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Gogebic County Park – Lake Gogebic

## **WELCOME TO THE LARGEST INLAND LAKE IN MICHIGAN'S UPPER PENINSULA**

Welcome to beautiful Lake Gogebic! We hope your stay is an enjoyable one...one that will bring you back time and again.

To give you a little background information on the area we've gathered some helpful information. Lake Gogebic is the "largest inland lake" in the Upper Peninsula and second largest inland lake in the state.

Lake Gogebic has 13,380 acres of surface water, with 36 miles of shoreline, it's 17 miles long and 37 feet deep. Lake Gogebic lies in both Ontonagon and Gogebic Counties in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and in two different time zones! The northern half of the lake is in the eastern time zone and the southern half of the lake is in the central time zone. This makes it possible to celebrate New Years Eve twice all on one lake. The Lake Gogebic area has long been known for the wide variety of attractions and activities. Snowmobiling, fishing, hunting, skiing, biking, hiking, sightseeing, golfing, historic sites, and camping are just some of the recreational opportunities offered in this beautiful area.

Lake Gogebic is prime fishing waters for walleye, small mouth bass, northern pike, jumbo perch and some whitefish. There are several fishing contests throughout the year for cash and prizes. There's a tagged fish contest, a summer Rod & Reel Contest and the Fall Walleye Tournament (for nearly 30 years). During the winter months, there's the Gogebic Lodge Ice Fishing Tournament.

Lake Gogebic was originally black bass territory; in the late 1880's the lake was one of the best black bass lakes in the country. Anglers came from Chicago, Milwaukee and Minneapolis by train to Gogebic Station, five miles south of the lake. There they boarded a stagecoach for the bumpy ride to the Gogebic Hotel and Cottages, now known as White City or The Whitehouse. In the morning the rowboats were towed to fishing sites on the lake and towed back to The Gogebic Hotel in the evening. Catches of 60 to 80 fish were common with weights up to five pounds plus.

The last stagecoach robbery east of the Mississippi River was in Gogebic County on the road from Gogebic Station to The Gogebic Hotel on August 26, 1889. One passenger was killed and another was wounded. The robber, Reimund Holzhey, escaped but later captured and served time in the Marquette Prison. There's an entire story being written on this historic tale.

Lake Gogebic is now a great walleye fishery. Gogebic (go-gee-bic) County is located in Michigan's Western Gateway. There are twelve hundred miles of rivers and streams, over 300 lakes, and nearly 700,000 acres of woods and wilderness. It offers thrills for anglers, fun for swimmers and boating enthusiasts, quiet adventures for kayakers and canoeists, excitement for the hunter and enchanting scenery accented with more than 50 breathtaking waterfalls. It is also the ski capital of the Midwest with four downhill ski areas and many cross-country ski trails located within 20 miles of Lake Gogebic.

A vast majority of the county's acreage is within the boundaries of the Ottawa National Forest. The Ottawa encompasses over a million acres, including three wilderness areas, in four counties. It is a multi-use forest with most areas open to the public.

Ontonagon (on-ta-na-gun) County was organized in 1843 by James K. Paul. Ontonagon is the oldest permanent settlement on the south shore of Lake Superior. The port was used extensively by the copper and silver mining industries until the turn of the century. The famous Ontonagon Copper Boulder was removed by James K. Paul and is now at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC.

The lumbering industry was a major employer in the early 1900's with the Diamond Match Company, located in Ontonagon, being one of the more well known. The Lewis Genson Company of Ewen became one of the largest users of hardwood in Ontonagon County. During that time Ontonagon County's population was more than 12,000.

More than 90 percent of this county is forested. Parts of the Ottawa National Forest, Porcupine Mountain Wilderness State Park and Copper Country State Forest make up large portions of the county's acreage. Some of the Ontonagon County attractions include Old Victoria Restoration Site, Adventure Copper Mine, Bond Falls Flowage, Agate Falls and Lake of the Clouds in the Porcupine Mountains, about 10 miles west of Silver City.

In both counties one can experience famous Lake Superior sunsets, as well as the timeless visual sensations of the Northern Lights, which dance most brilliantly in our northern skies.

Our area is a four-season vacation gem. We encourage visitors to take time to visit each season, they are all special. The area changes from white gold, to spring green, blue lakes then flaming fall colors. Our snowmobile trails are award winning, our spring waterfalls are spectacular, there are many quiet inland lakes and truly our fall colors set the area ablaze with orange, yellow and red.



