



MESABI TRAIL[®]

Mississippi River to the Boundary Waters.



Aaron W. Hautala
218-454-3210 ext 800
Stratelligent.com

Goal:

**Tell a purposeful & visual
Mesabi Trail story**

Why?

To build relationships between counties, cities, businesses, and organizations achieving economic development through outdoor recreation.

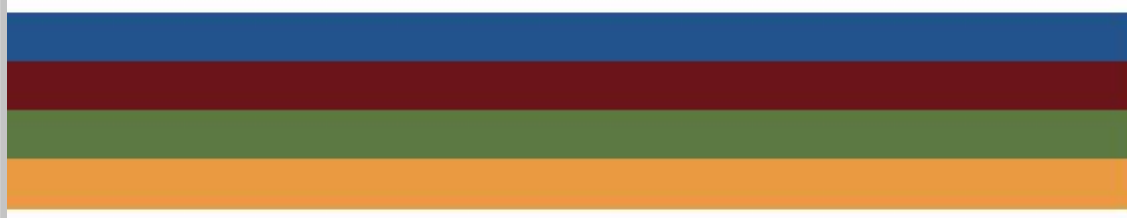
OUR STRATEGY:

**Make it easier
to experience the
Mesabi Trail**



MESABI TRAIL®

Mississippi River to the Boundary Waters.



2024 TRAIL MAP

Segment Specific Edutainment (Education meets Entertainment)



MISSISSIPPI

Enjoy scenic and fun cycling adventures on the Mesabi Trail Mississippi Segment. Along the way, you'll be surrounded by lush forests, ore stockpiles, and overburden hills. Take a dip in Prairie River and jump off a cliff in Nashwauk at the LaRue Mine Lake.

Grand Rapids to Nashwauk
29.0 MILES



Nashwauk's LaRue Mine Lake



MESABI TRAIL
MISSISSIPPI



MESABI

In Chisholm, visit "The Emergence of Man Through Steel" sculpture (or as the locals call it, Iron Man). Cycling through Virginia—the Queen City of the Iron Range. On your way out, pedal or stroll through the historic Olcott Park, grab a bite to eat at the community-owned co-op, or satisfy your sweet tooth at Minnesota's oldest candy store. Then, cycle across Minnesota's tallest bridge and climb up and through Pike Rock Cut to Gilbert.

Nashwauk to Gilbert
55.4 MILES



MESABI TRAIL
MESABI



Minnesota's tallest bridge



LAURENTIAN

Laurentian — "Ride the Laurentian Divide" Giants Ridge through the Embarrass Lowland and all the way to Tower. See what 'up north' looks like as you cycle the Laurentian segment where cyclists have been known to spot a moose or two!

Gilbert to Tower
50.4 MILES



Embarrass Boardwalk



MESABI TRAIL
LAURENTIAN



VERMILION

Discover the Minnesota iron north on the Vermilion segment. Cycle or hike among Vermilion boreal forests, where tall pines stretch endlessly to the sky. Fly like an eagle through stunning bedrock cuts that showcase the area's unique geology, and maybe even catch a glimpse of common Vermilion wildlife: moose, deer, mink, raccoon, porcupines, and bear.

