



2025 - 2029

KEWEENAW

RECREATION PLAN

COUNTY

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INTRODUCTION

Nowhere else in Michigan exists a landscape as majestic as Keweenaw County. Surrounded by the deep blue waters of Lake Superior, the region is rich in geological and ancient archeological sites, unique land formations, rugged terrain, boreal forests, lakes, rivers and streams. Copper mining by indigenous peoples occurred in the region as far back as the last Ice age, growing into a major industry in the 1800s. Forestry and



High Rock Trail – Photo provided by Visit Keweenaw

timber production also became an important industry in the county. The large holdings of managed timberland opened to the public through Michigan’s Commercial Forest program, providing diverse recreational access and opportunities in the county.

In more recent years, as the mining industry has disappeared and the timber harvest has slowed, the land itself has become the focal point to those that live in the region. The commercial timberland that has been sold to private owners and developers has sparked concern about maintaining public access that is vital to a recreational economy. Today, tourism is Keweenaw County’s primary industry. Old logging roads and trails cross the landscape, providing access for biking, hiking, snowmobiles, and ATVs. Isle Royale National Park, a 132,000 acres wilderness recreation, founded in 1940, lies 45 miles off the western coast of the Keweenaw Peninsula and is contained within the county’s borders. In recent years, new mountain biking trails, downhill skiing, cross country ski trails, and other recreational amenities have been developed to further support the county’s growing tourism industry

Many organizations have stepped in to help preserve the land for native wildlife, plant life, and recreational use. The 2019-2023 Keweenaw County Recreation Plan recognized the critical juncture the county was facing due to access challenges caused by changes in land ownership and corporate policies. In 2022, The Nature Conservancy purchased more than 32,500 acres of former timberlands, known as the Keweenaw Heartlands, as a temporary owner working with the community to transition the land to public governance and management with a goal of sustaining the recreational economy and revitalizing the health of this working forest. Recently, the Western UP Planning & Development Region (WUPPDR) partnered with Visit Keweenaw and the University of Michigan to study the impact of tourism in the Western UP.

It certainly is a unique time in the history of Keweenaw County. The Nature Conservancy, DNR, and local and regional partners are planning for the future of the 32,500 acres of Keweenaw Heartlands, the Copper Country Scenic Byway that traverses the county is experiencing new life, and a task force working to address emergency services and facilities to serve residents and visitors has been established. At the same time, the county is mapping out a new master plan, revisiting land use ordinances, and creating this Recreation Plan. These efforts will influence decisions and have a significant impact on the county's economy in the coming years.

The purpose of this plan is to set forth a recreation strategy for Keweenaw County that considers the current and future changes to the land while building collaborative efforts to assist decision-making regarding investment in recreational projects in Keweenaw County. This plan was developed with the assistance of the Western Upper Peninsula Planning & Development Region (WUPPDR) in accordance with the guidelines for Community Park, Recreation, Open Spaces, and Greenway Plans published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and referred to as the five-year 2025-2029 Keweenaw County Recreation Plan. This recreation plan begins by examining the inventory of parks and sites owned and managed by the County via the Keweenaw County Road Commission. The extensive lands held for public enjoyment are significant to the economic viability of the county. A five-year, DNR-approved Recreation Plan is necessary for governmental entities to pursue DNR-administered grants.

Keweenaw County Initial Recreation Committee:

Mark Aho
Eddie Brecht
Harvey Desnick
Loni Gliebemann
Raymond Landsberg
Gina Nicholas
Julia Petersen

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Keweenaw County, made up of five political townships and one village (**Figure 1**), is known for its stunning landscapes, featuring rocky shores with agate-strewn beaches, vast woodlands, and rugged terrain. Scattered among these natural wonders are the small, remote communities of Ahmeek, Copper Harbor, Mohawk, Gay, Eagle River, Eagle Harbor, and Lac La Belle. While each community has its own unique charm, they are all economically connected to the area's rich natural resources. The total land area of Keweenaw County is approximately 540 square miles (1,400 km²). However, the county also includes a significant amount of water area, primarily from Lake Superior, making the total area (land and water) around 6,000 square miles (15,500 km²), of which the vast majority is water.

Keweenaw County Location Map

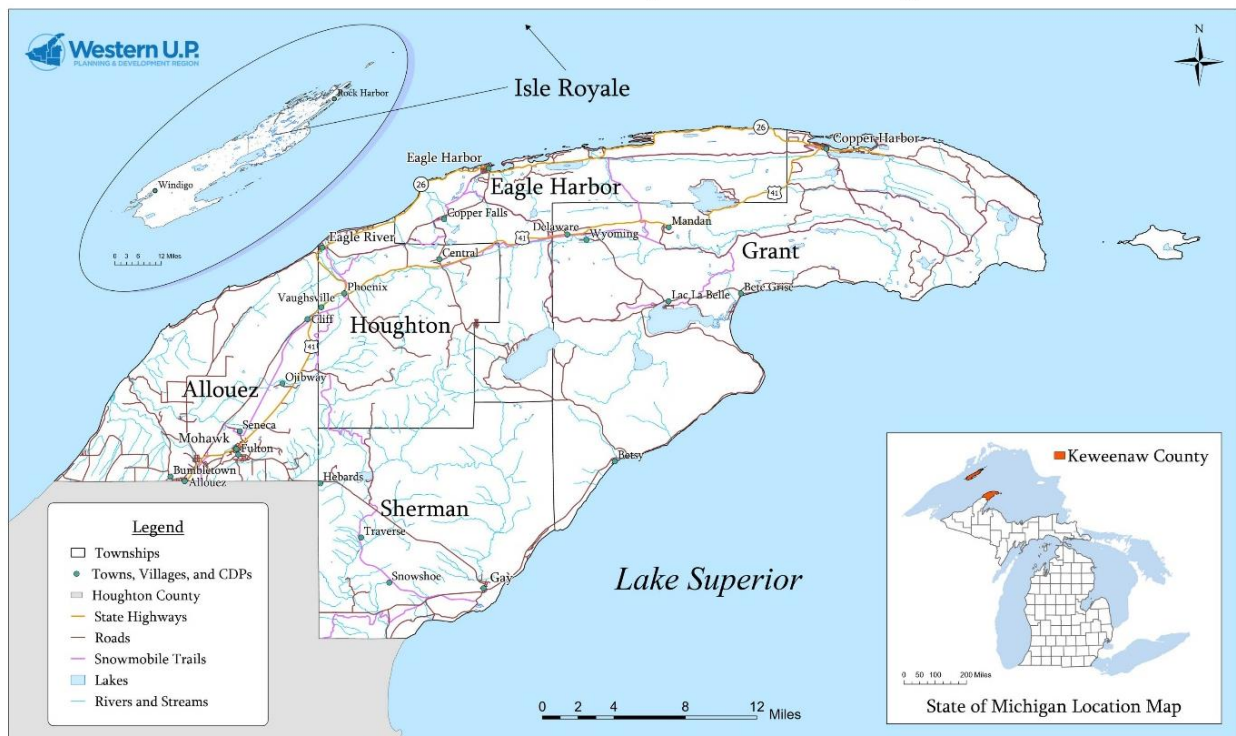


Figure 1: Keweenaw County Location Map

Ahmeek

This former mining community, located near the southern boundary of Keweenaw County along U.S. Highway 41, serves as one of the two main gateways into the county. As the only incorporated municipality in the area, the village holds a unique status.

Copper Harbor

At the northernmost tip of Keweenaw County lies Copper Harbor, once a bustling port for shipping copper in the 19th century. Today, Copper Harbor has transformed into a popular tourist destination, home to Fort Wilkins State Park, a gateway to Isle Royale National Park, and an internationally acclaimed mountain bike trail system.



Photo by [DebMomOf3 \(CC BY-ND 2.0\)](#)

Eagle Harbor

Eagle Harbor, located 14 miles west of Copper Harbor along the northern shore of the Keweenaw Peninsula, is a close-knit community primarily made up of seasonal residents who leave during the long winters. The town boasts its own ski trail system and is situated next to the Nature Conservancy's Mt. Baldy Preserve, offering residents and visitors access to natural beauty year-round.

Eagle River

Eagle River, situated along Highway M-26 on the northern side of the Keweenaw Peninsula, serves as the county seat. Once a thriving copper mining town thanks to its location near the Cliff Range, the community now offers scenic views of the Eagle River and boasts a sandy public beach, making it a peaceful spot to enjoy the area's natural beauty.



Photo credit: Harvey Desnick

Gay

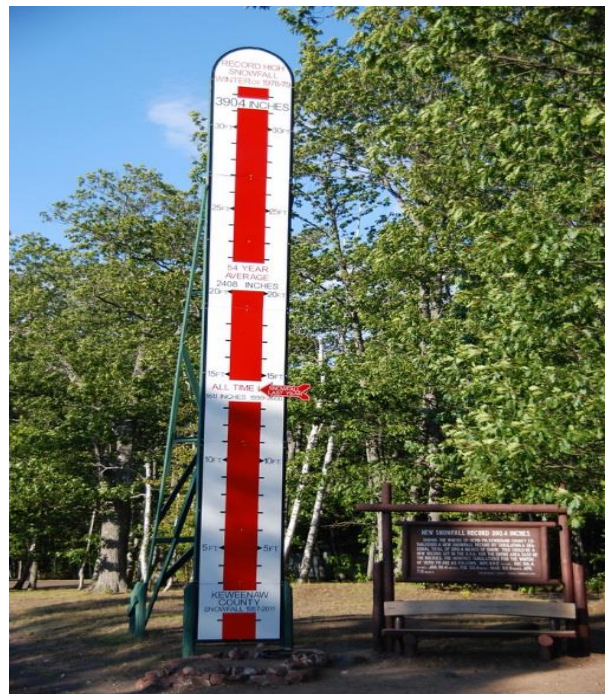
Located not far from Mohawk is the small community of Gay, named after Joseph E. Gay, who initiated mining operations in the area. Gay is historically significant as the site of a former copper ore stamping mill, where native copper and volcanic rock were crushed into smaller fragments until the copper was separated from the host rock.

Lac La Belle

Situated on the south shore of the Keweenaw Peninsula, Lac La Belle was once home to a stamping plant that processed copper from nearby mines, including the Mendota and Delaware Mines. Today, it has evolved into a resort community, known for its tranquil atmosphere and primarily summer cottages, attracting seasonal visitors who enjoy its peaceful setting.

