic Porcupine Mountains Wilderness of forest primeval: the greatest expanse of old growth northern hardwood forest in North America west of the Adirondack Mountains. The park hosts black bear, northern long-eared bat, little brown bat, tri-colored bat, marten, goshawk, fisher, bald eagle, fairy bells, climbing fumitory, male fern, small blue-eyed Mary, Douglas's hawthorn and many other rare or rarely seen plant and animal species. Prior to the decimation of bat populations by White Nose Syndrome, the park's abandoned mines provided winter hibernacula for many thousands of bats.

## Expansive Public Land

Often referred to as the "crown jewel" of the state park system, the sheer size of the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park is breathtaking. This park is the largest state park in Michigan at over 59,000 acres (around 92 square miles), an impressive and vast expanse when considering only four other Michigan state parks exceed 10,000 acres. Combined with the adjacent Ottawa National Forest, visitors have over 1,000,000 contiguous acres of public land to enjoy. With over 21 miles of Lake Superior shoreline within the park, PMWSP features the second longest Great Lakes coastline in the Michigan state park system, the majority of which is only accessible on foot or by boat. The park is rare in offering cold water sport fisheries both off the coast of Lake Superior and in the park's rivers and inland lakes.

## Winter Recreation

Located in the Lake Superior "snowbelt," where annual average snowfall exceeds twenty-five feet, the Porcupine Mountains is a destination for winter recreation and camping. Here you can find the only downhill ski slopes in the Michigan state park system and one of only two ski hills in the state that utilizes only natural snow. An extensive non-motorized multi-use trail system is maintained throughout the winter months. For snowmobilers, the iconic Lake of the Clouds scenic overlook can be reached by following County Road 107, which is unplowed in winter.

## The Friends of the Porkies

A passionate, long-standing, and active community group, the Friends of the Porkies, provides support and year-round programing, enhancing the visitor experience and inspiring appreciation of the park resources. The Artist-in-Residence program offers artists the opportunity to experience the wilderness while expressing their creativity, and the Porcupine Mountains Folk School offers classes and workshops focused on the park's natural environment and cultural heritage. The annual Porcupine Mountains Music Festival attracts many visitors for a weekend of music at the foothills of the Porkies.

## Scenic Landscape Features

The striking geologic and topographical features found within the park are integral to the visitor experience. The bedrock geologic formations are over one billion years old and are highly visible. Volcanic, tectonic, and glacial activity have worked to produce some of the highest points in the state, and the significant change in elevation within the park affords opportunities for dramatic panoramic views. Union Spring, the second largest terrestrial spring in the state, can be found here, as well as nearly 100 waterfalls, twelve of which are named as scenic destinations.

### 3.3 Public Affirmation of Significance

Stakeholder and public input assisted the planning team with affirming the significant features and opportunities at Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. The feedback from the online survey confirmed that the wilderness character, awe-inspiring scenic destinations, extensive and challenging trails, backcountry recreation, and many camping and lodging opportunities are key aspects of the park. Comments from survey respondents relating to those significant features are provided below.

*"I like the solitude, peace and tranquility of the park. It is the best backpacking we have in the Midwest. The scenery is gorgeous with the rivers, falls, and Lake Superior."*

*"Connecting amazement and joy at the trail and wilderness experience to the knowledge that it is all protected and will be preserved for generations to come."*

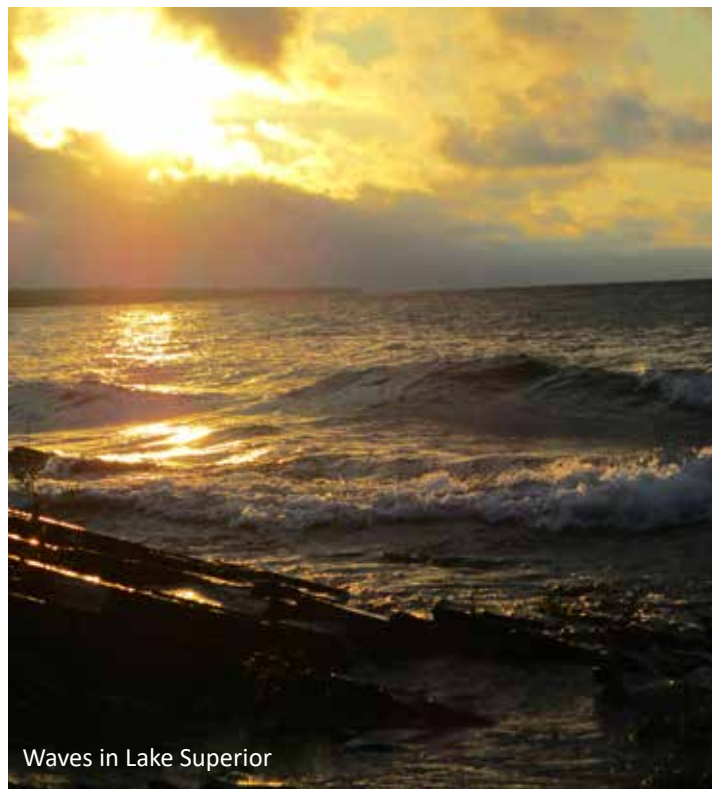
*"I love getting out in nature and leaving "civilization" behind for a few days. It's beautiful there and I've never been disappointed."*



A young camper in the woods



A child enjoys a telescope at the Lake of the Clouds overlook



Waves in Lake Superior

## PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE

*"The helpful park staff and the ability to introduce my child to backpacking with great historical trails, well-marked trails, maps, scenic views, and leveled experiences. I also appreciated the designated 'backcountry' sites that minimized human impact while providing a wilderness feeling."*

*"The escarpment trail was amazing and the outpost campsites are so crucial to our positive experience in the park, we loved the access to the Union River and the access to waterfalls."*

*"Porcupine Mountains is one of the few places left in the Midwest where you can truly find some solitude, peace, and quiet away from civilization."*

*"For 25 years, the Porkies backcountry experience has meant a great deal to me and my friends. The time I've spent in that wilderness and the experiences I've had have been life changing. I can only hope that the wilderness experience will be continue to be protected."*

*"Had a really nice three-day backpacking trip-- loved the remote feel of park, long hikes and rustic camping."*

*"I'm a retired Michigan DNR Forester. I recognize how unique and ecologically significant the 35,000 acres of old-growth hardwood/hemlock resource are. While I always enjoy the view of the Lake of the Clouds from the Escarpment, and the waterfall/cascades along the Presque Isle River, it's the old-growth timber that keeps me coming back. Such a precious resource, and such a marvelous place to lose yourself in. As long as I can walk, I'll be exploring the trails in the old-growth."*

*"We love the untouched natural beauty of the park. Virgin forests, rock outcroppings, rivers, waterfalls and wildlife".*

*"The best part about the park is preservation of the wilderness and old growth forest. I love getting lost on the trails among these untouched trees, because it makes it easy to imagine what it was like hundreds of years ago."*



A panoramic sunset

### 3.4 Community Connection

The Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park annually draws over 300,000 visitors from throughout Michigan and beyond to witness its breathtaking beauty and participate in four-season backcountry recreation. These numbers are in stark contrast to the low population density in Ontonagon County, which is the second least populated county in the state with an estimated population of 5,881 (U.S. Census Bureau). This influx of visitors has an important positive economic impact on the community, although this is limited to some degree by the relatively few stores, restaurants and services offered in the immediate vicinity of the park.