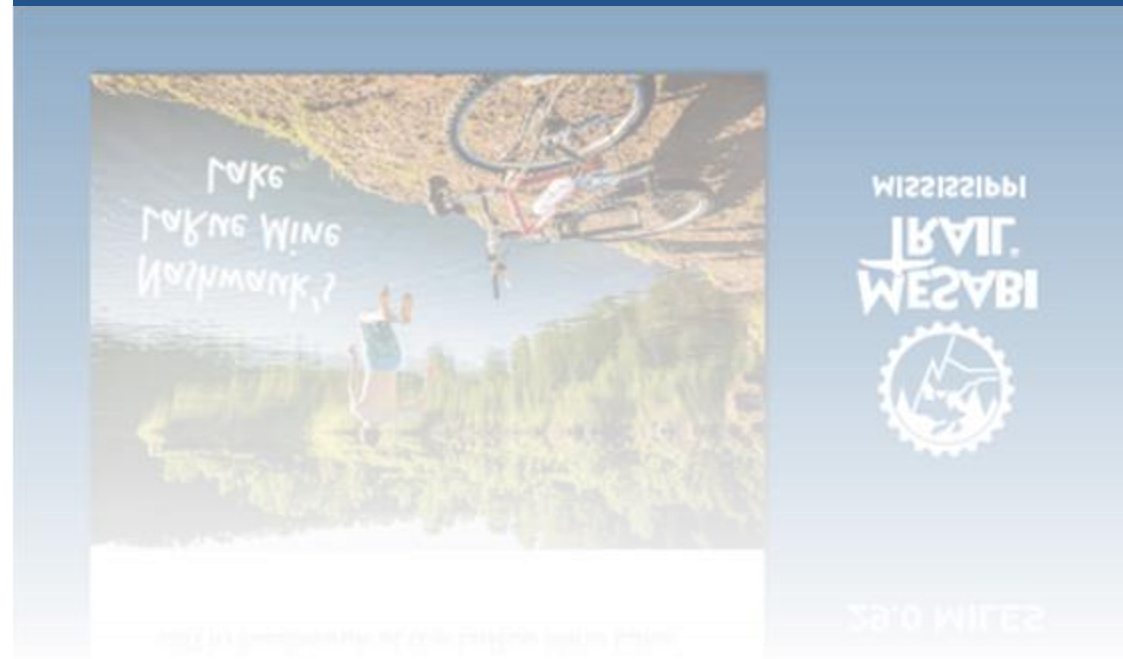
Tower to Ely
27.7 MILES



MESABI TRAIL
VERMILION



Eagles Nest



Nashwauk's LaRue Mine Lake



MESABI TRAIL
MISSISSIPPI

29.0 MILES

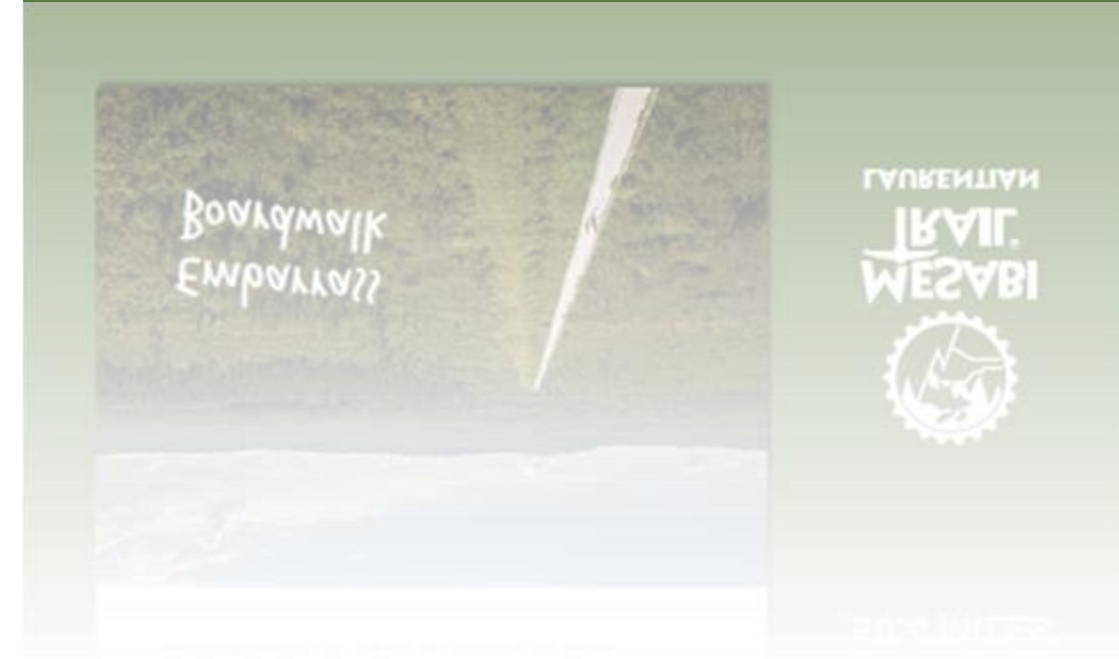


Minnesota's tallest bridge



MESABI TRAIL
MESABI

55.4 MILES



Embarrass Boardwalk



MESABI TRAIL
LAURENTIAN

50.4 MILES



Eagles Nest



MESABI TRAIL
VERMILION

27.7 MILES

Mesabi Trail Access Points

- 1 **GRAND RAPIDS** 1336 Fairgrounds Road Grand Rapids, MN 55744 Park at north end of Itasca Co. Fairgrounds Campground parking lot.
- 2 **COLERAINE** 803 Cole Street, Coleraine, MN 55722 Park at Longyear Park (400 Cole St)
- 3 **BOVEY** 1st Street & 1st Ave, Bovey, MN 55709 Park on any of the city streets
- 4 **TACONITE** Bennett Street & Hodgins Ave, Taconite, MN 55786 Parking available at the Community Center
- 5 **MARBLE** Near - 603 Alice Ave Marble, MN 55764 Park behind the ball field
- 6 **CALUMET** Gary Street & Hill-Annex Minnesota State Park Road, Calumet, MN 55716 Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point
- 7 **PENGILLY** Minnesota Highway 65, Pengilly When you turn from Hwy 169 onto Hwy 65, parking is immediately to your left
- 8 **NASHWAWK** Near - 703 1st St Nashwauk, MN 55769 Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point
- 9 **KEEWATIN** West 3rd Avenue & North 7th Street Keewatin, MN 55753 Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point
- 10 **HIBBING** 1201 Greyhound Boulevard Hibbing, MN 55746 Parking available at the Greyhound Bus Museum parking lot
- 11 **CHISHOLM** East Lake Street & 1st Ave SE Chisholm, MN 55719 Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point
- 12 **BUHL** Culver Ave & State Street Buhl, MN 55713 Park on any city street near the Mesabi Trail entry point kiosk

