

**SMALL
PADDLES
BIG
REWARDS**

**PADDLING WISCONSIN
STATE NATURAL
AREAS**



Paddling Wisconsin State Natural Areas

About SNAs

State Natural Areas protect the very best of Wisconsin's native landscapes; our original prairies, old-growth forests and pristine wetlands. They have unique ecological features, wonderful geological formations and outstanding scenery. Some preserve wild lakes and stream stretches that you can explore by canoe or kayak. Here are 12 easy, water-based trips to SNAs that offer a few hours of peaceful paddling in places that celebrate Wisconsin's natural heritage. Click on over to the SNA webpage for detailed access information and maps – dnr.wi.gov, search keyword "SNA."

Paddling Wisconsin State Natural Areas is a publication of the Wisconsin DNR's Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation.

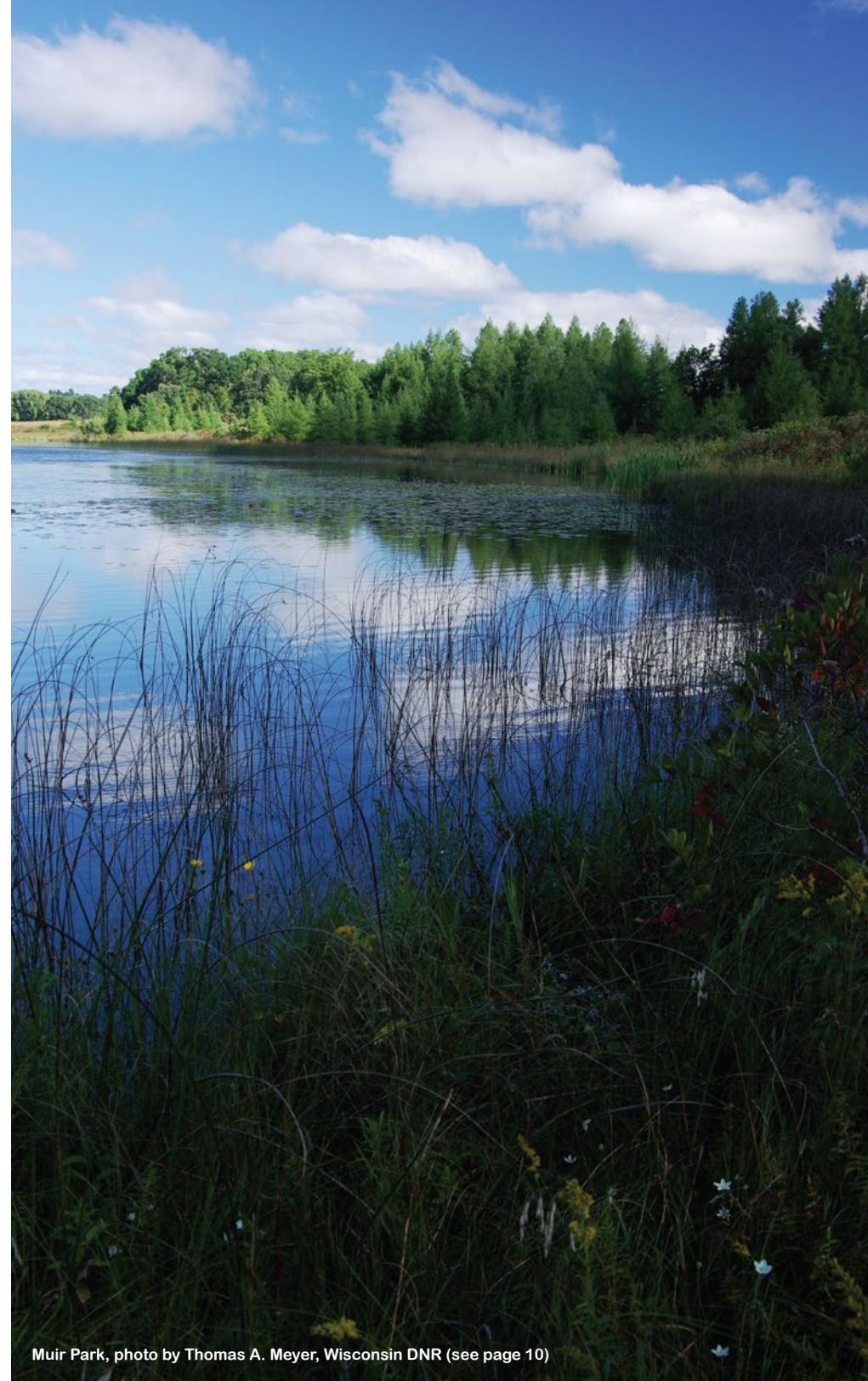
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Muir Park, photo by Thomas A. Meyer, Wisconsin DNR (see page 10)



Snow Bottom

County

Grant

Distance

5.5 miles

Recommended put in and take out

Put in at Bowers Rd and take out at Shemak Rd.