Mohawk

Like its neighbor Ahmeek, Mohawk is a former mining town and is the largest town in the County. In 1896, a lumberman found some native copper in the area and exploration by Joseph E. Gay proved the value of the find. In 1898, the Mohawk Mining Company began operation, and the community developed with the mine



Keweenaw County snow depth gauge sign along US 41 –
Photo by [Joe Ross \(CC BY-SA 2.0\)](#)

The population of Keweenaw County as of the 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) was 2,046. Most of the Keweenaw County's population is concentrated in Eagle River, Copper Harbor, Mohawk, and Ahmeek. According to the 2022 Census, Allouez Township had a population of approximately 1,428 people, while Grant Township and Eagle Harbor Township



Photo credit: Harvey Desnick

are smaller but still important communities in the region

The county's overall population density is very low, averaging about 4 people per square mile, reflecting its rural and expansive terrain. The largest concentration of residents is found in Allouez Township in the southern part of the county rather than the other four townships which are more remote and rugged.

Population does increase during summer months as seasonal residents visit the nearly 1,176 seasonal homes (2022 Census) which represent over 47% of the

total housing units in the area. The community of Eagle Harbor has the highest concentration of these seasonal homes, with around 488 units, while Allouez Township has about 165 seasonal units. The median age of residents in the county is 58, much higher than the state average of 39.9 and of neighboring Houghton County at 31.9. Eagle Harbor and Grant Townships have the highest median ages, while Houghton and Allouez Townships have the youngest median ages in the county.

Important demographic statistics from the 2022 ACS are shown in **Table 1**, providing a brief snapshot of the area as compared to the State of Michigan.

Table 1: Selected demographic data

Statistic	Keweenaw County	State of Michigan
Population	2,046	10,050,811
% of Population 65 & Older, 2022	36%	17.77%
% of Population Under 18, 2022	17.0%	21.37%
Median Age, 2022	58	39.9
% w/Bachelor’s Degree or Higher, 2022	37%	32.1%
Median Household Income, 2022	\$55,560	\$66,600
Per Capita Income, 2022	\$41,795	\$38,151
Average Household Size, 2022	2.0	2.4
Median Housing Value, 2022	\$155,900	\$224,400

Source: 2022 American Community Survey

The diverse population living and visiting Keweenaw County necessitates a range of recreational activities, supporting programs and services specific to each community. The county is also dependent on tourism, specifically keyed on outdoor recreation, trails, natural beauty, copper mining heritage, and as home to partner sites of the Keweenaw National Historical Park.

Keweenaw County is known for its rugged ridgeline (the Cliff Range) with elevations ranging from 400 to 900 feet above lake level. The terrain varies from conglomerate rock to sandy beaches. The rugged terrain and variable soils limit development potential in many areas. Northern hardwoods are the predominant forest cover with 128,632 acres considered prime forest lands mostly located in inland areas of the county. The county also supports several rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species, as well as special plant communities which are the focus of conservancy groups in the area.



Photo credit: Mark R. Upton Photography

Lake Superior helps to moderate the temperatures in the county but also encourages high precipitation rates. Annual snowfall averages 240 inches because of the lake effect. The weather has a tremendous impact on the tourist potential as summer visitors seek the cooling effect of the lake, while winter guests seek the abundant snowfall for downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE & SUPPORTING PARTNERS

Staffing

Parks and recreation responsibilities in Keweenaw County are split among the Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners, Keweenaw County Road Commission Agency and the Keweenaw County Parks and Rec Committee (See **Figure 2**). The Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners provides oversight to county-owned facilities. The Keweenaw County Road Commission is responsible for maintenance of Road Commission owned facilities and for caretaking Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) roadside facilities.

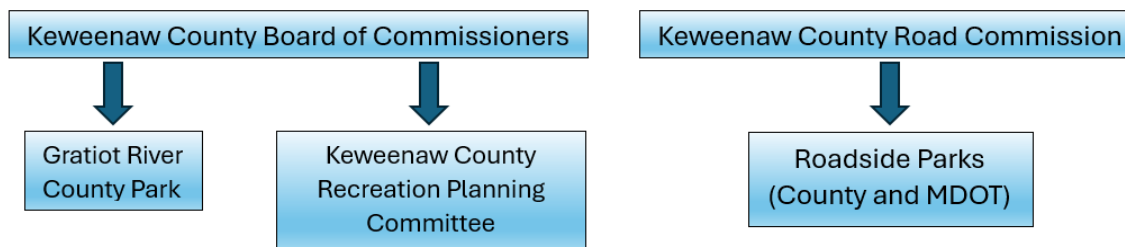


Figure 2: Administrative Structure

Budget

The Keweenaw County Road Commission has a budget of approximately \$75,000 for annual maintenance of county roadside parks and an additional \$30,000 for the maintenance of MDOT roadside facilities. The County does not have a dedicated budget for general recreation expenses. For additional recreation projects, the County Board of Commissions allocates funds as needed and available.

Partnerships/Volunteers

While the County, Road Commission, Townships (Allouez, Eagle Harbor, Grant, Houghton and Sherman), and DNR are primary recreation providers for Keweenaw County, they are only one aspect of the community of partners that support recreation programming in the region. In the county there are numerous entities that protect lands and public access, provide recreation and education programs, volunteers, funding and are social outlets for various interests. These partners and potential partners include:

- Bike Initiative Keweenaw (BIKE!)
- Calumet-Keweenaw Sportsman's Club
- Copper Country Audubon Society
- Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited
- Copper Country Ski Tigers
- Copper Country Trail Scenic Byway Committee
- Copper Harbor Trails Club
- Copper Harbor Improvement Association
- Copper Shores Health Foundation
- Federal Agencies (EPA, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, NOAA)
- Gratiot Lake Conservancy
- Horizon School
- Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District
- Keweenaw ATV Club
- Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce
- Keweenaw Community Forest Company (KCFC)
- Keweenaw Community Foundation
- Keweenaw County Historical Society
- Keweenaw Land Trust
- Keweenaw Nordic Ski Club
- Keweenaw National Historic Park
- Keweenaw Outdoor Recreation Coalition (KORC)
- Keweenaw Snowmobile Club
- Keweenaw Water Trail Association
- Isle Royale National Park (and Institute)
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Michigan Nature Association
- Michigan Technological University
- Northwoods Conservancy
- Private Landowners (TRG is the largest)
- The Nature Conservancy
- Visit Keweenaw
- Western Upper Peninsula Planning & Development Region (WUPPDR)

RECREATION INVENTORY

Keweenaw County offers a wide variety of recreational facilities for both residents and visitors. Through collaboration among local townships, the county, the Keweenaw County Road Commission, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the Michigan Department of Transportation, and private organizations, a comprehensive network of recreational opportunities has been developed across the county. This plan focuses specifically on facilities owned and managed by the county and road commission, highlighting their role in local recreation. The facility inventory was compiled in 2018 using previous plans, on-site evaluations, committee members input, local partner organizations, and interviews with the County Road Engineer. Below are descriptions of the types and locations of county or road commission-owned or maintained recreational facilities (**Figure 3**). All inventoried sites are available for use throughout the county. Additionally, accessibility assessments and rankings are provided for each site, based on criteria from the DNR Guidelines for Developing Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans.

- 1 = none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 2 = some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 3 = most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 4 = the entire park meets accessibility guidelines
- 5 = the entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design

Seven Principles of Universal Design

1. **Equitable Use:** The design is useful and marketable to any group of users.
2. **Flexibility in Use:** The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
3. **Simple and Intuitive Use:** Use of the design is easy to understand.
4. **Perceptible Information:** The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user.
5. **Tolerance for Error:** The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintentional actions.
6. **Low Physical Effort:** The design can be used efficiently and comfortably.
7. **Size and Space for Approach and Use:** Appropriate size and space is provided for approach and use

Keweenaw County Recreation Facilities



Figure 3: Keweenaw County Recreation Sites

County/Road Commission Owned or Managed Facilities

Agate Harbor: The County owns the tip of the rocky peninsula, and an island located there. This property is undeveloped for recreational use. Accessibility Assessment = 1

Ahmeek Park: The Emil Aho Memorial Ice Rink (Ahmeek Rink) is located on School Street. There is a small playground adjacent to the ice rink. It consists of a swing set, a slide, and a merry-go-round. Accessibility Assessment = 1

Bete Grise North Beach: Owned by Keweenaw County Road Commission, this beach provides over 1,000 feet of beautiful sand frontage on Lake Superior. Toilet and changing facilities are provided. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Brockway Mountain Drive: A Copper Country Trail National Byway-designated site and a popular tourist destination known for its scenic views. From the top of Brockway, visitors are treated to a 360-degree panoramic view of miles of beautiful Lake Superior coastline and Keweenaw forestland. Accessibility Assessment = 3

Brunette Park: Owned by Keweenaw County Road Commission, this roadside park occupies a narrow strip of land with 1,000 feet on Lake Superior with a beautiful sandy beach. Picnic and toilet facilities are provided. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Cliff Mine: The Cliff Mine is a historic site famous for being the first copper mine in Keweenaw County to generate a profit. Opened in 1845, the mine produced large quantities of copper through the 1870s, diminishing yields thereafter until its closing in the 1950s. Today, the site is owned by the Keweenaw County Road Commission and contains some archaeological remnants in addition to hiking trails. The site is visited by individuals interested in the region's mining heritage, geological enthusiasts and outdoor recreationists. Accessibility Assessment = 1



Photo Credit: Visit Keweenaw

Copper Falls Park: Owned by Keweenaw County Road Commission, this roadside park has a toilet that was recently replaced in 2023 and meets accessibility guidelines. Picnic tables, stoves, and toilet facilities are provided. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Copper Harbor Overlook: Overlooking the town of Copper Harbor, this roadside property on Brockway Mountain Drive is owned by the Keweenaw County Road Commission. Accessibility Assessment = 3

Eagle Harbor Beach: Keweenaw County and Eagle Harbor Township own this sandy public beach on Lake Superior. Eagle Harbor Beach is used for swimming, boating, and picnics. It occupies a narrow strip of land along Highway M-26 in the community of Eagle Harbor. Playground equipment is available. Accessibility Assessment = 1

Eagle River Beach: Public beach located in the community of Eagle River with picnic tables, and toilet/changing room facilities. The land is owned by Houghton Township, Keweenaw County, and Keweenaw County Road Commission. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Eagle River Bridge Park: A roadside park adjacent to the township hall in Eagle River featuring the historic Eagle River Bridge along with a view of the Eagle River Falls. This is owned by MDOT. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Esrey Park: Keweenaw County and MDOT own this roadside park located off Highway M-26. It features over 1,000 feet of rocky shoreline, a small shelter, a small pavilion near the water, water source, toilet facilities, picnic tables, rock stairway, grills, and bear-proof garbage cans. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Gay Stamp Sands Park: Owned by Keweenaw County Road Commission, this park overlooks the stamp sands and tailings piles on Lake Superior. No facilities are provided and there are no plans for the site. Accessibility Assessment = 1