- 13 **KINNEY** Hwy 169 & Co Hwy 25 Great Scott Township, MN From Hwy 169, exit north onto Co Hwy 25 and continue 3/10 mile towards Kinney, but not into town. Trail access and parking lot are on the left.
- 14 **MOUNTAIN IRON** Locomotive Street & Mesabi Ave Mountain Iron, MN 55768 Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point
- 15 **VIRGINIA** 1428 North 9th Ave Virginia, MN 55792 Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point
- 16 **GILBERT** Kansas Ave & Ore-Be-Gone Drive Gilbert, MN 55741 Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point
- 17 **EVELETH** **MESABI STATION** 111 Station 44 Road Eveleth, MN 55734 This access point is at Mesabi Station, Trailhead for the Mesabi Trail. Parking available at lower level parking lot near the entry point kiosk. *NOTE - this is a spur from the main trail.*
FAYAL POND 1502 Minnesota 37 Eveleth, MN 55734 Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point. Access to the Trail is to the east, under the Hwy 53 over-pass, immediately after the exit ramp. *NOTE - this is a spur from the main trail.*
FAYAL TOWNSHIP 4375 Shady Lane Eveleth, MN 55734 Parking available at the Township Hall
- 18 **MCKINLEY** 5252 Heritage Trail Gilbert, MN 55741 Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point *NOTE - there is a gap with no paved trail between McKinley & Biwabik. Heading west - there is paved trail connecting to Gilbert. Heading east - detour to the shoulder of Hwy 135 to get to Biwabik. Construction completion expected by the end of 2023. There is paved trail again starting east of Biwabik.*

- 19 **BIWABIK** **BIWABIK** 6233 Minnesota 135 Biwabik, MN 55708 Parking near Mesabi Trail entry point
EMBARRASS LAKE 5966 Minnesota 135 Biwabik, MN 55705 Direct access to the Mesabi Trail and parking right off Hwy 135 at the Wayside Rest & Boat Landing.
GIANTS RIDGE 6329 Wynne Creek Drive Biwabik, MN 55708 This access point is right at the entrance to Giants Ridge ski resort. Parking at the resort.
- 20 **AURORA** Hill Street & Co Hwy 100 Aurora, MN 55705 Parking at the Mesabi Trail entry point kiosk and yellow archway. *NOTE - this is a spur from the main trail, there is no connectivity east beyond Aurora.*
- 21 **EMBARRASS** 4846 Highway 21 Embarrass, MN 55732 Parking very near the Mesabi Trail entry point kiosk. *NOTE - the Trail travels north for 9.5 miles and dead ends at Hwy 26, about 6 miles short of Tower. There is no connectivity to Tower at this time. It is NOT recommended to detour to the shoulder of Hwy 135 as there is no shoulder*
- 22 **TOWER** Pine Street & Poirier Road Tower, MN 55790 Park in the lot by the Civic Center and Trail Museum. Access the Mesabi Trail just a half block south.
- 23 **SOUDAN** Breitung Monument Park 5263 Hwy 169 Soudan, Mn 55782 There is parking and a paved path that connects to the greater Mesabi Trail

- 24 **EAGLES NEST** 1552 Bear Head State Park Road Ely, MN 55731 Eagles Nest is 13 miles southwest of Ely off Hwy 169, on the way to Bear Head State Park. Parking is near the Township Hall at the Mesabi Trail entry point kiosk.
- 25 **ELY** **ELY** Pioneer Road & Miners Drive East Ely, MN 55731 Park in the lot off Miners Drive east, look for the Mesabi Trail entry point kiosk. Access to the Trail is to the east across Pioneer Rd. You can also access the Trezona City Trail here.
Hwy 169 and Co Hwy 88, Ely, MN 55731 Additional access point at the intersection of Hwy 169 and Co Hwy 88 in Ely



Scan these QR Codes to plan your trip!



Distance(miles) between communities

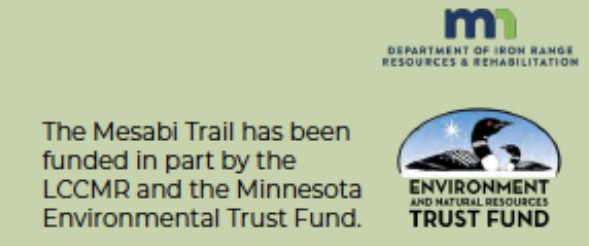
Grand Rapids	Marble	Keewatin	Hibbing	Chisholm	Buhl	Virginia	McKinley	Giants Ridge	Embarrass
16.3	13	10	7	5	5	10.2	8.5	11	
29.3	23	10	7	5	5	10.2	8.5	11	
39.3	23	10	7	5	5	10.2	8.5	11	
46.3	30	17	7	5	5	10.2	8.5	11	
51.3	35	22	12	5	5	10.2	8.5	11	
64.3	48	35	25	18	13	10.2	8.5	11	
74.5	58.2	45.2	35.2	28.2	23.3	10.2	8.5	11	
83.0	66.7	53.7	43.7	36.7	31.7	18.7	8.5	11	
94.0	77.7	64.7	54.7	47.7	42.7	29.7	19.5	11	

PLEASE NOTE: There is no connectivity to Tower at this time. It is NOT recommended to detour to the shoulder of Hwy 135 as there is no shoulder.

