

TRAILS & MORE

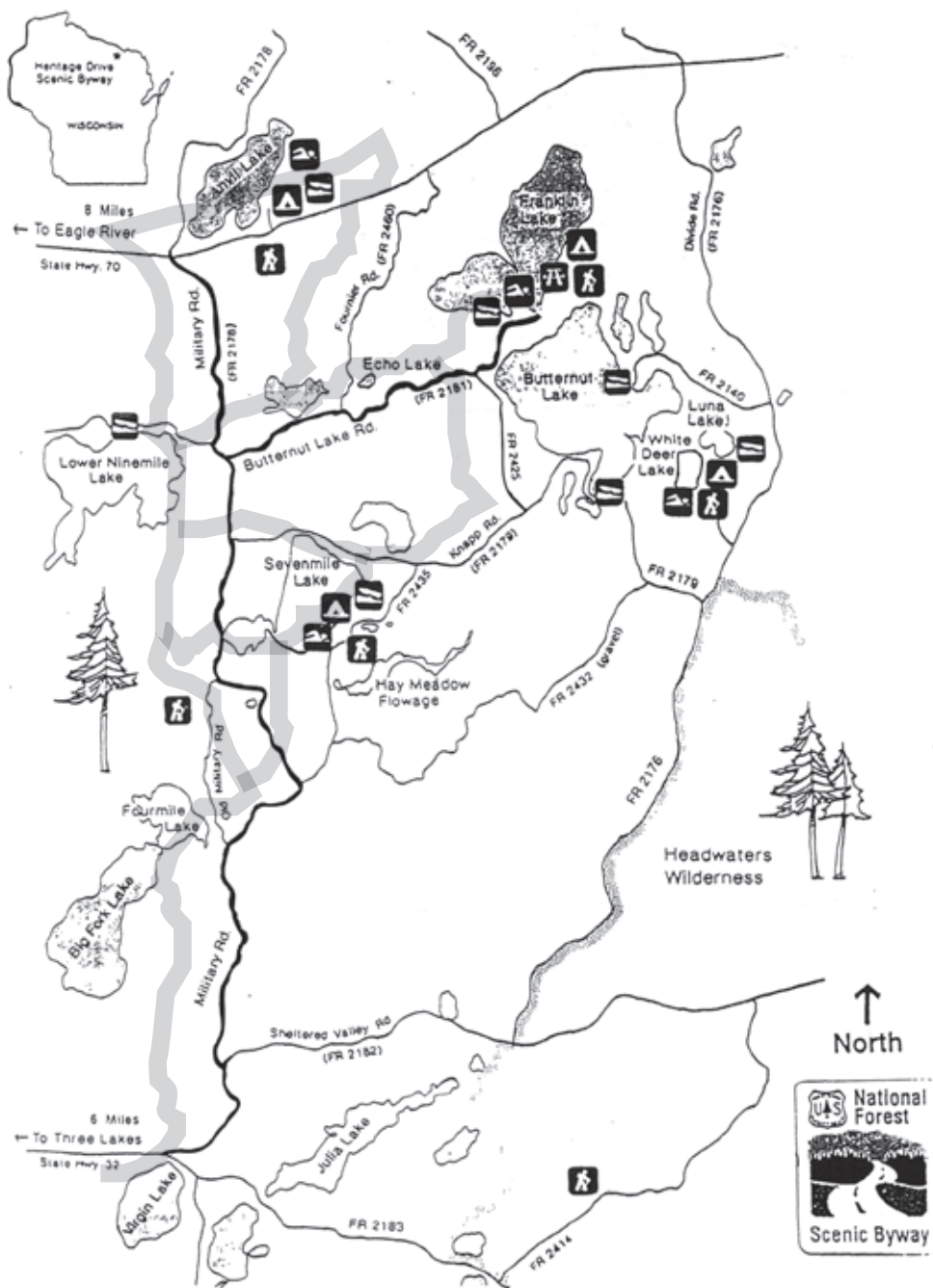
Adventure with us



ThreeLakes.com | 715-546-3344



Military-Butternut Lake Road Scenic Byway





ADVENTURE WITH US

CHEQUAMEGON-NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST

Some of the best trails in Northern Wisconsin await you in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. These trails take you on a delightful tour of the northwoods to remote lakes and streams, breath-taking overlooks, or spend a day in one of the several designated wilderness areas. Wildlife watchers will enjoy the forest's abundant wildlife. With over 1,180 miles of trails open to the public, each season offers a new experience for activities such as hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, snowmobiling and ATVing. Information on area trail locations and features is available by calling the National Forest Service in Eagle River at 715-479-2828.

CAMPING

Grab your camping gear and head to the Nicolet. There are many developed campgrounds in the Nicolet National Forest. Experience the great Northwoods atmosphere as you camp along the shore of one of our picturesque lakes or streams. For more information, visit www.forestcamping.com.

