



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**North
Western State
Trail**
Michigan



North Western State Trail

Michigan

The North Western State Trail—formerly known as the Petoskey to Mackinaw Trail after its endpoints—passes through many



Carp Lake and Mackinaw City on the north end are especially suitable as staging areas for off-trail excursions onto lightly traveled local (paved and gravel) roads. The northern trailhead in Mackinaw City also serves the [North Central State Trail](#), which extends south 62 miles to Gaylord, meeting the 71-mile [North Eastern State Trail](#) along the way in Cheboygan.

Near the North Western State Trail's southern end at Spring Lake Park in Petoskey, you can hop across State Route 119 to pick up the [Little Traverse Wheelway](#). The paved 26-mile rail-trail extends north to Harbor Springs and south to Charlevoix.

The North Western State Trail—formerly known as the Petoskey to Mackinaw Trail after its endpoints—passes through many communities along the way, including Conway, Oden, Ponshevaing, Brutus, Pellston, Van, Levering, and Carp Lake. In 2018, the scenic route was recognized with a National Recreation Trail designation.

Following the route of the former Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad, the rail-trail is open to all non-motorized uses year-round, and to snowmobiles from December 1 to March 31. The northern section of the trail, from Mackinaw City to Alanson, was resurfaced with a hard-pack aggregate and asphalt in 2015. The southern 7-mile section between Alanson and Petoskey is paved with asphalt. Bikes with wider tires, like mountain bikes, are recommended for the unpaved sections.



North Western State Trail

Michigan

States: Michigan

Counties: Emmet

Length: 32miles

Trail end points: North Central State Trail at Mackinaw Crossings Dr (Mackinaw City) to Spring Lake Park on SR 119 (Petoskey)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Fishing, Horseback Riding, Inline

Skating, Snowmobiling, Walking, Wheelchair

Parking & Trail Access

There is a small parking lot and restrooms at Spring Lake Park on SR 119 at the south end of the North Western State Trail in Petoskey. To reach the park from the south, take US 31 north through Petoskey to SR 119. Turn left on the highway towards Mackinaw City and travel for about 0.5 mile; parking is on the right.

There is also a trailhead alongside the trail at the Oden State Fish Hatchery Visitor Center. Additional parking is available at Pellston at the old rail depot and on side streets in several other small towns along the way. At the north end of the trail in Mackinaw City, there is a sizeable trailhead for parking. Restrooms can be found in the adjacent mall.



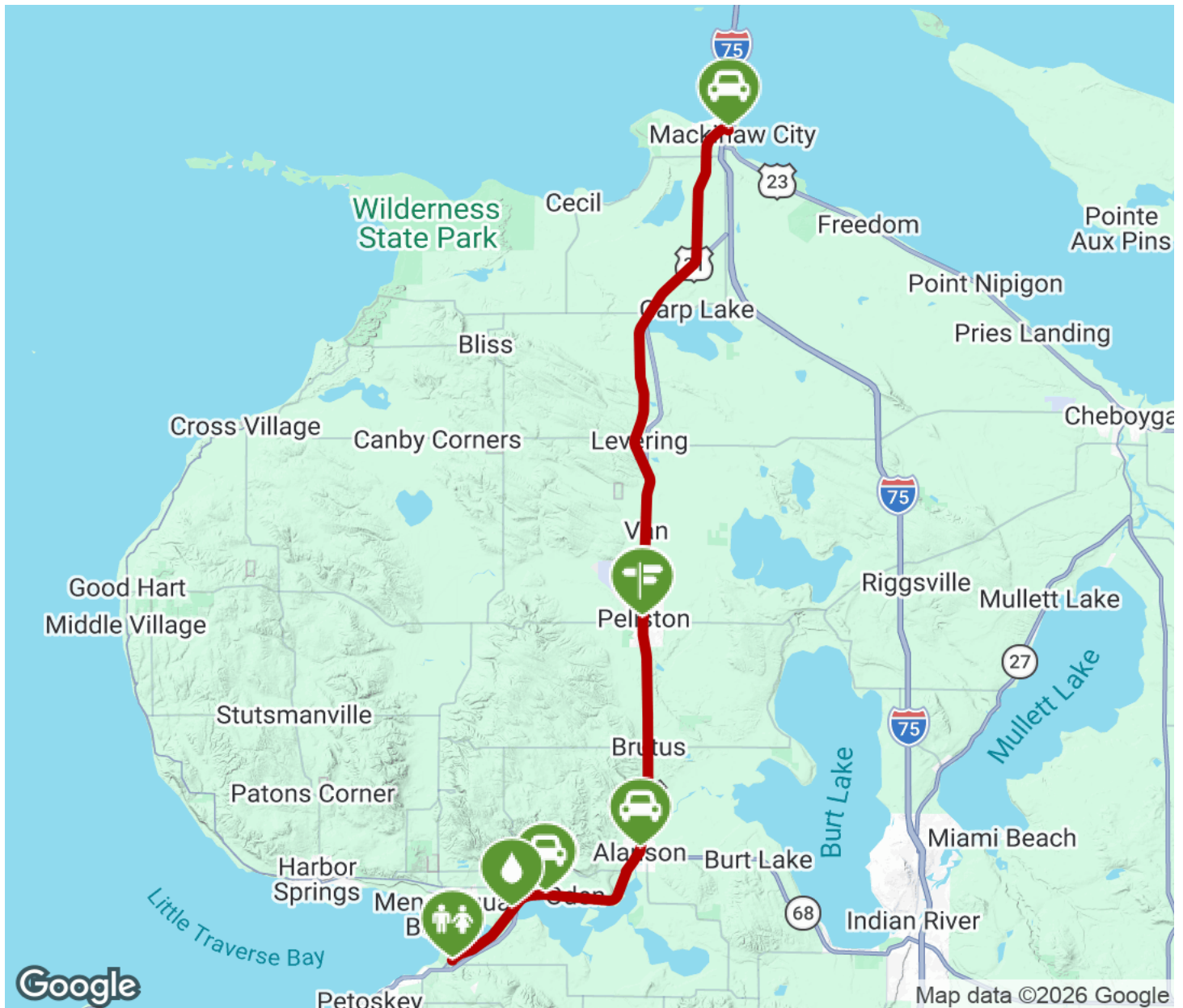
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North Western State Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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