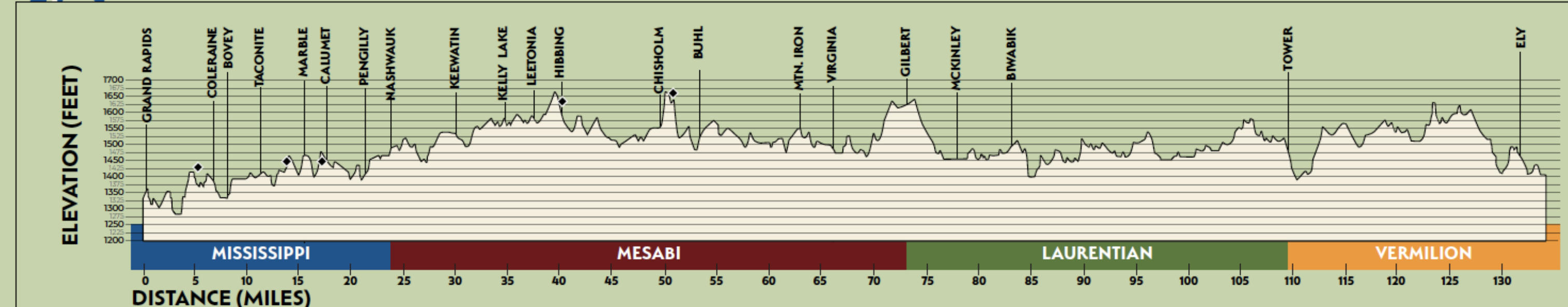
Tower	Soudan	Eagles Nest	Ely
4	12	9	14
26	23	14	

For Mesabi Trail Information:
MesabiTrail.com
877-637-2241

A wheel pass is required for ages 18 and older using wheels on the trail. Cost is \$20 annually or \$10 for 3-days. Available online at mesabitrail.com or at pass vendors listed on other side of this map.



MESABI TRAIL
Mississippi River to the Boundary Waters.



Mesabi Trail Access Points

- 1 GRAND RAPIDS** 
1336 Fairgrounds Road
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
Park at north end of Itasca Co. Fairgrounds
Campground parking lot.
- 2 COLERAINE**
803 Cole Street,
Coleraine, MN 55722
Park at Longyear Park (400 Cole St)
- 3 BOVEY**
1st Street & 1st Ave,
Bovey, MN 55709
Park on any of the city streets
- 4 TACONITE**
Bennett Street & Hodgins Ave,
Taconite, MN 55786
Parking available at the Community Center
- 5 MARBLE**
Near - 603 Alice Ave
Marble, MN 55764
Park behind the ball field
- 6 CALUMET**
Gary Street & Hill-Annex Minnesota
State Park Road,
Calumet, MN 55716
Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point
- 7 PENGILLY**
Minnesota Highway 65, Pengilly
When you turn from Hwy 169 onto Hwy 65,
parking is immediately to your left
- 8 NASHWAUK**

- 13 KINNEY**
Hwy 169 & Co Hwy 25
Great Scott Township, MN
From Hwy 169, exit north onto Co Hwy 25 and
continue 3/10 mile towards Kinney, but not into
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Locomotive Street & Mesabi Ave
Mountain Iron, MN 55768
Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point
- 15 VIRGINIA**
1428 North 9th Ave
Virginia, MN 55792
Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry point
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Kansas Ave & Ore-Be-Gone Drive
Gilbert, MN 55741
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MESABI STATION 
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Eveleth, MN 55734
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FAYAL POND
1502 Minnesota 37
Eveleth, MN 55734
Parking available near Mesabi Trail entry
point. Access to the Trail is to the east, under
the Hwy 53 over-pass, immediately after the
exit ramp.
NOTE - this is a spur from the main trail.

- 19 BIWABIK**
BIWABIK
6233 Minnesota 135
Biwabik, MN 55708
Parking near Mesabi Trail entry point
EMBARRASS LAKE
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Biwabik, MN 55705
Direct access to the Mesabi Trail and parking
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Biwabik, MN 55708
This access point is right at the entrance to
Giants Ridge ski resort. Parking at the resort.
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Hill Street & Co Hwy 100
Aurora, MN 55705
Parking at the Mesabi Trail entry point kiosk and
yellow archway.
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Embarrass, MN 55732
Parking very near the Mesabi Trail entry point
kiosk. *NOTE - the Trail travels north for 9.5 miles
and dead ends at Hwy 26, about 6 miles short
of Tower. There is no connectivity to Tower at
this time. It is NOT recommended to detour to
the shoulder of Hwy 135 as there is no shoulder*
- 22 TOWER**
Pine Street & Poirier Road
Tower, MN 55790
Park in the lot by the Civic Center and Trail
Museum. Access the Mesabi Trail just a half block
south.