Gabriel Chop Park: a community park in Ahmeek, MI. The park plays host to many community events throughout the year. Accessibility Assessment = 1



Photo Credit: Mike Kestell

Gratiot River County Park: This park is owned by Keweenaw County provides 222 acres of land, 8,489 feet of Lake Superior shoreline, and one-half mile on the Gratiot River. Only day use is allowed. Accessibility Assessment = 1

Great Sand Bay Public Beaches: State (MDOT) owned scenic turnouts and table sites with parking, restrooms, and beach access near Owl Creek on M-26 in Eagle Harbor Township, four miles west of Eagle Harbor. Maintained by Keweenaw County Road Commission. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Haven Falls Park: Owned by Keweenaw County Road Commission, this roadside park includes picnic and toilet facilities along with an attractive waterfall. The park is located across the road from beautiful Lac La Belle. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Hebard Park: A developed MDOT roadside park with 990 feet of rocky Lake Superior shoreline. Picnic and toilet facilities are provided. The park is split by M-26. Owned by MDOT and maintained by Keweenaw County Road Commission. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Hunters Point: Located in Copper Harbor, Michigan, this park is a scenic peninsula with trails along Lake Superior's rugged shoreline, offering views of the water and abundant wildlife. The park is popular for its rocky beaches, birdwatching, and peaceful natural setting.

Jackson Riverside Park: Owned by Keweenaw County Road Commission, this developed roadside picnic area is a popular site for fishing and smelting during the spring of the year. It is located on the Little Gratiot River near Lac La Belle. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Lake Bailey Island: The County owns this undeveloped island, and it is used primarily for primitive camping, day use, and fishing. Accessibility Assessment = 1

Lake Medora Islands: Several undeveloped islands in Lake Medora are owned by the County and are used by fishermen for primitive camping. There is a public access site on the east side of the lake including a boat launch and outhouse. Accessibility Assessment = 1

Mohawk Park: The Mohawk Park is located at the site of the old Mohawk school. It is bordered by a unique rock fence that has been a historical landmark for many years. The park consists of a small pavilion, concessions, picnic tables and benches, a volleyball court, and a variety of playground equipment. Accessibility Assessment = 1

Seneca Lake Twp Park: A serene spot featuring a small lake perfect for fishing, picnicking, and wildlife watching, this park is located off Cliff Drive, near Mohawk, MI. There is also a dock and rustic walking trail for hiking through the wooded area that surrounds the lake. Accessibility Assessment = 1

Silver River Falls Park: An accessible and iconic waterfall for Keweenaw tourists. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Tobacco River Mouth: This Keweenaw County Road Commission-owned area is popular with fishermen and features pit toilets and picnic tables. The toilet was recently replaced in 2024 and meets accessibility guidelines. Plans are in the works for further development to include a boat launching site with handicap access. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Veterans Park on U.S. 41 in Ahmeek: A roadside park with tourist information center, toilets and a Veterans Memorial. West of the highway is owned by MDOT and the east side with the memorial is owned by Keweenaw County Road Commission. Accessibility Assessment = 2

W.C. Veale Park: Owned by Keweenaw County Road Commission, this small roadside park has a rocky shore and is a day use park and includes picnic facilities, pit toilets and 235 feet of Lake Superior frontage. Accessibility Assessment = 2

Recreation Trails

Recreation trails have become an integral component of economic development and quality of life for Keweenaw County residents and are a major drive of tourism to the region. The county offers an extensive trail network system for both motorized and non-motorized use.

Figure 4 provides the locations of major trail systems in the County.

Keweenaw County Trails Map

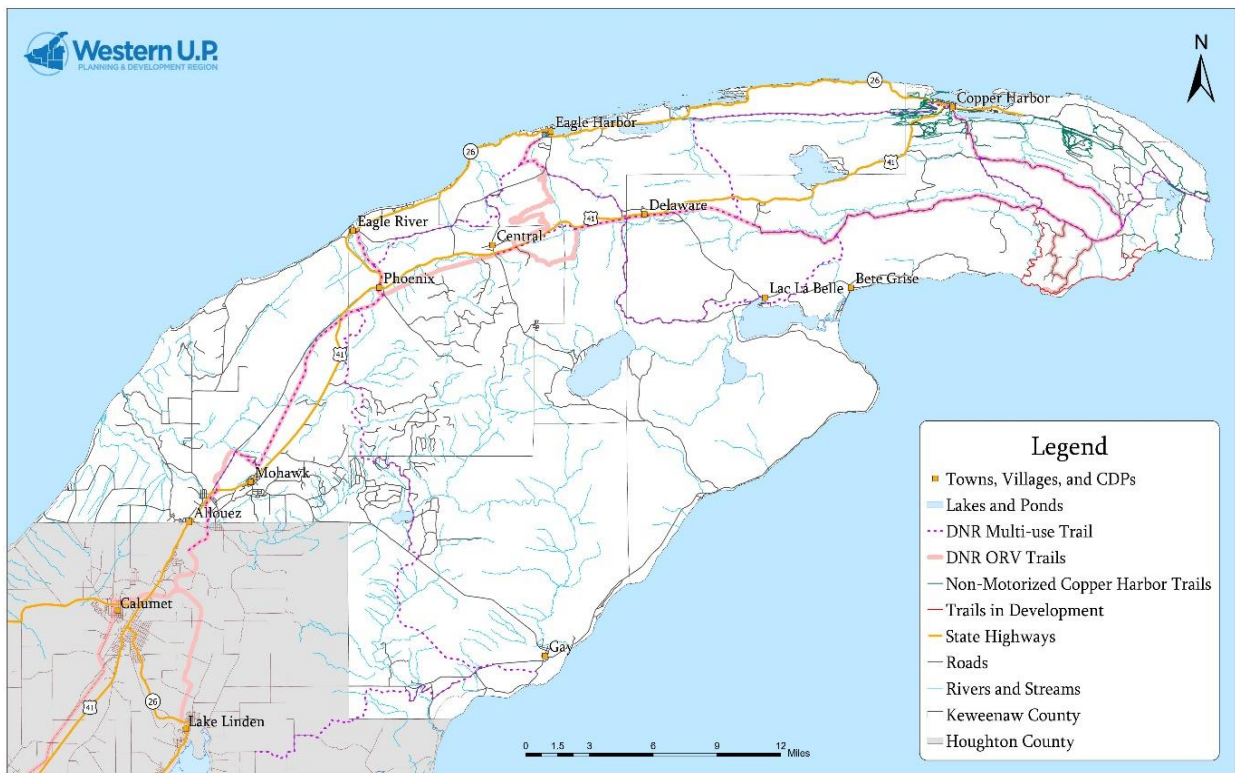


Figure 4: Keweenaw County Trail Map

Motorized Trails

Snowmobile: During the winter months, the county offers unparalleled snowmobiling experiences through an extensive system of trails that connect communities in and out of the county. This system provides vital economic support for businesses across the county. The nearly 235 miles of trails that stretch from Toivola in Houghton County to the very tip of the Keweenaw at High Rock Bay are groomed by the Keweenaw Snowmobile Club in partnership with the Michigan DNR. The system traverses private, township, county, state, and conservancy lands with continued access contingent on one-year easements and agreements.

ATV trails: With a total of 160 miles of trails, the summer trail system in Keweenaw County includes many miles of state designated trails. Like the Snowmobile trail system, the trails are on private, township, county, state, and conservancy lands. These trails are also contingent upon one-year easements and agreements. Much of the work on these trails occurs during the summer months in partnership with local organizations such as the Keweenaw ATV Club and the Michigan DNR



Photo Credit: Keweenaw ATV Club

Non-Motorized Trails

Copper Harbor Trail System

More than 50 miles of trails combine to create a unique system of biking and hiking trails in Grant Township on state, township, and privately owned land in and around Copper Harbor. The trail system is maintained by the Copper Harbor Trails Club (CHTC) and offers skiing and snowshoeing in the winter. The ski trails do not connect, but loop systems are available at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge and in Copper Harbor. Also currently under development is a 30km Nordic ski, snowshoe, and fat bike trail network on logging roads beyond the end of US-41. Trails on private land are subject to annual permissions from landowners. All trails are free to use and open to the public.

Keweenaw Point Trail

The Keweenaw Point Trail (KPT) is a 30+ mile non-motorized trail that circumnavigates the tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula, east and south of Copper Harbor (**Figure 5**). The KPT is optimized for mountain biking but is available for hiking and trail running in the warm-weather months, and snowshoeing and ungroomed backcountry skiing in the winter months. The Copper Harbor Trails Club is working with the Michigan DNR, the Keweenaw Outdoor Recreation Coalition, and private landowners to protect public access to the corridor in perpetuity. As of late-2024, the trail is a little over halfway built. It begins just outside of Copper Harbor on Manganese Road before connecting to High Rock Bay over 12 miles to the east in one continuous corridor. Near Schlatter Lake the trail makes a southward turn to reach Keystone Bay. A 2018 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund development grant, obtained in partnership with Grant Township for portions beyond High Rock Bay, will help to fund a portion of the trail as it continues west along Keystone and Big Bays. CHTC anticipates the trail will reach Montreal Falls in 2025 and then follow the Montreal River upstream shortly after, before eventually connecting back up to Copper Harbor and/or trails near East Bluff.

