

Paul Bunyan & Heartland State Trails

Beltrami, Cass, Hubbard & Crow Wing Counties



Paul Bunyan State Trail

Crow Wing State Park to Lake Bemidji State Park



The Paul Bunyan State Trail is a 123 mile long multi-use trail between Crow Wing State Park and Lake Bemidji State Park, including 8 miles shared with the

Heartland State Trail.

Primarily located on a former Burlington Northern Railroad grade, the trail is generally level and is wheelchair accessible with the exception of the 9 mile segment through the Chippewa National Forest. This segment may be challenging to some users as there are many rolling hills and curves with grades reaching 8%.

Construction Notes (as of 4/2017)

- The Clausen Avenue Bemidji trail segment is proposed to be completed in 2018.



Tiger muskie statue on Heartland in city of Nevis



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State trails require a permit for anyone horseback riding or riding an out of state snowmobile.

PLEASE NOTE: Horses are not permitted on the paved trails or shoulders, except when crossing bridges or roads. For more information about horseback riding or snowmobiling, please visit the DNR website at mndnr.gov or call the DNR Info Center at 1-888-MINNDNR.

The Shingobee Connection paved trail is an easier alternate route to Walker, although there are a couple of short very steep hills as well as some paved road shoulder sections of trail.

Only 1/2 mile of the Paul Bunyan State Trail within the City of Bemidji is not yet developed, but there are on-street bike routes directing the The region the Paul Bunyan State Trail runs through is rich in history.

The Paul Bunyan State Trail runs through a region rich in history. There are thirteen recorded prehistoric sites near the trail. Before European explorers arrived, the area was homeland to Dakota and Ojibwe people. The Dakota lived on these lands until the 1700s, when the Ojibwe migrated east from the Great Lakes. Minnesota is home to Indigenous Peoples to this day.

Towns along the trails have a rich railroad, logging and cultural history and now they are popular vacation destinations that provide trail access points, rest areas and other services.

Main summer uses of Paul Bunyan State Trail include hiking, bicycling, and in-line skating.

Snowmobiling is the primary winter use along the trail. Studded tracks are allowed on the Paul Bunyan State Trail. The trail provides connections to many miles of groomed snowmobile trails in the Grant-in-Aid trail system.

PARKING AVAILABLE:

(Do not leave valuables in your vehicle.)

The Paul Bunyan State Trail

- In Crow Wing State Park. From Baxter, south on Hwy 371 about 9 miles, then west at County Road 27 for one mile to the park office. From Little Falls, north on Hwy 371, then west on Co. Rd. 27 for one mile to park office.
- The Brainerd/Baxter trailhead, from the intersection of State Highway 210 and the State Highway 371 bypass in Baxter, go north 1 block to Excelsior Road, then go east 3/4 mile to Conservation Drive; the parking lot is on the left.
- In Lake Bemidji State Park. From Bemidji, go north on Co. Rd. 21 about 4 miles, then east on Co. Rd. 20 - 2 miles to the park entrance.

• On the east side of Lake Bemidji in Lavinia and at 5th and Gould in Bemidji.

• Southwest of Walker on State Highway 34 just south of the intersection of the Paul Bunyan and Heartland Trails, approximately 4 miles east of Akeley.

At Lake Bemidji State Park, the Paul Bunyan State Trail connects to the Blue Ox Trail, and together these trails form one of the longest rail-to-trail conversions in North America for a total distance of 213 miles. The Blue Ox Trail is primarily an unpaved motorized trail for snowmobiling and off-highway vehicle riding and extends northeast to International Falls.

Heartland State Trail

Park Rapids to Cass Lake

The Heartland State Trail was one of the first rail-to-trail projects in the country. It is a 49 mile paved multiple-use trail between Park Rapids and Cass Lake. The trail is located entirely on a level abandoned railroad grade, except for a four mile segment north of Walker which is on sharply rolling terrain for snowmobilers. Bicyclers can follow level road shoulders along Steamboat Loop NW and Cove Lane as marked.

The 30 mile segment between Park Rapids and Walker has a second, natural surface treadway for horseback riding, mountain biking and hiking.

The Heartland State Trail also provides connections to many miles of groomed snowmobile trails in the Hubbard County Grant-in-Aid trail system.

- In Pequot Lakes, from Highway 371, exit onto County Road 11, and go west into Pequot Lakes to the stoplight at the intersection with Patriot Avenue. Turn left (south) onto Patriot Avenue, then take the next left (east) onto Woodman Street for 1/2 block. The parking lot is on the left

- Parking is also available in Merrifield, Nisswa, Jenkins, Pine River, Backus, Hackensack and Walker, east of Akeley, Nary, Guthrie and Laporte.

- There is one National Forest Service parking lot located off of County Rd. 50 near the Shingobee Creek crossing. This lot is roughly at the mid-way point on the Chippewa section of trail.

The Heartland State Trail

- Parking for the trail is available in Park Rapids (at Red Bridge Park and Heartland County Park), Dorset, Nevis, Akeley, Walker, Erickson's Landing north of Walker, Steamboat Landing public water access/rest area and Cass Lake.

Views of lakes, rivers and streams are numerous and many are accessible from the trail. The trail passes through northern hardwood forests and stands of jack, red, and white pine, as well as the spruce fir forest community. The occasional majestic white pine can be seen towering over the trail.



Along the Heartland Trail

Common mammals noticed along the trail include whitetail deer, raccoon, red fox, porcupine, beaver and muskrat. The observant trail user may spot coyote, weasel, mink, bobcat, black squirrel or black bear.

Many varieties of birds can be seen along the trail including the bald eagle, which has a large population in the Chippewa National Forest and surrounding area.

For additional copies of this map or other state trail maps, contact the DNR Information Center.

DNR Information Center
500 Lafayette Road
Saint Paul, MN 55155-4040
(651) 296-6157 (metro area)
1-888-646-6367 (MN toll free)

Minnesota Department of Tourism
100 Metro Square
121 7th Place East
Saint Paul, MN 55101-2112
(651) 296-5029 (metro area)
1-888-TOURISM [868-7476] (toll free)

Minnesota Bikeway Maps
Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Boulevard
Room 110
Saint Paul, MN 55155
(651) 296-2216

You can also check out our website at:
mndnr.gov/state_trails

This information is available in alternative format by request

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