While use is highest in the summer months, the park is a year-round destination featuring snow sports in the winter, spring fishing and waterfall viewing when the rivers are in peak flow, summer camping, sightseeing and backpacking, and fall colors. The park provides overnight accommodation opportunities for the visitors at its campgrounds, cabins, and backcountry sites. Private lodging opportunities in the area also provide accommodation options for park visitors who may prefer more modern amenities, although some are only available seasonally. For those travelling a long distance to the park, this is often one of many stops across the Upper Peninsula, with visitors to the Porcupine Mountains also citing visits to the Keweenaw Peninsula, Pictured Rocks, other area waterfalls and Copper Peak, adding to the value of recreation and tourism across the western Upper Peninsula.

As a designated Wilderness Area, the park preserves one of the last remaining stands of virgin hardwood-hemlock forest in Michigan. This formal designation prohibits certain activities within the park, preserving this rugged landscape and its historic features for future generations of explorers. It was local community members, such as Raymond Dick, who organized the “Save the Porcupine Mountains Association”






Porcupine Mountains Music Festival

to advocate for protection of the property from commercial mining and logging and to preserve it as a park. Two cabins that once belonged to Raymond Dick have now been incorporated into park facilities/accommodations. This kind of passion and personal connection to the park is still evident today by the number of people that return year after year for generations of family experiences.

Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park has strong relationships with various community organizations. The park is supported by a dedicated non-profit group, Friends of the Porkies, which provides support and year-round programing, enhancing the visitor experience and inspiring appreciation of the park resources. The annual Porcupine Mountains Music Festival, hosted by the friends group, draws an estimated 1,600 visitors per year. The friends group also administers an Artist in Residence program and offers classes and workshops in the park. In addition, the Porkies Ski Area is run by Gogebic Community College, giving students from the school’s ski area management department real-world experience in handling the operations of the facility.



Ski Area

MANAGEMENT ZONE PROGRESSION			
MANAGEMENT ZONE	RESOURCE CONDITION	VISITOR EXPERIENCE	DEVELOPMENT LEVEL
ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE	Pristine	Restricted	None
PRIMITIVE			
BACKCOUNTRY			
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE			
HISTORY EDUCATION			
SCENIC			
NATURAL RESOURCE RECREATION	Active Management	Significant Use	Extensive Development
DEVELOPED RECREATION			
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES			

## Chapter Four: Management Zones

The 20-year management zone plan was developed in keeping with the park's purpose and significance. The primary goal in the development of the management zones is to protect and enhance the park's natural and cultural resources while also supporting outdoor recreation and education opportunities at the park. From a palette of nine management zones, the planning team studied the park and applied zones that best fit each area of the park. Management zones describe a variety of activities that may be appropriate within the zone and address the desired future condition for the following categories:

- Natural resources
- Historic/cultural resources
- Recreation opportunities
- Education/interpretation opportunities
- Visitor experience
- Management focus

The resource condition, visitor experience, and development level vary in each of the nine standard zones, as indicated in the figure above. Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park (PMWSP) was divided into the following five zones and two overlays:

- Primitive zone
- Backcountry zone
- Natural resource recreation zone
- Developed recreation zone
- Administrative services zone
- Cultural landscape overlay
- Scenic overlay

### Project Boundary

A project boundary is a geographic area in which the DNR is seeking to acquire property that supports the mission of the DNR. Property is acquired on a willing buyer/willing seller basis. The 2004 Project Boundary for PMWSP, approved by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC), proposed land additions along the southern park boundary and along the Presque Isle River. During the general management planning process, the planning team reviewed the 2004 project boundary for the park, considering the natural resource, cultural resource, economic value and/or public outdoor recreational value to complement the existing park land. The proposed project boundary typically includes parcels that the DNR seeks to acquire in order to consolidate ownership and provide clear boundary delineation and ease of access and management (such as provided by road corridors).



## PORCUPINE MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

### Proposed Project Boundary

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Open Data Portal, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Esri Basemap, USDA Forest Service

- Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park Current Boundary
- NRC 2004 Approved Project Boundary\*
- GMP Proposed Project Boundary\*
- Recommended to be added to the NRC 2004 Approved Project Boundary
- Recommended to be removed from the NRC 2004 Approved Project Boundary

- Ottawa National Forest
- County Boundary
- Municipality Boundary

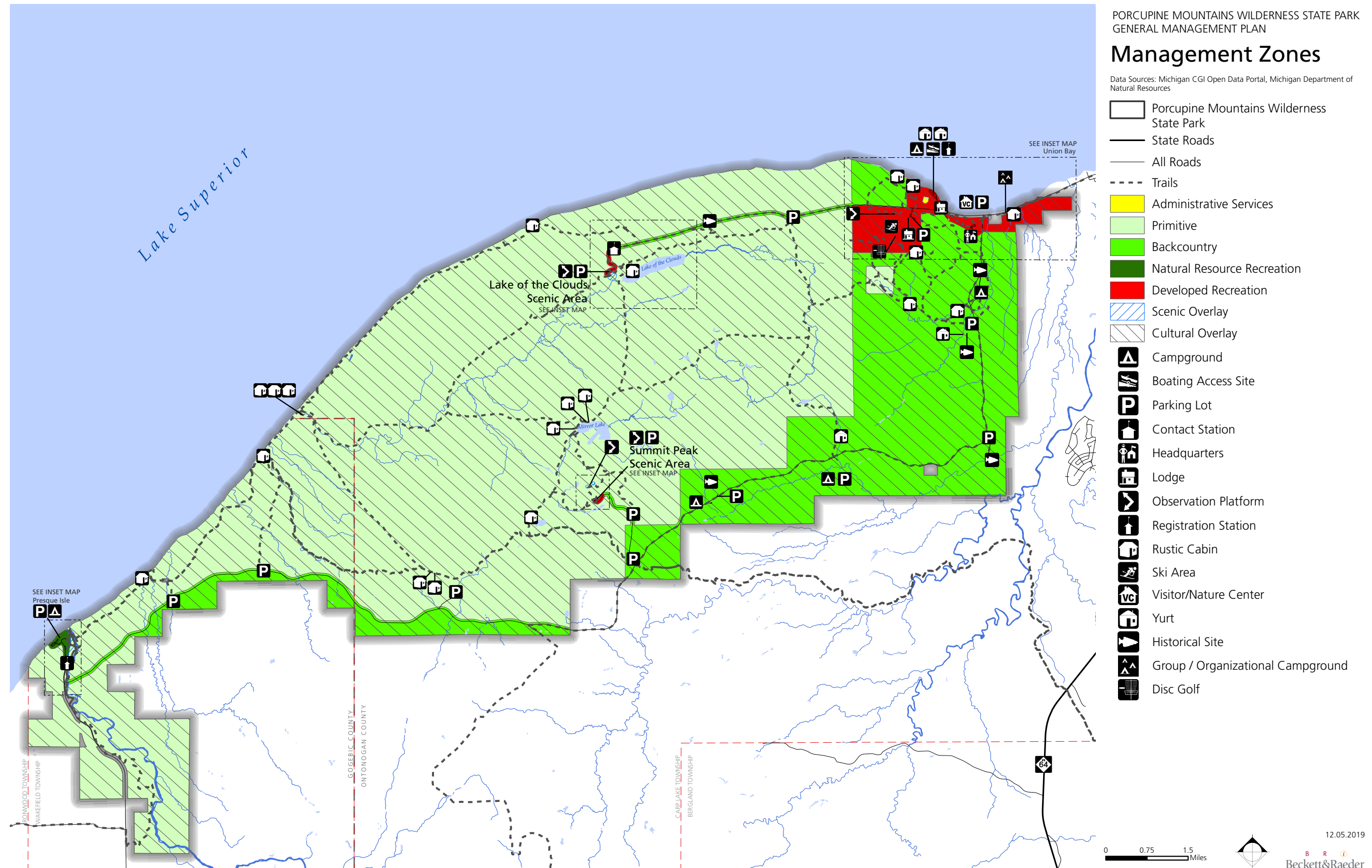
\*A project boundary is a geographic area in which the DNR is seeking to acquire property that supports the mission of the DNR on a willing buyer / willing seller basis.