Keweenaw Point Trail Map

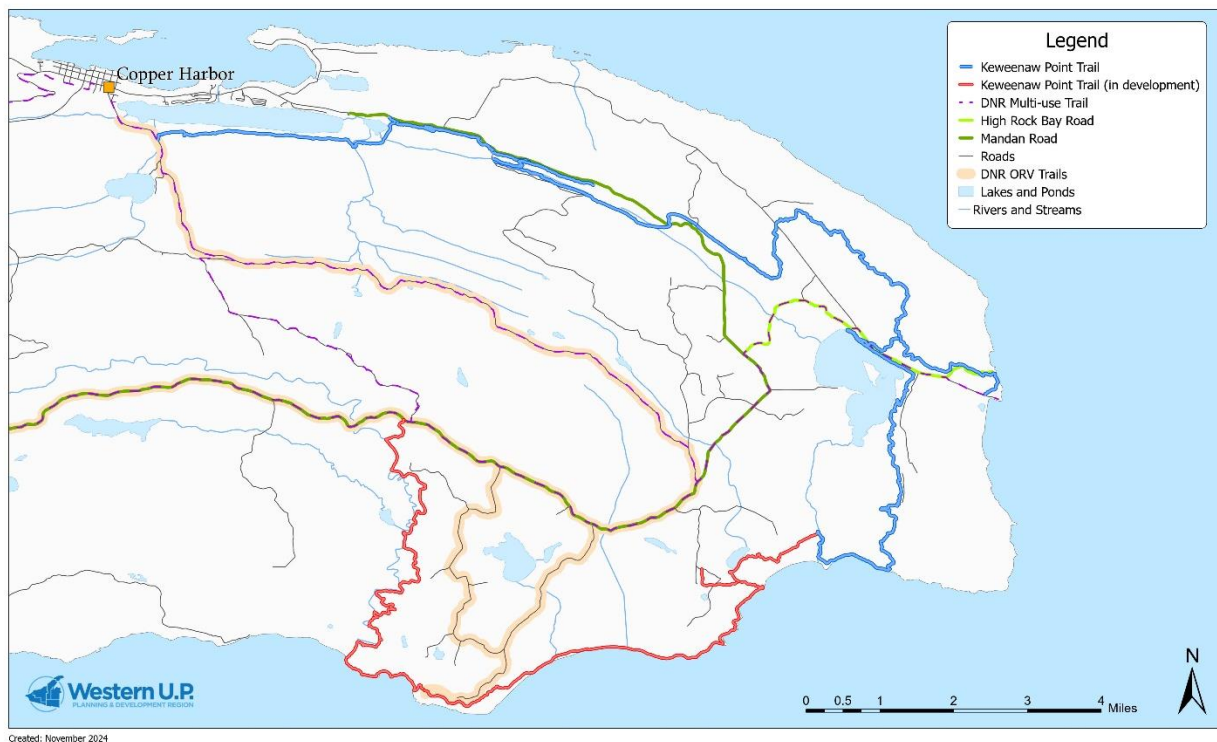


Figure 5: Keweenaw Point Trail Map

Hiking Paths

There's over 44 miles of hiking paths in Keweenaw County that are owned and maintained by numerous organizations and local units of government. These trails are another essential part of the economic vitality of the county.

- Brockway Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary
- Lake Bailey Wildlife Sanctuary
- Eagle Harbor Township Conservation & Recreation Area Trails
- Hunter's Point
- Botany Trail-Bete Grise Preserve
- Bear Paw Path Gratiot Lake Conservancy
- Black Creen Nature Sanctuary
- Red Pine Dunes & Cy Clark Memorial Nature Sanctuaries
- Estivant Pines
- Gratiot Lake Overlook
- Russell & Miriam Grinnell Memorial Nature Sanctuary at Bare Bluff (currently not accessible)
- Keweenaw Shore Nature Sanctuary
- James H. Klipfel Memorial Sanctuary at Brockway Mountain
- Redwyn's Dunes Nature Sanctuary
- James Dorian Rooks Memorial Sanctuary at Garden Brook
- Upson Lake Nature Sanctuary
- Helmut and Candis Stern Preserve at Mt. Baldy
- Mary Macdonald Preserve at Horseshoe Harbor

Water Trails

There's over 100 miles of shoreline around the Keweenaw Peninsula for water enthusiasts to enjoy. Paddlers have long enjoyed the waters surrounding three sides of the county. Since 1996, the Keweenaw Water Trail has been promoted by enthusiasts in Houghton and Keweenaw counties. **See Figure 6.**

Water Trails Surrounding Keweenaw County

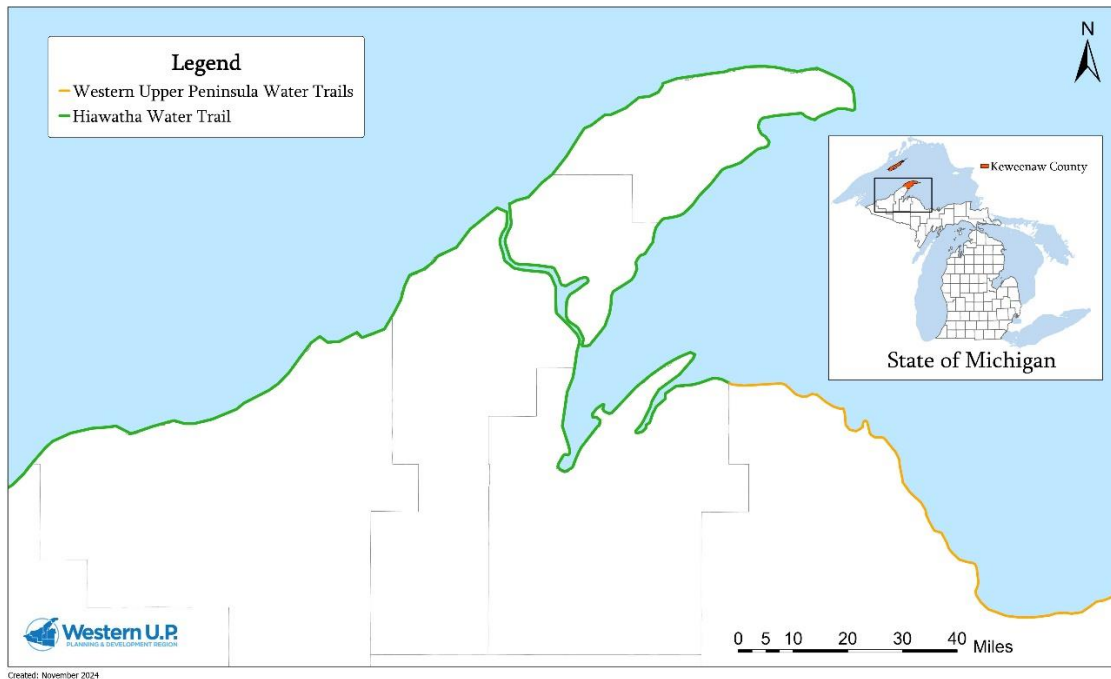


Figure 6: Keweenaw Water Trail

Regional Recreational Sites

(Sites outside of the County's or KCRC's ownership and management.)

Isle Royale National Park: This remote wilderness island located in Lake Superior, is known for its rugged wilderness and stunning landscapes. The park covers over 200 square miles of forests, lakes, and trails, offering visitors opportunities for backpacking, kayaking, and scuba diving. Accessible only by boat or seaplane, Isle Royale is renowned for its tranquility, making it a prime destination for those seeking solitude and adventure. It's also home to a unique ecosystem, featuring the famous wolf and moose populations studied extensively by researchers.



Photo Credit: Visit Keweenaw

Fort Wilkins Historic State Park: Located on the east side of Copper Harbor, the park preserves a restored 1844 military outpost built to protect the copper mining region. The park includes historic buildings, a museum, and scenic trails along Lake Superior, offering a glimpse

into 19th-century frontier life. It's a popular site for hiking, camping, bike trails, non-motorized trails, and exploring Michigan's early history.

Marinas: There are three state-owned marinas and harbors of refuge facilities in Keweenaw County located at Eagle Harbor, Copper Harbor and Lac LaBelle. State boat launches are available at Thayer Lake, Gratiot Lake, Lake Bailey, Lake Medora and Lake Fanny Hooe. Boat access is available at other inland lakes.

Copper Country Trail Scenic Byway: U.S. 41 from the Portage Lake Lift Bridge to Copper Harbor is a designated National Scenic Byway.

The Keweenaw Underwater Preserve: A 103-square mile preserve which hosts a variety of shipwrecks including the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Mesquite that ran aground in 1989 off the tip of the peninsula. Other shipwrecks are concentrated at Eagle River, Eagle Harbor and Copper Harbor and include both steamers and schooners, primarily of the 1800s and very early 1900s.



Photo credit: Robert Emperley

Tip of the Keweenaw: In 2003, the State of Michigan, working with The Nature Conservancy, acquired 6,275 acres of land and over 7 miles of shoreline near the tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula to prevent private development and preserve public use. This acquisition brought the state's total land ownership on Keweenaw Point to 8,387 acres. The Michigan DNR is in the planning process to acquire approximately 10,000 acres of the 32,600 acres of the TNC Keweenaw Heartlands.



Photo credit : Nathan Miller

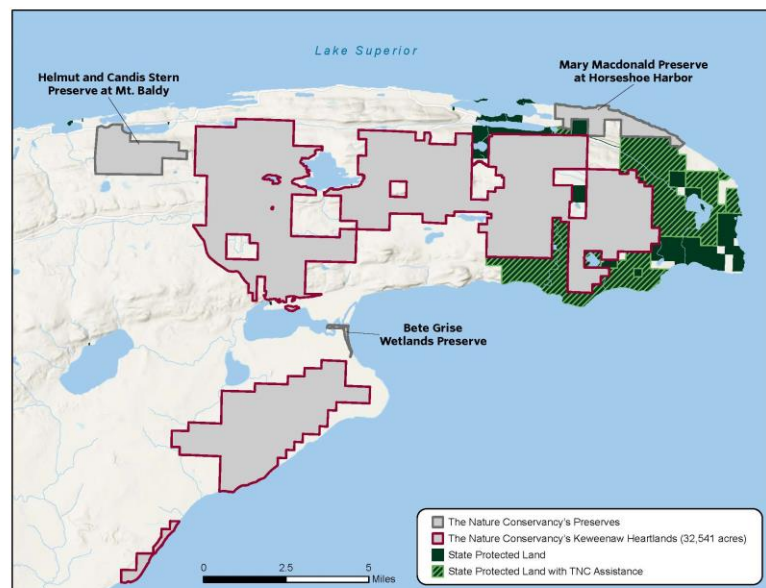
Estivant Pines: Located just outside Copper Harbor, this is the last stand of privately owned virgin white pine in Michigan. The sanctuary features trees over 600 years old and 130 to 150 feet tall. Unique rock outcroppings, steep hillsides, cliffs, and old upper mine workings dating back to the 1850s, are nearby.

Mount Bohemia Ski Resort: Mount Bohemia is the 5th highest point in the Keweenaw Peninsula and the 52nd highest prominent peak in Michigan with an elevation of 1,465 feet. Visitors can enjoy alpine and Nordic skiing as well as abundant snowshoe trails. Mount Bohemia is host to a ski resort, bearing the same name located at the northernmost portion of the Keweenaw Peninsula in Lac LaBelle, Michigan.