AUTO TOURS

MILITARY-BUTTERNUT LAKE ROAD SCENIC BYWAY

Military Road 5 miles east on Hwy 32, Three Lakes, with its many bends and rises, along with the tunnel effect created by the overhead tree canopy, it makes one feel like a gnome entering an enchanted

forest. From an Indian path called the Lake Superior Trail, to a military supply route in the War of 1812, to today's bicycle-motor vehicle route, Military Road has had a long and vibrant history. In the heyday of Carl Marty's Northernaire, tour buses left daily for chartered wilderness tours via Military Road.

In 1992, the ten-mile section of the road that runs north from Highway 32 was designated a Heritage Scenic Byway. Walt Goldsworthy, who guided many motor tours on Military Road, worked for thirty years to secure the designation. Butternut Lake Road was designed specifically to inform people by highlighting the ancient Hemlock Forest and undulating glacial landscape through which it winds. With its stellar natural features, and being lightly traveled, the Byway has become a favorite biking route.

THREE LAKES/EAGLE RIVER AUTO TOUR

If you are looking for a longer scenic ride, try the Three Lakes/Eagle River Self-Guided Auto Tour. This auto tour was created to highlight the variety of scenic and historic points of interest in the Eagle River Ranger District area. You'll experience a varied, forested landscape and a number of historic spots with informational signs along the way. Don't forget the featured last stop at the Historical Society Museum in Three Lakes. Pick up an auto tour brochure at the Eagle River Ranger Station; it gives directions and describes each of the stops on the route. The tour is about 80 miles long and takes one 4-5 hours to drive and enjoy.

THREE LAKES NATURE TRAILS

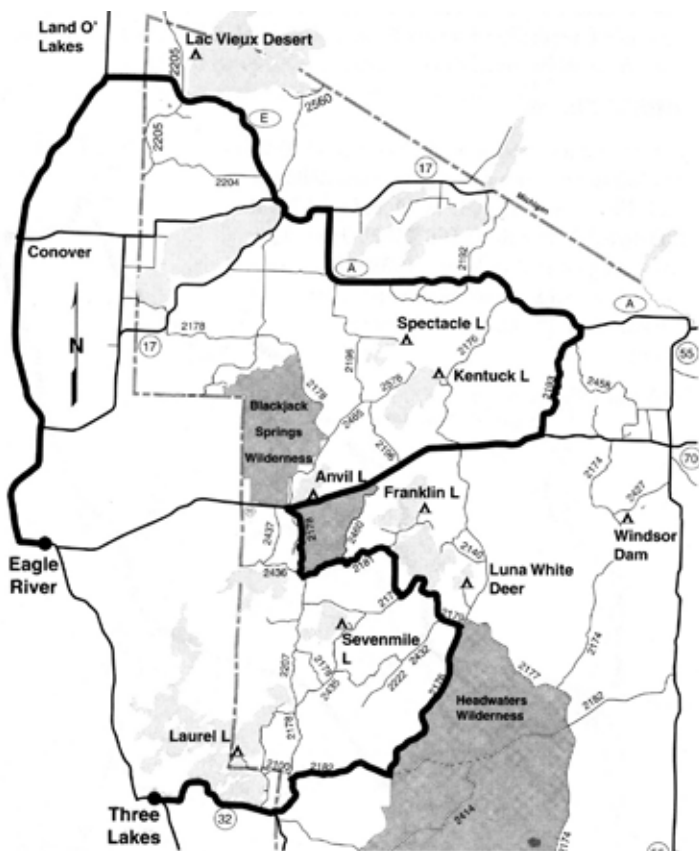
Most of the Three Lakes Trails were founded by our town's distinguished past naturalists: Sam Campbell, who came to be known as the philosopher of the forest; Walt Goldsworthy, who was called the *Thoreau of Three Lakes*; and Carl Marty, who was hailed as *Mr. Conservation*. They have inspired three generations of nature lovers from all over the country. Stop at either the Three Lakes Library or Historical Museum to find out more about them and read their inspiring words.

CANOEING AND KAYAKING

With thousands of lakes and numerous rivers there is no shortage of paddling opportunities in the Northwoods. Canoeing and kayaking are always an adventure and there is a lot to explore.

Canoe and kayak rentals are available at Three Lakes Hardware & Rental in downtown Three Lakes. For information, call 715-546-3680. Find out more about outdoor life in the Northwoods. www.ThreeLakes.com.

