



Paul Bunyan & Heartland

Beltrami, Cass,
Hubbard & Crow Wing
Counties



Paul Bunyan State Trail

Crow Wing State Park to Lake Bemidji State Park

When completed, the Paul Bunyan State Trail will be a 100+ mile long multiple use trail between Crow Wing State Park and Lake Bemidji State Park. Primarily located on a former Burlington Northern Railroad grade, the trail is generally level and is wheelchair accessible with the exception of the 9 mile segment through the Chippewa National Forest. This segment may be challenging to some users as there are many rolling hills and curves with grades reaching 8%. Currently, 80 miles of the trail is paved: 73 miles from Baxter to north of Walker, and 7 miles from Lake Bemidji State Park to Co. Rd. 20 across the Mississippi River trestle to 5th and Gould. The remaining 28 mile section is undeveloped with variable surface material ranging from the original railroad ballast to sand.

The region is rich in history, having been inhabited for centuries before French explorers came to the area. Thirteen recorded prehistoric sites have been identified near the Paul Bunyan State Trail alone. The Ojibwe and Dakota were present in the area until explorers entered the region and the logging and railroad industries began to dominate. Most towns along the trail have a rich railroad and logging history. Today, they are popular vacation destinations and provide trail access points, rest areas and services. They also provide a major part of the regional identity and sites of historic interest.

Main summer uses of the developed portions of the Paul Bunyan State Trail include hiking, bicycling, and in-line skating. The undeveloped sections are suitable for mountain biking. Snowmobiling is the primary winter use along both the paved and undeveloped sections of the trail, however studded tracks are prohibited on the paved surface. The trail provides connections to many miles of groomed snowmobile trails in the county Grant-in-Aid trail system. When completed, the Paul Bunyan State Trail will also connect with the Blue Ox Trail forming one of the longest rail-to-trail conversions in North America, for a total distance of 210 miles.

Heartland State Trail

Park Rapids to Cass Lake

The Heartland State Trail was one of the first rail-to-trail projects in the country. It is a 47 mile paved multiple use trail between Park Rapids and Cass Lake. The trail is located entirely on a level abandoned railroad grade, except for a four mile segment north of Walker which is on sharply rolling terrain. The 27 mile segment between Park Rapids and Walker has a second grassy treadway for horseback riding, mountain biking, hiking and snowmobiling. The 20 mile segment from Walker to Cass Lake has recently been paved and will have a dual treadway for snowmobiles with studded tracks. The entire trail is groomed in the winter for snowmobiling, however studded tracks are prohibited on the asphalt. The Heartland State Trail also provides connections to many miles of groomed snowmobile trails in the Hubbard County Grant-in-Aid trail system.

Views of lakes, rivers and streams are numerous and many are accessible from the trail. The trail passes through northern hardwood forests and stands of jack, red, and white pine, as well as the spruce fir forest community. The occasional majestic white pine can be seen towering over the trail. Common mammals noticed along the trail include whitetail deer, raccoon, red fox, porcupine, beaver and muskrat. The observant trail user may spot coyote, weasel, mink, bobcat, black squirrel or black bear. Many varieties of birds can be seen along the trail including the bald eagle, which has a large population in the Chippewa National Forest and surrounding area.

Construction Notes (as of May 2004):

A project to pave approximately 6 miles from Bemidji south to Nary is proposed for 2004.

The Paul Bunyan Trail connection through the Chippewa National Forest, from 7 miles north of Hackensack west to the Heartland State Trail, is almost complete. Currently, 8.5 miles are paved. The remaining 1/2 mile follows Hubbard County Road 26, which is a gravel road, to connect with the Heartland State Trail. The remaining 1/2 mile is expected to be paved by 2005.