- 24 EA**
155
Ely,
Eag
Hwy
Park
Mes
- 25 ELY**

Distance	
Grand Rapids	Marble
16.3	
29.3	13
39.3	23
46.3	30
51.3	35
64.3	48
74.5	58.2
83.0	66.7
94.0	77.7

Customer Service - Quick Links for Fast Planning

Shuttle Service



Lodging



Campgrounds



Food & Drinks



Bicycle Service



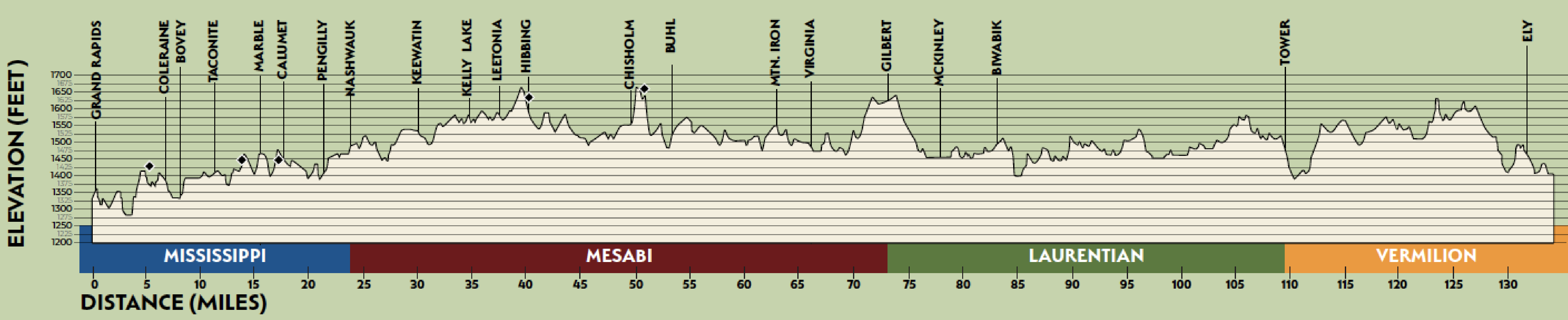
Mtn. Bike Trails



Scan these QR codes to plan your trip!



Customer Service - Showcasing Elevation



OUR STRATEGY:

**On-Trail Adventure +
In-Town Experience =
I Want That!**

In 2023 we introduced,



**In 2024
we doubled down,**



Mesabi
segment



an **Iconic** ride





**In 2025, we captured
Autumn prime**

TO BE RELEASED LATE SPRING 2025

COLLABORATION: Public Relation Wins

Ride Guide OF MN TRAILS

MINNESOTA HAS THOUSANDS OF MILES OF PAVED
AND MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS TO EXPLORE

by KATE LINGGI



REDHEAD MOUNTAIN
BIKE PARK ALONG THE
MESABI TRAIL NEAR
CHISHOLM



SOUTH MAHONOMEN
UNITY AT CUYUNA
LAKES STATE TRAIL

Southern Minnesota

BELMONT PARK

LOCATION: Jackson, 43.81993963095932,
-95.02855401338513

TYPE: Unpaved

DISTANCE: 5.3 miles

DESCRIPTION: This 80-acre park is rich with history and natural beauty. Located on the east bank of the Des Moines River, this trail has switchbacks, berms, and jumps that drop 120 feet into the river valley.

PARKING: Available on-site.

LEVEL: Easy to difficult

COST: Free

INFO: 507-847-2525; co.jackson.mn.us

BLAZING STAR STATE TRAIL

LOCATION: Albert Lea,
43.642570657540055, -93.32250720864288

TYPE: Paved

DISTANCE: 6 miles

DESCRIPTION: A paved stretch that connects Albert Lea Lake and Myre-Big Island State Park, this trail features a diverse landscape of wetlands, prairie, and oak savanna, as well as great birding spots in the spring and fall.

PARKING: One lot available next to Frank Hall Park at the intersection of Frank and James avenues; parking also available in Myre-Big Island State Park.

LEVEL: Moderate

COST: Free

INFO: 507-414-6193; mndnr.gov/trails

**DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE BIKE TRAIL
TO INCLUDE IN THIS LIST?**

Email anelson@greenspring.com to
be added online and in future issues.

PHOTOS: CUYUNA LAKES STATE TRAIL; W. RAUTALA

MINNESOTA

LAND YOUR DREAM VACATION

Spectacular nature, fun festivals, delicious dining, top-notch shopping, charming cities and towns

PLUS:

Outstanding museums and theater

Breathtaking parks and road trips

Best of the best fishing, golfing and hiking



REGIONS: NORTHEAST

▲ Biking on the Mesabi Trail, Eagles Nest, photo courtesy of Mesabi Trail

continued from page 72 →

boatbuilding, moccasin sewing, mushroom foraging and more. The school counts celebrated artisans and authors among its teachers, but students needn't have a lick of experience to sign up.

Classes are held on the lakefront campus year-round; lucky are the tutees whose course dates coincide with popular events like the annual **Grand Marais Arts Festival** in July, **Moose Madness** in October or **Winterer's Gathering & Arctic Film Fest** in November. Summer visitors can book a spot aboard the 50-foot Hjordis, the school's raffish-rigged schooner. Daytime and sunset

Over at Wintergreen, the pack comprises 65 Canadian Inuit dogs, whose hardy personalities guests get to know via day trips, multi-night camping tours and comfy lodge-based excursions. Whichever ice-packed path you choose, whooshing through the snow-blanketed Northwoods in the winter is always exhilarating.

SHOOT THE RAPIDS ON THE ST. LOUIS RIVER

Adrenaline hunters, look no further: Rip-roaring runs abound on the St. Louis River, 15 miles from Duluth.

[Comment](#) [Gift](#) [Share](#) [Listen](#)

OUTDOORS

Is the Mesabi Trail Minnesota's next great cycling destination?



