

## CREATE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE Sample Sites

*The sky's the limit! Use these ideas to get started planning your adventure today!*

### Hiking- Available Late spring -late fall (approx. May through October)

#### **Bond Falls**

Trail Length: 0.75 mi.

Terrain: Gravel path with stairs and steep hill (off-trail option available)

*Watch the roaring waters of the Ontonagon River as they tumble a total of 50 ft. over ancient exposed basalt rocks. Located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Bond Falls is among the most photographed waterfalls in the state. This would be the perfect complement to a hike in Sylvania or a day in the Porcupine Mountains.*

#### **Escanaba Trail**

Trail Length: 2.5-5+ mi.

Terrain: Moderately rolling with some steep hills

*Located in the Northern Highland American Legion (NHAL) State Forest, this trail winds through different forest types and along the shores of both Escanaba and Palette Lakes. Recent logging provides a chance to learn about forest management and how the state cares for its different forests.*

#### **Franklin Lake**

Trail Length: 1 mi.

Terrain: Flat with 1 large hill (hill bypass available)

*Great fit for hikers of any age and ability! Located in the Nicolet National Forest, this hike takes visitors among towering hemlocks, and pines, and through a spruce bog. This trail is a great place to see ephemeral wildflowers in early spring.*

#### **Hidden Lakes Trail**

Trail Length: 2-6 mi.

Terrain: Gently rolling to moderate hills

*This trail offers multiple sections to explore in a day or ½ day adventure! True to its name, this trail meanders among several secluded lakes in the Nicolet National Forest.*

#### **Luna-White Deer trails**

Trail Length: 4.5 mi.

Terrain: Flat to gently rolling, some low-lying wet areas possible

*This hidden gem of a trail in the heart of the Nicolet National Forest encircles 2 pristine lakes. Travel through different forest types like red pine, hemlock, and oak, and get the opportunity to see wildlife such as the common loon, which typically are found on the lakes in this area.*

#### **Porcupine Mountains**

Trail Length: Variable (typically 2-5 mi)

Terrain: Moderate to steep hills, rocky terrain.

*Old growth forests, ancient exposed rock escarpments, and pristine waterfalls help make up this park's rugged beauty. An adventure in the "porkies" is truly customizable with many options!*

#### **Raven trails**

Trail Length: 1-5 mi.

Terrain: Gently rolling to moderately hilly

*Located in the Northern Highland American Legion (NHAL) State Forest, this trail system offers multiple loops that meander through forests of pine, hemlock, and maple. Topography on this trail system is generally flat, though there are a few bigger hills.*



**Seven-Mile Lake** Trail Length: 3 mi.

Terrain: Mostly flat with some moderate hills; some low-lying wet areas possible

*This Nicolet National Forest trail offers hikers the opportunity to get up close and personal with several different habitats including mixed forest, spruce, and maple. A highlight of this trail is a boardwalk that takes you through a bog and gives you learn about bog ecology while identifying common bog plants.*

**Star Lake** Trail Length: 1 mi. or 2.5 mi.

Terrain: Mostly flat to gently rolling; some narrow sections

*This peninsula is the perfect place to learn about, and witness forest regeneration in Wisconsin. Over a century ago, this site was pasture for logging camp horses. During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, this land was selected for an experimental forest plot that would set the stage for re-forestation efforts in the state. As you walk through the pines, you can still witness some of the experimental forest, travel along the shores of Star Lake, and visit a northern Wisconsin peatland.*

**Sylvania Wilderness** Trail Length: typically 2-5 mi. (longer routes available)

Terrain: Gently rolling to moderately hilly

*This 20,000-acre wilderness treasure, located in the Ottawa National Forest in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, is a participant favorite. Learn about Sylvania's history and forest ecology as you hike through the massive pines and hemlocks in this pocket of old-growth forest.*

**Trampers Trail** Trail Length: 4 mi.

Terrain: Moderately hilly with a few steep hills

*This Northern Highland American Legion (NHAL) State Forest trail is among the best in the area! Skirt along the shores of scenic Star Lake underneath hemlocks, with an option to hike across the isthmus to Plum Lake.*

**Whispering Lake** Trail Length: 2-3 mi.

Terrain: Flat to moderately hilly

*This trail system allows hikers to venture into Blackjack Springs Wilderness, one of 3 designated wilderness areas in the Nicolet National Forest. This trail ventures from upland pine forest into lowland bog-tamarack-spruce habitat, and circles around secluded Whispering Lake.*