Three Lakes/Eagle River Auto Tour



CRYSTAL CREEK PADDLING TRAIL

This could be a point to point, or up and back trip depending on your planning. Consulting a map is recommended. Three-plus miles east of Three Lakes, a bridge on Highway 32 crosses the channel that connects Deer Lake to the south with Big Stone Lake to the north. Just south of the bridge, on the west shore of Deer Lake, stood Carl Marty's original Northernnaire Hotel (which is now replaced by the new Northernnaire Resort). Sixty years ago, a pontoon boat called the *Wilderness Queen* left three times an afternoon for two-hour excursions described by Walt Goldsworthy, the tour's guide, thusly: "You enter this last bit of primeval wilderness through the scenic portals which guard the entrance of Crystal Creek, a sequestered stretch of wilderness antiquity that echoes the romance of past ages. Recently re-discovered, this long-forgotten waterway which once felt the touch of the canoe paddle of the passing Indian and pioneer trapper, has caught the fancy of modern day adventurers." A boat launch is located on the east end of Big Stone Lake.

Today, you can retrace the route by canoe or kayak. Although much of the shoreline is now developed, Nature's splendor is still there to behold. From the Highway 32 bridge, paddle south on Deer Lake one mile, to the southwest bay of Deer Lake, to the confluence with Lower Crystal Creek (on the right). One mile up stream enter Crystal Lake. After paddling the length of the lake, you may take out at the town boat landing. If water levels allow, you can paddle under the Hwy 45 bridge and upstream about 1 mile to an old railroad grade.

EAGLE RIVER HEADWATERS PADDLING TRAIL

This is a start and return route. The put-in is at the National Forest boat ramp at the end of Frogson Landing Road about 6 miles east of Three Lakes, just south of

Hwy 32. After paddling from the boat ramp, turn right heading down stream on the thoroughfare. In about 1/4 mile, just after a slow no wake buoy, take a hard left. You are now heading up stream on the Eagle River. The river has a deep channel with many meanders through alders and marsh grasses bordered almost exclusively by national forest land. After a little over 4 1/2 miles, a large beaver dam blocks the river. This is a good stopping point since you have to paddle about 2-2 1/2 hours back to the boat ramp. However, the river does continue on for several more miles through mostly public lands toward the sub-continental divide. Several more beaver dams are possible. A long-abandoned logging era railroad grade is crossed by the river several times. Ultimately, the river disappears into the forest without sufficient water levels to continue.

JULIA-VIRGIN-WHITEFISH LAKES PADDLING TRAIL



Going east of Three Lakes on Hwy 32, turn left on Lake Julia Road. Follow it straight to the boat landing on Julia Lake. **This is a private boat landing, please use respectfully. No facilities are available.** Paddle north-east about half way up the west side of the lake. At the end of the bay on your left is the outflow of the lake, Julia Creek. **All the land is private along the creek.** As you follow the meandering creek downstream, watch for the remains of a wooden bridge built by the Thunder Lake Lumber Company for their locomotives hauling logs to the sawmill.

(Continued on page 6)

After passing through the Highway 32 culvert, you enter Virgin Lake. Across the lake is a peaceful state-owned island, where you may stop for a restful interlude and admire the old-growth trees the early loggers left stand. Please note that fires and overnight camping are not allowed on the island.

Leaving the island, paddle to the south end of the lake and enter the outflow stream. As you do, you'll see another old Thunder Lake Lumber Company railroad bed and trestle remains. Following the gently meandering stream, you'll once again slip under Hwy 32, only this time into Whitefish Lake.

Keep to the right-hand shore, and again you'll pass under Hwy 32, this time into the Thoroughfare. In season, observe the lush stands of wild rice on either side of you. This was a staple crop of the Native Americans who lived in the area, and now may be harvested by Wisconsin residents each fall.

Takeout is on the right-hand side about one quarter mile downstream, at the landing on Frogson Landing Road. Or, continue onto an alternative takeout at East Big Lake Loop Road Landing, just before the bridge and immediately upstream of Big Lake.

UPPER PINE RIVER PADDLING TRAIL

Paddle the upper portion of one of Wisconsin's three originally designated Wild Rivers. Just downstream from the nationally designated headwaters wilderness area, the Pine River flows gently, meandering through mostly undeveloped, public northern forest. It flows passed beaver dams and over Wildcat Rapids.

Take Hwy 32 east then turn left on Military Rd., then a right on Sheltered Valley Rd. which becomes Pine River Rd. and finally left on NF2177. The put-in is where NF2177 crosses over the Pine River. Here, there once stood a logging-era sluice dam. Because of the deep and hard-bottomed original river channel, this portion of the Pine River can be paddled all

season. Water levels, though adequate, will determine if beaver dams, the occasional downed tree or Wildcat Rapids can be negotiated. There is a portage trail along the left side of the rapids for non-whitewater paddlers. The Pine continues to meander under the Holford Rd. Bridge, past the confluence with the North Branch of the Pine and onto the takeout at the Hwy 55 Bridge. Depending on water and skill levels, the trip can take from 4 to 6 hours.

