

Watersmeet Township recreational  
accomplishments from prior plan and  
future goals for 2018-2022.

# Watersmeet Township Recreation Plan 2018-2022

Watersmeet Township Planning Commission

---

## *Table of Contents*

<i>Section 1 Introduction</i>	<i>Page 1</i>
<i>Section 2 Plan Review/Adoption</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Section 3 Recreation Inventory</i>	<i>Page 3-15</i>
<i>Regional Recreational Opportunities</i>	<i>Page 3</i>
<i>Local Area Recreational Opportunities</i>	<i>Pages 4-6</i>
<i>Fishing both Lakes and Streams</i>	<i>Pages 7-9</i>
<i>Kayaking, Swimming and Camping</i>	<i>Page 10</i>
<i>Hunting, Golf and Birdwatching</i>	<i>Page 11</i>
<i>Lodging Available</i>	<i>Page 12</i>
<i>Mountain Biking, Motorized and Non-Motorized Vehicle Trails</i>	<i>Page 13-14</i>
<i>Community Recreation Resources Watersmeet Township and School</i>	<i>Page 15</i>
<i>Section 4 Basis for Action Plan</i>	<i>Page 16</i>
<i>Section 5 Recreation Action Plan</i>	<i>Page 17</i>
<i>Section 6 Administrative Structure</i>	<i>Page 18</i>

# Section 1-Introduction

An area must have adequate recreational facilities and activities in order for a community to ensure a high quality of life for its residents. This Revised Five Year Watersmeet Township Recreation Plan has been developed to determine if adequate facilities and activities exist and to correct any shortcomings in an orderly manner, based on sound reasoning and planning.

Watersmeet Township has made significant improvements in the recreation facilities offered within the community in the last several years. In the past the Watersmeet Township Board has made priorities for development and improvements. Many community organizations have been integral in contributing to new development and the maintenance of recreation facilities and the many existing recreational activities offered in the Watersmeet area. Various organizations have worked jointly and/or cooperatively with the Watersmeet Township Board to enhance recreation opportunities.

With this revised Five Year Watersmeet Township Recreation Plan the Township Board and the Board of Education have been working together with Lac Vieux Desert Tribal Planning, the US Forest Service, and many area organizations and individuals to identify what types of development should occur to meet the existing and future recreational demands of the residents of Watersmeet Township and the visitors which are vital to its economy. The Plan will aid in assisting organizations, special interest groups and governing bodies to work together to achieve the outlined goals and objectives in a more methodical and efficient manner.

While the action plan lays out a schedule for completing a variety of improvements, the schedule should remain flexible since funding opportunities may not match the identified schedule. The schedule endeavors to evenly distribute the required improvements over the five-year planning period. The integrity of the plan will not be compromised if elements are moved to different time frames.

Finally, this plan should be a working document to be frequently consulted. As a working document, it will be in effect for five years (through the year 2022). Under the Department of Natural Resources requirements, the plan will need to be updated at that time.

*Edited by: Paul Kemppainen for the Watersmeet Township Planning Commission*

## ***Section 2-Plan Review/Adoption***

This section of the Five Year Watersmeet Township Recreation Plan documents that Watersmeet Township has submitted copies of the plan to the proper authorities and held a public hearing. The Watersmeet Township Board has adopted the Five Year Watersmeet Township Recreation Plan. The Township Board hopes to be successful in maintenance and upgrade of current recreation opportunities and is committed to implementing this Plan for additional recreation facilities and programs. Copies of the following documents are included:

- Notice of Public Hearing
- Resolution of Watersmeet Township Board
- Letter to the Watersmeet Township School District Board of Education
- Letter to Michigan Regional Planning Commission
- Letter to Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Tribal Council
- Letter to Gogebic County Board of Commissioners
- Letter to Michigan Department of Natural Resources

## Section 3- Recreation Inventory (Regional Recreation Opportunities)

The Big Snow Country area, which includes Watersmeet, is located in Michigan's western Upper Peninsula and nearby Wisconsin and consists of Ontonagon, Gogebic and Iron counties in Michigan, as well as parts of Ashland and Bayfield counties in Wisconsin. The area offers over 50 waterfalls, hundreds of inland lakes, almost one million acres of national and state forests and parks, historic mining and logging museums and attractions, numerous golf courses, more than 2,000 miles of snowmobile trails, over 200 miles of groomed Nordic ski trails and some of the Midwest's finest ski resorts with over 60 miles of alpine ski slopes. Big Snow Country has become a complete year round vacation destination because of its abundance of beauty, scenery, history, excellent dining and many hotels, motels and resorts.

Lake Gogebic is considered nature's four-season vacation gem. The largest lake in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Lake Gogebic, offers 13,380 acres of prime fishing water, and is surrounded by the almost one million-acre Ottawa National Forest. Lake Gogebic fishing includes walleye, small mouth bass, northern pike, perch, and whitefish. This region is also a prime hunting hot spot for deer, bear, small game, and birds. Families will enjoy Lake Gogebic summer water sports, sightseeing, hiking in the surrounding timberlands, and the scores of colors that appear in the region's autumn spectacular.

Porcupine Mountains State Park was established as a Michigan State Park in 1944 to protect the last extensive tract of old-growth hardwood-hemlock forest remaining in the Midwest. At nearly 60,000 acres, it is Michigan's largest state park and one of the Midwest's largest wilderness areas. The park is located at the western edge of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, along the south shore of Lake Superior. Things to do and see in the Porcupine Mountains are many. A schedule of interpretive programs and guided hikes is conducted daily throughout summer and fall by the park's interpretive staff. Activities cover exciting topics such as the black bear, gray wolf, peregrine falcon, and historic copper mining. Interpretive programs are free of charge and open to visitors of all ages. Winter programs also offered. The park is well known for its extensive trail system. Nearly 100 miles of wilderness pathways traverse the rugged interior of the Porcupine Mountains. Trails pass through big-tree forests, atop rocky cliff tops, alongside cascading rivers, and to scenic lakes and vistas. Trail difficulty varies from season to season and trail to trail. Trails range from short day hikes to routes that take several days to complete. Park rangers can help you select a route matching your interests and abilities.