PARKING AVAILABLE:

** Do not leave valuables in your vehicle.*

The Paul Bunyan State Trail

- The southern trailhead of the Paul Bunyan State Trail is located in Baxter. From Brainerd, go west on State Highway 210 about 3/4 of a mile. Turn north (right) on State Highway 371 to the first stoplight (Excelsior Road). Turn east (right), and continue to the parking lot.
- The northern trailhead is located in Lake Bemidji State Park. From Bemidji, go north on Co. Rd. 21 about 4 miles, then east on Co. Rd. 20 2 miles to the park entrance.
- Parking is also available on the east side of Lake Bemidji in Lavinia and at 5th and Gould in Bemidji.
- Parking for the Paul Bunyan State Trail is also available in Merrifield, Nisswa, Pequot Lakes, Jenkins, Pine River, Backus, Hackensack and Walker.
- There are 2 National Forest Service parking lots available for trail users between Hackensack and the Heartland State Trail. The one on the north end is located 1/2 mile east of the Paul Bunyan State Trail on State Highway 34. The other lot is located off of County Road 50 near the Shingobee Creek Crossing. This lot is roughly at the midway point on the Chippewa section of the trail.

The Heartland State Trail

- Parking for the trail is available in Park Rapids at Heartland County Park, Dorset, Nevis, Akeley, Walker, and Erickson's Landing north of Walker.

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

DNR Information Center

500 Lafayette Road
Saint Paul, MN 55155-4040
(651) 296-6157 (metro area & outside MN)
1-888-MINNDNR [646-6367] (MN toll free)
TDD
(651) 296-5484 (metro area)
1-800-657-3929 (MN toll free)

Minnesota Department of Tourism

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

Minnesota Bikeway Maps Minnesota Department of Transportation

395 John Ireland Boulevard
Room 110
Saint Paul, MN 55155
(651) 296-2216
MnDOT produces two maps (east and west MN) that grade the quality of road shoulders suitable for biking. There is a charge for these maps. Maps not available for the Metro area.

Printed on recycled paper
with a minimum of 30%
post-consumer material.



This information is available in alternative format upon request.

You can also check out our website at:
www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_trails/index.html

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Paul Bunyan & Heartland State Trails

Beltrami, Cass, Hubbard & Crow Wing Counties


Heartland Trail Distances in Miles	6.3	11.6	17.9	27.3	39.8	47
Park Rapids	6.3	15.7	28.2	35.4		
Dorset	9.4	21.9	29.1			
Nevis	12.5	19.7				
Akeley	7.2					
Walker						
Wilkinson						
2 mi south of Cass Lake						

Cyclists can ride U.S. Highway 71 shoulder to Itasca State Park. It is approximately 20 miles from Park Rapids.

Paul Bunyan Trail Distances in Miles

Baxter	9.0	15.9	22.1	25.4	31.4	40.7	48.2	71.0	77.6	82.8	89.0	94.2	100.6	107.9
Merrifield	6.9	13.1	16.4	22.4	31.7	39.2	62.0	68.6	73.8	80.0	85.2	91.6	98.9	
Nisswa	6.2	9.5	15.5	24.8	32.3	35.5	46.1	7.6	69.7	73.1	78.3	84.7	92.0	
Jenkins	3.3	9.3	18.6	26.1	48.9	55.5	60.7	66.9	72.1	78.5	85.8			
Pine River	6.0	15.3	22.8	45.6	52.2	57.4	63.6	68.8	75.2	82.5				
Backus	9.3	16.8	39.6	46.2	51.4	57.6	62.8	69.2	76.5					
Hackensack	7.5	30.3	36.9	42.1	48.3	53.5	59.9	67.2						
Walker	22.8	29.4	34.6	40.8	46.0	52.4	59.7							
Benedict	6.6	11.8	18.0	23.2	29.6	36.9								
Laporte	5.2	11.4	16.6	23.0	30.3									
Guthrie	6.2	11.4	17.8	25.1										
Bemidji	5.2	11.6	18.9											
Nary	6.4	13.7												
Bemidji St. Park	7.3													