WINTER ACTIVITIES

ANVIL LAKE TRAIL

The Anvil Lake trail system is located off of Military Road just north of Butternut Lake Road, or you can take Hwy 70 East of Eagle River about 8 miles, to the Anvil Lake Trailhead, on the south side of Hwy 70. Anvil Lake Trail offers 12 miles of groomed trails. There is a log cabin shelter where skiers can enjoy a crackling fire. Be sure to take a snack for the local flock of very tame birds; they will eat right out of your hand. Cross-country skiing is a unique way to become acquainted with the splendor of the Northwoods.

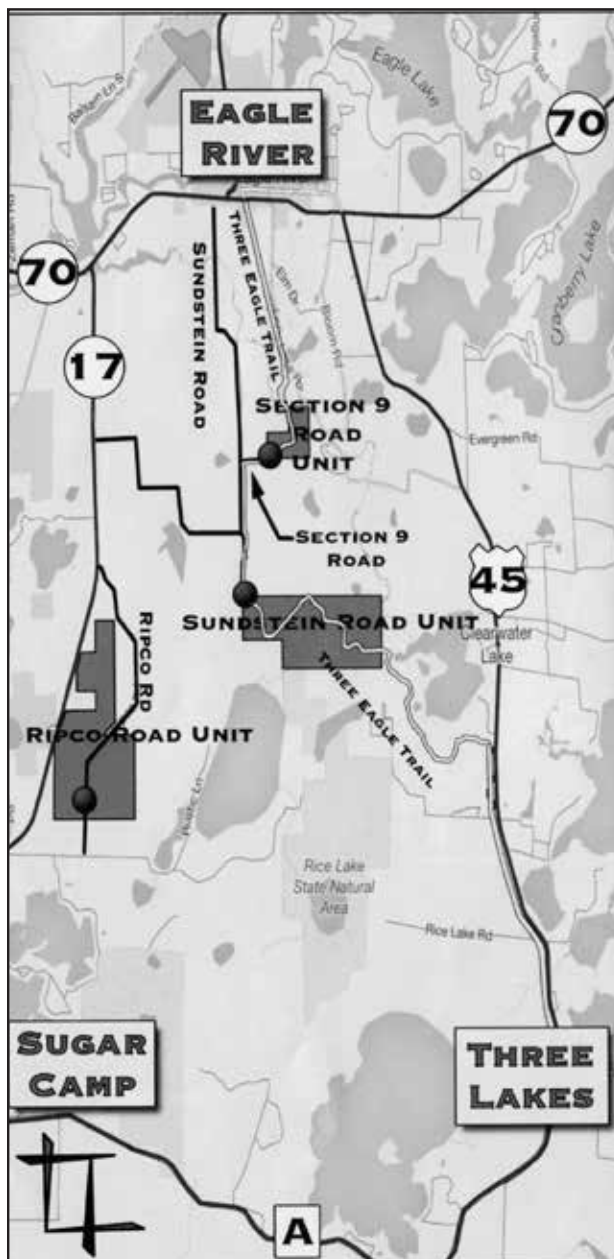
TARA LILA TRAILS

Tara Lila - Ripco Road Park Unit:

Tara Lila's largest conservancy park at nearly 800 acres. The entrance at 7550 Ripco Rd. is just 8 miles from Eagle River. The park's Jewel Tree area's rolling topography hosts a treasure chest of natural features and ecosystems. The Samadhi area feature more dramatic elevations and stunning vista that are rare in a region of myriad lakes and bountiful wetland. Unique to the park unit are its miles of groomed winter Fatbike trail in addition to its rustic hiking and snowshoe trail.

Tara Lila's Section 9 Unit: At 120 acres, the smallest of Tara Lila's conservancy parks contains all of the diversity of the larger units. Just 2 miles south of Eagle River on the Three Eagle Trail, the North end of the unit sports the 600' Four Women

Tara Lila Trails



Boardwalk. The South entrance on Sec. 9 Road has parking, water, privy, and 4 season covered picnic shelter. Three trails provide miles of hiking and snowshoe recreation. Snowshoeing is allowed on the Three Eagle Trail within the park unit. From big boulders at the “Rocks” to the alpine-esque “Frieda’s Meadow” it’s a great way to spend an hour or a day “Exploring...”

Tara Lila’s Sundstein

Road Unit: Welcome to where it all started. The 650+ acre Sundstein Road Unit was our first conservancy park unit and the site of the first Snowshoe Celebration. The expansive park features miles of rustic trail and hosts the Three Eagle Trail from Sundstein Road to the Black Spruce Boardwalk. The Green, Red, and White Tara trails offer snowshoe opportunities for both the novice and the more adventurous.