With over 100 downhill runs and 34 lifts, Big Snow Country offers miles and miles of a wide variety of skiing terrain - from easy greens to challenging double diamonds. Discover incredible skiing and boarding in Big Snow Country. With four mountains only a few minutes apart, Big Snow Country boasts variety the entire family can enjoy. Big Powderhorn Mountain offers 25 freshly groomed Trails, 2 Half Pipes and 2 Snowboard Parks" Indianhead Mountain Resort offers 22 trails (with about 42 percent rated most difficult). Five chair lifts and four surface tows. The Porkies' has 11 miles of slope covering 100 acres over a 320 acre area. There are 7 intermediate trails, 8 challenging expert trails and 3 novice trails. Whitecap Mountains offers three incredible mountains of skiing with 36 runs.

Northern Wisconsin (border is only 7 miles south) offers many recreational opportunities for area visitors: Miniature Golf, Horseback Riding, Go-Karts and the World Championship Snowmobile Derby.

# **Section 3- Recreation Inventory (Local Area Recreation Opportunities)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Watersmeet is located in an area of lakes, rivers and forests. The majority of the land in the township is publicly owned, primarily by the U.S. Forest Service. This land base provides opportunities for a variety of outdoor recreation. Campgrounds, boat landings, biking, snowmobile and ATV trails, and more are the base for Watersmeet's recreation. Combine that with a casino, resorts, golf courses, and other supporting businesses, and Watersmeet has become known as a Northwoods playground.

Watersmeet is within a day's drive of a quarter of the Nation's population. Specific places that draw tourists are the Sylvania Wilderness and Recreation Area, the Cisco Chain of Lakes, and the Lac Vieux Desert Resort and Casino.

## **NORTHERN WATERS RESORT AND CASINO**

The Northern Waters Resort and Casino, formerly the Lac Vieux Desert Resort and Casino, provides a swimming pool, hot tub and an 18-hole golf course along with the surrounding areas largest acomodations.

## **OTTAWA NATIONAL FOREST &**

### **SYLVANIA WILDERNESS AND RECREATION AREA**

The Ottawa National Forest has their District Headquarters in Watersmeet, as well as a Visitor Center, and the Toumey Tree Nursery. Within the township, the Ottawa National Forest also has several campgrounds, boat landings, and trails.

The Toumey Tree Nursery has been in operation since 1937 providing tree seedlings to the Great Lakes National Forests. Originally established to provide seedlings for the lands that had been cut-over and burned following the logging of the early 1900's, the Toumey Nursery now works to produce trees that have superior growth and disease resistance, as well as species that are preferred by wildlife.

The Ottawa National Forest Visitor Center – located on US 2 in Watersmeet, is open year-round and offers exhibits, interpretive programs, and area information – all free to the public. Within the Visitor Center is the "Bear's Den" gift shop, offering nature related books and gifts, including many local items.

The Sylvania Wilderness and adjacent Sylvania Recreation Area, located entirely within Watersmeet, Township, are part of the Ottawa National Forest. The twenty square mile wilderness is part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. A private playground of the wealthy until 1967, the area contains thirty-six lakes and old growth forest. Sitting atop the watershed, the lakes are mostly land locked, deep, clear, and pristine. Many of the lakes have natural sand beaches, and wilderness campsites are interspersed throughout Sylvania. The main activities in the Wilderness are canoeing, hiking, fishing and camping. In the adjacent Recreation Area you will find a 48 unit drive-in campground, and a developed beach and picnic area.

## **WATERSMEET AREA POINTS OF INTEREST**

Ottawa National Forest Visitor Center - Located on US-2 in Watersmeet, which is open year-round-offers many outdoor and historical displays, rocks, movies and slides of the Ottawa National Forest. Summer programs run from June through September and are free to the public. Some of the programs that are planned include moose, birds of prey, wolves, bats, Michigan Legend and Lore, black bears, loons and rare plants. The Ottawa National Forest Visitor Center provides area information, maps, museum exhibits and free interpretive programs to visitors. It is home of the Ottawa Interpretive Association and "Bears Den" (gift shop), offering interpretive books, and gift items.

Sylvania Wilderness and Recreation Area - located off US-2 just west of Watersmeet. The 18,327-acre Wilderness is part of the National Wilderness Preservation system. Combined with the adjacent recreation area, Sylvania offers an outstanding experience for those who want to camp, swim, and fish, hike, canoe, and cross country ski or enjoy the solitude of wilderness.

Watersmeet Fish Hatchery-Located 4.5 Miles east of US 2. Come for "Family Fishing Fun". No license is required. See the raising of Brown, Brooke and Rainbow Trout. Tours are available. Open six-days / week.

## **HIKING TRAILS**

Mex-i-mine falls - This is a short, fairly easy trail and follows the river for a good view of the falls. Total length round trip is approximately 1/4 mile. The trail is found at Burned Dam Campgrounds, approximately seven miles northeast of Watersmeet.

Imp Lake Trail - The trail is approximately 1 mile and is a loop trail. It is a nice trail and wheelchair accessible. Part of the trail is boardwalk and at the halfway point, there is decking with wooden chairs. It is particularly scenic with fall colors. The entrance is at the Imp Lake Campground, which can be accessed east of US 2 on FR 3940 to FR 3978.

Visitor Center Interpretive Trail - This is a short, paved trail, about 10 minutes long, and loops back to the starting point. There are interpretive signs along the way to explain the variety of plants and trees. The trail is accessed at the Ottawa Visitor Center, which is located at the corner of US2 and Hwy 45 in Watersmeet.

Sylvania Wilderness and Recreation Area - There are about 26 miles of trails that wind through old growth forests and along lakeshores. Trails in the wilderness are unmarked. Most are maintained to a 24-inch tread width and some to a 36-inch tread width.