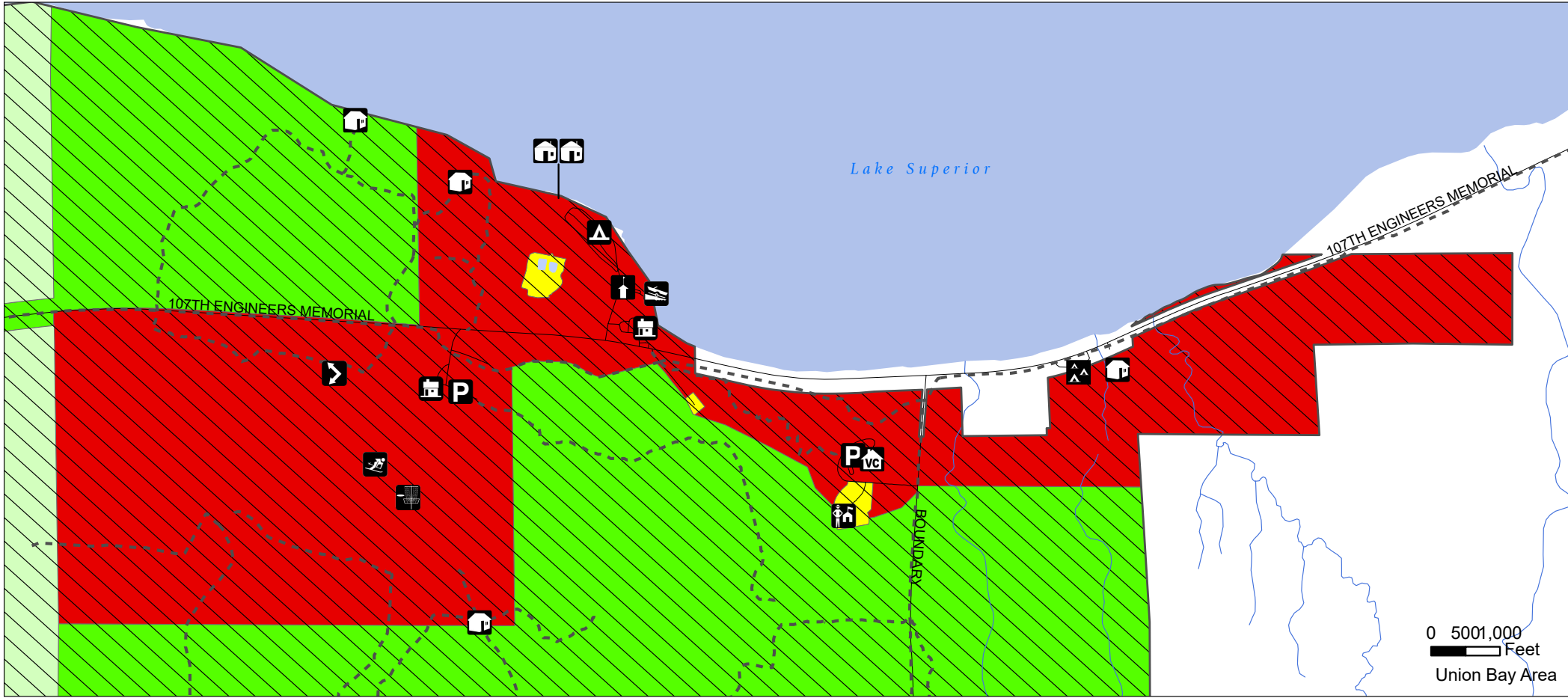


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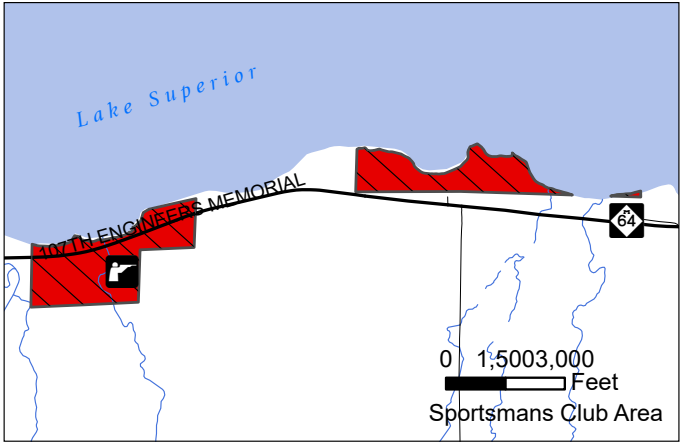
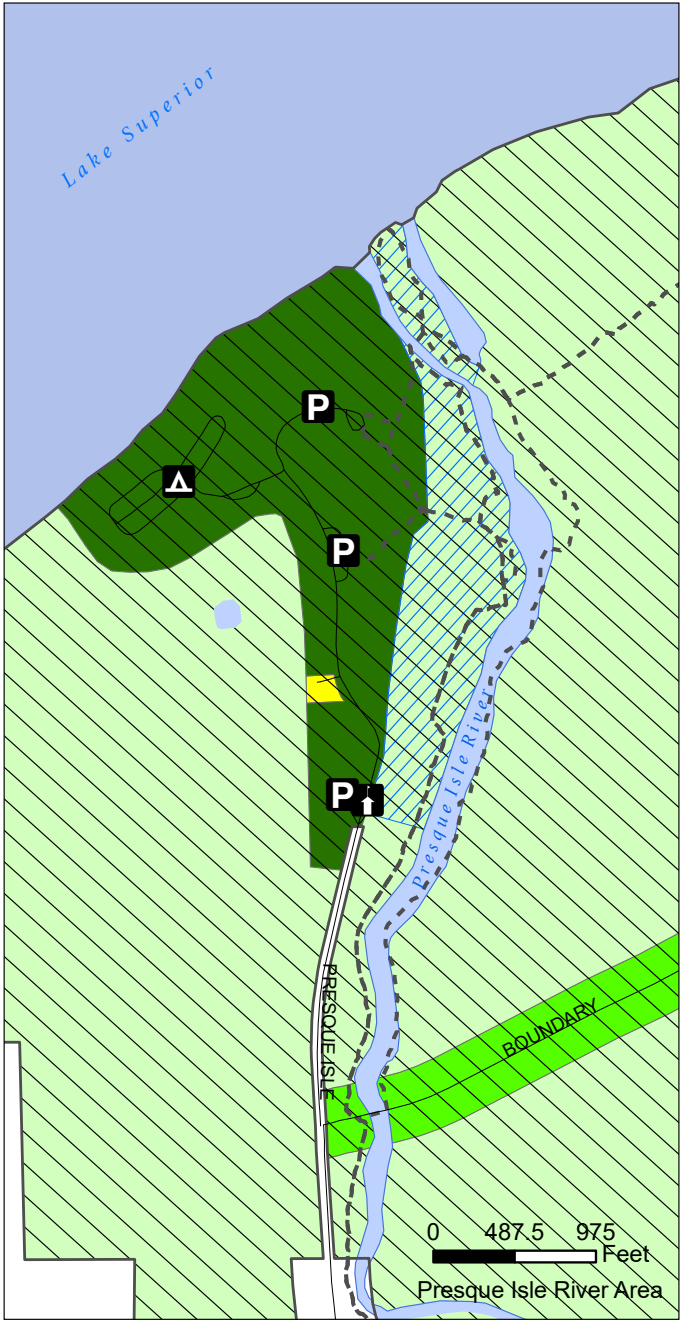
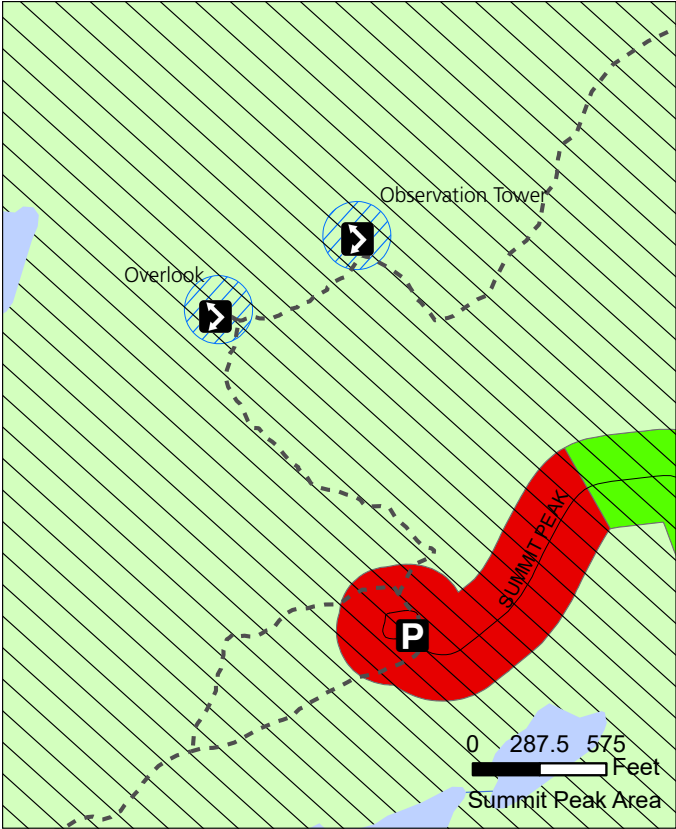
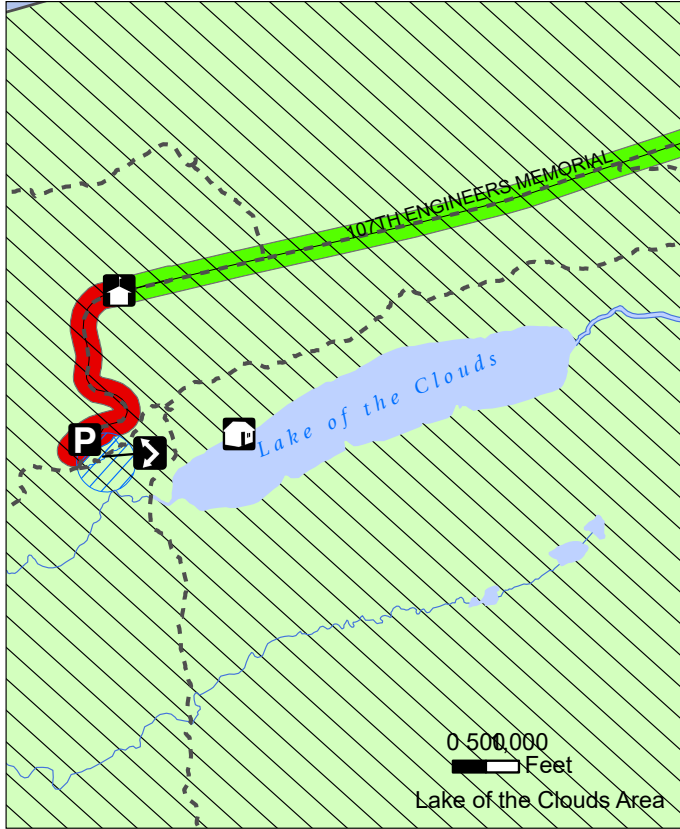
PORCUPINE MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS STATE PARK  
GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN  
**Management Zone Insets**

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Open Data Portal, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

- Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park
- State Roads
- All Roads
- Trails
- Administrative Services
- Primitive
- Backcountry
- Natural Resource Recreation
- Developed Recreation
- Scenic Overlay
- Cultural Overlay

Amenities:

- Campground
- Boating Access Site
- Parking Lot
- Contact Station
- Headquarters
- Lodge
- Observation Platform
- Registration Station
- Rustic Cabin
- Ski Area
- Visitor/Nature Center
- Yurt
- Historical Site
- Shooting Range
- Disc Golf
- Group / Organizational Campground



At the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park, the planning team recommended removing lands from the project boundary that were not considered to support the land strategy goals. These include sections 26, 27, 28, and a portion of Section 24 in Township 50 North, Range 44 West, as well as portions of sections 22, 23, 24, 28, and 33 in Township 50 North, Range 45 West. However, the proposed boundary still includes some private parcels desired to form a buffer along South Boundary Road to preserve the wilderness aesthetic. Near the upstream end of the Presque Isle River, the project boundary is recommended to follow the river corridor as closely as possible, following quarter-section lines to preserve the natural resources and to provide access for scenic viewing and fishing. This change simplifies the project boundary and is a net add of land to the project boundary in this location. The proposed project boundary also recommends a land exchange with the U.S. Forest Service to consolidate ownership along South Boundary Road and land additions near the Sportsman's Club, east of Silver City, to consolidate ownership and enable legal access to state land along the Lake Superior shoreline. In total, the proposed project boundary would add 2,725 acres to PMWSP. As a comparison, the 2004 NRC Approved Project boundary would have added 6,080 acres to the park if the proposed boundary were realized.