With its hills, curves and striking terrain, the trail across the Iron Range offers one of the state's most distinctive cycling experiences.

By Bob Timmons, photos by Aaron Lavinsky
The Minnesota Star Tribune

OCTOBER 11, 2024, AT 8:00AM

Built segment by segment between Grand Rapids and Ely over the past 29 years, the trail is at a defining moment. New segments (such as McKinley to Biwabik) are under construction, and ground will break on the trail's final section from Embarrass to Tower next year, continuing managers' plans to link up more than 28 cities and towns along the path. There are dreams for adding even more miles and communities, too. Trail managers estimate this year's use will surpass the 185,000 visitors in 2023.

Just the idea of the trail rankled some people back in the early 1990s. But their worries about crime and spending millions on bike recreation have largely been replaced with support and pride among trail towns.

The current momentum is similar to a pot of water simmering toward a boil, said Sarah Ciochetto, deputy director at the St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority, which owns and manages the trail.

"You turn on the burner and it takes a while," Ciochetto said. "I think we are there. We are at that point and it is ready to just take off."



Reporter Bob Timmons and Sarah Ciochetto, deputy director of the St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority, prepare to embark from Hotel Rapids in Grand Rapids, Minn., on the Mesabi Trail.



Bob Timmons, Sarah Ciochetto and Aaron Hautala set out on Sept. 10 from Grand Rapids. "From the Mississippi to the Boundary Waters" is the vision for the finished Mesabi Trail, linking miles of lovely vistas and interesting towns.

Over the 'mountain'

The Grand Rapids trailhead was a welcoming start line on my first day of riding in early September. Columns of isolated pines gave way to dense, rolling hardwoods. After only a few miles, I had an arresting sight that would become more common over the next 100: Rising from a lake's edge stood a curious red mountain, a waste pile of rock and soil removed in mining to get to iron ore, also known as overburden or spoils. I wasn't only seeing them; I rode over them. Talltale, in places, the scrubby vegetation struggled to take hold in the



The cyclists cross the Prairie River outside Grand Rapids, Minn., passing mine lakes and a mountain of rock and soil removed in mining to get at iron ore.

Atop her Aventon e-bike, Ciochetto pointed out markers of the past – an old depot in ruin or rail tracks poking through the understory – as we whizzed past. And she took pride in highlighting towns that accommodated trail users by, say, freshening up parks at a trailhead or showcasing expansive overlooks of canyon-like old mining pits transformed into shimmering spring-fed pools. The knowledge deepened my appreciation of my ride – recreation tinged with a sense of place.

Since 1993, the railroad authority has received about \$36 million in federal and state money to build the trail. Its master plan called for a 135-mile path, but currently there are plans for 162½, Ciochetto said, including a 6½-mile final segment, in two phases, that will connect Embarrass and Tower.

Hovt Lake's connection to the corridor will be done by 2026. Babbitt.

and 30-second-long descents winding through fragrant pines before we slowed into boggy lowlands, rumbling across a three-quarter-mile boardwalk and into Embarrass.



George Delich, owner of Four Seasons Market, bags up beef sticks for the hungry cyclists. The longtime butcher in Coleraine says he's seen a steady uptick of cyclists popping in. In Virginia, Canelake's Candies offers sweet treats for riders. The cyclists pass First Lutheran

I grabbed a car ride from Embarrass, where a trail gap will begin construction next year, to pick up the final stretch beginning in Tower. I had only 25 miles or so to Ely, but the hills weren't done with me. As I passed through Soudan, I continued a series of climbs toward Eagles Nest. Any toil was rewarded with smooth pavement and a wide corridor out of Eagles Nest, which took several years to complete on its way to Ely. I also encountered more e-bikers (one, gamely, powered by an adult e-tricycle), who were added indicators of where the trail's use is headed.

Trail shuttle driver Craig Johnson of Ely Lake moved 200 cyclists in August alone, at least half of them e-bike owners. Johnson and his wife, Chris, help ferry some customers on multiday trips. August's ledger showed an increase in business of 50% from a year ago, he said.

Some of those cyclists get their start at Ardent Bicycle Shop in Grand Rapids, where owner Peter Gustafson said there has been a steady increase from one-day e-bike rentals to multiday use.



The riders visit the massive Iron Man statue before hitting the trail Chisolm.

Hautala has been a key player in the development and promotion of mountain biking at [Cuyuna Country State Recreation in the Crosby-Ironton area](#). Now he is consulting the railroad authority. Cuyuna has encouraged newcomers of all ages and skills as it has expanded the trails. About 350,000 visited the recreation area in 2022. He said he sees similar momentum now on the Mesabi, centered partly on the rise of e-bikes.

“E stands for equalizer, not electric, in this case. But you can do [the trail] now,” he said after we were passed by four middle-aged e-bikers. We both noticed they were smiling. “That’s the point. They can. The Mesabi is about building community. Community among people. Community among cities. Community across the whole northern part of the state.”

The railroad authority says the trail draws 34% of users from outside northeast Minnesota. Johnson said his widening shuttle customer base supports the



Minnesota's next great cycling path

With its striling terrain, the Mesabi Trail across the Iron Range offers a distinctive experience.