## **CROSS COUNTRY SKIING**

Sylvania Wilderness and Recreation Area offers about 26 miles of trails that wind through old growth forests and along lakeshores. Trails in the wilderness are unmarked. Most are maintained to a 24-inch tread width and some to a 36-inch tread width. Trails are un-groomed. Parking is located at the entrance station off County Road 535, there are 13 beginner trails, 7 Intermediate trails and 12 expert trails.

Sylvania Outfitters boasts 20 miles of groomed trails, there are 13 Beginner trails, 4 intermediate trails, and 1 expert trail. Parking and ski rental are available at Sylvania Outfitters and the trails connect with the Sylvania Wilderness Trail System.

The Land O' Lakes Fish and Game Club cleans and/or grooms several miles of cross country ski trails that run from North Land O' Lakes to the east through a circuit trail and again to the north. Parking is available just north of Moon Lake Road on the east side of Highway 45.

There are many miles of un-groomed Sylvania trails that start in Land O' Lakes at the end of Fisher Road and extend north.

## **WATER RESOURCES**

302 lakes and 241 miles of trout streams make Watersmeet a true water wonderland. From Watersmeet, the Ontonagon River flows north to Lake Superior. The Wisconsin River Flows South into the Mississippi River, and the Paint River flows east into Lake Michigan. This is "where the waters meet".

**CISCO CHAIN OF LAKES-** The famous Cisco Chain of Lakes has fifteen interconnected lakes with over 270 miles of scenic shoreline. Three of the chain of lakes border Michigan and Wisconsin. Wildlife abounds on this peaceful chain. Nestled in our colorful forests, it is one of the largest chains of lakes in the world. Two undeveloped lakes on the chain remind us of days past when solitude prevailed.

**LAC VIEUX DESERT-**Lac Vieux Desert is the headwaters of the Wisconsin River. This beautiful 4,200-acre boundary lake is nestled between the Ottawa and Nicolet National Forests for all to enjoy. Both Michigan and Wisconsin licenses are legal here.

**OTTAWA NATIONAL FOREST-**Watersmeet is in the heart of the Ottawa National Forest. There are over 500 named lakes and nearly 2,000 miles of river and stream in the Ottawa.

**SYLVANIA WILDERNESS AND RECREATION AREA-**The Sylvania is a specially designated area within the Ottawa National Forest. There are 34 named lakes - some with sandy beaches, other surrounded by record size red and white pines.

See section on *Boating* for lakes with public access. The sections on *Lake Fishing* and *Stream Fishing* list all the lakes in Gogebic County.

## **SNOWSHOEING**

Sylvania Wilderness and Recreation Area offers 15+ miles of un-groomed trails. Parking is located at the entrance station off County Road 535,

Sylvania Outfitters has snowshoe areas available. Parking and snowshoe rental are available at Sylvania Outfitters and the trails connect with the Sylvania Wilderness Trail System.

## **BOATING**

Public access sites maintained by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources are as follows: Cisco Lake, Clearwater Lake, Thousand Island Lake, Long Lake, Beatons Lake, County Line Lake, Little Duck Lake, Duck Lake, Moon Lake, Allen Lake, Marion Lake, Deadman Lake, Imp Lake, Horseshoe Lake, Lac Vieux Desert, and Tamarack Lake.

Bass Lake Boat Launch is owned and maintained by Watersmeet Township.

A day boating on the Cisco Chain or Lac Vieux Desert can take you to both Michigan and Wisconsin.

# LAKE FISHING

C-Crappie

B-Bluegill

P-Panfish

Size - Acres

CI - Carry In

BL - Boat Launch

\*Lakes with Forest Service Campgrounds

\*\*Sylvania (Special Rules Apply)

Lake Name	Size	Depth	Access		Walleye	Bass	Musky	Trout	Panfish
GOGEBIC COUNTY									
Albino	17	16		NP					
Allen	70	40	BL	NP	W				
Banner						BA			B
Barb	66		CI						
Bass	187	13	BL	NP				T	
Beaton	323	80	BL			BA	M		C
Big Bateau**	220	34						T	P
Bluebill				NP		BA			B
Bobcat*	73	15	BI						
Buck	19	20	CI	NP		BA			C.B
Castle	28	50	CI			SA			P
Cisco				NP				T	
Clark**	820	75	CI		W	BA			B
Clear**	38	48		NP		BA		T	
Core**	18	10							P
Cornelia						BA			P
County line	62	65	BL					T	
Crooked**	579	66	CI	NP		BA			P
Cub**	28	13							B
Cyrus	22	26	CI			BA			IJ
Dawn						BA			B
Deer Island**	281	48						T	
Devils Head**	92	47				BA			P
Dinner	ito	25	BL			BA			S
Doyle**	9	46			W	BA			P
Dream				NP		BA			P
Duck	616	25	BL	NP	W	BA			P
East Bear**	40	30				SA			C.B
Eel	44	20	SL	NP		SA			C.B
Elbow	20	21	BL	NP		SA	M		C.B
Finger	60	30							
Fisher*	29	31				SA		T	
Florence**	25	22							
Glimmerglass**	26	10							P
Golden Silence**						BA			P
Grass**	52	25	CI			BA			P
Hay**	14	35				SA			P
Heart	175		CI			SA			P
Helen**	60	51							ID
Henry*	43	30	BL			BA			
High**	60	95				BA			S
Hillop		16				BA		T	P
Holly		35		NP				T	
Honeysuckle						SA			B
Imp*		111	80	BL					P
Indian (Cisco Chain)		93	15		NP			T	P