## 4.1 Primitive Zone

The primitive zone reflects a desired condition that emphasizes the natural resources and is managed to only allow dispersed and low-frequency use in the zone for low-impact recreational purposes. Attaining and maintaining a high-quality natural resource condition dictates the extent to which recreational improvements or uses are allowed. This zone covers 44,329 acres (73.8% of the park) and includes the areas within the park that are designated as a Wilderness Area, Natural Area or Natural National Landmark. The primitive zone encompasses the majority of the Lake Superior shoreline and the interior of the park, featuring virgin forest, lakes, streams, geological features, much of the park's hiking trail system and many of the backcountry cabins. Existing cabins and shelters were included within the Wilderness Area as non-conforming uses. The Lake of The Clouds scenic overlook, Summit Peak scenic area, Union Springs Scenic Site, and the Presque Isle River Scenic Site are within the primitive zone. The primary scenic sites within this zone also have a scenic overlay. The legal description for the Wilderness and Natural Areas, and thus the primitive zone, excludes land lying 200 feet on either side of South Boundary Road, County Road 107, and Summit Peak Road (see Appendix C for legal descriptions).

## Natural Resources

Native species and natural processes take precedence over visitor accommodation in this zone. Native Michigan natural communities/ecosystem components and processes are maintained, restored, and protected, and human-caused habitat fragmentation is eliminated. This zone contains expansive old-growth northern forest. The Stewardship Plan will determine the appropriate habitat management for the park. In a Wilderness Area, "removing, cutting, picking, or otherwise altering vegetation is prohibited, except as necessary for appropriate public access, the preservation or restoration of a plant or wildlife species, or the documentation of scientific values and with written consent of the department".