Slate River – Lake Gogebic

On Lake Gogebic there are plenty of parks to launch a boat or enjoy a picnic at. There's the Lake Gogebic State Park, Gogebic County Park, Ontonagon County Park and Bergland Township Park. There is also a DNR public boat launch along the East Shore. There's so much

to do at the lake with campgrounds, Slate River, waterfalls of Judson Falls and Nelson Canyon Falls along with 17 creeks that feed into Lake Gogebic for great stream fishing.

There are plenty of mountain biking trails on logging roads and in the Elcho trail area and even the Lake Gogebic Chambers “Tour da Lake” mountain bike ride around the entire lake.



Alligator Eye – Lake Gogebic

There are many scenic overlooks like the famous Alligator Eye. Take the strenuous hike up to the top for a great birds eye view of Lake Gogebic. It is often mistaken for Lake of the Clouds when seen in photographs. There is a small parking lot on the West Shore of Lake Gogebic near the 19 mile marker. Just past the parking lot is a hiking marker with an earthen hiking trail that leads you to the top of Alligator Eye. The name comes from the view you see best from the East Shore, an alligator snout starts from the Gogebic Lodge and works its way to the quartz mound found near the top of Alligator Eye, (which used to be painted white back in the 1920's, and could be easily seen from a long distance to form the “eye”), then southward forming the balance of the alligator to it's tail.



Birds Eye View of Lake Gogebic from the top of Alligator Eye

There are plenty of resorts and several nice places to eat and there's even a casino in nearby Watersmeet. If you love photography be sure to come in the spring for wildflowers like Trilliums or in the fall to watch the woods come alive with brilliant colors. Explore the Ottawa National Forest, Sylvania Wilderness and Cisco Chain of Lakes while you are here. Some of the most pristine paddling waters are found in the Sylvania Wilderness area, especially High Lake, it is a spectacular blue tropical color! Plan a relaxing trip, allow yourself plenty of time and prepare to make another trip up to see things you didn't have time for on the first trip. If you love to hike, you can explore the wilderness areas of the Trap Hills and Norwich Mine. For more information about great hiking trips, see [www.WesternUpperPeninsula.net](http://www.WesternUpperPeninsula.net) which is also a link found at the bottom of the Snow Country Real Estate website.

Wildlife can be easily spotted in our forests and around the lake. Different species are more visible at different times of the year – but, if you are patient, you will be richly rewarded. There are plenty of black bear, but they are usually shy. Just remember not to get between a mother and her cub or a bear and food. Whitetail deer are very common - so common that care must be taken while driving a car or snowmobile. On a rare occasion, some have even spotted a wandering moose. Coyotes and fisher require patience to spot. Bobcats roam the forests and hills. River otters can be seen playing and fishing around the shoreline or near the mouths of the rivers and streams in our area.

The gray wolves that currently roam Michigan's Upper Peninsula number approximately 400, Gogebic County has the highest concentration of wolves in the state. According to recent tracking information by the D.N.R., there is at least one pack of wolves on the west side of Lake Gogebic that roams north across Highway M-28. There is another pack southwest of Lake

Gogebic that roams south across Highway US-2. There are also individual wolves, referred to as “lone dispersed” wolves that also roam the area east of Lake Gogebic. Lone wolves are mostly one or two years of age which have left the pack in search of mates to form their own packs.

The Lake Gogebic area is also home to snowshoe hare, cottontail rabbits, skunks, beaver, raccoons, weasels/ermine, pine martens, mink, gray and red fox, kangaroo mice and on and on. As you can see, we have quite an abundance of wildlife.

For the hunter, the Lake Gogebic area is truly a Sportsman’s Paradise for whitetail deer, black bear and small game. Game birds have been experiencing an upswing as greater numbers of ruffed grouse and woodcock have been seen in recent years. Each fall you will see some duck hunter blinds near the Slate River looking for their limit of ducks or geese.

A growing number of people also find pleasure, recreation and new knowledge about the natural world through observing birds. There are many birding habitats within close proximity to our lake, river, marsh, alder swamp and mixed forest areas. There are many species of birds, especially during spring and fall migration.