THREE EAGLE TRAIL

In snow season, 5 miles of the Trail (from miles 3.5 to 8.4) is groomed for cross-country skiing. From the Sundstein Road and Section 9 Road trailheads, some spectacular hiking and snowshoe trails through the neighboring woodlands of Tara Lila can be accessed. More detailed maps are available at the trailhead.

Three Lakes, Wisconsin





HIKING

ARGONNE EXPERIMENTAL FOREST TRAIL



Since 1946, the Argonne Experimental Forest has been managed by the Forest Service as a living laboratory to study methods for managing northern hardwoods. Located off Hwy 32, about 12 miles East of Three Lakes on Experimental Road (FR 2184), this 1/2 mile interpretive trail passes through nine study areas where you can learn about different cutting methods and their effects. The trail features 17 informational signs.

BAILEY LAKE EQUESTRIAN TRAIL



Enjoy this trail from high in the saddle. Take your horse on a slow trot through a tall, red pine forest over what was once a logging road and railroad grade at the turn of the century. Early loggers used a combination of horse drawn sleds and trains to haul timber from the woods. Parts of this

trail are used as a snowmobile route from December through March. The trail is located on level, flat terrain, and follows snowmobile trail and forest roads for most of the trail length. Highlines and hitching racks are available at the trailhead. Camping is allowed at the trailhead where a large group fire ring and a few picnic tables are located. Use of certified weed-free hay is required on all National Forest Lands.

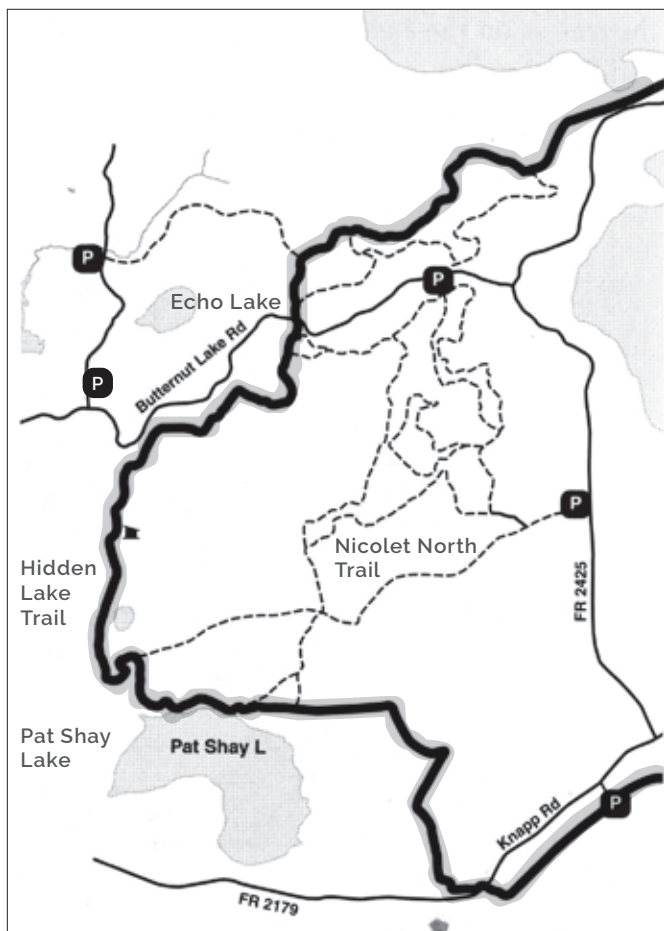
ECHO LAKE

The Military Road north from Hwy 32 or south from Hwy 70 to Butternut Lake Road. Follow Butternut Lake Road to FR2460. Turn north on FR2460 about .10 mi. to single car pullouts and park. Head east into the site, there are no established trails. You are invited to wander the area and enjoy the sights and sounds of the old growth hemlock-hardwood forest situated on rolling moraines. This site is one of the oldest and least disturbed in the Nicolet. (see page 9). Most of the stand is dominated by large hemlock (to 45 inches in diameter) with yellow birch, and sugar maple. The mature forest provides nesting habitat for numerous neotropical migrant birds including the black-throated blue warbler, and an abundance of other wildlife.

FRANKLIN LAKE INTERPRETIVE TRAIL AND ADJACENT TRAILS

At the northern terminus of the **Military-Butternut Lake Road Scenic Byway** is the Franklin Lake Campground and Interpretive Trail. The campground has magnificent stone and log cabins, pavilions, and fireplaces, all constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. The buildings are now on the National Register of Historic Places.

The mile-long interpretive trail, meanders through what has come to be known as the *Hemlock Cathedral*—a virgin stand of immense Hemlock and White Pine. Walt Goldsworthy, the US Forest Service's naturalist, was once the resident naturalist at the campground and would guide Trail walks.



and north to Franklin Lake Campground. Sites along the way include several small lakes with scenic vistas and remarkable stand of old hemlock trees. Camp along the way near one of the small lakes or at either of the developed campgrounds.