## **Canoe Trips (Available mid-may-early October\*)**

\*combined water and air temperature must be at least 100°F

**Canoe Lessons & Silver Lake Tour** Lessons/Tour Length: 3-4 hours

*If you've longed to explore this area's many lakes and rivers but are intimidated by the thought of manning your own canoe, fear not! We've got lessons for you! Lessons are typically 2-3 hours in length and our educators will cover safety and equipment basics, and different paddle strokes for maneuvering your canoe. As time allows, we'll take a short tour around Silver Lake in Eagle River!*

**Allequash Lake** Tour Length: 2-4 mi.

Water body: Calm, low-traffic lake

*This 406-acre lake is a great place to experience a couple hours on the water! Located in the Northern Highland American Legion (NHAL) State Forest, this lake is a birders' haven. Eagles, nesting geese, black terns, and other shorebirds are routinely spotted here.*

**Baker Lake/Tamarack Flowage** Tour Length: 2.5 + mi.

Water body: Calm, low-traffic lake with small connecting wetland creek

*This staff favorite sits in the Vilas County forest, and provides the opportunity to see several interesting features including an old beaver lodge, tamarack bog, nesting Common Loons, and several species of aquatic flowers. Put in at Baker Lake, travel up a small section of "creek", and then enjoy exploring the larger Tamarack Flowage. This paddle is perfect at any time of day- morning, afternoon, or even sunset!*

### **Manitowish River**

Tour Length: 5.5 mi.

Water body: Calm (no riffles), meandering river with many turns

*This river gently twists and turns through northern Vilas County - you never know what you'll see just around the bend! This beautiful river winds its way through pines, willow, and tag alder wetland. It is an excellent place for viewing eagles, ducks, and other river wildlife. The number of turns on this river make it an excellent fit for someone who has some experience steering a canoe or pair this experience with some canoe lessons!*

### **Sylvania Wilderness**

Tour Length: Customizable- 3+ mi.

Water body: Large lake, only small outboard engines allowed

*Located in the heart of the Ottawa National Forest in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, this area was spared from the logging heyday of the late 1800's and is one of the few pockets of old growth forest remaining in the Midwest. With over 34 lakes within Sylvania's boundaries, paddling is the perfect way to explore!*

### **Wisconsin River**

Tour Lengths: range from 6-10 mi.

Water body: Calm river with some riffles and rocks; some areas with many meanders.

*From its narrow, twisting headwaters to its wider post-dam meanders, the Wisconsin River offers a trip for everyone as it flows through the Northwoods. There are multiple routes available, including quieter options closer to the headwaters that have many twists and turns, perfect for those with some canoe experience.*

*Beginner canoers will enjoy the wider portions of the river south of Eagle River. Talk to one of our educators to find the route that's right for you! All options offer opportunities to see wildlife including eagles, deer, otters, and multiple species of songbirds.*

## **Snowshoeing (Available mid-December through mid-March\*)**

\*dependent on snow levels

### **Awassa Trails**

Trail Length: 1-2.5 mi.

Terrain: Mostly flat to gently rolling

*Despite being tucked away in St. Germain's backyard, this trail system has a nice wilderness feel! Enjoy the quiet as you walk through pine, fir, and maple forests.*

### **Deerskin Trails**

Trail Length: 1.5-3.5 mi.

Terrain: Moderately hilly

*Nestled in the heart of the Nicolet National Forest, Deerskin Trails offer snowshoers the opportunity to "get away" from it all. Walk along maple ridges and beside the picturesque Deerskin River.*

### **Razorback Ridges**

Trail Length: 2 mi.

Terrain: Gently hilly to moderately hilly

*Snowshoeing among the stately pines at Razorback Ridges is a great way to spend a morning or afternoon! Want to expand your experience? This option pairs perfectly with an additional ski tour at the over 15 miles of trails Razorback has to offer.*

### **Star Lake**

Trail Length: 1 mi.

Terrain: Mostly flat with a couple moderate hills

*Over a century ago, the Star Lake peninsula was pasture land for logging camp horses. During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this land was selected for an experimental forest plot that would set the stage for re-forestation efforts in the state. As you snowshoe through the pines, learn about the forestry experiments from our educators, and take a break to listen to the breeze as it courses through the pines.*

### **Sylvania Wilderness**

Trail Length: 1-3 mi.