Keweenaw Mountain Lodge: The lodge was built by the WPA Conservation Corps in 1934 and is on the state and national historic registers. This four-season historic resort focused on outdoor activities, rustic worldly food, and education. The lodge is a designated Dark Sky Park and features many events celebrating the night sky.

Keweenaw Heartlands:

In late 2022 The Nature Conservancy in Michigan purchased approximately 32,500 acres of some of the most unique, historic, cultural and scenic land in Michigan. Aply named the Keweenaw Heartlands, a large portion of the holding is located along the spine of the



Map courtesy of The Nature Conservancy

Figure 7: The Keweenaw Heartlands

Keweenaw Peninsula. Since the purchase, TNC has been working closely with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Keweenaw County and a Community Advisory Committee to create a governance and management plan that lays the framework for the continued conservation and sustainability of this significant property. The Michigan DNR is anticipating the purchase of 10,000 acres of the Heartlands to add to nearby property held by

the state referred to as the 'Keweenaw Point Lands'. The DNR is currently in the planning process to collectively manage this future acquisition, the existing DNR forestlands that surround it, and the Fort Wilkins Historic State Park. In addition, TNC is collaborating with Keweenaw County, the Community Advisory Committee, and local and regional residents to plan for local governance and management of the remaining 2/3 of the Heartlands. Through both DNR and local efforts, this forest will be publicly accessible for generations to come. **See Figure 7.**

Keweenaw National Historical Park: Established in 1992, the park celebrates the life and history of the Keweenaw Peninsula. It is a partially privatized park made up of two primary units, the Calumet Unit and the Quincy Unit, and 22 cooperating "Heritage Sites" located on federal, state, and private land in and around the Keweenaw Peninsula. Keweenaw County has four Heritage Sites: Central Mine, Delaware Copper Mine, Fort Wilkins Historic State Park and the Eagle Harbor Lighthouse and Museum. More information on the Keweenaw Heritage sites can be found at www.keweenawheritagesites.org.

Preserves

Eagle Harbor Township Property

George Hite Dunes & Marshes Preserve: This 360 acres property includes about 40 acres of Lake Superior coastal dunes and protects ancient bedrock, two small lakes, forested ridges, numerous ponds, swales, and marshes, and Owl Creek, which empties into Lake Superior.

Houghton-Keweenaw Conservation District Properties

Bete Grise Preserve: This 5,500 acre preserve permanently protects native coastal wetland ecosystems and is a refuge for many animals and plants. Included in this preserve are Bete Grise Soth, Pt. Isabelle, Oliver Bay, the Mouth of the Little Gratiot River and Deer Lake.

Joseph and Mary Lizzadro Lakeshore

Preserve: Featuring stunning sunsets and crashing waves, this preserve is conveniently located on highway M-26 about four miles west of Copper Harbor. The preserve features boreal and mixed hardwood forests, lowland swamp, a portion of the bedrock glade in the Keweenaw, and a bedrock and cobble beach

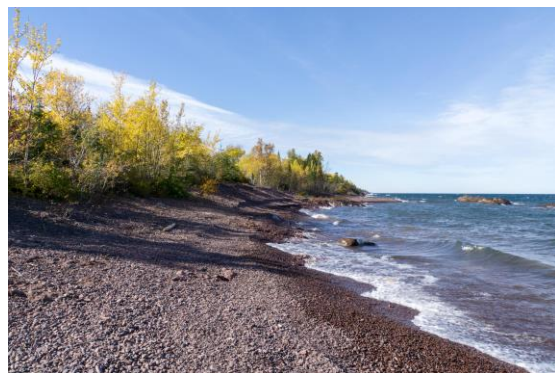


Photo credit: Keweenaw Land Trust

along 643 feet of undeveloped shoreline on Lake Superior with several small islands just offshore.

Seneca #3 Bat Conservation Area: The Seneca #3 shaft is located on these 45 acres preserve and is a known bat hibernarium.

Bare Bluff Shoreline Wilderness: 287 acres and a mile of Lake Superior shoreline features geology of Bare Blue shoreline that includes sea stacks providing outstanding kayak and canoe adventures.

Keweenaw Land Trust Properties

Keweenaw Sandhills: Bare ancient conglomerate rocks rise from the shoreline below steep, forested dunes that make standing up straight difficult! Access to the lake is not possible until a dune stabilization project provides access that will protect the fragile and highly erodible dune.



Photo credit: Keweenaw Land Trust

Lake Glazon: The nature area is about 26 acres with 1,100 feet of shoreline on Lake Superior and encompasses the marshy west end of Lake Glazon. It is located on the north shore of the Keweenaw Peninsula between Great Sand Bay and Dan's Point.

The Nature Conservancy-Michigan Properties

Mary Macdonald Preserve at Horseshoe Harbor: These 1,200 acres include 5 miles of Lake Superior shoreline. While this preserve includes a spectacular rocky ridge and bluff shoreline, a bedrock beach, and forestlands, it is home to a myriad of birds and wildlife as well as to numerous threatened and rare plant species.

Helmut & Candis Sterm Preserve at Mt. Baldy: This rare bald bluff offers spectacular views along a windswept bluff. Many bird, plant, and animal species can be found in this unique preserve.

Township Facilities

Numerous additional recreation facilities owned by various townships within Keweenaw County serve both residents and visitors include local playgrounds, ice rinks, ballfields and the larger facilities of Seneca Lake Recreation Area (Allouez Township), Hunter's Point Park (Copper Harbor in Grant Township), Eliza Lake Park (Eagle Harbor in Eagle Harbor Township) and Grant Township Park (Copper Harbor).

Eagle Harbor Township maintains a ski trail system and several preservation groups in the County maintain hiking trails for visitors including Michigan Nature Association, The Nature Conservancy, Gratiot Lake Conservancy, Michigan Audubon Society and Northwoods Conservancy. Owned by Eagle Harbor Township, Brockway Mountain Conservation and Recreation Area is a Copper Country Trail National Byway-designated site and a popular tourist destination known for its scenic views. From the top of Brockway, visitors are treated to a 360-degree panoramic view of miles of beautiful Lake Superior coastline and Keweenaw forestland.

Historic and Archeological Assets

The county's rich mining history provides an abundance of recreational resources for history, archeology and geological enthusiasts. The remnants of these sites provide popular attractions to tourists and locals alike interested in exploring a bygone era. The sites often also serve as a unique backdrop for outdoor recreationalists as they traverse the county's extensive trail networks. Several of the sites have been recognized by the state and federal government, and others are promoted by the Keweenaw County Historical Society. Sites include, but are not limited to past mining sites, lighthouses, churches, cemeteries, bridges, shipwrecks and ghost towns.

Pre-European History

The Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (KBIC), part of the Lake Superior Band of Ojibwa, resides in the central and western Upper Peninsula of Michigan. As one of the 150 bands of the Anishinaabeg, they are descendants of a people who have lived in the Great Lakes region for thousands of years, long before European contact. Their pre-colonial history is rich with traditions of fishing, hunting, and gathering, as well as a deep spiritual connection to the land, waters, and natural resources of the area. The KBIC is the successor in interest to the L'Anse and Ontonagon Bands of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians and a signatory to the Treaties of 1842 and 1854, which defined the ceded territories encompassing the western Upper Peninsula of Michigan as well as northern regions of Wisconsin and Minnesota. Within these ceded territories, the KBIC retains hunting, fishing, gathering, and other rights that are vital for the subsistence of its tribal members.

PREVIOUSLY COMPLETED PROJECTS/GRANT INVENTORY

Keweenaw County and the Keweenaw County Road Commission have completed several projects in recent years. The following list highlights projects completed by the county and road commission with the support of MNRTF funding and other funding sources.

Gratiot River County Park – Acquisition-

- \$442,500 (1999 MNRTF Grant No. TF99-276)
- \$1,957,500 (2005 MNRTF Grant No. TF05-078)

Keweenaw Mountain Lodge – (now under private ownership)

- Conference Center and Winterization- \$3,000,000 (Economic Development Administration, Rural Development and MEDC)
- Terrain Park, Ski Trails and Disc Golf- \$30,000 (Copper Harbor Trails Club, Keweenaw County)

W.C. Veale Park near Five Mile Point – Moved outhouses to center of park near roadway.

- \$8,000 (Local funds from KCRC and private donation)

Eagle River Beach –Acquisition-

- \$55,000 (Houghton Township and Keweenaw County)
- Built new toilet/changing room facility and chip sealed parking area- \$13,000 (Local funds from KCRC, County and Houghton Township)

Haven Park– Pavilion built along with a new built-in grill.

- \$8,000 (Local funds from the South Shore Association)

Great Sand Bay – Land Acquisition in support of future improvements.

- \$30,000 (Keweenaw County, Eagle Harbor Township and KCRC)

Central Mine – Efforts by the Keweenaw County Historical Society have rehabilitated many of the structures on site in recent years. A grant has been received from the Keweenaw Community Foundation to enhance the site’s access to hiking trail systems and build upon the two site trails opened in 2005.

Acquired “Top of Brockway” –Acquisition-

- \$268,600 (2013 MNRTF Grant No. TF16-0143)
- In 2013, Eagle Harbor Township acquired approximately 320 acres at the summit of Brockway Mountain to preserve public access to the historic vista.

COUNTY RECREATION GOALS

Keweenaw County is intended to be place where residents and visitors have continued access to the many scenic, recreational and historical assets of our area. Identifying goals and objectives is an important part of the recreation planning process. To develop goals and objectives, the recreation committee collected community input through an extensive community survey and by soliciting feedback at regularly scheduled township meetings. Based on this process, three goals for the county recreation plan were identified:

- Protect existing and development new recreation trail assets, both non-motorized and motorized.
- Maintain and enhance public access to forestlands, rivers, lakes and Lake Superior to facilitate a diverse array of recreational activities.
- Develop recreation opportunities to attract younger residents and visitors.

With these needs in mind, goals and objectives were developed to help address the identified needs and guide the action program for the county. Goals are meant to be overreaching and general while objectives carry out the purpose of the goal.

Goal: Protect existing and develop new recreation trail assets, both non-motorized and motorized

Objective 1: Secure trails throughout the county through land acquisition or permanent easements.

- Secure rights-of-ways and main connections between communities and points of interest.
- Purchase public lands to protect non-motorized systems.
- Protect and preserve corridors (riparian, recreational and wildlife) through easements or purchase of land.
- Support all efforts to permanently preserve trail access and improve trails for both motorized and non-motorized.

Goal: Maintain and enhance public access to forestlands, rivers, lakes and Lake Superior to facilitate a diverse array of recreational activities

Objective 2: Encourage and secure public access to public places in Keweenaw County.