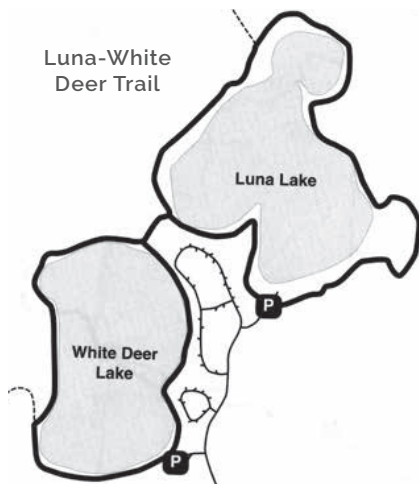
LUNA-WHITE DEER TRAIL

From Eagle River travel 13.4 miles on Hwy 70 East to FR 2176 (Divide Road). Turn right (south) and continue 5.6 miles to FR 2188. Turn right and travel 0.7 miles to the campground. Hike along the shorelines of both Luna and White Deer Lakes on this tranquil 4 mile loop, adjacent to Luna-White Deer Campground. Bring your binoculars and camera because you'll likely catch sight of loons on

From the Trail, one can continue on the thirteen-mile **Hidden Lakes Trail**, with its scenic vistas overlooking small lakes and its section through a breathtaking stand of great Hemlocks. Another option is the six-mile trail leading to the **Anvil Lake Trail** complex.

HIDDEN LAKE TRAIL

Looking for adventure? Put on your hiking boots and try the Hidden Lakes Trail. It is a long distance trail providing the chance for an overnight campout by a small remote lake. Begin your hike on the **Franklin Lake Interpretive Trail**. The Hidden Lakes Trail begins at the T intersection about a half mile from the parking lot and loops to the south around Butternut Lake, passing Luna-White Deer Lake Campground and then back west



one of these lakes. Both of the crystal clear, undeveloped lakes present a setting hikers can enjoy at dawn on a foggy morning or on a crisp, clear, and sunny fall afternoon.

NICOLET NORTH TRAIL

From Eagle River, take State Highway 70 east for 11 miles to Fornier Road (FR 2460). Turn right and go south about 3 miles to the parking lot on the right, which accommodates 5 vehicles. This is a favorite trail for cross-country skiers, hikers, and mountain bike enthusiasts. Fifteen miles of trail are groomed and tracked in winter for skiing (traditional-style as well as ski-skating style).

The Nicolet North Trail is connected to the Anvil National Recreation Trail. In addition, part of the Hidden Lakes Trail follows some of this trail. The trail meanders through old growth hemlocks and by several small lakes that are great for wildlife viewing, like Pat Shay Lake and Echo Lake. (see map page 9)

SAM CAMPBELL MEMORIAL TRAIL

Four-plus miles north on Military Road (Forest Road 2178), then left another mile on Old Military Road (Forest Road 2207), brings you to the Sam Campbell Memorial Forest and Hiking Trail Complex. Sam Campbell had established a series of interconnected trails on the mainland just north of his island sanctuary on Fourmile Lake, which he named *Sunset Trail*, *Friendship Trail*, *Chapel Trail*, and *Vanishing Lake Trail*. They were the current Trail's predecessors. There are self-guiding maps and signs along the Trail. A section of the Trail leads to Wegimind Point and Vanishing Lake, which are featured in a number of Sam's writings. The entire Trail is three miles long and meanders through a forest of Pine, Fir, Cedar, Spruce, and hardwoods.

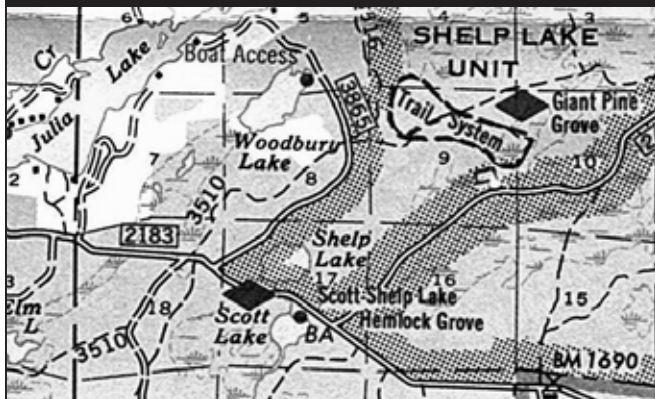
SCOTT LAKE AND GIANT WHITE PINE TRAILS

Scott Lake Trail: Eight miles east of Three Lakes lies the Headwaters Wilderness. Just into the Wilderness, on the north side of Scott Lake Road (Forest Road 2183) is Shelp Lake. A short trail winds from the parking area through a grove of ancient Hemlocks, then out on a boardwalk over the bog surrounding the lake. Here is a great opportunity to keep your feet dry while getting a close-up look at bog plants and animals. Scott Lake, which is blanketed with wild rice, is found on the opposite side of the road. Directly across Scott Lake Road is the access to the Scott Lake Trail that circles through a stand of towering White and Red Pine, Hemlock, and Yellow Birch that are hundreds of years old for about 1 mile. A Research Natural Area, it gives an authentic feel for what the Northwoods was like before the logging era.