Johnson Springs**	13			NP	W				P
Kathrine**	40	55				BA			
Kerr**	8	26							
King	17	42							P
Kunschke					W	BA			B--
Lac Vieux Desert	4,260	38	BL	NP	W	BA			B
Langford*	470	15	BL	NP		BA	M		P
Little Duck	41	69			W	BA			C
Little Langford	14	17		CI				T	
Little Oxbow				NP	W	BA			C
Little Pomeroy						BA			P
Loon**	358	50				BA			P
Long	168	51	BL	NP	W	BA			P
Marion*	317	40			W	BA	M		P
Marsh**	65	24				BA			P
Mastadon				NP					
Mink	63	6	CI	NP				T	P
Mishike	13	30	CI						
Misty						BA			P
Moon	93	40				BA			
Moraine	77	22	BL	NP	W	BA	M		C
Moosehead*	43	27	BL	NP		BA			C
Mountain**	100	39				BA			
Orchard				NP					P
Ormes	49	65	BL		W	BA			
Plymouth	26	15	CI					T	
Pomeroy*	303	15	BL	NP	W	BA	M		C
Presque Isle				NP		BA	M		C
Presque Isle Flowage	65	10	BL	NP	W				C
Queen						BA			
Range						BA			B
Redboat	24	31	BL					T	
Scout	24	15	CI		W	BA			B
Snap Jack**	48	62				BA			P
Sucker									P
Summit	24	31	CI			BA			P
Sun	31	30	CI			BA			P
Taylor*	110	41	BL			BA			P
Thrush	17	20	BL			BA			P
Thousand Island				NP	W	BA	M		B
Trapper**	16								P
West Bear**	56	20				BA			B

## **STREAM FISHING**

Stream Name	Brook Trout	Rainbow Trout	Brown Trout	Steelhead Trout	Lake Trout	Salmon	Small-Mouth Bass	Walleye
<b>GOGEBIC COUNTY</b>								
Black River	B	R	BN	ST	LT	SL		
Bluff Creek	B	R						
Deadman Creek	B							
Duck Creek	B		BN					
E. Branch Presque Isle	B	R						
Gaylord Creek	B							
Imp Creek	B							
Little Presque Isle	B							
Marathon Creek	B							
McGinty Creek	B							
Mid. Br. Ontonagon	B	R	BN	ST			SM	W
Montreal	B		BN	ST				
Morrison Creek	B	R						
Pelton Creek	B							
Presque Isle River	B		BN	ST		SL		
Tamarack River	B		BN					
State River	B						SM	W
Wellington Creek	B							

## **CANOEING / KAYAKING**

The north has long been associated with the romance of canoeing. With over 500 lakes and 1,800 miles of streams awaiting the canoeist, the Ottawa National Forest is no exception. M-28 generally separates two distinct types of canoeing opportunities on the Forest. The portion of the Forest lying south of M-28 is relatively flat. Hundreds of small lakes dot the landscape, especially towards the Wisconsin border. Rivers in this portion of the Ottawa range from flat water with moderate currents to small rapids. Many of the smaller streams have a thick overgrowth of tag alder, and portages over beaver dams may be necessary.

During spring run-off, the rivers of the Ottawa flow fast and furious, and once quiet waters can become potentially dangerous torrents. However, when the summer canoeing season arrives, rivers may be so low that canoeing is nearly impossible.

**MIDDLE BRANCH ONTONAGON RIVER-** the River generally has ample flow for canoeing through the year. Canoe access and parking is available at a Forest Service wayside in the town of Watersmeet where US-45 crosses the river. A portage is necessary at Mex-i-min-e falls, which is approximately 9 miles down the river before Burned Dam campground. The rest of the trip to Bond Falls Flowage has moderate rapids and quiet pools for fishing. There are approximately 11 additional miles to Bond Falls Flowage. Just about any kind of native fish can be caught from the campground to Bond Falls Flowage.

Another entry point for canoeing and kayaking is located north of US 2 on Russ Road. Launching at this site will provide:

**LAKE CANOEING** - The Sylvania Wilderness offers fine lake canoeing. There are 36 pristine lakes connected by portage trails; most have wilderness campsites with latrines and fire grates. Numerous other lakes within the Ottawa National Forest are excellent and offer a unique experience.

## **SWIMMING**

Beautiful beach facilities are located at Clark Lake in the Sylvania Wilderness Recreation Area, and at Imp and Marion Lakes located in the Ottawa National Forest. Bass Lake Park is also available.

## **CAMPING**

### **NORTH SHORE CAMPGROUNDS**

Located on the north shore of Lac Vieux Desert. Full hookups, tent spots and lakefront wooded sites; modern bath facilities w/ showers. Boat docking, sandy beach, level grounds, modern cabin and camping trailer rentals with A/C, color TV, deck with gas grills, daily, monthly, seasonal rentals.

In the Ottawa National Forest out of the Watersmeet Ranger District five campgrounds with various levels of services are provided. The "development level" of a National Forest campground measures the degree of facility development, such as whether or not the roads are paved, if running water is present, or whether or not some sites have electricity. The higher the development number of a campground, the more developed its facilities. The following is a general guide on what to expect from campgrounds at these different development levels:

#### **LEVEL 2**

Low level of development. These campgrounds are usually accessible over primitive roads. The spacing of camp units is irregular, with some distance between campsites. Water and pit toilets may be provided. A fee may or may not be charged for use of these campgrounds.

#### **LEVEL 3**

Moderate level of development. These campgrounds are accessible by better unpaved or by paved roads. Camp units are usually regularly spaced, may be paved and can accommodate recreational vehicles. Facilities such as water and toilets are usually provided. A fee is charged for use of these campgrounds.

Marion Lake Campground offers Level 3 services and has 39 sites it is open from May 15 to December 1. Imp Lake Campground offers Level 3 service and has 22 camp sites it is open from May 15 thru

December 1. Sylvania Campground at Clark Lake also offers Level 3 services and is open from May 26 thru October 1. There are 48 sites at the Clark Lake location. Burned Dam has Level 2 services and has 5 campsites for which there is no charge. The Burned Dam facility is open from May 15 thru September 29. There is also free camping at three campsites located at Robbins Pond. These sites have Level 2 services and are open from May 15 thru September 29.