A prime spot to view specialty birds like Barred Owls, Alder Flycatchers, Pileated Woodpeckers, American Bitterns and many warblers would be near the Slate River and Merriweather Sloughs. You’ll need to quietly kayak or canoe those areas and carefully walk the railroad tracks near Merriweather. Ducks of all kinds nest on our lake, as do loons and blue herons. Our area is truly rich in bird life, other birds common to our area are blue jays, finches, grosbeaks, chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, sparrows, bluebirds, hummingbirds, kingfisher, and many, many more. If you keep a sharp eye out you may even see a peregrine falcon, osprey, or golden eagle.

The east shore of Lake Gogebic has one of the oldest nesting areas for the bald eagle. Look high in the trees or sky while boating and you’ll likely spot several. Adult eagles are easier to spot due to their white heads and tails, while the younger or immature eagles keep a somewhat mottled look for a few years before attaining their white head and tail.

Lake Gogebic is within a days drive from many metropolitan areas. The approximate amount of time it takes to reach the lake is:

- Minneapolis Area - 5 hours
- Milwaukee – 5 1/2 hours
- Fox River Valley - 3 hours
- Duluth / Superior - 2 hours
- Chicago Area - 6 1/2 hours
- Wausau – 2 1/2 hours
- Detroit - 9 1/2 hours
- Marquette - 2 1/2 hours

For more information on our area, please check out The Lake Gogebic Area Chamber of Commerce website at [www.lakegogebicarea.com](http://www.lakegogebicarea.com)

Looking for some local authors? Here are some other great area books to read, which can be found at Book World in downtown Ironwood or at the Ironwood Historic Society in the Old Depot in Ironwood.

“Autobiography of a Stagecoach Robber – The Story of Reimund Holzhey” by Bruce K. Cox  
“The Porcupine Wilderness Journals” by Christopher J. Julian-Fralish  
“A Dead End Road Never Ends” by Amy Van Oyen

### **Snowmobiling Trails**

Lake Gogebic is centrally located so it can be used as a hub for your snowmobile activity whether you are looking for family fun, a weekend getaway or overnights. The trails offer winding forest trails, scenic overlooks, railroad grades, bridges, hills, lakes, cedar swamps, and logging roads - all in a days ride.

Lake Gogebic to Iron River & Iron Mountain to Lake Gogebic (overnight) Take Lake Gogebic Trail 1 or 13 south to Trail 2. Go east to Watersmeet, through Iron River and on to Iron Mountain. Stay overnight in Iron Mountain approximately 130 miles. Leave Iron Mountain heading north on Trail 5, then east on Trail 16 to Crystal Falls where you head north on Trail 111 to Trail 15 north to Trail 8 and go west through Kenton, Bruce Crossing, Ewen and Bergland approximately 150 miles.

You may shorten this trip by staying over at Iron River. That would make it approximately 86 miles the first day. Leaving Iron River you would backtrack west, 6 miles on Trail 2 and go north on Trail 15 to Trail 8 and go west through Kenton, Bruce Crossing, Ewen and back to Bergland. Approximately 95 miles. This is an easy ride.

Lake Gogebic to Copper Harbor & Back to Lake Gogebic (Overnight) Take Lake Gogebic Trail 1 or 13 and north on Trail 13 out of Bergland to Rockland and Greenland. Pick up Trail 3 (Bill Nichols Trail) to Houghton. Follow trail 3 to Trail 132 and into Copper Harbor approximately 175 miles. Follow the same route back. This is a very picturesque trip and includes the three Firesteel Bridges and the bridge at Houghton.

Lake Gogebic into Wisconsin and Return (day trip) Take Lake Gogebic Trail 1 or 13 south to Trail 2 east to Watersmeet. Go south on Trail 3 to Land 'O Lakes west on Trail 6 (Wisconsin) and follow signs to Bents Camp for lunch. Back out to Trail 6, which turns into Trail 15 west to Presque Isle. Go north on Trail 1 back to Michigan, Marenisco and on to Lake Gogebic. The entire trip is approximately 100 miles.

Lake Gogebic to Lake of the Clouds and Return (day trip) Take Lake Gogebic Trail 1 north to Silver City then west to the Porcupine Mountains and Lake of the Clouds. On the way back down from Lake of the Clouds pick up Trail 11 south to Trail 8 and Wakefield. Go west on Trail 2 to Marenisco and north on Trail 1 back to Lake Gogebic (approximately 115 miles)

These are just some suggestions but the possibilities are endless. Be sure to pick up trail maps at any area resort or gas station and check trail conditions and any changes. Check the most recent map published before you go. The mileage may vary depending on possible trail re-routing. We want you to enjoy your visit with us.