Terrain: Moderately hilly- trails are not packed down

This 20,000-acre wilderness treasure, located in the Ottawa National Forest in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, is a participant favorite. Learn about Sylvania's history and forest ecology as you snowshoe through the massive pines and hemlocks in this pocket of old-growth forest. Be ready for a workout- you may be breaking fresh trail through several inches of snow over moderately hilly terrain!

### **Tara Lila**

Trail Length: 2-4 mi+

Terrain: Gently rolling with a few larger hills

*Tara Lila is a wilderness conservation project that maintains 3 separate park units just south of Eagle River. TFT is proud to offer snowshoe experiences in the 2 larger units, both offering the opportunity to 'shoe through different habitats: A highlight of the Sundstein Rd. Unit is a grove of stately hemlocks, while the Ripco Rd. Unit showcases unique landforms left behind the Wisconsin glaciers thousands of years ago.*

## **Cross Country Skiing (Available Late Dec-mid March, depending on snow)**

### **Anvil National Recreation Trails**

Trail Length: 2-5 mi.

Terrain: Mostly flat with a couple larger hills

*This trail system just east of Eagle River was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930's and is a local favorite. Find out why as you glide through the maple, pine, and balsam fir forests and learn about winter ecology from our educators.*

### **Awassa Trails**

Trail Length: 1-2.5 mi.

Terrain: Flat (trail is rolled flat, but no tracks for classic XC skis)

*Despite being tucked away in St. Germain's backyard, this trail system has a nice wilderness feel! With flat terrain, this little gem is perfect for beginner skiers!*

### **Madeline Lake Trail**

Trail Length: 2-6 mi.

Terrain: Gently rolling with a couple larger hills

*Part of the Northern Highland American Legion (NHAL) State Forest System, the Madeline Lake Trail is comprised of multiple loops that travel through a mix of pine and maple forest. The land around this area was recently logged, allowing for opportunities to learn about and get a first-hand look at forest management in this area.*

### **Nordmarka Trails (Eagle River Golf Course)**

Trail Length: 3.5 mi.

Terrain: Mix of flat and hills

This trail, located in the heart of Eagle River, offers a delightful mix of flat land and hills of all difficulty levels. This location is perfect for someone who loves skiing hills, or for someone who wants to learn more and gain experience on hills. This outing pairs perfectly with a longer ski outing- visit Nordmarka Trails with us in the morning to practice hills, then go out with us in the afternoon to either the county, state, or national forests!

### **Pioneer Creek Trail**

Trail Length: 2-6 mi.

Terrain: Flat to moderately hilly with a few larger hills

*Glide through the Vilas County Forest on this Conover ski trail as it crosses through diverse habitat types including young jack pine/aspen forest as well as maple and pine forest. Observe evidence of forest management in action at this trail and learn about how it benefits the ecosystem from our educators.*

### **Razorback Ridges Ski Trail**

Trail Length: 3-6 mi.

Terrain: Moderately hilly with a few larger hills

*With miles of groomed ski trails, Razorback Ridges is a destination for many cross-country skiers in the area. After a half or full day "on the ridges," you'll see why these trails are so popular. The moderately hilly terrain (with a few steeper hills) makes for a delightful ski for an intermediate level skier, though there are more beginner-friendly options as well.*

## Birding (Available starting 2<sup>nd</sup> week of May)

**Allequash Lake:** This beautiful lake in the Northern Highland American Legion State forest is a great place to look for birds of all types, but especially shorebirds. One of the more unique species regularly seen here is the Black Tern. Other species include Great Blue Heron, Bald Eagles, and nesting Canada Geese.

**Deep Lake-Hunter Lake:** Enjoy a morning listening to the diverse birdsong on Vilas County Forest lands. Birding along the backroads in the Deep Lake/Hunter Lake Rd. Area consistently yields excellent results without having to travel far from Eagle River. In the past, our staff has heard or seen Pine Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Indigo Bunting, and Winter Wrens, just to name a few species.

**Fallison Lake:** This trail system offers the opportunity to enjoy birding on a beautiful hike! As we travel among pines, hemlocks, and bogs, we'll keep our eyes and ears open for spring residents like Black-throated Green Warblers, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Chipping Sparrows, and others!