Story by BOB TIMMONS Photos by AARON LAVINSKY • The Minnesota Star Tribune

ON THE MESABI RANGE, MINN.
Tird quads were a price I was willing to pay as I pedaled my Trek road bike up and over another mountain of red dirt. I was 30 or so miles into a 150-mile ride across the Iron Range's Mesabi Trail, but in this case, I enjoyed the burn. As I ultimately climbed more than 5,500 feet of elevation, shot past emerald-green mine lakes and flew down woded, curvy slopes, I revisited a singular thought:

The Mesabi Trail is unlike any other cycling path I've experienced in Minnesota. Now, it is emerging as a go-to spot — especially among e-bicyclists — on the state's active cycling scene. Built segment by segment between Grand Rapids and Ely over the past 29 years, the trail is at a defining moment. New segments, such as McKinley and Biwabik, are under construction, and the trail will break on the trail's final segment from Embarras to Tower next year, as continuing managers' plans to link up the more than 28 cities and towns along the path. There are dreams for adding even more miles and communities, too. Trail managers estimate this year's use will surpass the 185,000 visitors in 2023. Just the idea of the trail ranted some people back in the early 1990s. But their worries about crime and spending millions on bike recreation have largely been replaced with support and pride among trail towns.

The current momentum is similar to a pot of water simmering toward a boil, said Sarah Clochetto, deputy director at the St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority, which owns and manages the trail.

From left, Sarah Clochetto, Aaron Hautala and Bob Timmons cycle over a bridge crossing the Prairie River on the Mesabi Trail on Sept. 10 in Grand Rapids, Minn.

WNBA Finals Game 2: 2 p.m. Sunday at New York (ABC) - Lynx leads series 1-0 Reeve cementing status as WNBA's all-time greatest

NEW YORK - Her college playing career at La Salle over, Cheryl Reeve was a graduate assistant coach at her alma mater in 1988 for coach John Miller. "I'll never forget it," Reeve said Thursday at Barclays Center, hours before her Lynx team would match the biggest comeback in WNBA Final history in an overtime game against New York in Game 1.

By KENT YOUNGBLOOD • The Minnesota Star Tribune

GETTING READY FOR WORK

Rituals, routines for seven pro athletes
SPECIAL SECTION

Seniors face Med...

"It's incredibly amazing" the 2023 leg...
The senior...
potential...
ing year...
proven...
with...
to health...
getting...
from the...
said Paul...
and health...

OWNERSHIP INVOLVES

more than just baseball
the midmarket of MLB

BY BOB WIGHTWALE
The Minnesota Star Tribune

owners could introduce...
owner in team his...
next year if the...
quickly finds a...
ive chair...
his fam...
can't...

Mesabi could be Minnesota's next great cycling trail



MESABI FROM CI
"You turn on the burner, and it takes a while," Clochetto said. "I think we are there. We are at that point, and it is ready to just take off."

Over the 'mountain'
The Grand Rapids trailhead was a welcoming start line on my first day of riding in early September. Columns of isolated pines gave way to dense, arresting sight that would become more common over the 100 miles of trail. The trail is a mix of red mountains, a waste pile of rock and soil as overgrown as a forest, in places. The scrubby vegetation struggled to take hold in the acidic soil. "Main-made 'mountain' is how my riding companion Aaron Hautala described them, as overgrown. They remind me of the region's natural beauty, which meant steady head-down climbs of up to 8% grade. This isn't a traditional trail, especially topographically, but a combination of old railway logging roads and highway. Hauled in all beginning, grew up in Gilbert. Clochetto had intimate knowledge of our route when she first rode it with us. Parts of our route were the first time she'd seen the trail from a bike seat. But Clochetto's knowledge of the trail was not just from riding. She had spent years as a trail manager at the railroad authority, and during the past — an old bed of a river or a stream, and she took pride in highlighting towns that accommodated trail users by, say, creating up parks at a trailhead or allowing a trail to cross a road. The knowledge she gained from her experience transformed into a passion for the trail. "The knowledge she gained from her experience transformed into a passion for the trail. "The knowledge she gained from her experience transformed into a passion for the trail."



Top: reporter Bob Timmons, left, and riding companion Aaron Hautala cycle over a boardwalk in the Starvo S. Myers Wildlife Management Area on the Mesabi Trail on Sept. 11 in Embarras, Minn. Construction has taken place over three decades, with work on the final section to Tower beginning next year. Above, the owner of Four Seasons Market in Clochetto, back up beef sticks for the riders. Right, Timmons speaks with Sarah Clochetto, deputy director of the St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority, before the two embarked from Grand Rapids.

COLLABORATION: Iron Range Tourism Win



[Home](#) › [Sponsored](#) › [12 Weeks of Spring](#) › [Top Reasons to Discover the Range](#)

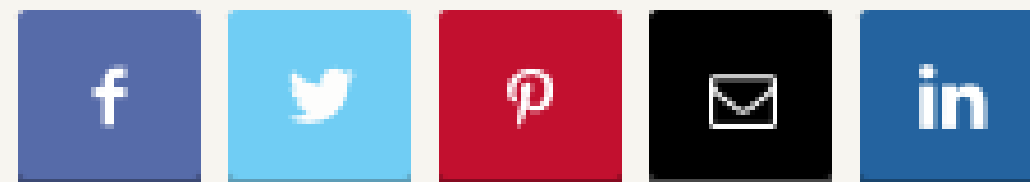
12 Weeks of Spring

SPONSORED

Top Reasons to Discover the Range

Northern Minnesota's Iron Range is undergoing a renaissance of sorts, with new trails, businesses, and events popping up in cities like Hibbing, Biwabik, Virginia, and Chisholm.