## **HUNTING**

The exception diversity of wildlife habitats found on the Ottawa and in the Watersmeet Area translates into hunting opportunities for everyone. For the hunter, aspen and tag-alder are home to ruffed grouse, woodcock, and snowshoe hare. White-tail deer browse there and take refuge in the nearby spruce, fir, and cedar lowlands. There is good opportunity for a trophy whitetail, but simply being able to hunt in relative solitude in the quiet north woods can be a "trophy" all its own. About  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all bears registered in the western U.P. are taken on the Ottawa. Waterfowl hunters can choose between ducks and geese.

## **GOLF**

GATEWAY GOLF CLUB, INC.-Land O' Lakes, Wisconsin, Public nine hole course. Complete watered greens, tees, and fairways. Bar, lounge, and pro shop. Practice range.

LAC VIEUX DESERT GOLF COURSE-Behind the Northern Waters Resort and Casino. A beautiful and challenging eighteen hole USGA golf course with irrigation throughout.

## **BIRDWATCHING**

The Watersmeet Area does not have any sites specifically developed nor designated for bird watching. However, wild birds are indeed abundant and sighting is available through utilization of the trail systems and Forest Service Roads within the Ottawa National Forest including the Sylvania Wilderness and Recreation Area.

The call of the loon can be heard on many of the area's secluded lakes. Observation of loons should be done from "binocular range" especially during the spring and early summer when the eggs and chicks are most susceptible to predation. Area "Loon Rangers- work in conjunction with the US Forest District to annually report Loon nesting and egg hatching activities. Though private donations and a recent grant from the Watersmeet Area Community Fund, man-made loon nesting habitat has been installed on more than 15 area lakes.

## **LODGING**

LAC VIEUX DESERT- Resorts range from American plan to housekeeping cottages.

CISCO CHAIN OF LAKES-Resort facilities range from modest to deluxe to satisfy the most discriminating visitor in all seasons.

## **RESORTS & VACATION HOMES**

**ARROWS, THE** - Open All Year Deluxe vacation homes on the Cisco Chain. 2,3 & 4 bedroom homes sleep to 15 each. Terrific amenities in most including double whirlpool tubs and fireplaces. Boat, motor, deluxe boat & pontoon rentals.

**BENT'S CAMP RESORT** - Open All Year. 1/units; 1 to 3 bedrooms, housekeeping cottages with screened porches. Located on Mamie Lake of the Cisco Chain. Excellent sandy beach, boat ramp. bait & tackle shop. The Lodge Restaurant provides a full-service restaurant & bar, with a pictorial history of the Cisco Chain for your enjoyment - where history & great food meet!

**BLACKHAWK POINT** - Open All Year. Thousand Island Lake

**EAGLE VIEW** (at the former LAC LABELLE RESORT) - Open All Year. Thousand Island Lake

**EAGLE'S NEST COTTAGE**-A privately owned 3-bedroom, 2 bath home on the south shore of Big Lake on the Cisco Chain. Beautiful view of lake, open deck with picnic table and chairs, gas grill, loft and fireplace, large screen TV with satellite. Manicured grounds are level to the lake. Good swimming. Can sleep up to 8 people.

**FISHER HOUSE, THE** - Open All Year. Four bedroom, 2 story home, located on the north shore of Thousand Island Lake, Cisco Chain. Features gas log fireplace, 2 full baths, fully equipped kitchen, use of wet boathouse, Alumacraft boat and sauna. Sleeps 8 to 10. Private vacation getaway on 16 acres with 850 feet of shoreline.

**FOXES DEN** - Open May 15 - November 30. On Crooked Lake Road adjacent to Sylvania Wilderness. 1 & 2 bedroom modern, housekeeping cabins with exposed log and knotty pine interior. All this snuggled away in the woods. Quiet and relaxing.

**GUEST HOUSE ON MAJESTIC POINT** - Open All Year. Private, quiet and secluded at the end of a peninsula, our guest home offers breath-taking panoramic views of Thousand Island Lake. Our home, with two bedrooms and a bath and a half, can accommodate up to six people. A full kitchen and great room offers the guests the opportunity to experience the feeling of having their very own vacation home.

We offer a wrap-around deck, gas grill, outdoor fireplace, use of canoes, kayak and fishing row-boat,

**WILDERNESS BAY LODGE, RESORT & GUIDE SERVICE**-Open All Year, Quiet resort on Thousand Island Lake close to Sylvania Wilderness Area. 5 log cabins with TV/VCR with full satellite service. Enjoy fishing, hunting, snow shoeing & cross country skiing. NO jet skis or snowmobiles! General store with bait, tackle, license, & gas. Guide service available.

**WIND DRIFT RESORT** - Open All Year. The only resort on the Michigan side of Lac Vieux Desert. Eight modern fully equipped housekeeping 1-4 bedroom cabins, (some handicap access). Level grounds, sand beach & boats. Fire pit, BBQ grill, pontoon rental, horseshoes, volleyball and badminton.

**VACATIONLAND RESORT**- Fourteen lakeside cabins on the Cisco Chain adjacent to Sylvania Wilderness Area. Fully equipped cabins, some with fireplaces and dishwashers, grills and decks. Deluxe fishing boat and pontoon boat rentals. Sandy beach, sauna, playground, kayaks and sailboats, all free to guests. Fall colors, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling.

**HILLSIDE RESORT, BAR & RESTAURANT**- Open May 1st - mid October. South shore of beautiful Lac Vieux Desert. 1, 2 and 3-bedroom cabins. Fully equipped. Picnic table, outside chairs, grill, microwave, TV, boat and half dock. Sand beach, swim raft, paddle boats. Fire pit and playground. Restaurant and full bar with pool tables and games. 100 acres to roam.

**INDIANHEAD RETREAT POINT** - Open All Year. Thousand Island Lake

**ISLAND VIEW** - Open All Year. Thousand Island Lake

**JAY'S RESORT** - Open All Year. On Thousand Island Lake of the Cisco Chain. Ten beautiful 1-4 bedroom house-keeping cottages, many with fireplaces & dishwashers. Featuring two log cabins and two private homes. Swimming, playground, licenses, bait & gas. Deluxe boat and pontoon rentals. On the snowmobile trail system.