What to see

The winding Blue River threads its way through the heart of a wild and spectacular southwestern Wisconsin Driftless Area landscape with soaring, rocky bluffs and relict pine forests. A paddle through Snow Bottom on the Blue is rewarding, but possible only with small kayaks during periods of adequate river flow, usually in spring. The river is fed by many springs and affords wonderful trout fishing.



Day Lake

County

Vilas

Distance

3.5 miles

Recommended put in and take out

Boat landing on Day Lake Rd.

What to see

Exceptionally clear, acidic water in a 57' deep "sterile" lake harboring unusual stiff-leaved aquatic plants that hug the sandy bottom. The meandering shoreline is ringed by northern forest of pine and oak. Loons are often sighted here diving for fish.



Go to dnr.wi.gov and search keyword "SNA" for detailed site descriptions, access information and maps.

Dells of the Wisconsin River

County

Adams and Juneau

Distance

4 miles

Recommended put in and take out

Put in at the Cambrian Overlook and take out at the boat landing in Wisconsin Dells.

What to see

Scenic cliffs, sculpted sandstone formations and narrow, moss-lined glens hug the banks of the Wisconsin River in a four-mile stretch through the famous Upper Dells gorge. A forest of hemlock, pine, white cedar and oak sits atop the Cambrian sandstone while rare plants cling to the cliff faces.



Bittersweet Lakes

County

Vilas

Distance

Variable. From 1 to 8 miles.

Recommended put in and take out

Prong Lake carry-in landing off Hwy 70.

What to see

A quartet of small, wild lakes within the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest, each with its own distinct character. Old-growth forest of hemlock, white pine and red pine surround the scenic, undeveloped lakes which are linked by short portage trails. Bald eagles and osprey are frequently seen fishing for food.



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Dells of the Wisconsin River, photo by Thomas A. Meyer, Wisconsin DNR



Kickapoo Valley Reserve

County

Vernon

Distance

5 miles. Can be extended or shortened.

Recommended put in and take out

Put in at Landing 5 on Hwy 131 and take out at Landing 10 on Hwy P.

What to see

A five-mile-long panorama of Driftless Area woodlands and striking sandstone cliffs adorned with rare plants, ferns and mosses. Rich southern hardwood forest of sugar maple and oaks is carpeted with bluebells and other wildflowers in the spring.



Lost Creek Bog

County

Bayfield

Distance

2 miles

Recommended put in and take out

Carry-in canoe launch on Blueberry Lane.

What to see

An estuary formed by the murky flow of Lost Creek where it meets the clear, cold water of Lake Superior. A coastal barrier sand spit populated with spruce and pine separates the big lake from boggy, creek-side wetlands where colorful orchids and carnivorous plants grow.



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Mawikwe Bay Cliffs

County

Bayfield



Distance

7 miles (or less) round trip

Recommended put in and take out

Carry-in landing at Meyer's Beach off Hwy 2.

What to see

Fantastic brownstone sea caves along the coast of Lake Superior within the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. A 2½ mile-long stretch of cliffs are undercut by waves and wind and capped by a forest of red and white pines, cedar and balsam fir. These are the famed “ice caves” that attract throngs of visitors who walk across the frozen lake in frigid winters.