Mirror Lake 2 Bunk Cabin



The illegal cutting of vegetation is a concern at some backcountry sites (park visitor photo, campsites ES-2)



Hiking examining a downed tree

### Historic/Cultural Resources

There are numerous recorded archaeological sites and resources within the park, and there is a high potential for new sites to be found, as no formal archaeological survey has been completed. Refer to the cultural landscape overlay description for general historic and cultural resource recommendations for the park. Within the primitive zone, the historic trail system and cabins (Mirror Lake 8 Bunk Cabin, Mirror Lake 4 Bunk Cabin, Little Carp Cabin, Big Carp 4 Bunk Cabin, Section 17 Cabin, Lake of the Clouds Cabin, Lily Pond Cabin, Lake Superior Cabin, Buckshot Cabin, Mirror Lake 2 Bunk Cabin, Greenstone Falls Cabin, and Big Carp 6 Bunk Cabin) and the Carp Lake / Meade Mine Historic Site can be found.

### Recreation Opportunities

This zone allows dispersed, low-density, off-trail or trailed, self-reliant (no bicycle, equestrian, or motorized equipment use) outdoor activities (e.g., camping on designated sites, hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hunting/trapping, fishing, swimming, paddling, nature observation). Within a Wilderness Area, the use of motorized equipment or mechanical transport is specifically prohibited for recreation purposes. This zone contains the majority of the park “interior” with its many backcountry campsites, cabins, and miles of backcountry trails.

### Education Opportunities

Education opportunities associated with this zone are primarily implemented off-site. Interpretive signage is allowed at trailheads and with low frequency on trails and at overlooks.

### Visitor Experience

The visitor can expect a relatively low frequency of encounters with other people. Visitors are engaged in high solitude, off-

trail or trailed outdoor activities. This zone requires a high time commitment and high levels of challenge and adventure. It is considered a “discovery” area with minimal on-site interpretation. The noise tolerance in this zone is low, and visitors can expect low interaction with DNR staff. The primary scenic sites within the park are also designated with the scenic overlay.

### Management Focus

The focus is to maintain the low-impact character of this zone, with an emphasis on natural resource quality. In a Wilderness Area, the use of motorized equipment is allowed only if the department approves its use for management purposes or conservation practices. Management will focus on maintaining the foot trails and designated backcountry campsites, while limiting the impact on the natural and cultural resources and wilderness character of the zone.

### Development

This zone maintains a very low level of development for visitor accommodation (e.g., foot trails). Site hardening is allowed only to protect sensitive resources (e.g., boardwalk). There should be little evidence of human activity in this zone. This zone is largely undeveloped and extensively wooded and contains primitive foot trails, backcountry cabins, backcountry campsites and their associated features. The primary scenic sites within the park, identified with a scenic overlay, generally have a higher level of development to allow for controlled access for the purposes of safe scenic viewing. While maintenance of the existing infrastructure is appropriate, further development will not be allowed except to protect the resource.

## 4.2 Backcountry Zone

The character of the backcountry zone is natural, with minimal evidence of human impact through recreational use. While the primitive zone is highly restrictive for recreational use and human impact, this zone allows for slightly increased use and may include modifications of the landscape, such as trail development, to accommodate that use. This zone is 14,122 acres (23.5% of the park) and includes the 400-foot-wide road corridors excluded from the Wilderness Area designation along County Road 107, South Boundary Road, and Summit Peak Road; lands to the south of South Boundary Road; and the majority of the undeveloped land east of the Wilderness Area. Prominent features in this zone include Nonesuch Falls; the Nonesuch Mine and Townsite; the Lost Creek, Union River, and White Pine Extension Outpost campgrounds; Gitche Gumee cabin and the group use campground.

### Natural Resources

Natural resources may be modified slightly to support visitor use, but tolerance for natural resource impacts is typically low. Native Michigan natural communities/ecosystem components and processes are maintained, restored, and protected, and human-caused habitat damage is repaired.



An Angler holding a Brook Trout

### Historic/Cultural Resources

Refer to the cultural landscape overlay description for general historic and cultural resource recommendations for the park. Within the backcountry zone, the Nonesuch Mine and Townsite, Union Mine Interpretive Trail/Site, and the Haliwell Mine Site can be found.

### Recreation Opportunities

Moderate levels of recreation (non-motorized) that are compatible with the natural character of the zone are allowed. Outdoor activities in diverse natural settings, such as hiking, backpacking, or bicycling on designated trails, paddling, visiting historic sites, nature observation, cross-country skiing, back-country camping, hunting/trapping, fishing, and snowshoeing, may be allowed in this zone. Snowmobiling is not permitted in the backcountry zone, except within the public road right-of-way legally open to such use.

### Education Opportunities

Education opportunities, such as interpretive signage at trailheads, on the trail, at scenic sites, and at overlooks, are allowed.

### Visitor Experience

Moderate visitor encounters are accommodated in this zone. Visitors will be engaged in non-motorized outdoor activities. Moderate challenge and adventure should be expected, with low noise tolerance and infrequent interaction with DNR staff.

### Management Focus

The management focus is to maintain the low-impact character of this zone, with an emphasis on natural resource quality.

### Development

This zone may contain a low level of development to support visitor access to outdoor activities such as trails, trailhead parking, designated backcountry campsites, pit toilets, and educational opportunities. Development shall be unobtrusive and blend with the natural environment. Site hardening, such as boardwalks, fencing, and pedestrian paths, may be necessary to protect sensitive resources. This zone currently contains existing backcountry cabins, Outpost campgrounds, and trails.

### 4.3 Natural Resource Recreation Zone

The natural resource recreation zone supports medium- to high-density active recreation conducted in natural settings. There is an emphasis on resource quality over recreation. The natural resource recreation zone makes up 79.6 acres (approximately 0.13% of the park) and includes the Presque Isle Campground area (the rustic campground, ranger station, parking areas, trails, and Lake Superior shoreline).

#### Natural Resources

In this zone, the natural resources may be managed or modified to support visitor activities with only moderate impacts, while being protected to the highest degree possible. This zone will reflect natural processes, with vegetative management to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and function. Vegetation may also be managed to facilitate recreational infrastructure.

#### Historic/Cultural Resources

Refer to the cultural landscape overlay description for general historic and cultural resource recommendations for the park.

#### Recreation Opportunities

Moderate to high levels of recreation compatible with the natural character of the zone are permitted. Visitors may be engaged in outdoor activities in diverse natural settings. Activities that may be allowed in this zone include hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, rustic camping, picnicking, nature observation, hunting/trapping, and fishing. This zone contains a rustic campground, a ranger station, parking lots, a picnic shelter, and trails to the Presque Isle Scenic Area.



Tent camping at the Presque Isle campground

#### Education Opportunities

Interpretive signage may be provided at trailheads, on the trails, and at overlooks.

#### Visitor Experience

Visitors can expect frequent encounters with other visitors and moderate interaction with DNR staff. Visitors may be engaged in outdoor activities in diverse land and water settings for recreation and education. This zone requires a variable time commitment as well as variable levels of challenge and adventure. There is a moderate noise tolerance in this zone.

#### Management Focus

The management focus is to maintain use of the zone appropriate to the PRD mission, to protect public safety, protect natural resources, and provide accessibility.

#### Development

A moderate level of development of facilities for support of visitor activities is acceptable including vault toilets, concrete/asphalt/gravel trails and small parking lots, trails, benches, picnic tables, and shelters for recreation and educational opportunities. Site hardening including boardwalks and surfaced pedestrian paths is allowed, as necessary, to protect sensitive resources and provide access. A moderate level of accessibility should be expected in this zone.