- Work with the DNR and local units of government to improve access to the “Tip of the Keweenaw” properties and other recreational properties throughout the county.

- Facilitate public access to public places through communication that welcomes residents and visitors alike.
- Encourage public and private efforts to maintain public access.

Objective 3: Support, improve, and maintain all recreation facilities open to the public, including historic sites

- Actively seek grant opportunities and other funding when available.
- Encourage public and private efforts to maintain public facilities.
- Collaborate with organizations to protect historic assets.

Objective 4: Build on partnerships with active groups to leverage resources (money and people) and enhance support of community projects and events.

- Support efforts to enhance community recreation facilities and lands.
- Provide funding as feasible to support community projects.
- Provide support as feasible for community programs and events.

Objective 5: Improve public awareness and appreciation for recreational opportunities through regular communication with residents and visitors.

- Increase awareness of recreation opportunities through improved communication with residents, visitors, and partners including signage, literature, social media, and websites.
- Work with local organizations to encourage Leave No Trace ethics to include trash and recycling awareness and management.

Goal: Support more recreation opportunities for youth, families, and individuals with special needs.

Objective 6: Improve family and youth recreational opportunities and facilities.

- Provide opportunities for youth to establish recreation priorities through targeted public engagement efforts (e.g. surveys, forums, discussion groups, etc.)
- Provide more/better publicized opportunities for youth (clinics, camps, etc.)
- Support efforts to improve family friendly recreation facilities
- Support more recreational and cultural events focused on youth and families.

Objective 7: Improve recreational opportunities and facilities for those with special needs.

- Upgrade existing recreational facilities to meet accessibility standards, ensuring access for people with disabilities.

- Improve pathways and signage to increase ease of use for individuals with mobility challenges

Goal: Address safety concerns, emergency operations, and capacity for visitors and residents especially during peak recreational periods

Objective 8: Encourage collaborative efforts with community members, organizations, businesses, and facilities.

- Support efforts to maintain and/or expand facilities, personnel, equipment, and services
- Address activities and behaviors that increase forest fire risk (e.g. illegal camping, fires, etc.)

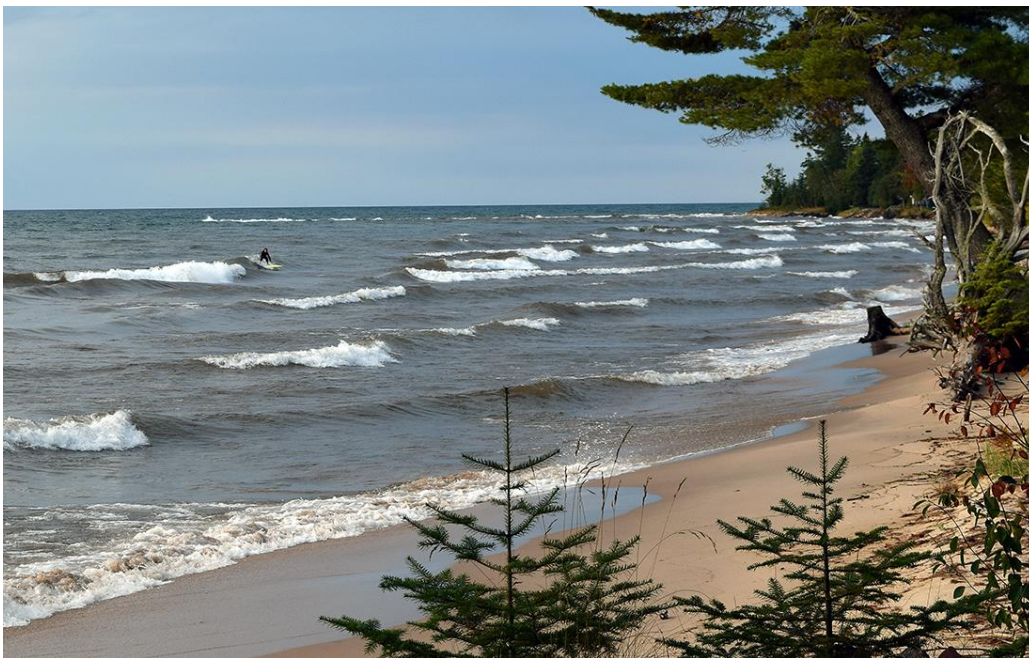


Photo credit: Harvey Desnick

ACTION PLAN

With goals and objectives in place, the committee was able to develop a five-year action program to work towards accomplishing the goals and objectives. The action plan’s intent is to provide direction to the community to maintain and improve the quality and diversity of park and recreation opportunities. The action plan is not intended to be all inclusive or exclusive but used rather as a guide for recreation development. This plan will remain flexible to account for changing needs and new ideas so that it will provide the best overall recreation opportunities for Keweenaw County residents and visitors.

Funding

Grant opportunities are constantly changing, so the county will remain diligent in pursuing funding programs and be willing to partner with other organizations to accomplish projects. Several possible sources of funding for recreation projects within Keweenaw County are available and include the following: **Table 2**

Table 2: Possible funding sources

Description	Grant/Match	Source
Local Funds	-	County
Community Foundations/Other	-	Local
Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF)	75/25	DNR
Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	50/50	DNR
Recreation Passport Grants (RP)	75/25	DNR
Boating Infrastructure Grants	75/25	DNR
Waterways Program Grants	50/50	DNR
Snowmobile Trail Improvement Program	-	DNR
Michigan Coastal Management Program	50/50	EGLE
Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)	80/20	MDOT
Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act Grants	50/50	USFWS
National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants	50/50	USFWS
United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development	Varies	USDA

Five-Year Action Plan

Based on the goals and objectives for Keweenaw County, the following projects have been identified to pursue over the next five years. The project list is to be used as a working guide to meet the recreation needs within Keweenaw County. Other projects and opportunities may be identified over time, and the schedule may also be adjusted as funding is available.

2025 Recreation Committee

Appoint and support an ongoing Keweenaw County Parks & Recreation Committee to pursue activities to support goals and objectives to enhance the county's recreational assets. (Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners)

Estimated Cost: \$0

2025 Enhance County Website

Include information and links for residents and visitors about parks and recreation across the county owned/maintained by KCRC and other organizations.

Estimated Cost: \$5,000 (County)

2025 Land and Trail Acquisition and Development

This is an ongoing action item beginning in 2025. Establish the Keweenaw Trail in addition to continuing activities that will help to secure motorized and non-motorized trail access while enhancing trail connectivity. This includes supporting township efforts. Additional priority placed on securing long-term easements for existing trail networks in collaboration with DNR. Acquire properties for recreational purposes from various private and public entities.

Estimated Cost: \$5,000,000 (MNRTF, Trail Clubs, organizations, local units of government, local donations)

2025 Support Trail Maintenance

Support purchase of trail grooming equipment and construction of a facility for equipment. Support work to improve trails and signage.

Estimated Cost: ongoing (County, DNR, local organizations)

2025 Keweenaw County Recreation Site Signage

Collaborate with organizations, local governments, DNR and other partners to better promote and educate the public on recreation facilities within the county by establishing road signage along key intersections, corridors, roads, trail heads, etc.

Estimated Cost: \$50,000 (County, Scenic Byways, local organizations, KCF, CSCHF)

2025 Improve On-Road Bicycle Facilities

Support Road Commission and local organizations' efforts to secure funding for Brockway Mountain Drive Road resurface and work with the road commission and MDOT to develop additional paved pathways and bicycle shoulders throughout the county.

Estimated Cost: To be determined (MDOT, local organizations, county)

2025 Park Endowment

Plan, establish and work with the Keweenaw Community Foundation to create a park endowment to support maintenance and improvement of county parks.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000+ (Donations)

2026 Cliff Mine Protection and Development

Identify and support efforts to protect and enhance the historic, recreational, and educational asset of the Cliff Mine.

Estimated Cost: To be determined (Keweenaw County Historic Society, MNRTF, Scenic Byways)

2026 Boat Launch with handicap access at Tobacco River

Develop a handicap accessible boat/kayak launch at the Tobacco River Park.

Estimated Cost: \$10,000 (MDNR, RP, local, County, sport organizations)

2026 Coastline Erosion Control Planning

Since the historic high-water levels have receded on Lake Superior, the county should study and create a plan to protect county waterfront parks from further damage.

Estimated Cost: \$50,000 (various federal agencies, EGLE, DNR, local, County)

2026 Emergency Response Support

Work with the local units of government and the DNR to enhance cell service coverage and search & rescue operations for emergency response efforts.

Estimated Cost: To be determined (County, townships, MDOT, DNR, local units of government, local organizations, foundations)

2026 Keweenaw Water Trail

Create a plan and work with partners to designate safe stopping/camp sites along the shoreline. Develop and market the Keweenaw Water Trail through websites and partners.

Estimated Cost: \$500,000 (MNRTF, RP, County, local units of government)

2027 Gratiot River County Park Management Plan

Develop a management and improvement plan for the Gratiot River County Park.

Estimated Cost: \$40,000 (Coastal Zone, County, MDNR)

2027 Improve Playground Equipment

Numerous county parks have playground equipment in need of upgrading. Add new units to Mohawk Park, Ahmeek Park, and Eagle Harbor Beach.

Estimated Cost: \$75,000 (RP, county, local organizations, townships, foundations)

2027 Develop Additional Camping Sites

Identify opportunities, identify locations, and seek funding to develop new and/or accessible campsites in the county.

Estimated Cost: \$50,000 - \$250,000 per location depending on number of sites (MNRTF, RP, County, Townships, local organizations, local units of government)

2028 Trail Head Bike Racks

Install bike racks and safety signage at trailheads to reduce accidents on mixed use trails.

Estimated Cost: \$8,000 (County, foundations, local organizations)

2028 Bete Grise North Beach Additional Facilities

Install additional changing facility/restroom at the beach to serve increasing number of beach users. Continue improving the kayak and canoe launch facilities on the sloughs.