Giant White Pine Trail: A half-mile further east on Scott Lake Road from the Scott Lake Trail, head north on Giant Pine Road (Forest Road 2414), for a little over a mile. You'll find a small parking area on the left-hand side of the road. A rustic one and a half mile long trail takes you from there through one of the best surviving examples of a mature Hemlock-Sugar Maple-Yellow Birch-Basswood forest capped with a super-canopy of towering White Pine.



Giant Pine Scott Lake Trails



THREE EAGLE TRAIL

Connecting the communities of Three Lakes and Eagle River, this pedestrian and biking pathway begins at Don Burnside Park in Three Lakes and continues north to the restored railway depot in Eagle River. Shortly after exiting the park, the trail follows the former Chicago & Northwestern rail grade for 3.5 miles, then heads west on an exceptionally scenic route through mixed upland forest and wetlands. Boardwalks take you over a cranberry bog and through a black spruce swamp, then you cross a bridge over Mud Creek.

At mile 8.4, the packed limestone surface temporarily ends, and the route continues north on Sundstein Road for 1.2 miles, then east on Section 9 Road for .25 miles.

There the limestone trail resumes its northerly direction through a beautiful woodland. A highlight along this stretch, at mile marker 10.5, is the Four Women Boardwalk: a 660 foot long structure that spans Mud Creek and its widening flood plain. The trail rejoins the old railroad grade near mile 11 and follows it to mile 12.7, just south of the depot on Railroad Street in Eagle River.

THUNDER LAKE MARSH

Thunder Lake Wildlife Area is a 3,000-acre property located one mile north of Three Lakes. It is managed by the DNR for wildlife preservation and recreation. A wide variety of wetland wildlife frequent the property including mallards, blue-winged teal, ring necked ducks, Great blue

herons, sandhill cranes, Canada geese and numerous species of wetland songbirds. Three rare species, the Nelson sharp-tailed sparrow, merlin and the yellow rail nest on the property. The area encompasses 120-acre Rice Lake and incorporates 1.3 miles of shoreline on 1,800-acre Thunder Lake. The whole property is open for hunting except for the waterfowl closed area around Rice Lake. Besides hunting, the area offers a wide array of recreational activities including Birding, Wildlife viewing, Canoeing, Hiking/Cross country skiing (no designated trails), Trapping, Wild edibles/gathering, and Biking with easy access from the Three Eagle Trail.

THREE LAKES PARK SYSTEM..... 715-546-3316

Don Burnside Park • Cy Williams Park • Three Lakes Beach • Phyllis Feland Memorial Ski Park • Maple Lake Fishing Pier

The Town of Three Lakes through the guidance of the Park Commission operates and maintains five distinct areas for recreation and reflection. These areas offer multiple opportunities for activities such as tennis, pickleball, soccer, baseball, softball, horse riding, swimming, fishing, and a golf driving range. Picnic tables, outdoor grills, and bathroom facilities are located throughout the Park System.



Three Eagle Half
Marathon & 5k.
Photo by Rachel
Wood Studios.

Don Burnside Park provides a true recreation area for all sports. Named after Don Burnside a long time Park Board President who provided endless hours of community support. Here you will find our ball diamonds, tennis courts, 6 pickleball courts (hosting our annual July tournament), soccer fields, playground area, and horse arena. Our local high school and youth programs utilize this park for their year round programs. A large pavilion is available for family reunions, awards ceremonies, and meetings. It plays host to the annual 4th of July party with music, non-profit vendors, and night time fireworks. Memory Lane is adjacent to the pavilion providing a location for planting trees or shrubs in memory of family, friends, or community patrons. The park's major fundraiser, the Three Lakes Softball Classic, is an annual event. Hosting up to 20 teams, this event brings in hundreds of players and spectators on Father's day weekend in June.

Cy Williams Park named in honor of the late professional baseball player and community leader provides a quieter side to the community. A gazebo is available for weddings, and musical events. It's a prime location for concerts, our Fireman's picnic, fun at the playground, and the holiday tree lighting/Santa, or just a place to pass time.

