



2025

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Heart of the  
Lakes Trail**  
*Minnesota*



## Heart of the Lakes Trail

Minnesota

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Otter Tail County is not only home to the most lakes in Minnesota, but is the county with the most lakes in the whole country. With 1,048 lakes, it is no wonder that the new regional trail constructed was aptly named Heart of the Lakes Trail.

Colloquially known as the Perham to Pelican Rapids Trail, the Heart of the Lakes Trail stretches across Otter County, MN, and passes through the scenic lake country of northern Minnesota, along the Otter Tail Scenic Byway for some of its length. This epic project, headed by the Otter Tail Parks and Recreation, has been divided into 5 segments, with 4 of 5 currently open.

**Pelican Rapids Segment (7 miles):** The westernmost segment of the trail starts just south of Pelican Rapids first

along TH 59 and then east along Hwy 3 until Isle View Drive. This whole section follows the Otter Tail Scenic Byway and passes the Grunewald Waterfowl Production Area and nearby lakes. There are two benches along this segment.

**Silent Lake Segment (8.1 miles):** The most rugged section of the trail, the Silent Lake Segment starts in Maplewood State Park along 260th Ave and heads north, away from the Otter Trail Scenic Byway and into more rural terrain. This is considered the most challenging and hilly section of the trail.

**McDonald Lake Segment (5.8 miles):** Picking up from Hwy 41, this trail is mostly straightforward and passes near West McDonald Lake and Big McDonald Lake in its nearly 6-mile route.

**Perham Segment (6.2 miles):** The easternmost section of the trail starts where the McDonald Lake segment leaves off, along the Otter Trail Scenic Byway, skirting by Rusch Lake, Little McDonald Lake, Paul Lake, and Ceynowa Lake, and continuing along CSAH 34 until reaching Perham.



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**States:** Minnesota

**Counties:** Otter Tail

Length: 27.1miles

**Trail end points:** TH 59 (Pelican Rapids) to  
CSAH 34 (Perham)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt

**Trail category:** Greenway/Non-RT

**Trail activities:** Bike, Fishing, Wheelchair  
Accessible, Mountain Biking, Walking

## Parking & Trail Access

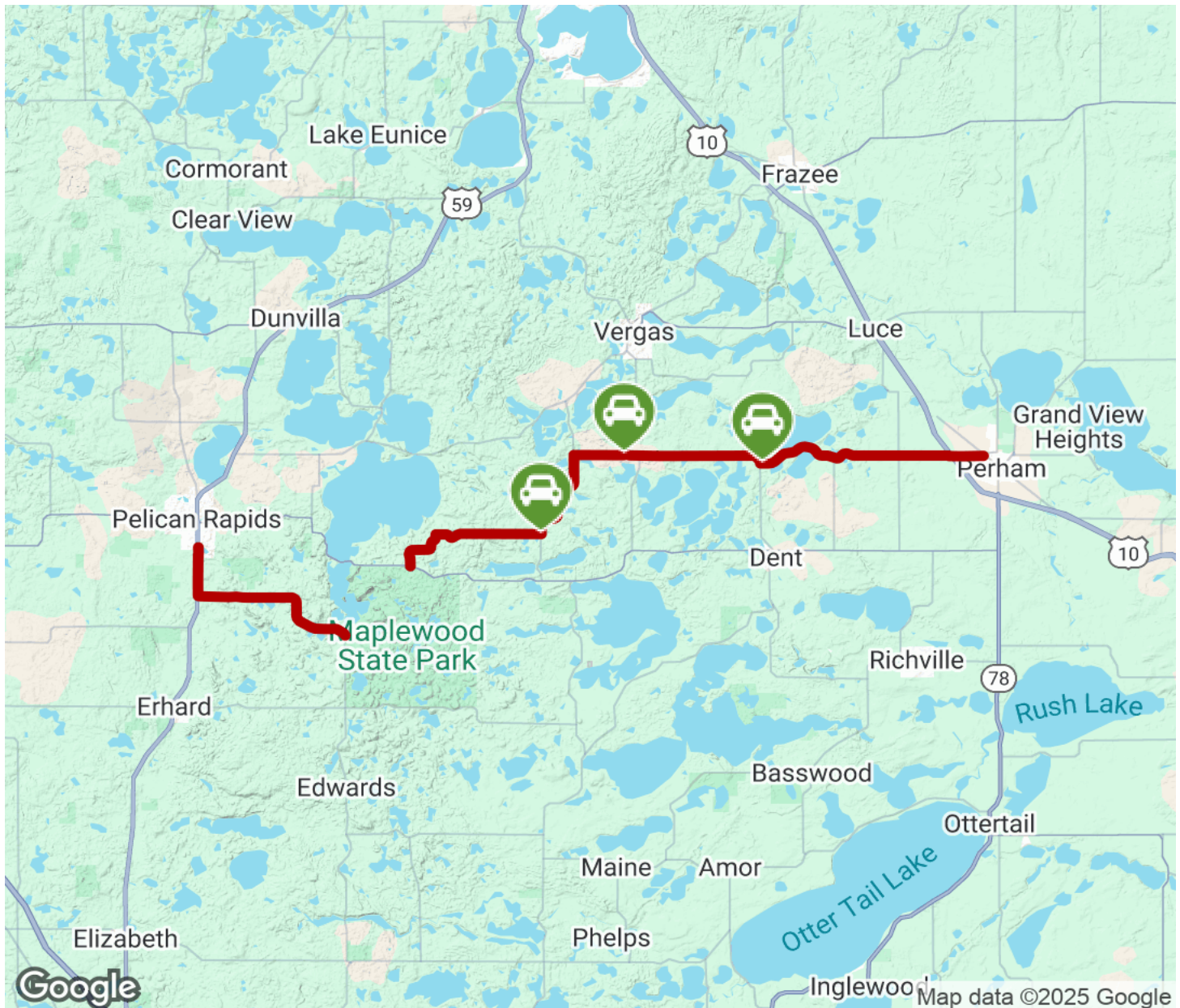
Parking is available at three trail heads. Along the Silent Lake Segment, there is parking at the intersection of 415th St and Hwy 41, near the Blackboard restaurant. Along the McDonald Lake Segment, there is parking near where Paul M Osborn Rd. meets Old County Hwy 35 and further along Hwy 35 where the McDonald Lake Section meets the Perham section of the trail at Hwy 34. See TrailLink Map for more detailed directions.





# Heart of the Lakes Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



**TrailLink**  
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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