Picnic shelter near the Presque Isle Campground

#### 4.4 Developed Recreation Zone

This zone allows active recreation with high-density use conducted in areas not designated for natural resource significance. In this zone, recreation dominates with natural resource attributes enhanced as possible. The developed recreation zone is 1,530 acres (approximately 2.55% of the park land) and includes the Union Bay area (the modern campground, Kaug Wudjoo modern lodge, park store, boat launch on Lake Superior and the old park headquarters area); the Wilderness Visitor Center; the ski hill area; disc golf course; the Sportsman's Club area; and parking areas for Lake of the Clouds and Summit Peak Scenic overlooks. Some land surrounding these facilities is also included in this zone to allow for expansion or potential new development in this area of the park.

##### Natural Resources

Natural resources may be actively managed and modified to support visitor activities. Vegetative management in this zone will facilitate development and recreational use and maintain an aesthetically appealing landscape.

##### Historic/Cultural Resources

Refer to the cultural landscape overlay description for general historic and cultural resource recommendations for the park. Within the developed recreation zone, the service area in the Union Bay area is eligible for designation as a Historic District (see Appendix A, section A.9).

##### Recreation Opportunities

High levels of recreation in a highly structured environment are found in this zone. Visitors may be engaged in recreation in diverse and modified land and water settings such as hiking, modern and semi-modern camping, bicycling, motorized boating, paddling, fishing, nature observation, downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, swimming, picnicking, metal detecting in designated areas, participating in educational programs, attending races and events, and other day-use activities (e.g., disc golf). Snowmobiling may be permitted on designated routes only.

##### Education Opportunities

The Wilderness Visitor Center is included in this zone and is the primary on-site resource for educating visitors about the park, with interpretive exhibits, printed media and staff to provide information. Interpretive signage is encouraged at trailheads and at gathering areas such as the campground, ski lodge, registration station and day-use areas. Active programming may also be provided such as the programs hosted by the park interpreter and Friends of the Parkies.

##### Visitor Experience

Visitors should expect a high frequency of encounters with other visitors and DNR staff. Visitors may be engaged in indoor or outdoor activities in diverse land and water settings for recreation and education. Activities in this zone may require a variable time commitment, variable levels of challenge and adventure, and low to moderate exertion. This zone has a high noise tolerance.

##### Management Focus

The management focus in this zone is to maintain use of the zone appropriate to the PRD mission, protect the park's resources, maintain public safety, effectively manage visitors, and provide universal access.

##### Development

A high level of development of facilities to support visitor activities is permitted in this zone such as restrooms, walkways, boat launches, fishing piers, ski area facilities, parking, campground facilities, cabins, trails, playgrounds, benches, picnic tables, and shelters for recreation and educational opportunities. Site hardening is allowed as necessary to facilitate activities, protect natural resources, and provide accessibility.



Campers at Union Bay Campground

### 4.5 Administrative Services Zone

This zone encompasses the developed areas required for program administration and operations such as the park headquarters, maintenance area, sanitary infrastructure, and all related land required to conduct the business of running the state park. This zone is 16.4 acres, or approximately 0.03% of the park.

#### Natural Resources

Natural resources may be actively managed and modified to facilitate administrative support activities. Vegetative management, primarily consisting of tree removal for safety, is allowed.

#### Historic/Cultural Resources

Refer to the cultural landscape overlay for general historic and cultural resource recommendations for the park.

#### Recreation Opportunities

There are no recreational activities provided in this zone.

#### Education Opportunities

Person-to-person contact occurs at park headquarters for general information, both verbally and written (brochures, maps, etc.). Kiosks and other informational signage may be found in this zone.

#### Visitor Experience

The visitor experience in this zone is related to park business and information only. A high level of noise is tolerated in this zone.



Park entrance sign

#### Management Focus

The management focus in this zone is the business of running the park. This includes safety for employees, universal public access to the office, and providing appropriate facilities for staff, equipment, and materials.

#### Development

This zone supports a high level of development of facilities for support of park infrastructure and administrative activities, such as office space, meeting rooms, an employee locker room, employee seating area, shop space, storage space, and other related spaces. A high level of accessibility is expected.



Hiking near Lake of the Clouds

## 4.6 Cultural Landscape Overlay

The cultural landscape overlay is used to highlight not only historic structures, but also non-structural evidence of the traditions, beliefs, practices, arts, crafts, and social institutions of any community. This overlay is applied to the entire park, which has a long history of Native American activity, fur trapping and trading by Europeans, and mining and logging pursuits. It contains numerous reported historical and archaeological sites and has a high potential for new sites to be discovered, as no formal archaeological survey has been conducted.

### Natural Resources

Vegetation management will be in accordance with the underlying zone. Within the developed recreation and education zones, vegetation may also be managed to enhance education/interpretation uses, which can include non-native species (non-invasive) specific to the era and/or location and maintaining an aesthetically appealing landscape that is sensitive to the historical resource and interpretation of the zone.

### Historic/Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are the focus of this overlay and will be preserved for visitor education and understanding. These include 37 reported archaeological sites, several homestead/cabin sites, twelve existing historic cabins, and four buildings in the Service Area at Union Bay Historic District (see Appendix A, section A.9). Cultural resources may be preserved or allowed to remain undisturbed.



Ruins of the Nonesuch Mine

### Recreation Opportunities

Visitors may be engaged in recreation activities in accordance with the underlying zone.

### Education Opportunities

Education opportunities related to this zone are primarily found at the Wilderness Visitor Center, on the Union Mine Interpretive Trail, and through guided historical hikes, and are consistent with the underlying zones. Off-site education and interpretation of the park's cultural resources may also be appropriate.

### Visitor Experience

The visitor experience will be consistent with the underlying zone.

### Management Focus

Management focuses on maintaining and preserving the cultural resources in the area consistent with the underlying zone.

### Development

Development will be consistent with the underlying zone and will not negatively impact the cultural resources.



Trail to the Nonesuch Mine Site

### 4.7 Scenic Overlay

The scenic overlay recognizes that there are aesthetic qualities to be preserved and protected in our state park and recreation areas. In PMWSP, this overlay includes scenic site areas with developed accommodations such as 35.7 acres at the Presque Isle River Scenic Site (Natural Area) as well as the overlooks at Summit Peak and Lake of the Clouds. These sites are within the designated Wilderness or Natural Areas and are managed as primitive (the underlying zone).

#### Natural Resources

Natural resources will be managed in accordance with the underlying zone. Vegetation may also be managed to enhance viewsapes.

#### Historic/Cultural Resources

Historic and cultural resources will be managed in accordance with the underlying zone and the cultural landscape overlay.

#### Recreation Opportunities

Levels of recreation compatible with the purpose of viewing are permitted and should be consistent with the underlying zone.

#### Education Opportunities

Interpretive signage at key viewing points, trailheads, and overlooks that is consistent with the underlying zone is permitted, along with off-site interpretation.

#### Visitor Experience

The visitor experience will be consistent with the underlying zone. Visitors may be engaged in sightseeing, hiking on trails and boardwalks, picnicking, nature viewing, and photography.

#### Management Focus

Management focuses on preserving the quality of viewsapes and public safety consistent with the underlying zone.

#### Development

Development will be consistent with the underlying zone and will not negatively impact scenic viewsheds.