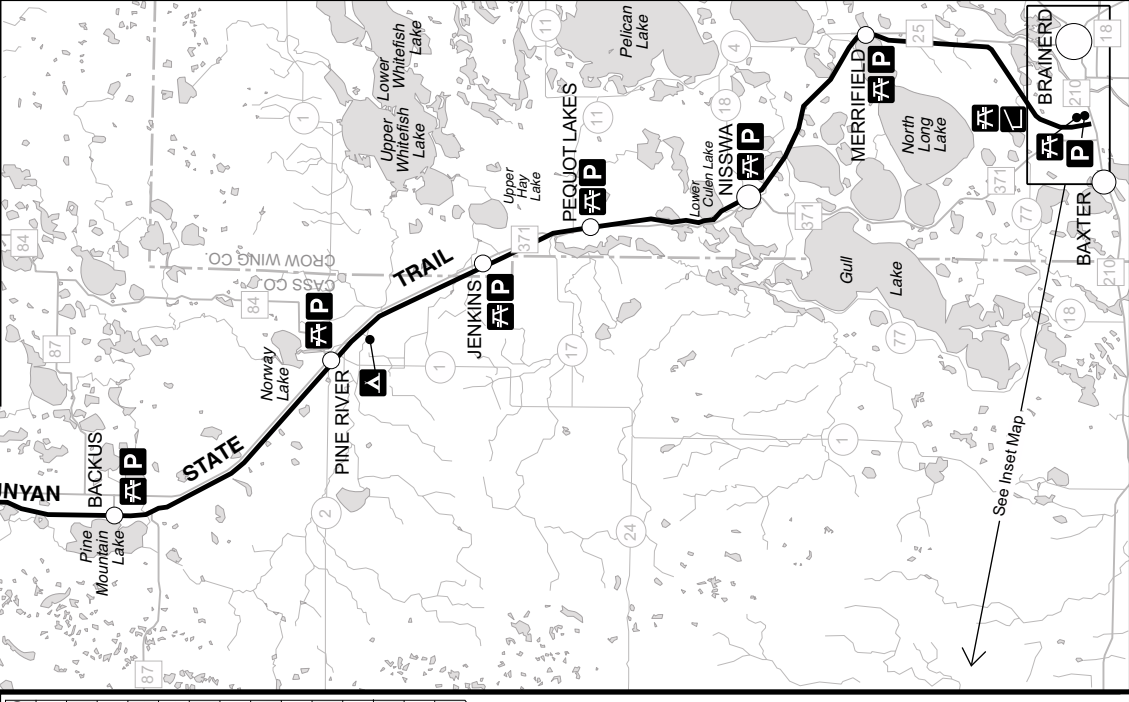
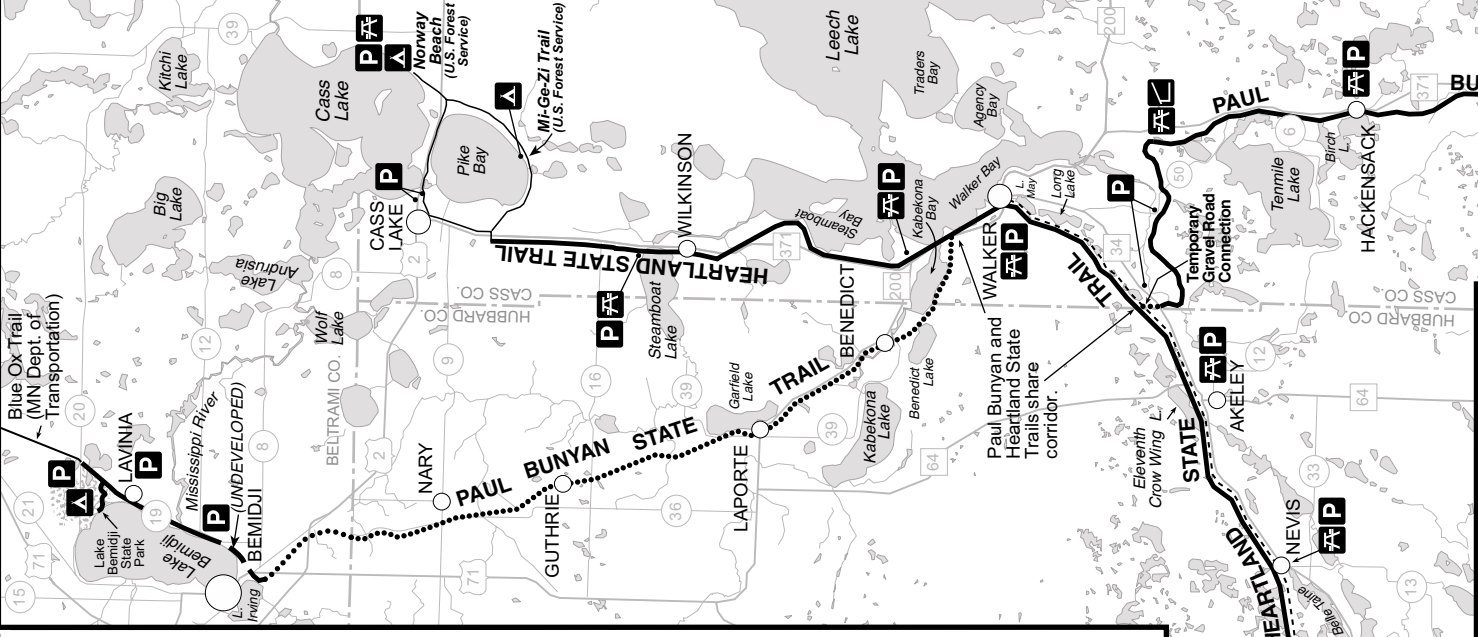
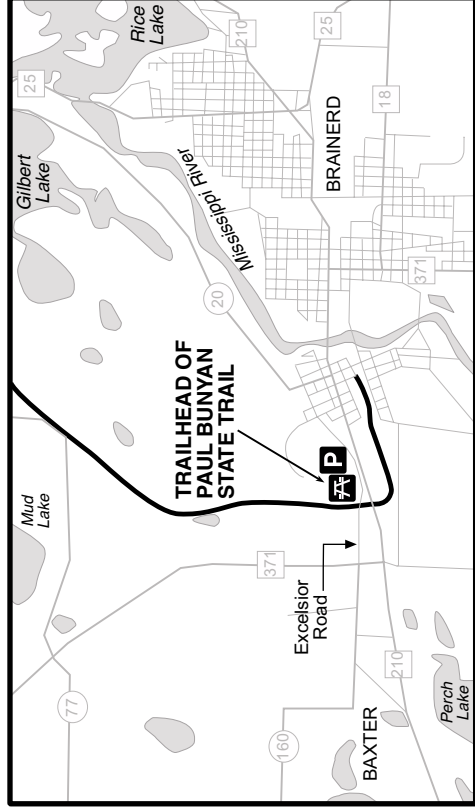
Studded Snowmobile Track Restrictions On Asphalt State Trails



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

State law restricts metal studs on asphalt trails. All other trails are open to snowmobiles with studded tracks.

On some sections of the affected State Trails, alternate routes open to all snowmobiles have been provided. They provide links with the grant-in-aid trails, and a connection to service areas. For most up-to-date information, call the DNR Information Center at 1-888-646-6367.



Minnesota DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES REC MAPS

NORTH

Duluth
Minneapolis/
St. Paul
Location of map area in Minnesota

MAP EXPLANATION

Trails

- Paved (Asphalt)
- - - - - Adjacent Horse Trail
- Unpaved
- - - - - Future Trail (Proposed)
- Other Trails

Facilities

- P** Parking
- PA** Picnic / Rest Area
- CA** Campground
- SH** Shelter

Scale in Miles

0 5 10

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See Inset Map