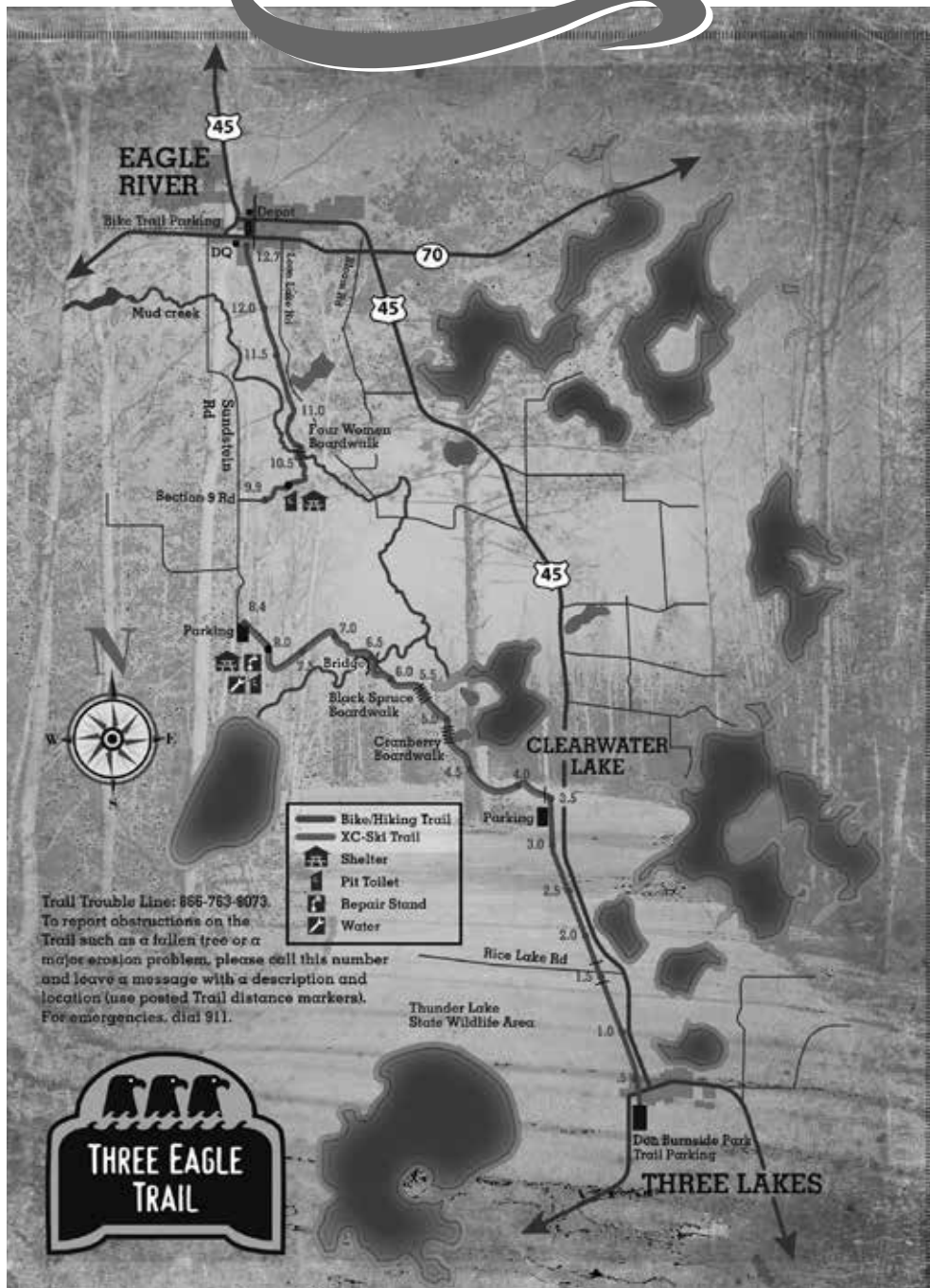
The **Three Lakes** beach is located at the north end of the park with a picnic shelter and bathhouse. Just down the road on Lake Street the **Maple Lake fishing pier** is available for the angler of all ages. The beach and pier are maintained in cooperation with the Three Lakes Wildlife Association.

Phyllis Feland's Memorial Ski Park provides waterskiing opportunities for our area youth. Local citizens and summer residents can take advantage of this area located on Big Stone Lake by joining the local ski club. The club operates shows throughout the summer providing entertainment as well as teaching waterskiing safety.

The Park Commission helps maintain the Townline boat landing located on Maple Lake Dam Road, with the assistance from the Town of Three Lakes and Three Lakes Fish and Wildlife Improvement Association.

Three Lakes is fortunate to have a large diverse park system. Our multi-use, well maintained parks, have been created through citizen input and suggestions, public and private contributions, and volunteers. Any ideas or suggestions you might have can be submitted to the Three Lakes Town office at 715-546-3316.

Three Eagle Trail





Brochure provided with appreciation to the Town of Three Lakes and The Natural Resources Committee.
Layout by Rachel Wood Studios. Copyright © 2020.
Printed by Press Express in Rhinelander, WI.