A scenic overlook known as Cloud Peak



Presque Isle River corridor

## Chapter Five:

# Ten-Year Action Goals

The planning team has developed 10-year action goals that it believes are necessary to guide management and development within Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park (PMWSP) to achieve the desired resource protection and user experience. Action goals are recommended that address the following categories: natural resources, cultural resources, recreation opportunities, education/interpretation opportunities, and development. These goals apply either to the whole park or to specific locations within the park, as appropriate, and according to the management zone. Refer to the zone descriptions in Chapter Four for appropriate activities in each zone.

Management plans do not guarantee future funding to achieve the actions identified but are based on funding realities and sound investment policies. PRD will seek internal funding, alternative funding sources, partnerships and other potential mechanisms for implementing the desired future conditions defined in this plan. On an annual basis, PRD districts determine priorities for project planning and project capital outlay. Each district's top projects are then evaluated at a state-wide level for available funds.

The following 10-year action goals are ranked in terms of priority based on health, safety, and welfare, as well as ease of implementation (cost, ability to implement with own staff, partnerships, etc.). Priority Level 1 projects indicate those that should be addressed within the next 2 years. Priority Level 2

projects include those that should be addressed within 2-5 years. Priority Level 3 projects are desired but can be tackled in the next 5-10 years once funding has been identified. Opinion of probable costs have been developed for each capital outlay action goal identified (see Appendix C), and these projects will be included in the statewide master project list.

The Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park currently provides an extensive trail system for foot traffic including hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Horseback riding and the use of pack animals was specifically prohibited within the park under the 1972 Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park Master Plan and it is proposed that this should be adhered to in the future to prevent erosion, the introduction of non-native and invasive species, and potential conflict with other users. Mountain bike use is currently permitted seasonally on the cross-country ski trails in the backcountry and developed recreation zones (in the vicinity of the downhill ski area). For the same reasons stated above, expansion of mountain bike use will generally not be considered outside of the developed recreation zone. Mechanical modes of transport (including bicycles, motorized vehicles and motorized boats) are specifically prohibited within the designated Wilderness and Natural Areas. ORV/snowmobile use off the designated route or outside the county road right-of-way is prohibited.

In recent years, visitation to the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park has significantly increased. Although this means that more people are enjoying the park's splendor, this also causes a strain on the park and its resources. For example, backcountry camping was previously allowed in any area, and the increased use was having a detrimental effect on the natural resource condition. A backcountry campsite reservation policy was put into effect in 2018, which helped to limit the impact of camping on the park's Wilderness Area and improve the experience for backcountry campers. In the coming years, staff will study and monitor the impacts to the natural resources and wilderness experience of designated backcountry camping and backcountry infrastructure, and make recommendations to ensure resources are protected.

Goals for the management and operations of PMWSP focus on a balance between planning for the park's improvements and maintaining the quality of the wilderness experience. Both stakeholders and the public expressed that while the park was a beautiful wilderness in need of protection, they also desired improvements to increase public enjoyment of the park's resources and support the local businesses and tourism industry. For example, the top five "collective priorities" from the stakeholder workshop were to provide additional funding and staff for the park, increase trail maintenance, maintain the wilderness character, protect the shoreline, and improve the cabins. In the public input survey, many comments related to enjoyment of the wilderness experience and the desire to maintain it, but also requested trail and cabin improvements. Beginning in the summer of 2019, funding was provided for additional full time staff at PMWSP to work primarily on interior park trails, cabins and bridges, etc. Additional staffing was also provided for neighboring Gogebic State Park, including rangers who will work across the U.P. on maintenance projects, PMWSP included.

In the next ten years, park management will work to protect the resource condition by detecting and controlling invasive species, creating plans for the stewardship of natural and cultural resources, exploring acquisition of property rights within the park project boundary as opportunities arise, and working to improve accessibility to recreation while limiting impacts to natural resource quality. Management and operations goals will also seek to improve the visitor experience by working with partners to improve the park's transportation infrastructure, assessing and improving parking lot capacity, exploring modifications to the Wilderness Visitor Center, and reviewing the overnight lodging options and seasonal availability. A study is currently underway by the Gogebic Community College to assess summer recreation opportunities for the park's ski area, and will be reviewed for possible additions to the park's offerings.

Goals to complete larger construction projects involving capital improvement funds include replacing critical infrastructure, addressing erosion issues on County Road 107 accessing the park, renovations to the former park headquarters buildings and the bunkhouse; improving the drainage and preparing a redevelopment plan for the Union Bay campground; and re-routing the Iron Bell / North Country Trail.

Other proposed infrastructure and development projects involve re-striping parking lots to increase their capacity without paving more area, maintaining historic cabins, replacing the shoreline yurts, renovations to the newly acquired Cotten Cabin, and working with partners to install a reflector or dark-sky compliant light to aid night time navigation at the boat launch. In addition, the DNR is currently working with the Lake Superior Sportsman's Club to provide new and improved facilities at the shooting complex.



Erosion threatens County Road 107 along the Lake Superior shoreline

**PORCUPINE MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS STATE PARK  
TEN-YEAR ACTION GOALS**

The following 10-year action goals are ranked in terms of priority based on health, safety, and welfare, as well as ease of implementation (cost, ability to implement with own staff, partnerships etc.). Priority Level 1 projects indicate those that should be addressed within the next 2 years. Priority Level 2 projects include those that should be addressed within 2-5 years. Priority Level 3 projects are desired, but can be tackled in the next 5-10 years, once funding has been identified. In the program input column, the bolded party is the program lead.

**MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS**

GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
Continue to explore land acquisition of properties within the GMP Proposed Project Boundary.	Ongoing	All	<b>Park Manager</b> Lands Liaison
Continue to manage the dedicated Wilderness and Natural Area to preserve, protect, and restore Wilderness and Natural Areas values.	Ongoing	All	<b>Park Manager</b> Stewardship
Implement invasive species control with an emphasis on early detection and rapid response.	Ongoing	All	<b>Park Manager</b> U.P. Stewardship Field Specialist Partners/Volunteers
Manage and promote the park for dark sky viewing.	Ongoing	All	<b>Park Manager</b> Partners
Continue to work with partners and increase skilled permanent staff for ongoing maintenance.	Ongoing	All	<b>Park Manager</b> Local Partners
Study the impacts to the natural resources and wilderness experience of designated backcountry camping and backcountry infrastructure and revise policies as needed. Consider the design and location of backcountry campsites, the potential for grouped backcountry campsites, and assess human waste disposal and sanitation.	Ongoing	Primitive Backcountry	<b>Stewardship</b> Park Manager
Work with the Green Initiatives Team to identify options for alternative energy to power the Presque Isle Campground Office. Work with CAMIS to develop a park registration app, satellite phone, or other method of camper registration at the Presque Isle Campground.	1	Natural Resources Recreation	<b>Park Manager</b> Green Initiatives Team CAMIS
Review ownership of mineral rights and develop a strategy to address severed mineral rights within the park in accordance with the DNR policy.	1	All	<b>Lands Liaison</b> Park Manager Office of Minerals Management
Explore modifying or reconfiguring the Wilderness Visitor Center to accommodate changing trends and patterns in its use.	3	Developed Recreation	<b>Marketing and Outreach</b> <b>Park Manager</b>

MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS CONTINUED			
GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
Complete MiFI forest inventory mapping for land outside of the Wilderness Area boundaries.	1	All	<b>Stewardship Ecologist</b>
Relocate state game encumbrance within the ski area to another location within the park.	1	Developed Recreation	<b>Lands Liaison</b> Wildlife Division Park Manager
Negotiate for the inclusion of a Recreation Passport requirement for access to the ski area in the next lease agreement.	1	Developed Recreation	<b>Park Manager</b> Concession & Lease Manager
Work with Ontonagon County Road Commission, Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and other stakeholders to determine the best method to address erosion issues along County Road 107 and implement the recommended action.	1	Developed Recreation	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager Ontonagon County Road Commission MDOT
Develop a park business plan that includes a review of overnight lodging options and seasonal availability.	1	All	<b>PRD Productivity Analyst</b> Park Manager
Complete a natural resource stewardship plan for the park, identifying targets for conservation and related natural resource management strategies.	2	All	<b>Stewardship Ecologist</b> Park Manager
Assess parking lot capacity across the park and prepare a holistic improvement plan. Consider a concessionaire to provide shuttle service within the park.	2	All	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager
Determine potential for year-round use of ski area, considering the results of the Summer Recreation study (in progress) for the ski area.	2	Developed Recreation	<b>Park Manager</b> Regional Planner Gogebic Community College
Develop Cultural Resource Management Plan(s) for historic sites within the park.	3	All	<b>Park Manager</b> Park Interpreter Cultural Resources Analyst Michigan History Center
Continue to partner with the Ontonagon County Road Commission to improve park access, considering future bike lanes.	3	All	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager Ontonagon County Road Commission

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT: CAPITAL OUTLAY			
GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
Design and implement a culvert replacement at the headquarters.	1	Administrative Services	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager
Improve drainage of the existing Union Bay Campground.	1	Developed Recreation	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager
Replace roofs, windows, and foundations of former park headquarters buildings for park operations use.	1	Developed Recreation	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager
Renovate the former park staff tri-plex for potential staff quarters.	1	Developed Recreation	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager
Construct a new pedestrian bridge over the Little Iron River and relocate the Iron Belle/ North Country Trail.	1	Backcountry	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager
Prepare a Phase 100 study for the Union Bay Campground to improve capacity, layout, infrastructure, and amenities.	2	Developed Recreation	<b>Park Manager</b> Regional Planner
Design and implement the replacement of asphalt surfacing for the headquarters entrance road.	2	Administrative Services	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager
Replace aging sewage infrastructure.	2	Administrative Services Developed Recreation	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager
Assess and address erosion at Presque Isle high bank along campground and adjacent to Speaker's Cabin.	3	Natural Resources Recreation Primitive	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT: SMALL PROJECTS (PARK OR DISTRICT FUNDS)			
GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
Replace roofs and logs in historic cabins.	Ongoing	Primitive	<b>Park Manager</b> Regional Planner Cultural Resources Analyst
Re-stripe parking lots to increase capacity within existing infrastructure at Lake of the Clouds and Summit Peak.	1	Developed Recreation Backcountry	<b>Park Manager</b> Regional Planner
Renovate Cotten Cabin for visitor overnight use.	1	Primitive	<b>Park Manager</b> Regional Planner
Replace shoreline yurts with lodging able to withstand shoreline conditions.	1	Developed Recreation	<b>Park Manager</b> Regional Planner
Re-route the Iron Belle/ North Country Trail through the park to avoid wet areas and provide a better trail experience in three areas: Cotten Property, Presque Isle area, and Lost Lake Trail.	1	All	<b>Regional Planner</b> Park Manager Trails Section North Country Trail Association
PARTNER PROJECTS			
GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
Improve shooting complex in collaboration with the Lake Superior Sportsman's Club to provide new and improved indoor and outdoor shooting range and club facilities.	2	Developed Recreation	<b>Facilities and Operations Division</b> Marketing and Outreach Division Regional Planner Park Manager Lake Superior Sportsman's Club
Install a reflective marker or dark-sky compliant light at the boat launch to aid in finding the dock at night.	2	Developed Recreation	<b>Park Manager</b> Western UP Sports Fishermans Association



A rustic cabin



Lake Superior shoreline

## Chapter Six:

# Implementation Strategy

This chapter of the general management plan (GMP) provides guidance for implementation of the action goals and maintaining the plan so it remains relevant in the long term. These guidelines will also help the park align the action goals with park, district, and statewide annual funding processes and annual tasks outlined in the Parks and Recreation Division's Strategic Plan or other planning documents. Although the implementation of the GMP will require commitment from staff at every level, it will be the primary responsibility of the Unit Supervisor/Manager to oversee plan implementation.

A long-range plan such as this must maintain a degree of flexibility to be responsive to changing circumstances or opportunities that cannot be foreseen. It is recognized that some goals may be accomplished in a short time frame, while others may carry over through multiple years. It will be important to track progress so that the plan remains a relevant park management tool. The GMP will be reviewed every five years to ensure it remains viable.

### 6.1 Implementation Toolbox

The following is a list of items to consider when reviewing and prioritizing the implementation of action goals identified in the GMP.

#### Coordination/ Communication

- Meet regularly with the Field Planner and District

Supervisor to coordinate and prioritize large capital projects for capital outlay requests.

- Maintain an open dialogue with local partners and stakeholders to coordinate community-related projects as identified in the action goals.
- Follow-up regularly on progress for action goals that are not the primary responsibility of the Unit Supervisor/Manager with the responsible program position.

#### Funding

- Identify estimated cost for each capital improvement/infrastructure project, with assistance from Field Planner or other planning and infrastructure section staff as needed.
- Identify potential funding sources for each project/task. Liaise with PRD grants coordinator as appropriate.
- Align potential funding sources with the annual "call for projects" in July for capital outlay funding requests.
- Review action goals list and determine which projects can be requested to receive District Small Project funding through the District Supervisor.

#### Scheduling

- Further prioritize projects based on need, funding, staffing and other constraints and opportunities.
- Incorporate project/task assignments into annual staff performance objectives

### 6.2 Documentation of Changes

The Unit Supervisor/Manager should keep a record of any major changes to the park since approval of the GMP and note potential updates that may be required in the future. Documenting these changes will assist in the five-year plan review or when the GMP is updated. Changes may include:

- New user requests or conflicts
- Emerging recreation, funding or partnership opportunities
- Changes in land management
- Land transactions or changes to the Approved Project Boundary
- Major infrastructure projects or removal of structures

Changes may be documented by marking up the park's copy of the GMP or maintaining a log that is kept with the GMP. In reviewing the action goals for changes, document goals that may become irrelevant or are no longer viable, as well as proposed new action goals, including justification.

Park management zoning is intended to be a long-term document: changes will only be considered with adequate justification and are subject to a formal review and approval process.



Skiing at the Porcupine Mountains Ski Area

### 6.3 Documentation of Accomplishments

As action goals are completed, the Unit Supervisor/Manager should mark them as such in the park's copy of the GMP, including the completion date. This will also help to maintain a log of accomplishments for district and division-wide reporting purposes, including PRD's strategic plan.

### 6.4 Five-Year Review Process

General management plans are reviewed every five years from the date of approval of either the phase 2 plan or the complete GMP. The planning team for the five-year review is made up of the Park Management Plan Administrator, Unit Supervisor/Manager, Field Planner and District Supervisor, with other team members included as may be necessary. A Five-Year Review Form will be used to record all changes to the plan within the past five years. Upon reviewing the GMP and the documented changes, the planning team will determine whether the changes warrant a complete update of the plan.

If there are no major changes required in either the zoning or the action goals, the planning team will complete the Five-Year Review Form and attach it as a supplement to the existing GMP. If zoning changes are needed, the GMP will be revised or updated following the complete GMP planning process led by the Park Management Plan Administrator. If changes to the action goals only are required, the phase 2 GMP planning process will be implemented.



Sunset on Lake Superior