Muir Park

County

Marquette



Distance

1 mile or less

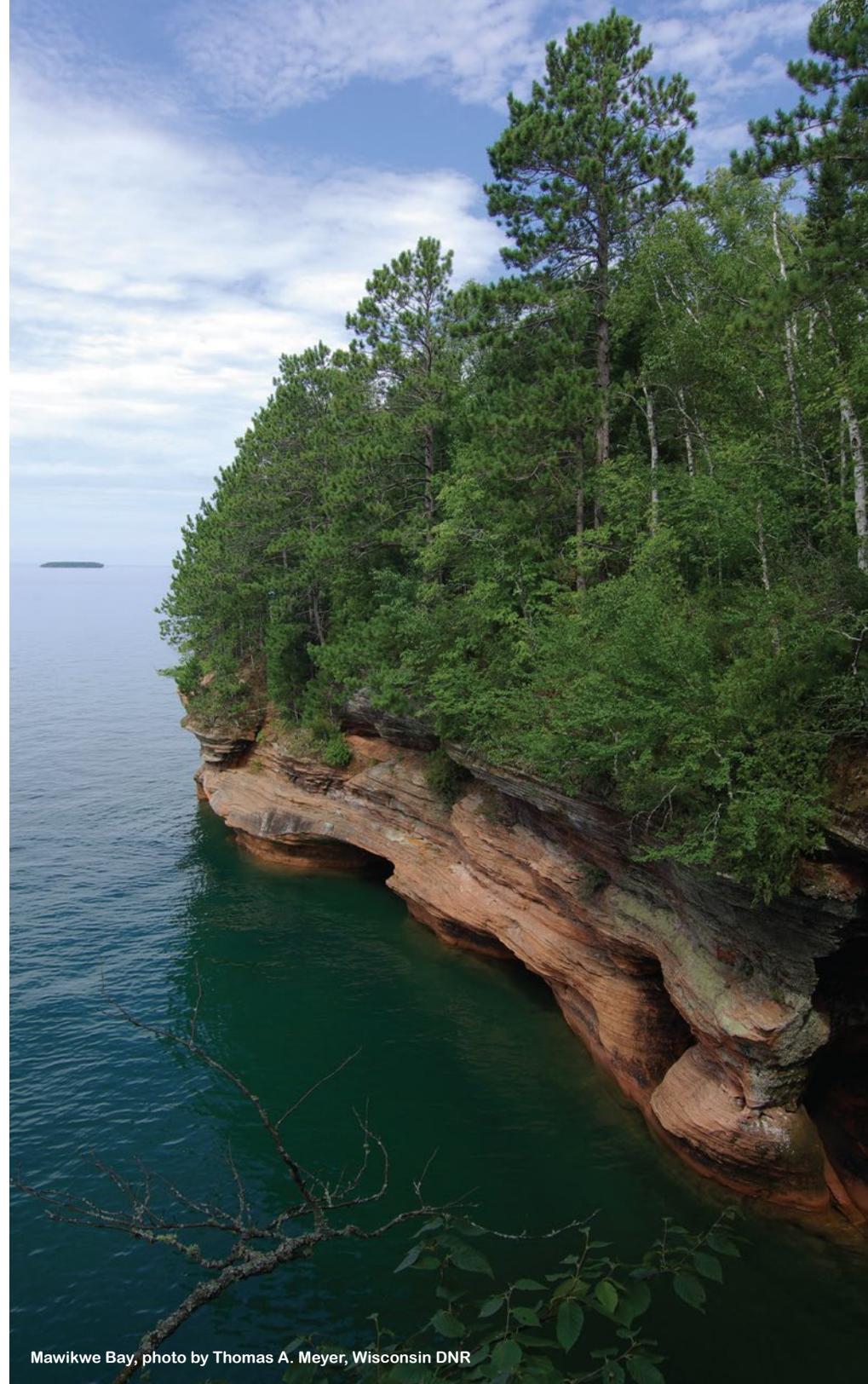
Recommended put in and take out

Muir County Park boat landing on Hwy F.

What to see

Spring-fed Fountain Lake (aka Ennis Lake), which inspired naturalist John Muir who as a boy lived on the family farm along its eastern shore. Mossy, alkaline wetlands along the banks support tamarack trees, fringed gentians and pitcher plants.

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Tomahawk River Pines

County

Oneida

Distance

6 miles

Recommended put in and take out

Put in at Camp Nine Rd and take out at Cedar Falls Rd.

What to see

Scattered upland islands forested with stands of towering red pines line a wild, undeveloped, six-mile reach of the Tomahawk River as it meanders through vast wetlands of alder and swamp conifers. Northern birds such as boreal chickadee, gray jay and pine warbler find refuge here.



Mink River Estuary

County

Door

Distance

5 miles

Recommended put in and take out

Public boat landing on Hwy ZZ at Rowley's Bay.

What to see

One of the Great Lakes' finest freshwater estuaries where the waters of the pristine Mink River join those of Lake Michigan and provide habitat for waterfowl and spawning fish. The river is fringed by deepwater marshes of rushes, sedges and beds of wild rice. This is a preserve of The Nature Conservancy.



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Brule Glacial Spillway

County

Douglas

Distance

About 4.5 miles. May be extended.

Recommended put in and take out

Put in at the Stone Chimney Rd carry-in launch and take out at Stones Bridge on Hwy S.

What to see

The cold, spring-fed headwaters of the Bois-Brule River wander slowly through boggy lowlands and mossy conifer swamps of cedar, spruce and balsam fir on their journey to Lake Superior. Rare orchids and black-backed woodpeckers find refuge in this wild part of the Brule River State Forest.



Lulu Lake

County

Walworth

Distance

6 miles

Recommended put in and take out

Public boat launch on Eagle Spring Lake at Wambold Rd. Enter Lulu Lake via the connecting channel.

What to see

A lake ringed by rare alkaline wetlands harboring an exceptional diversity of plant, fish and invertebrate life and retaining a very wild character in densely developed southeastern Wisconsin. Paddle up a narrow reach of the Mukwonago River for an even more intimate natural experience.



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