**Nepco Landing:** This young jack-pine stand in the Vilas County Forest just north of Conover makes a great location for an evening of birding. In the spring, just after sunset, resident woodcocks begin their mating displays; several openings make this a great place to observe their performance. If we're lucky, we might even hear the "boom" of nighthawks flying overhead or the lovely call of the Whip-poor-will.

**Ninemile Lake:** This large, shallow lake is perfect habitat for a variety of waterfowl and other wetland birds. Mergansers, Ring-Necked ducks, Trumpeter swans, and American Bitterns are species have been spotted here before. This calm lake is the perfect destination for a sunrise or sunset paddle to observe its avian residents.

**Powell Marsh:** This wetland was once the site of a railroad grade and several homesteads before being restored as a waterfowl refuge. A raised dike that goes along several pools provides ample opportunity to observe birds paddling in deeper waters or wading in the shallows. We consistently see Common Loons, Trumpeter Swans, Yellow Warblers, and several species of sandpipers. You might even get lucky and see a Harrier or Short-eared Owl patrolling the marsh. This is an excellent option for just a morning outing, or can be paired with a canoe at nearby Allequash Lake (see above) for a full day of birding adventure!

**Raven Trails/Clear Lake:** Warblers, woodpeckers, and other perching birds abound in these state-forest recreation areas! We'll start the morning by visiting the Clear Lake beach and picnic area. While not typically thought of as a "traditional" birding area, this site typically yields a high diversity with ample opportunities for viewing birds like Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black and White Warbler, and Blackburnian Warblers. Afterwards, we'll take a short drive to the Raven Trail system where we will continue our search of birds among the towering pines, oaks, and maples in the area.

**Rainbow Flowage Area:** Join our staff as we spend a morning exploring several different types of habitat near the Rainbow Flowage in between Eagle River and Minocqua. We'll start in a stand of young aspen regeneration where we often see Chestnut-sided Warbler, Rose-Breasted Grosbeak, and nesting Osprey on a platform overlooking the Wisconsin River. Then we'll drive along backroads to a shoreline of the flowage that's an excellent place to observe Bald Eagles, waterfowl, and, depending on the water level, wading shorebirds.

## **Biking (Available Late May - Early October)**

All listed bike routes are on paved surface, appropriate for either road or hybrid-style bikes. Our group leaders cycle at approximately 10-12 mph

### **Eagle River Area Backroads**

Trail Length: 10-30 mi.

Terrain: Gently rolling with some larger hills

*Enjoy a morning or afternoon exploring the scenic backroads surrounding Eagle River! Pedal through forest and along lakes, with stops along the way to learn about local points of interest including the chain of lakes, burnt rollways dam, and different forest types. Typical rides range from 10-30 mi., and terrain ranges from gently rolling to some larger hills.*

### **Heart of Vilas County Trails**

Trail Length: 10-30mi.

Terrain: Gently rolling with a few larger hills

*With over 40 miles of trail one-way from St. Germain to Mercer, there's plenty of room to explore and choose your own biking adventure! Some staff favorites are the section between Sayner and Boulder Junction, which travels along Crystal and Trout Lakes, or between Boulder Junction and Manitowish Waters that travels over rivers and through picturesque bogs. Out-and-back or point-to-point rides available.*

### **Land O'Lakes/Sylvania**

Trail Length: 30 mi.

Terrain: Gently rolling that becomes hilly

*Brag to your friends and family that you biked all the way to Michigan on your vacation! Located just along the border, the town of Land O' Lakes hosts a well-maintained, paved bike trail that provides access to Michigan's Upper Peninsula via back roads. After venturing on to the back roads, we'll ride along the Sylvania Wilderness area. While flat to gently rolling at first, this trail becomes more challenging with moderately hilly topography with larger hills.*

### **Nicolet National Forest**

Trail Length: 6-30 mi.

Terrain: Moderately hilly with several larger hills

*Discover the Nicolet by peddling along the backroads with our staff! This route passes through mature maple forests, past a couple pristine lakes, and across ancient glacial terrain! There are opportunities to learn about current forest management activities, and also see the site of a past CCC camp. This is among the more challenging routes perfect for an adventurous cyclist, with rolling terrain, and several larger hills. This route can be made into a short 6-mi. Point-to-point option, OR a larger 30 mi-route if you have a full day!*