Estimated Cost: Changing facility \$20,000, Restrooms with flush toilets \$80,000, vault toilets \$20,000 Slough facilities \$20,000 (MNRTF, RP, County, local organizations)

2028 Fishing Piers and Fish Cleaning Stations at various parks

Fishing pier and cleaning station at Tobacco River Park, Jackson Riverside Park, and Seneca Lake Township Park

Estimated Cost: \$120,000 (MNRTF, RP, County, sport organizations, local)

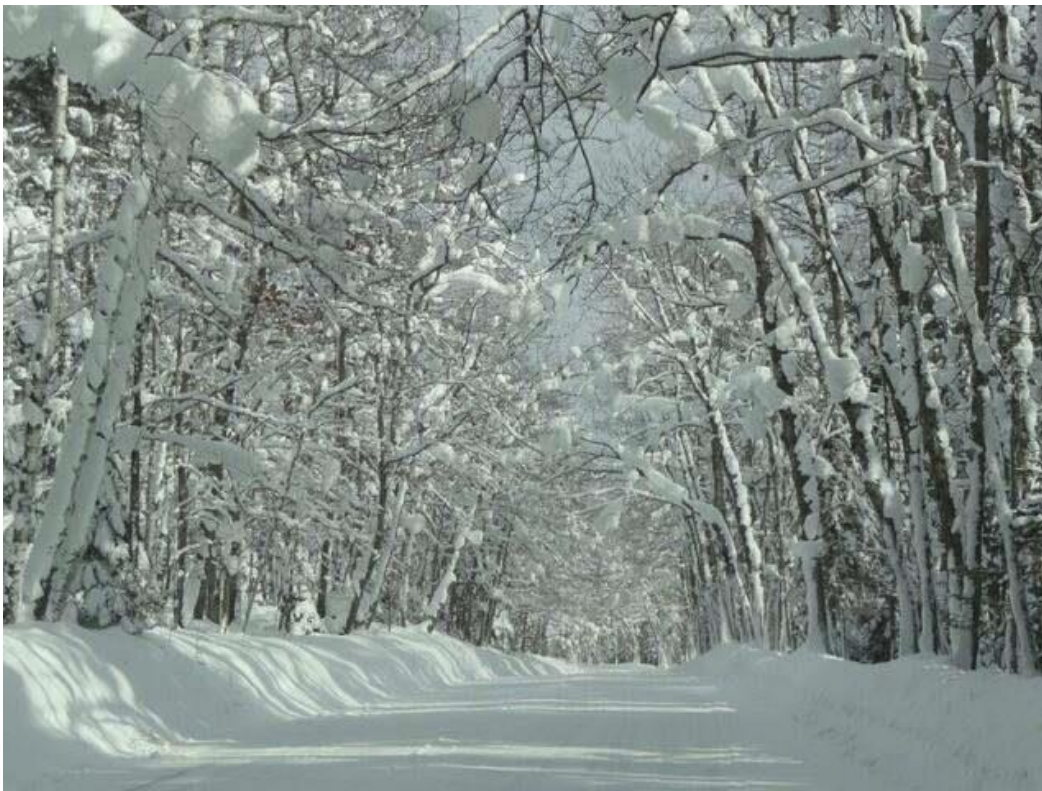


Photo credit: Mark R Upton Photography

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

A small committee was selected by the Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners. The committee was charged with identifying goals and making project recommendations. The County partnered with the Western U.P. Planning & Development Region (WUPPDR) to assist with developing the plan.

The committee held an initial meeting on September 3, 2024, to discuss the process of developing a new five-year recreation plan and brainstorm strategies to gather public input to establish recreation priorities for the county. Committee members developed an outreach strategy which focused on a community survey. A copy of the survey can be found in **Appendix A**. Representatives of the committee also attended township meetings to discuss local recreation priorities.

The community survey was launched the week of September 8, 2024, and hosted online using Survey Monkey and accessible through the County's and WUPPDR's websites. Paper copies were also made available at the Keweenaw County courthouse and at the township offices. A press release was issued to generate publicity for the survey. Committee members also forwarded the survey to recreation organizations within the county to solicit participation.

The survey was available for seven weeks and had 480 submitted responses (See **Appendix C** for Survey Results). The committee met on October 15, 2024, to review the results of the survey and identify recreation priorities for the Plan. The committee met again on November 14, 2024, to review a draft of the plan and prepare it for the public review process.

The draft plan was presented to the public for their review. The draft plan was available for inspection both online and at the courthouse for 30 days beginning on XXXX. A summary of received written comments is included in **Appendix F**. A public hearing was held on XXX, at the County Courthouse (See **Appendix D** for the meeting's public notification). The plan was subsequently adopted by the Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners on XXX (See **Appendix E**: Agenda, Resolution of Adoption & Meeting Minutes).

APPENDICES

- APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY RECREATION SURVEY
- APPENDIX B: PRESS RELEASE FOR COMMUNITY SURVEY
- APPENDIX C: RECREATION SURVEY RESULTS
- APPENDIX D: PUBLIC HEARING NOTIFICATION
- APPENDIX E: AGENDA, RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION & MEETING MINUTES
- APPENDIX F: PUBLIC COMMENT
- APPENDIX G:
- APPENDIX H:

APPENDIX A: Community Recreation Survey

Keweenaw County Recreation Survey

The Keweenaw County Recreation Committee is seeking public input to help plan improvements to recreation sites in the County. The purpose of this short 10-minute survey is to collect feedback from residents on the types of recreation opportunities they would like the County to maintain, develop and/or improve. The results of the survey will help develop the County's Five Year, 2025-2029, Recreation Plan.

The survey includes questions about your recreation interests and preferences for improvements to recreation sites within the County. Participation is voluntary, and responses are confidential. We will make the combined results from this survey available through the County's Five-Year Recreation Plan.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Michael Stanitis at mstanitis@wupcdr.org or (906) 482-7205 ext. 113. Thank you for your time and thoughtful responses!

Sincerely,

The Keweenaw County Recreation Committee

How to Return the Survey

Completed surveys should be returned to the County Office through any of the following options:

- **Mail or Drop Off:**
Keweenaw County Court House
Attn: Recreation Committee
5095 4th Street
Eagle River, Michigan 49950
- **Online:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SPWBZWT>

Response Deadline

In order for your feedback to be included, please complete and return the survey no later than **October 11th, 2024.**

Keweenaw County Recreation Survey - 2024

1. Are you (check all that apply):

A resident of Keweenaw County...If "yes", which Township do you live

in: _____

Nonresident but own property in Keweenaw County

A visitor

Other: _____

2. What is your age category?

13-19___ 20-29___ 30-39___ 40-49___ 50-59___ 60-69___ 70-79___ 80+___

3. How many persons in your household falls into each of the following age groups:

0-5___ 6-12___ 13-19___ 20-29___ 30-39___ 40-49___ 50-59___ 60-69___ 70-79___ 80+___

4. Does anyone in your household have a disability or require specialized recreation? Specialized recreation refers to accommodations or modifications made to recreation facilities and equipment to remove barriers that prevent individuals with disabilities from using the facilities or equipment. Yes No

If "yes", please specify:

5. What are the top 5 activities that you and your household participate in?

ATV/off road vehicles

golf

skiing-downhill

baseball/softball (youth)

hiking

skiing—cross country

baseball/softball (adult)

hockey—adult

sledding

basketball

hockey—youth

snowmobiling

backpacking

horse shoes

snowshoeing

beach activities

horseback riding

soccer

bicycling (road)

hunting

swimming

bicycling (trail/BMX)

ice skating

tennis

birdwatching

dark (night) sky viewing

visiting historic sites

boating (motorized)

playgrounds

volleyball—beach

camping

picnicking

walking for pleasure

canoeing/kayaking

rock climbing

wildlife viewing

fishing

running/jogging

Other: _____

foraging

6. Using the list below, please indicate your **Top 3** forms of recreation you'd like to see in the County?

access to trails

motorized trail system

camping(all forms)

(ATV, ORV,

fishing

snowmobile,vehicle)

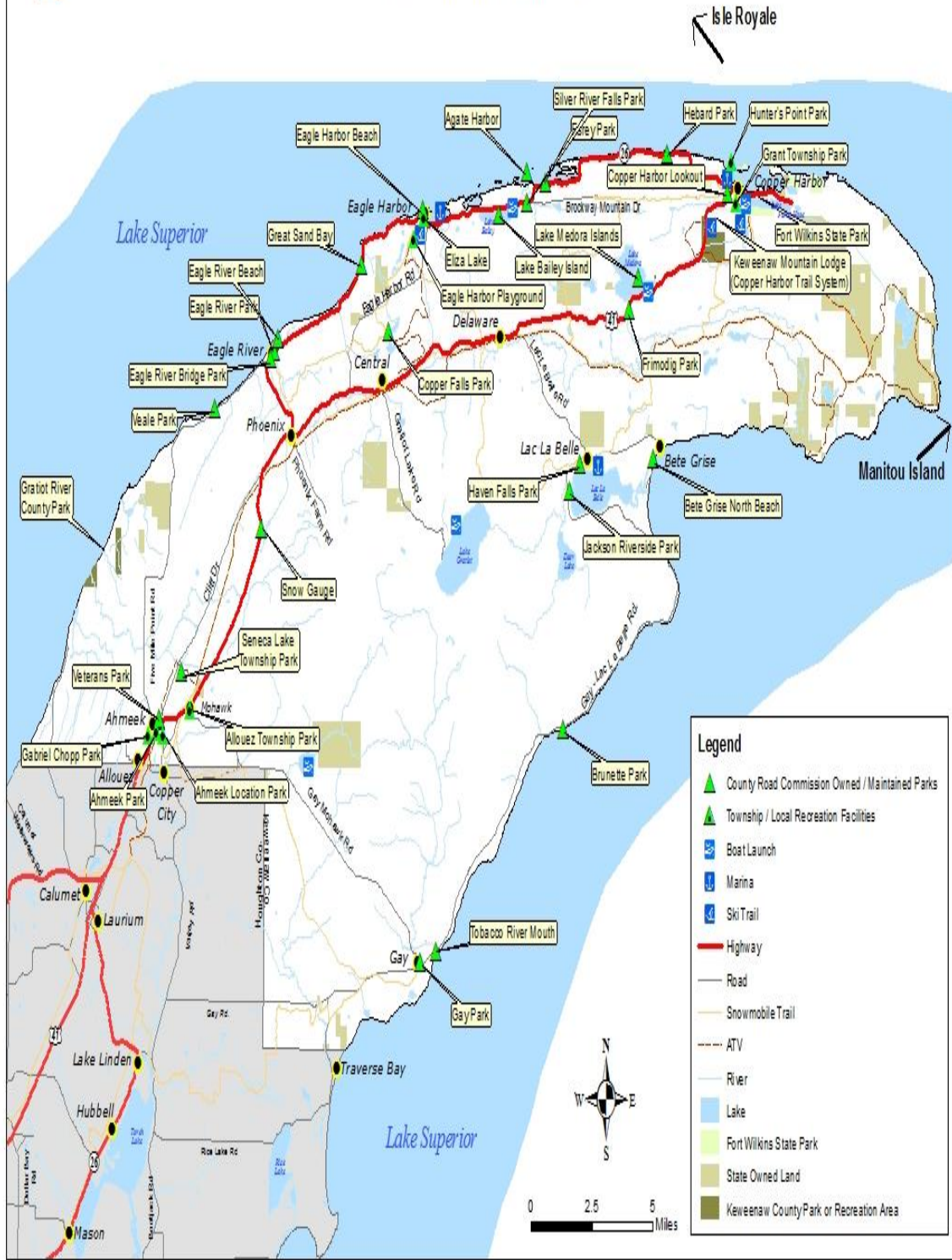
non-motorized trail system

(hiking/biking)

- hunting
- indoor sports facilities
- park facilities/beach access
- winter sports (skiing, etc)
- watersports (kayaking, etc)
- Other: _____



Keweenaw County Recreation Facilities



7. Are you aware or unaware of the following recreation sites? Did you visit the site this year? Please indicate your response by placing an "X" inside the appropriate response options.