By **Iron Range Tourism** - March 4, 2024



Minnesota's Iron Range is not like anywhere else in the state, or even the country. Native Americans, French Voyageurs, and immigrants from 43 countries built the foundation for a region whose unique geology is constantly being explored and whose lakes and forests

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Minnesota
Monthly

12 WEEKS OF
Spring

1. Amazing Trails

You've never seen trails like these! Built in and around former iron ore mines, the hiking and mountain biking trails of Redhead Mountain Bike Park put you in the middle of history, which, by the way, is pretty beautiful. Clear water from underground aquifers fills open mines that are hundreds of feet deep with sheer cliff walls. Did we mention you can kayak in many of these mine lakes, too? Swim, fish, and paddle after hiking or cycling. There's nowhere in Minnesota, or the country, like this. And did we mention the [Mesabi Trail](#)? Its paved surface traverses 162 miles, passing through 28 communities. So grab your mountain bike and your road bike and explore the land of mines and pines. Look for other hiking trails in the Superior National Forest or at [Giants Ridge resort](#), and rent bicycles there or 30West in Chisholm. You can also rent kayaks, stand-up paddleboards, and ATVs.



FRI
22

Scents to Scenes by Cheryl LeClair-Sommer

February 10 - March 23

FRI
22

Join our Turtle Rescue Team | SEA LIFE at Mall of America

March 1 @ 10:00 am - April 14 @ 8:00 pm

FRI
22

Edible Exhibition

March 2 - April 21

[Submit an Event](#)





3. Only On The Range Shopping & Dining

The state's oldest confectioner, Canelakes' Candies in Virginia, is not to be missed, with an old-fashioned candy counter full of every chocolate—all homemade—that you could dream of, plus all your favorite candy brands, homemade fruit-flavored treats, and a soda fountain. Get your green rivers and vanilla cokes, or just a couple scoops of ice cream! Browse their Minnesota and Iron Range souvenirs. Canelakes is a must-stop. To truly experience The Range, a couple other stops stand out: For a delicious porketta sandwich, it's Whispering Pines restaurant in Gilbert. For the region's only craft beer, visit [Boomtown Brewery](#) in

Submit an Event



COLLABORATION: Club Mesabi Win

ULTIMATE Travel GUIDE 2023

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Minnesota
Monthly

From outdoor adventures to quirky culture, discover how to be a true Minnesotan



MESABI TRAIL

150-mile trail from Grand Rapids to Ely

Looking for an adventure? Try traversing the 150-plus miles of paved paths on the Mesabi Trail. From Grand Rapids to Ely, visitors will find an asphalt trail built on old logging and mining roads, abandoned railroad beds and highways, and some city streets. Twenty-eight access points are available for starting points. Along the way, gaze at the sprawling forests of northeast Minnesota, lakes, creeks, ponds, and wetlands. During your journey, you'll ride across the tallest bridge in Minnesota, just south of Virginia. The newest section, between Tower and Ely, takes you to the doorstep of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. **NOTE:** Three sections on the east end of the trail will be under construction this year—see website for details.

Trailhead/Parking: 28 access points (refer to website)

For more info: mesabitrail.com



PIPESTONE

Accessible trail
Easily access
Trail is a short
way through
Winnewissa F
and pipestone
esque Pipesto
along the trail
are not allowe
tional 20 mile
journey at the
junior and B.A
Trailhead/P
For more inf

**COLLABORATION:
Ride The Range Win**



RIDE THE RANGE

RideTheRange.com



MESABI TRAIL: THE UNTAPPED CYCLING HEAVEN OF MINNESOTA'S ICONIC NORTH

The Mesabi Trail stretches 162 miles from the Mississippi River in Grand Rapids, MN, to the gateway of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA) in Fly

Learn More about Mesabi Trail and the trails:

[Visit Mesabi Trail](#)

[Stay on the Iron Range](#)

[Eveleth, Minnesota](#)



**Is the Communication and
Collaboration Working?**

Website Analytics - 2023 versus 2024

Total Website Users:

+11.49%

Website Analytics - 2023 versus 2024

Length of time on site:

+8.26%

Website Analytics - 2023 versus 2024

**Google Paid Traffic
Time On Site
+ 100%**

2021 versus 2024

Print Map Online Orders

+ 679%

2024 Trail Usage

177,043 & counting

An Added Bonus:



ONE MINNESOTA AWARD
MESABI TRAIL

**There is no feat we together
cannot accomplish.**

**Imagine the power and
positivity of a united
Minnesota Iron Range.**

**It can't happen everywhere,
but it can happen here.**

Let's make it happen.

Thank you.



Aaron W. Hautala
218-454-3210 ext 800
Stratelligent.com