**MARTY'S FIRESIDE LODGE** - Open All Year. A newly renovated home, extra clean and nicely decorated, sleeps 8, walk-out sliding glass doors to deck and fire pit, gas-log fireplace set on a nicely wooded lot with short walk to pier on Mamie Lake. On Cisco Chain. On snowmobile trail.

**SUNRISE LODGE** - Open All Year. Family oriented. Recreational resort located on Lac Vieux Desert. Features the American Plan and Supervised Activity Program. Home cooked meals and public dining. Executive homes and vacation cottages from 1 to 6 bedrooms. All units air-conditioned. Winter units all have fireplaces.

**SYLVANIA WILDERNESS CABINS**-On Crooked Lake - a 556-acre lake situated almost entirely within the Sylvania Wilderness Area. Clean, newly remodeled, newly furnished two and three bedroom cabins w/fully equipped kitchens. Canoe & kayak rental available. Open May 15th to October 15th. No gas motorboats allowed.

**TIMBER COVE COTTAGE** - Open All Year. Private 1000 sq. ft. • 3 bedroom home on Thousand Island Lake/Cisco Chain. (sleeps 8). Includes 14 ft. aluminum boat. screened gazebo. private dock. Fire pit. satellite dish, dishwasher, grill, gas fireplace and linens. Open year round for fishing, boating, hunting, fall colors, snowmobiling & X-country skiing. Near snowmobile trails, boat/motor rentals available nearby.

## **MOTELS & HOTELS (in no particular order)**

**NORTHERN WATERS RESORT** - Open All Year. Stay at our luxurious 132 room hotel complex attached to Lac Vieux Desert Casino. Located on U.S. 45 North. Relax and enjoy our indoor pool, sauna and whirlpool. Our variety of rooms from fireplace/whirlpool suites to handicap accessible rooms are sure to meet your needs.

**GATEWAY LODGE** - Open All Year. Rustic Northwoods Elegance" on U.S. 45 & Cty. B. Pool, hot tub and sauna. Studios & suites. Conference rooms. Restaurant/lounge within hotel. On-site trap and sporting clays. (Now air-conditioned rooms)

**NORDINE'S LODGING** - Open All Year. US 2 & Highway 45

## **MOUNTAIN BIKING**

The Agonikak Mountain Bike Trail begins in Watersmeet at the Sylvania Visitors Center located on the southeast corner of the US2 and Highway 45 intersection. The Watersmeet Ranger District maintains the trail. The Agonikak Trail extends south for approximately 9.5 miles and ends at the Michigan DOT Wayside located just north of Land O' Lakes, Wisconsin on Highway 45. See map in Appendix.

## **MOTORIZED RECREATION (SNOWMOBILE / ATV) TRAILS**

### **UP THUNDER RIDERS MAINTAINED TRAILS FOR MOTORIZED RECREATION**

#### **Overview**

The U.P. Thunder Riders Snowmobile Club maintains over 70 miles trails in the heart of "Big Snow Country" in the Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan. These trails reach from Land O' Lakes Wisconsin, to the South, bringing traffic into downtown Watersmeet. Here, snow travelers can get fuel, supplies and refreshment before venturing east to Iron River, North to Bruce Crossing, or West to Marenisco and Lake Gogebic. The U.P. Thunder Riders Snowmobile Club also grooms the L.V.D. Casino spur, under contract, during the snow season.

Trail 2, which runs east - west between Iron River and Marenisco, is a four-season corridor trail, which supports All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) traffic during snow-less months in addition to snowmobiles. While not designated as such, Trail 3 from Land O' Lakes to downtown Watersmeet is heavily traveled by ATVs. An ATV staging area in Land O' Lakes Wisconsin, immediately across the State Line from the trail head was constructed to source much of this traffic. The impact of ATV use requires increased levels of year round maintenance to these trail right-of-ways. All Gogebic County roads are available for snowmobile and ATV use. This maintenance includes brushing and signage, grading and drainage (gravel and culverts) as well as bridges. Most of this maintenance is necessary to keep the trails ready to support the renewable "pavement" of groomed snow for our traditional "season" but there is no question that the demand for attention to the infrastructure is dramatically increased by the four-season traffic.

### **Mi-TRALE ATV/UTV MAINTAINED TRAILS**

#### **Overview**

"Michigan Trails and Recreation Alliance of Land and the Environment", commonly known as Mi- TRALE, maintains the "LL" Trail (Trail #3) which connects Land O' Lakes, Wisconsin north to Lac Vieux Desert Resort/Casino in Watersmeet. OHV riders are able to legally connect to County Line Road and/or take Old US 45 to Robbins Pond Road. Access to Robbins Pond Road provides OHV riders a chance to see the Paulding Light. The "LL" Trail is one of only two CURRENT OHV Trails that connect the Upper Peninsula to Wisconsin. Thus, this trail brings THOUSANDS of OHV riders to Watersmeet and surrounding areas.

Mi-TRALE also maintains the "IRM" Trail (Trail #2) from Iron River to Marenisco. Since January of 2006, Mi-TRALE has been working with the Ottawa National Forest (ONF) in extending the "IRM" Trail to Wakefield, Michigan.

Mi-TRALE was also instrumental in extending the "LL" Trail from the intersection of the "IRM" Trail (Trail #2) to the LVD Resort/Casino.

Trail #2 from Iron River to Marenisco also has the Mi-TRALE "Pilot" project signing. For OHV trail users it is designated and signed as the "IRM" Trail. The IRM Trail is a "Michigan DNR Designated OHV Route."

"Route" designation allows vehicles up to 72 inches wide to use the IRM, providing they display a current MDNR OHV Trail Permit sticker on the vehicle. Mi-TRALE educates and informs the public through numerous Press Releases and our website that the IRM Trail is open to vehicles 72 inches or less throughout the year. Mi-TRALE asks that no "wheeled" vehicle use this trail other than from May 15th to November 30th.

