



Wilderness Camping Summer

Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park

Great Lakes, Great Times, Great Outdoors

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Introduction

This manual provides you with important information concerning wilderness camping in Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park from mid-June through August. It is essential that you and all



*Escarpment Trail overlooking
Lake of the Clouds.*

members of your party read this information before your trip. After reading it, make a careful and honest evaluation of your party's abilities. Once you enter the wilderness, **you are responsible for yourself and your group's safety.** Please be aware that wilderness travel can be dangerous.

Wilderness camping can be a very rewarding way to see and experience the park. Some of the park's most scenic areas are accessible only by hiking trail. The remoteness and serenity of wilderness camping is what draws many people to this area; however, those same reasons are why careful planning and preparation is essential.

Trip Planning

1. The first step in planning your trip is to determine the abilities of your group. You have a variety of trail options. When determining a route, consider the distance and terrain to a desired location.
2. Wilderness campsites are first-come, first-served. Have an alternative route planned, especially if you visit in the busy months of July or August.
3. Consider weather and other environmental factors when planning your trip.
4. Upon arrival to the park, stop at the Visitor Center to register your group and obtain a wilderness camping permit. If after business hours, you may self-register at trailhead kiosks at Presque Isle, Lake of the Clouds, Summit Peak, and Park Headquarters. Fees are posted at these locations. For accuracy in information, in-person registration is preferred.

Additional information

- Camping is not permitted within a ¼ mile of any cabin, road or scenic area.
- Maximum group size is 6 persons.
- "Bushwhacking" and off-trail camping are permitted. Use of minimal impact techniques is required.
- Campfires are allowed only in designated fire rings at established sites.
- Review the suggested equipment list. Make sure everyone in your party is properly prepared.

Before leaving, always tell a relative or friend where you are going, your route and when you plan to return. If there are any concerns about your return, persons can call the park headquarters at (906) 885-5275 to report any problems or emergencies.

No Mechanical or Motorized Vehicles

Motorized vehicles, wheeled carts, wheeled boat carriers and other mechanical devices are not allowed in the wilderness. Mountain bikes are permitted only on established mountain bike trails.

While on the Trail

The journey is not only about the destination. Enjoy the beauty and scenery of your travels, but also take the following into consideration and plan for an adventurous hike.

Foot trails are rugged. You may encounter steep hills to climb and streams to cross (with or without a bridge), along with obstacles that may block the trail. Always carry a map and compass and know how to use them. Trails are marked, but nighttime travel is not recommended. Be considerate of other people on the trail. Do not dampen the experience of others.

While on the trail:

- Let nature's sounds prevail by traveling in small groups, and avoid making excessive noise
- Pick up any litter you may drop or find
- Minimize trail impact by staying on designated trails, not cutting switchbacks and walking through muddy spots or puddles so as not to widen the trails
- Practice the wilderness motto of *Leave No Trace* of your visit.

Water

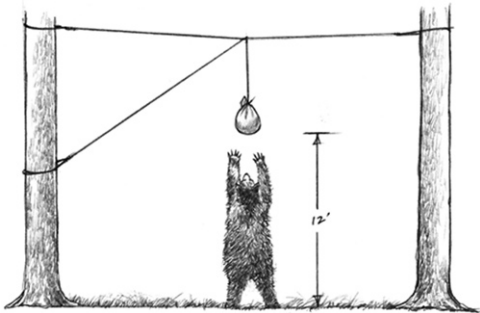
Unless carried in with you, all drinking water should be boiled for one minute or filtered through a 0.5 micron filter. Some commercial chemicals or treatments may also work.

Campfires

Campfires are allowed only in designated metal fire rings at established sites. All wood must be taken from "dead and down" trees and branches.

Bear Poles

Bear poles are provided at or near many of the established wilderness campsites. See the Porcupine Mountains Back-country guide map for bear pole locations. If you stay at a site that does not have a bear pole all food and scented items must be stored in a bear-proof container or secured properly.



Bear bags must be suspended at least 12 feet above the ground and far enough from the tree to prevent an animal from reaching or jumping on it. Creativity often is needed because the right tree is difficult to find. Bear bags can be hung from a single tree, suspended between two trees, or by using multiple rope combinations. Practice before entering the wilderness.

Trash

Please haul out what you haul in, including all food scraps. Trash receptacles are provided at trailheads. It only takes a simple commitment to pack out all that is packed in, and to encourage others to do the same. Do not burn any garbage in the fire pit.

