



Rustic Cabin Use Summer

Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park

Great Lakes, Great Times, Great Outdoors

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Introduction

This manual provides you with important information concerning summer use of the rustic cabins at Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. It is essential that you and all members of your party read through this information before your trip. After reading it, make a careful and honest evaluation of your party's abilities. Once you enter the wilderness, **you are responsible for yourself and your group's safety**. Please be aware that wilderness travel can be dangerous.

Mirror Lake 8-bunk, completed in 1946, was the first rustic cabin built at the Porkies by park staff. Since then, 18 more rustic cabins have been added throughout the park and the popularity of these cabins is still as great as ever.



Mirror Lake 8 Bunk

2-bunk cabins

- Cross-cut
- White Birch
- Mirror Lake 2 Bunk

4-bunk cabins

- Lake Superior
- Big Carp 4
- Section 17

4-bunk cabins

- Greenstone Falls
- Little Carp
- Mirror Lake 4
- Lily Pond
- Buckshot
- Speakers
- Log Camp

- Lake of the Clouds

6-bunk cabins

- Big Carp 6

8-bunk cabins

- Mirror Lake 8
- Union River*
- Whitetail*
- Gitche Gumees*

** Cabins with asterisk are open all year*

These cabins all offer a remote setting, with no electricity, no running water and only a woodstove for heat. It is the simple setting, simple duties and simple pleasures combined with a sense of adventure and beautiful scenery that makes the park's rustic cabin program just the ticket for folks looking to get away from the concerns of the bustling modern-day world.

Trip Planning

1. The first step in planning your trip is to determine the abilities of your group. Most of the rustic cabins are found in a wilderness setting and require travel on foot to access. Hikes to the cabins range from 1 to 4 miles on wilderness trails except for Gitche Gumees which is barrier free.
2. Pick a range of dates and a few different cabin choices. The popularity of these cabins means they often are reserved well in advance.
3. Beginning the first work day of the new year, reservations can be made by calling the park at (906) 885-5275 for the following year. Example: Beginning Wednesday, January 3, 2007, reservations can be made for the 2008 season. Starting later in 2006, reservations will be handled through the Central Reservation Service. Call the park or visit www.mi.gov/porkies.
4. After your reservation and payment have been made, you will be sent a confirmation permit to use the cabin containing information about the rental policy. A park map and wilderness use guidelines (also available online) will be included with your cabin key upon arrival to the park.
5. Rustic cabin users are expected to conform to all wilderness rules and regulations.

Additional trip planning information

- Maximum number of persons sleeping in cabins is not to exceed the number of bunks in the cabin.
- A bunk is one bed. Tents are not permitted in the yard of the cabin.
- Maximum length of stay is 15 nights.
- July through September is the busiest season; for more solitude, try earlier or later in the year..
- Cabin rentals are from 3 PM Eastern time the date of the reservation until 1 PM Eastern time on the last date of the reservation.

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

No Mechanical or Motorized Vehicles

Motorized vehicles, wheeled carts, wheeled boat carriers and other mechanical devices are not allowed on trails except on established mountain bike trails.

While on the Trail

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

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

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

While at the Rustic Cabins

Standard furnishings at each cabin include: woodstove, bunk beds, mattresses, table, chairs, outhouse (bring toilet paper), ax and saw. All cookware and tableware are provided. Lighting is not provided. Cabins on Mirror Lake, Lily Pond and Lake of the Clouds are furnished with a boat or a canoe, boat cushions, PFDs and oars or paddles. All other equipment must be carried in and removed when you leave (see equipment list on the back of this manual).

Water

Each rustic cabin is equipped with an information board which locates the nearest source of water; no hand pumps are available. Unless carried in with you, all drinking water should be boiled for one minute or filtered through a 0.5 micron filter. Some commercial chemicals or treatments may also work.

Wood

All wood must be taken from "dead and down" trees and branches. In addition to the wood-heating stove, a designated "fire circle" is provided near each cabin.

Trash

Please haul out what you haul in, including all food scraps. There are no trash receptacles at the cabin. Trash receptacles are provided at trailheads. It only takes a simple commitment to pack out all that is packed in, and to encourage others to do the same. Do not burn any garbage in the woodstove or fire pit.

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

Insects

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

Pets

Pets are not allowed in any state-owned buildings (except service dogs) and may not be left unattended at any time. If you are unable to attend to your pet(s), leave your pet(s) at home.

Wildlife

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

Black Bears

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



Understanding Bear Behavior

A bear is studying you if...

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

A bear may be getting upset if...

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

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

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

Do not confront or feed any bear. To minimize any bear encounters while at a rustic cabin:

- Keep coolers and all food products inside the cabin.
- Keep shampoo, toothpaste and any other products with an inviting scent inside the cabin.

Keeping the cabin and site clean goes a long way in reducing any unwanted animal encounter.

Weather

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

Procedures When You Leave: use as a checklist

- Thoroughly clean the cabin, even under the beds.
- Sweep out dirt, wood chips, even crumbs that may attract unwanted visitors. Carry out all garbage.
- Wipe down the table, bunk beds and kitchen cabinet.
- Place all cooking pots/pans/bowls upside down in cabinet.
- Pack out everything you packed in.
- Restock the cabin with wood and kindling so the next group will have dry wood when they enter.
- Make sure the fire is out in the fire circle. The coals should be cool to the touch.

Please leave the cabin in as good as, or better, condition than what you found. **You are responsible for cleaning the cabin at the end of your stay, not park personnel.**

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments about the rustic cabins, please stop by the park headquarters when you leave.

Safety

Medical assistance is not available at the park and may be hours away. In case of an emergency, call 911 and the park headquarters at (906) 885-5275. Cell phones seldom work in the wilderness. Emergency phones are located at the Presque Isle ranger station, Union Bay campground office, and park office. When you dial have the following ready:

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

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

Remember, you are responsible for your actions.

Suggested Equipment List

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

Personal Equipment:

each person should have:

hiking boots

sleeping bag

pillow - an inflatable one

saves space

backpack

sunglasses*

headlamp or small flashlight*

matches in a waterproof container*

lighter and fire starter*

high-energy trail snacks*

emergency whistle*

large water bottle*

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map or USGS topographic

quadrangle maps of the area*

compass*

small knife*

toothbrush and paste

personal medications

watch

Clothing:

underwear

- underpants (2-3)

- light- or medium-weight

synthetic, wool or blend top and bottoms

- wool or synthetic socks (2 pairs)

- sock liners (optional)

middle wear

- wool or fleece pant and jacket

- wool or fleece sweater or shirt

outerwear

- windproof jacket and pants

- waterproof or waterproof/breathable pants and jacket

- hat

Optional:

cookstove and fuel

(recommended)

small lantern or candle lantern for light

camera and extra film

binoculars

day or belt pack

biodegradable soap

slippers

extra flashlight batteries and bulb

Group Equipment:

cabin key

cabin registration

food and drink

toilet paper

roll of paper towels

sunscreen

insect repellent

water filter or water jug

first aid kit that includes:

- first aid book

- moleskin

- gauze rolls

- chemical heat pack

- ace bandage

- 2" first aid tape

- assorted band aids including butterfly

- triangular bandages and sterile pads

- antacid tablets

- anti-diarrhea medication

- strong pain medication

- ibuprofen tablets

- antiseptic wound cleaner

- body thermometer

- latex gloves

- tweezers/scissors/nail clippers

- small mirror

emergency and repair kit that includes:

- small roll of duct or strapping tape

- stick-on nylon repair patches

- nylon cord/braided wire

- safety pins

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