Recreation Site	Aware	Not Aware	Visited this year	Not visited this year
County Swimming Beaches:				
Bete Grise Beach (North)				
Brunette Park				
Eagle River Beach & Park				
County Owned Roadside Parks:				
Copper Falls Park				
Copper Harbor Overlook				
Eagle River Bridge Park				
Esrey Park				
Gay Stamp Sand Park				
Hebard Park				
Haven Park and Falls				
Jackson Riverside Park				
Snow Gauge Park				
Veterans Park Ahmeek				
W. C. Veale Park				
County Parks:				
Cliff Mine				
Gratiot River County Park				
Tobacco River Park				
ATV/Snowmobile Trails				
Offroad Trails				
Township Parks:				
Allouez Township Park				
Eagle Harbor Beach				
Eagle Harbor Playground				
Gabriel Chop Park				
Hunter's Point				
Silver River Falls Park				
Seneca Lake Twp Park				
Parks maintained by Kew. Co:				
Brockway Mountain				
Great Sand Bay Public Beaches				
Nature Preserves:				
Bare Bluff				
Bete Grise South Preserve				

Black Creek Nature San				
Eliza Lake Park-Eagle Harbor				
Estivant Pines				
George Hite Dunes				
Gratiot Lake Preserve				
Horseshoe Harbor				
Keweenaw Sand Hills				
Lake Glazon				
Lizzadro Lakeshore Preserve				
Long Lake Refuge-Eagle Harbor				
Redwyn Dunes				
Recreation Site	Aware	Not Aware	Visited this year	Not visited this year
Stern Preserve (Mt Baldy)				
Upton Lake (Brockway)				
County Owned Undeveloped land:				
Agate Harbor				
Lake Bailey Island				
Lake Medora Islands				
Marinas:				
Copper Harbor				
Eagle Harbor				
Gratiot Lake				
Lac LaBelle				
Lake Medora				

8. What would you like to see more of in the county? Please indicate how you would prioritize each proposed activity by using the provided scale where “1” = “Low Priority” and “5” = “High Priority”. Indicate your response for **each** site by placing an “X” inside the appropriate response option.

Goal	1 = Low Priority	2	3	4	5 = High Priority
Enhance and/or build new motorized recreation trails					
Enhance and/or build new non-motorized recreation trails					
Enhance and/or develop new water trail routes for paddle craft					
Increase public access to rivers and streams					
Increase public access to Lake Superior shorelines					
Create new green spaces (e.g. parks) for public use					
Create designated dog parks for public use					

Increase recreational opportunities for individuals with mobility challenges					
Enhance bike-“ability” of our communities					
Improve access to “team sports” facilities (e.g. baseball)					
Enhance/improve playground facilities for children					
Preserve/enhance public access to historical and cultural sites					
Enhance/increase primitive camping opportunities					
Enhance/increase camping facilities					
Enhance and/or build new hiking trails					
Enhance and/or develop new mountain bike trails					
Develop new road bike routes					
Enhance and/or develop new cross-country ski/snowshoe trails					
Enhance and/or develop outdoor ice-skating rinks					
Develop indoor community/recreational facility					
Develop outdoor community recreational facility					
OTHER:					

Please provide any additional comments or explanations for your responses that you think would be helpful in developing recreation opportunities in Keweenaw County.

9. If you go out of the county for indoor recreation/exercise, where do you go?

10. Is there anything we are missing in this survey?

11. Overall, how would you rate the quality of recreational opportunities in Keweenaw County?

Poor Average Excellent

Thank you! The draft plan will be available for public review and comment 30 days beginning in November at <http://wupldr.org> . A public hearing will be held by the Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners prior to the plan's approval.

DRAFT

APPENDIX B: Press Release for Community Survey

DRAFT



Western U.P.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGION

400 Quincy St, 8th Floor, Hancock, Michigan 49930
906-482-7205 Fax: 906-482-9032 e-mail: info@wupldr.org

Media Contact:
Michael Stanitis
(906)-482-7205 ext 113
mstanitis@wupldr.org

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Keweenaw County Recreation Committee Releases Public Recreation Survey

Keweenaw County is developing a new *Five-Year Recreation Plan* for 2025-2029. Members of the public are being asked to fill out a survey to determine recreation habits and recreation site usage in Keweenaw County. The survey's goal is to collect information on the types of recreational opportunities and sites community members would like to see developed, maintained, and/or improved. This information will help prioritize funding and increase the county's understanding of community recreation needs.

The survey also gives the public an opportunity to give feedback or suggestions on the proposed improvements to recreation sites in Keweenaw County. Individuals can fill out the survey online or on paper. You can access a paper copy from Keweenaw County Courthouse. **Public responses are due October 31, 2024** and are confidential; survey results will be included in the final draft of the *2025-2029 Five-Year Recreation Plan*.

To access the online survey, please copy the link below or scan the QR code at the bottom of the page.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SPWBZWT>

If you have any trouble filling out the survey, or for more information, please get in touch with Michael Stanitis at mstanitis@wupldr.org.



APPENDIX C: Recreation Survey Results

DRAFT

Summary of Findings from the 2024 Keweenaw County Recreation Survey

The survey responses provided insights into recreation preferences, needs, and priorities within Keweenaw County. Key findings are as follows:

1. **Popular Activities:**

Hiking, biking, and ATV/off roading are among the most favored activities, suggesting a strong interest in non-motorized and motorized outdoor recreation. This aligns with the county's natural attractions and emphasizes the importance of preserving and expanding non-motorized and motorized trails, and water access.

2. **Recreation Infrastructure:** There is significant interest in enhancing both motorized and non-motorized trail systems. Many respondents expressed the need for dedicated spaces, such as mountain biking trails, hiking-only paths, and areas for motorized off-road vehicles. Residents also highlighted the desire for additional parking at trailheads, access to water based recreation, and indoor facilities to support winter activities.

3. **Accessibility Needs:** While 6.96% of respondents indicated a need for specialized recreation facilities, several comments emphasized the importance of accessibility. Suggestions included expanding motorized access for those with limited mobility and creating safe, beginner-friendly paths and trails.

4. **Community and Environmental Concerns:** The survey reflected a strong sentiment for preserving the “wild” character of Keweenaw County, with calls for balanced development. Concerns were raised about the impact of tourism on natural areas, and some residents opposed the expansion of loud, motorized recreational activities. Others advocated for responsible tourism and conservation efforts to maintain the area's natural beauty and prevent environmental degradation.

5. **Recreational Gaps and Suggestions:** Respondents voiced a desire for more diverse recreational opportunities, such as an indoor skate park, pickleball courts, and areas for climbing. Additionally, there were suggestions to improve marketing efforts to attract visitors and encourage respectful use of public lands. Enhanced maintenance, more signage, and broader public access to beaches and riverfront areas were also recommended.

6. **Feedback on Survey Quality and Infrastructure Needs:** Some respondents felt the survey map was incomplete, and a few pointed out the need to prioritize infrastructure improvements—like road maintenance and cell service—alongside recreational development to accommodate increased visitation effectively.

These findings provide valuable insights into recreational priorities and areas for development in Keweenaw County, highlighting both the need to expand accessible, diverse recreational options and the importance of preserving natural landscapes and resources.

Keweenaw County Recreation Plan Survey Analysis

The Keweenaw County Recreation Survey gathered input from 479 respondents, mostly residents, and visitors who frequent the area. Key insights reflect the community's recreational preferences, accessibility needs, and interest in enhancing local amenities.

1. Demographics and Household Information:

- Most respondents were residents (24.01%) or visitors (48.02%). Some respondents also indicated a desire to either purchase property or become permanent residents, showing a strong connection to the area.
- Households represented varied age groups, with the largest percentage in the 40-49 age range, followed by 50-59, indicating a maturing population with potential needs for accessible recreation options.

2. Disability and Accessibility:

- Only 6.96% of respondents reported having a household member requiring specialized recreation, indicating a moderate need for adaptive facilities. This can guide resource allocation for accessibility improvements without overshadowing general recreation demands.

3. Recreational Activities and Preferences:

- Top activities included walking for pleasure, beach activities, hiking, fishing, and visiting historic sites. Preferences align with Keweenaw's natural attractions, emphasizing a demand for non-motorized trails, camping, and access to historical areas.
- Respondents also prioritized future recreation developments such as nonmotorized trails (58.52%), beach access (45.86%), and winter sports (21.52%).

4. Awareness and Usage of Local Sites:

- Awareness levels varied widely across recreation sites. Popular spots like Brockway Mountain and Great Sand Bay Public Beaches had high visitation rates, while lesser-known areas, such as the Veale Park Roadside Park, showed low familiarity, suggesting potential areas for promotional efforts to increase local tourism.

5. Recreation Priorities:

- Participants ranked increasing public access to rivers, streams, and Lake Superior shorelines highly, along with expanding non-motorized trail networks and preserving historical sites. These priorities reflect a strong community emphasis on preserving natural landscapes and enhancing access to water-based activities.

6. Quality Ratings:

- Most respondents rated recreational opportunities as "Average" (65.23%), with fewer (31.81%) indicating "Excellent." This rating suggests room for improvement in recreational offerings and amenities to boost overall satisfaction.

Conclusion

The survey findings underscore a preference for natural, accessible, and culturally significant recreational opportunities in Keweenaw County. Strategic enhancements to trails, shoreline access, and promotion of lesser-known sites could foster community engagement and attract new visitors. The insights will guide the county in crafting a recreation plan that aligns with the community's vision and needs.

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APPENDIX D: Public Hearing Notification

APPENDIX E: Agenda, Resolution of Adoption & Meeting Minutes