Mi-TRALE developed a Western UP OHV Trail map covering five counties, to show OHV riders where they can legally ride. It is with this map and the corresponding OHV Trail Signage program that Mi-TRALE is making every effort to inform, and educate OHV riders that not all snowmobile trails are open to OHV riding. It is with this map, totally paid for Mi-TRALE, that emergency personnel now have a way to identify the location of an accident on the OHV trail system. Mi-TRALE is in the process of expanding this map to include Baraga and Marquette Counties.

## **MULTI-USE SNOWMOBILE AND ATV TRAILS ON FOREST SERVICE LANDS**

There are approximately 450 miles of groomed snowmobile trails within the Proclamation Boundaries of the Ottawa National Forest. These trails are maintained through a cooperative effort between the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, numerous local snowmobile clubs and the U.S. Forest Service.

Generally, the snowmobile season runs for 16 weeks, from December 1<sup>st</sup> through March 30<sup>th</sup> on groomed snowmobile trails and unplowed Ottawa National Forest Roads. After March 1<sup>st</sup> each spring, the area of the Ottawa National Forest, which lies south of M-28 and east of Highway M-64, is closed to cross-country snowmobile use to prevent disturbance of nesting eagles. Snowmobiles are permitted to use any designated trails, or Forest Service roads within this area, which have not been snowplowed, signed/blocked by gates, or otherwise closed to such use. The remainder of the forest (north of M-28 and west of M-64) is open to cross-country, designated trail use, or operation on unplowed Forest Service roads, which have not been closed to such use.

Snowmobiling is prohibited in Federally Designated Wildernesses (McCormick, Sturgeon River Gorge and Sylvania Wildernesses) and is permitted only on designated trails within Semi-primitive Non-motorized Management Areas and Wild Segments of Federally Designated Wild and Scenic Rivers Corridors.

Snowmobilers need to remember that the Ottawa National Forest is only one of many partners and landowners of Michigan's world-class 7500-mile groomed snowmobile system. It is extremely important to respect the rights of these private landowners to assure that snowmobile trails will remain open in the future.

## **• NON-MOTORIZED RECREATION TRAILS**

### Bike Trails--

A trail was developed consisting of a 40-mile loop connecting the towns of Watersmeet Michigan and Land O' Lakes Wisconsin and encircling the Sylvania Wilderness. The "Wilderness Lakes Trails Project" was supported and completed with the help of the following organizations:

- Watersmeet Township Board
- Watersmeet Township Planning Commission
- Gogebic County Board of Commissioners
- Lac Vieux Desert Tribe
- US Forest Service-Watersmeet District-Ottawa National Forest
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region (WUPPDR)
- Gogebic County Road Commission
- Land O' Lakes (WI) Town Board
- Land O' Lakes (WI) Chamber of Commerce
- Watersmeet Chamber of Commerce

Cross Country Skiing / Skate Skiing-- The current variety of backcountry and classic cross-country skiing trails are important community assets. Some of our local resorts have begun catering to silent sports enthusiasts, helping to diversify our tourism economy and the recreational opportunities and taking advantage of the "Wild Northwoods" feel of our area during all seasons of the year. Connecting the groomed trail systems and standardizing and improving the grooming of these trails would enhance the current offering of cross-country trails. Becoming more popular

among cross-country skiers is skate skiing, which is not currently available in Watersmeet. Given the number of unplowed roads within the Township, the wonderful terrain and bountiful snowfall as well as our location on both east-west and north-south highways, the opportunity exists for a groomed skate skiing trail system to provide recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors and enhance tourism.

## **ATV RALLYS**

Rogers Bar sponsors an annual ATV Rally.

## **TRIBAL EVENTS**

The LVD Tribe holds a pow-wow at the Watersmeet School Gymnasium during the second week of February and a traditional pow-wow during the second week of August at the Old Village on Lac Vieux Desert. Additionally, cultural classes are offered by the Tribal Historic Preservation Office and the current offerings available can be found by calling (906) 358-0137.

## **JULY 4th CELEBRATION**

The Township of Watersmeet provides funds for fireworks. Working capital for the events associated with the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration are attained through fund raising efforts by members of the 4th of July committee. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration consists of games for kids, food, a parade and of course the fireworks.

## **WATERSMEET TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION**

Recreational facilities owned and operated by Watersmeet Township include one beautifully landscaped Community Park located in downtown Watersmeet, a boat landing and picnic area on Bass Lake. The Community Park features a covered pavilion complete with kitchen and service bar facilities, picnic tables, handicap accessible restroom facilities, and an outdoor covered gas grill. The park also features open space, trees, shrubbery, walks, and benches. During the winter, the entrances to the pavilion are boarded and the floor flooded to create an ice skating rink. Park facilities are available for use by the public with advance notice and a security deposit. The Bass Lake facility includes a movable dock, parking and picnic areas. The Watersmeet Community Center was opened in April of 2017 and houses the Township Administrative Offices along with an area for events of up to 200 participants, which can be rented for a fee. Pickle Ball courts are available along with Foot Golf at the Lac Vieux Desert Golf Course.

## **WATERSMEET TOWNSHIP SCHOOL & FACILITIES**

### **GYMNASIUM & HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER**

The renovated school now includes a regulation size gymnasium and a Health and Wellness Center. The Gym allows for "Open Gym" hours and can be partitioned off into two full size basketball courts. Community members are encouraged to use the gymnasium.

The Health and Wellness Center provides a wonderful range of equipment to assist both young and old who can receive a full body workout and has a wide range of free weights, specialized weight equipment, spin cycles and other cardio equipment. The Center has open hours for the public both during the daytime and in the evening to accommodate community residents.

### **WESTERN UP BOUNDLESS PLAYGROUND**

A Boundless Playground means that all children regardless of their physical, mental and emotional abilities will be able to utilize the playscape and even learn and develop while playing with the equipment and each other. The play environment is designed so that more than 70 of the equipment is handicap accessible.

