



2026

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Leelanau Trail

Michigan



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The 16.6-mile Leelanau Trail runs up a Lake Michigan peninsula that is known for its abundance of cherry orchards and Riesling grape vineyards. Located in northern Michigan, the paved trail connects the popular tourist destinations of Suttons Bay and Traverse City.

About the Route

The northern endpoint of the Leelanau Trail is located just 1.8 miles north of the village of Sutton's Bay. The charming small town was an old railroad stop and has also served as a safe harbor for passing boats since the 1850s. Walking around the marina, trail users can spot a tall ship schooner that serves as a hands-on vessel for the Inland Seas Education Association. Elsewhere in town, boutiques, galleries, bed-and-breakfast inns, and restaurants cater to

visitors.

As the trail meanders south, after about 7 miles it passes through Bingham, which sits atop the spine of the peninsula and is roughly between Lake Leelanau in the west and the West Arm Grand Traverse Bay in the east. From here the route heads downhill toward Traverse City.

About 6 miles past Bingham, the trail passes the DeYoung Natural Area. This 145-acre preserve, one of 25 natural areas owned by the Leelanau Conservancy, provides hiking trails through a former farmstead and access to Cedar Lake. Drinking water and restrooms are available.

1.2 miles past the DeYoung Natural Area, the trail arrives at a trailhead on Cherry Bend Road that is marked by a historic caboose from the Leelanau Scenic Railroad. The trail comes to its southern endpoint 0.9 miles farther south on East Carter Road in Greilickville, but there is no parking here.

Connections

The Leelanau Trail is part of the TART Trails, a series of interconnected trails near Traverse City, Michigan, and surrounding northern Michigan.

At the southern end of the trail, the Leelanau Trail connects seamlessly to the [Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trail](#)

Trail History

The Leelanau Trail uses a former railroad corridor that got its start by hauling timber out of old-growth forests and ended its life as a scenic railroad. The Traverse City, Leelanau & Manistique Railway opened for business in 1903 by running up the peninsula from Traverse City and then crossing the lake by ferry to Manistique on the Upper Peninsula. The railroad went through some ownership changes and fell on



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States: Michigan

Counties: Grand Traverse, Leelanau

Length: 16.6 miles

Trail end points: N Dumas Road (Suttons Bay)
to E Carter Rd (Greilickville)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Fishing, Inline
Skating, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible, Cross
Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

The Leelanau Trail runs between N Dumas Road (Suttons Bay) and E Carter Rd (Greilickville).

Parking is available at:

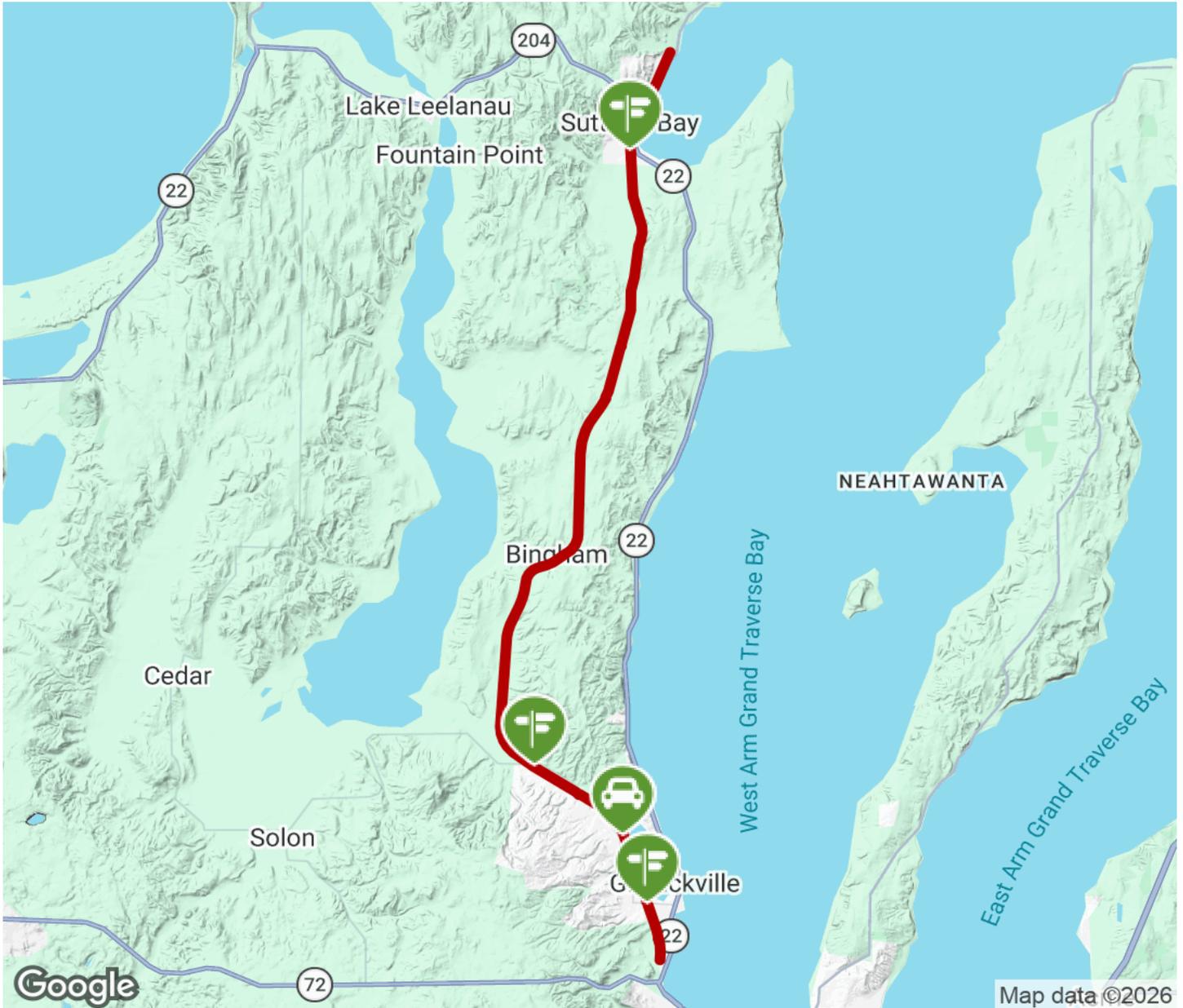
- 8600 E Fouch Rd (Traverse City)
- 9509 E Cherry Bend Rd (Traverse City)

Please see [TrailLink Map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



Leelanau Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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