To learn more about our area visit these websites:

[www.WesternUpperPeninsula.net](http://www.WesternUpperPeninsula.net)

[www.ironwoodmi.org](http://www.ironwoodmi.org)

[www.lakegogebicarea.com](http://www.lakegogebicarea.com)

Or stop in to visit with the friendly folks at Snow Country Real Estate in Bessemer Michigan, we've got a lot of area brochures and information in the office for you! Call Snow Country Real Estate at 1-800-876-9751 or (906) 932-1411.



## **A SUMMARY OF THINGS TO DO WHILE IN THE LAKE GOGEBIC AREA**

Broken down into 3 categories (1) immediate area (2) nearby and (3) 30 min-1 hour away

### **IMMEDIATE AREA:**

Four Season Vacation Gem

Largest inland lake 13,380 acres of water

Prime Fishing water for walleye, small mouth bass, northern pike, jumbo perch and some whitefish

Fishing contests year round: Tagged fish contest, Summer Rod & Reel contest, Fall Walleye Tournament, & Gogebic Lodge Ice Fishing Tournament

Sportsman's Paradise – Hunt whitetail deer, black bear, partridge, ducks and geese

Spectacular Fall Colors

Hike Alligator Eye

Plenty of Parks: Lake Gogebic State Park, Gogebic County Park, Ontonagon County Park and Bergland Township Park

East Shore DNR Boat Launch  
Slate River area – great for paddling & fishing  
Waterfalls: Judson Falls and Nelson Canyon Falls  
Mountain Biking Trails & Tour Da Lake Fat Tire Bike Ride  
Hiking Trails: Alligator Eye, Lake Gogebic State Park, and  
Gogebic Ridge near Bergland  
Award Winning Snowmobiling Hub with 5 main trails starting at the lake  
Snow shoeing  
Photograph and view Wildlife and Wildflowers  
Ottawa National Forest (Stop by the Supervisors Office in Bessemer – Great maps & info)  
Boating: canoe, kayak, jet skis, pontoons welcome  
Campgrounds, resorts and restaurants  
Bird watching in Merriweather and Slate River Sloughs  
Bergland Heritage Center – currently in development stages  
Historic Stagecoach Road – Don't forget to buy the book on the Stagecoach Robber!

### **NEARBY**

North Country Hiking Trail  
Towns of Bergland and Marenisco for your shopping convenience  
4 wheeler trails – ORV in Ottawa National Forest (select roads)  
Cross Country skiing  
Waterfalls: Cascade Falls, Little Trap Falls, Marshall Falls, Yondota Falls and  
Kakabika Falls  
Wolf Mountain Overlook – Highest Point in Gogebic County  
Presque Isle River – great for canoeing and kayaking  
Blue Ribbon Trout streams

### **THINGS TO DO IN AREA WITH PLACE TO SEE WHILE IN THE LAKE GOGEBIC AREA cont...**

#### **30 MINUTES to 1 HOUR**

Watersmeet – Lac Vieux Desert Casino  
Watersmeet Trout Hatchery (New owners in 2007!)  
Paulding Mystery Light  
Lake Superior's sandy beaches and deep-sea fishing  
Ontonagon Harbor & Lighthouse  
Ontonagon Historical Museum  
Porcupine Mountains State Park & Lake of the Clouds  
Sylvania Visitors Center & Wilderness Area  
Adventure Copper Mine  
Old Victoria Restoration Site  
Bond Falls Flowage & Agate Falls  
Copper Peak – take an Adventure Ride to the top!  
Ski Areas – Indianhead, Blackjack, Big Powderhorn & Whitecap  
Antique Shopping

Get your fill of Galleries & Gifts in Ironwood, Bessemer & Wakefield shop at some of our favorites, Northwood Candle in Wakefield, Leather & Gift & The Muse in Bessemer, Northwood's Niche, Depot Antiques, Potluck & Pine Tree Gallery in Ironwood Visit the towns of White Pine, Silver City, Ewen & Bruce Crossing Waterfalls along Black River Scenic Byway with Rainbow Falls, Gorge Falls, Sandstone Falls & Potawatomi Falls  
Trap Hills Wilderness Area  
Historic Norwich Mine Site  
Gogebic County Airport  
Numerous small inland lakes: Beatons Lake, Eel Lake, Bobcat Lake, Moosehead Lake and many many more!