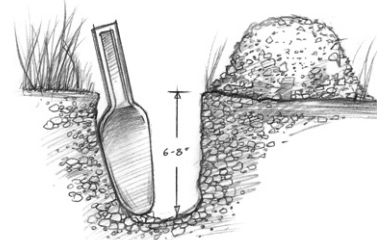
To minimize waste, repackage food items into smaller, more easily packed containers. For example, repackage boxes of macaroni and cheese into one Ziploc®-type bag and retain the directions. Canned goods can be repackaged into doubled Ziploc®-type bags. Do not carry glass bottles into the wilderness. Reducing your waste prior to your trip not only saves on the amount at the end of the trip, it also makes your pack lighter on the trail.

Dispose of Waste Properly

Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished. Pack out used toilet paper, diapers and hygiene products.

Hygiene

To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.



Insects

Expect plenty of insects (especially from late May through the middle of July). Repellants, head nets and protective clothing may help.

Pets

Pets are not allowed in any state-owned buildings (except service dogs); they must remain on a 6-foot leash at all times and may not be left unattended at any time.

Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
- Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, exposes them to predators and other dangers, and causes them to lose their natural fear of humans.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, or when raising young.

Black Bears

Black bears normally are afraid of you and will leave in a hurry. If you see a bear near the trail, move away from it or turn back. Give bears with cubs plenty of room.



Understanding Bear Behavior

A bear is studying you if...

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

A bear may be getting upset if...

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

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

- blows loudly
- makes short lunges and hits the ground or near by objects
- gives a bluff charge that stops short of you

Do not confront or feed any bear. To minimize any bear encounters, keep all food and scented products stored in an appropriate bear bag. Keeping a clean site goes a long way in reducing any unwanted animal encounter.

Weather

Average summer temperatures range from highs in the low 70s to lows in the low 50s, but plan for variable weather conditions and expect some rain on your trip. Hypothermia, the dangerous chilling of the human body, can be a threat any time of the year. Do not underestimate the danger of being wet during cold or windy weather. National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration weather radio can be received on the frequency of 162.400 MHz.

Safety

Medical assistance is not available at the park and may be hours away. In case of an emergency, call 911 and the park headquarters at (906) 885-5275. Cell phones seldom work in the wilderness. Emergency phones are located at the Union Bay campground office and park office.

When you dial have the following ready:

- A detailed list of the injury(ies)
- How the injuries occurred, if known
- An exact location of where rescuers can meet the injured party
- Other personal information about the injured party (allergies, age, physical condition, known ailments, etc)

Everything you do in the wilderness should be done carefully. Use common sense and care at all times. Always carry an up-to-date, well-stocked first aid kit with the knowledge to use it appropriately. Most importantly, never take unnecessary risks and think through your actions. **Remember, you are responsible for your actions.**

Suggested Equipment List

This equipment list is provided to help you prepare for your trip. Dressing in layers is the best choice for outdoor activities. As you get warm you can take off layers, and as you cool down during breaks, you can put them back on. Please photocopy this equipment list and pass it on to all members of your party.

Personal Equipment:

Each person should have

hiking boots
sleeping bag
backpack
sunglasses*
headlamp or small flashlight*
matches in a waterproof container*
lighter and fire starter*
high-energy trail snacks*
emergency whistle*
large water bottle*
Porcupine Mountains
Wilderness State Park map
or
USGS topographic
quadrangle
maps of the area*
compass*
small knife*
personal toiletries
personal medications
watch

Clothing:

underwear

- underpants (2-3)
- light-weight synthetic, wool or blend top and bottoms
- wool or synthetic socks (2 pairs)
- sock liners (optional)

middle wear

- wool or fleece pant and jacket
- wool or fleece sweater or shirt

outerwear

- windproof jacket and pants
- waterproof or waterproof/breathable pants and jacket
- hat

Optional:

sleeping pad
carabiners
camera
binoculars
day or belt pack
biodegradable soap
backpack cover
tarp
garbage bag
flashlight batteries and bulb

Group Equipment:

wilderness camping permit
food
food bag for hanging food
from bear pole 60 feet of
bear rope if you are
staying at a location where
there is not a bear pole
cookstove and fuel
cookware and utensils
tent or shelter
trowel
toilet paper
insect repellent
sunscreen
water filter
first aid kit that includes:
- first aid book
- moleskin

- gauze rolls
- chemical heat pack
- ace bandage
- 2" first aid tape
- assorted bandages including butterfly
- triangular bandages and sterile pads
- antacid tablets
- anti-diarrhea medication
- strong pain medication
- ibuprofen tablets
- antiseptic wound cleaner
- body thermometer
- latex gloves
- tweezers/scissors/nail clippers
- small mirror

emergency and repair kit that includes:

- small roll of duct or strapping tape
- stick-on nylon repair patches
- nylon cord
- safety pins

* Items with an asterisk should be placed in a small "survival" pack and always carried when in the woods