The Western UP Boundless Playground features three distinct play areas developed specifically for age appropriate physical and mental development. The individual equipment is too numerous to mention but suffice to say there is everything from sand diggers, tire swings, ribbon climber, twist & shout slide, chain bridge, driver panel to arch swings, hand track and drums. The Watersmeet Township School district maintains the playground and exceeds federal safety standards with its rubberized base below high risk fall areas.

# **Section 4- Basis for Action Plan- Lac Vieux Desert Tribal Council, Watersmeet Township Board of Education, and Watersmeet Township Board**

## **LAC VIEUX DESERT FACILITIES AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES BASIS FOR ACTION PLAN**

.The Lac Vieux Desert Tribe continues to work with the Township to enhance the recreational opportunities available to all area residents. The Tribe contributes funds from its general operating budget along with 2% money to aid projects in the Township

## **WATERSMEET TOWNSHIP BASIS FOR ACTION PLANS**

The Five Year Watersmeet Township Recreation Plan proposes that the Watersmeet Township Board will be responsible for carrying out several areas of the plan.

### **•AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES ERADICATION / EDUCATION BASIS FOR ACTION PLAN**

#### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Integrated management of Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) which is threatening the numerous lakes and streams of the important natural aquatic resources in Watersmeet Township, Michigan and the Ottawa National Forest.

#### **CONSERVATION NEED:**

The freshwater lakes and wetlands of the western Upper Peninsula are under increasing threat from exotic invasive plant and animal species, including Eurasian water milfoil, purple loosestrife, spiny water flea, zebra mussel, and rusty crayfish and others. These invasive species degrade water quality and wildlife habitat, change food webs, and impact recreational experiences. Biodiversity often decreases in infested waters. Prevention of new infestations and control of existing infestations is necessary to maintain species diversity, support rare species, and provide quality habitat. Lac Vieux Desert contains one of the few historic sites of wild rice in the western Upper Peninsula. Watersmeet Township is approximately eight times the size of a normal township, enhancing the project scale while using local government oversight to respond to local needs. We have begun working on a Cooperative Weed Management District, which will include neighboring Townships, Gogebic and Iron County Conservation Districts, Great Lakes Indian and Fish Wildlife Commission and Lake Associations.

Future ANS education efforts will be based upon past successes; data collected, and apparent needs for additional efforts. Based on the influx of incoming traffic from remote areas, statistical analysis will provide the necessary information to determine where concentrated efforts are needed and which educational techniques are best suited to affect visitors traveling to the area. Future treatment of area lakes for ANS will also be based on statistical analysis of current conditions.

The Watersmeet Township Board will continue to work with the ISCCW in its efforts to control the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species. The Township provides funds each year to support the work of the ISCCW.

## **Section 5- Recreation Action Plans**

### **LAC VIEUX DESERT TRIBAL COUNCIL FACILITIES AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES ACTION PLANS**

#### **EXTENSION OF NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL FROM LAC VIEUX DESERT CASINO COMPLEX TO BASS LAKE**

The Watersmeet Township Board hopes to work in conjunction with the Lac Vieux Desert Tribal Council to extend the present non-motorized trail that terminates at the Lac Vieux Desert Casino to the Bass Lake Park owned the Township. The goal would be to have a safe walking or bike riding experience from the Forest Service parking area on the Middle Branch of the Ontonagon River to Bass Lake. This would provide a non-motorized trail of approximately two miles in length.

#### **NON-MOTORIZED ALBINO LAKE TRAIL**

The Tribe will be completing the Albino Lake Trail, which will provide an additional non-motorized trail from the Thousand Island Lake Road to connect with the Land O' Lakes Bike Trail system, during the summer of 2017.

#### **WHITEFISH TRAIL PROJECT GRANT**

The Tribe is also working in conjunction with the Whitefish Trail Committee to complete another alternative route to the Land O' Lakes Trail System through a grant from Tribal funds. The project should be completed in the fall of 2017.

The Lac Vieux Desert Tribe continues to work in conjunction with other local organizations to provide recreational opportunities for area residents.

### **WATERSMEET TOWNSHIP BOARD ACTION PLANS**

#### **BASS LAKE BOAT LAUNCH & PARK AREA COMPLETED**

This Bass Lake Boat Launch and Park have been completed renovated with a new pavilion, bathrooms, grills, picnic tables and sandy beach for swimming. The project was completed with a great deal of volunteer help along with Township funds for contracted services.

#### **PICNIC GROUNDS ALONG MIDDLE BRANCH OF ONTONAGON RIVER**

The Township is planning on developing a picnic area along the Ontonagon River with access from Roundhouse Road. The Township owns property that it feels can be developed into a day use area along the river. Sources of funding will be looked into to achieve our goal.

## **Section 6- Administrative Structure**

In order for Watersmeet Township to have a parks and recreation program that operates smoothly, a chain of command needs to exist. In Watersmeet Township the residents elect a Township Board, which guides the direction the Township will take and represents the Township's residents. Watersmeet Township's day- to-day operations are accomplished by a Clerk, Supervisor, Treasurer, and a staff of Township employees, most of which are part-time (including Boards, fire fighters, election workers, assessor, zoning administrator, building inspector, deputy clerk, etc.). Police services are provided through the Lac Vieux Desert Tribal Police Department and the fully trained and certified Watersmeet Volunteer Fire Department provides fire rescue services.

The Watersmeet Township Board and the Watersmeet Township School District Board of Education listen to the residents of the Township when the recreation needs of the Township are involved. By working together the Township Board, School Board and Lac Vieux Desert Tribe have been able to provide various recreation opportunities without duplicating effort and have been able to maximize efficient use of taxpayer's dollars when necessary to use such dollars.

The Watersmeet Chamber of Commerce also helps to promote our area by providing brochures which are distributed in the surrounding area highlighting the recreational opportunities available in the Watersmeet area with the help of partial funding by the Township. They also attend recreation shows and distribute their brochures to provide exposure to our area and increase tourism as well.