



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides   



Mesabi Trail
Minnesota



Mesabi Trail

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Traversing the incredibly scenic Iron Range region of northern Minnesota, the Mesabi Trail is well on its way to becoming one of



Traversing the incredibly scenic Iron Range region of northern Minnesota, the Mesabi Trail is well on its way to becoming one of the longest rail-trails in the United States. When completed, the pathway will run "from the Mississippi River to the Boundary Waters" on a continuous route between Grand Rapids and Ely. Presently, 155 miles are open for use and fully paved except for a short stretch of less than a mile that is gravel surfaced through the Darwin S. Myers Wildlife Management Area near the town of Embarrass.

Winding between Grand Rapids and Ely, the route currently has a 5.5-mile gap between McKinley and Biwabik and a 7-mile gap between Kugler Township and Tower. For the gap between McKinley and Biwabik, it is possible to use the shoulder of Hwy 135 but it is not

recommended. Use caution as the two-lane highway is busy.

The Mesabi Trail provides the opportunity to connect with nature as the trail winds through woods, stream areas, ponds, and lakes. Animal sightings on the trail are common, with deer, raccoons, beavers, eagles, hawks, and even black bears making relatively regular appearances. For history buffs, the trail provides an open window to the past and present mining of the Iron Range as it takes users past constructed mine-pit lakes, old iron ore pits, and still-working iron ore mines.

Because the trail connects with so many towns and tourist attractions, such as the United States Hockey Hall of Fame Museum in Eveleth, Hill Annex Mine State Park near Calumet, and the Forest History Center in Grand Rapids, the Mesabi Trail is also viewed as a way to get from place to place without using a car. All the trail routing through communities is along city streets.



Mesabi Trail

Minnesota

States: Minnesota

Counties: Itasca, St. Louis

Length: 155 miles

Trail end points: Itasca County Fairgrounds (1336 Fairgrounds Rd, Grand Rapids) to E Sheridan St/MN-169 (Ely)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Gravel

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Fishing, Inline

Skating, Snowmobiling, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible, Cross Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

The Mesabi Trail runs between Itasca County Fairgrounds (1336 Fairgrounds Rd, Grand Rapids) and E Sheridan St/MN-169 (Ely) with a couple gaps in the route. Both ends of the trail offer parking.

Parking is also available at:

- Virginia Access Point, 1428 North 9th Ave (Virginia, MN)
- McKinley Access Point, 5252 Heritage Trail (Gilbert)
- Biwabik (Embarrass Lake) Access Point, 5966 Minnesota 135 (Biwabik)

Parking is available at numerous locations along the route. Visit the [TrailLink map](#) for all parking options.



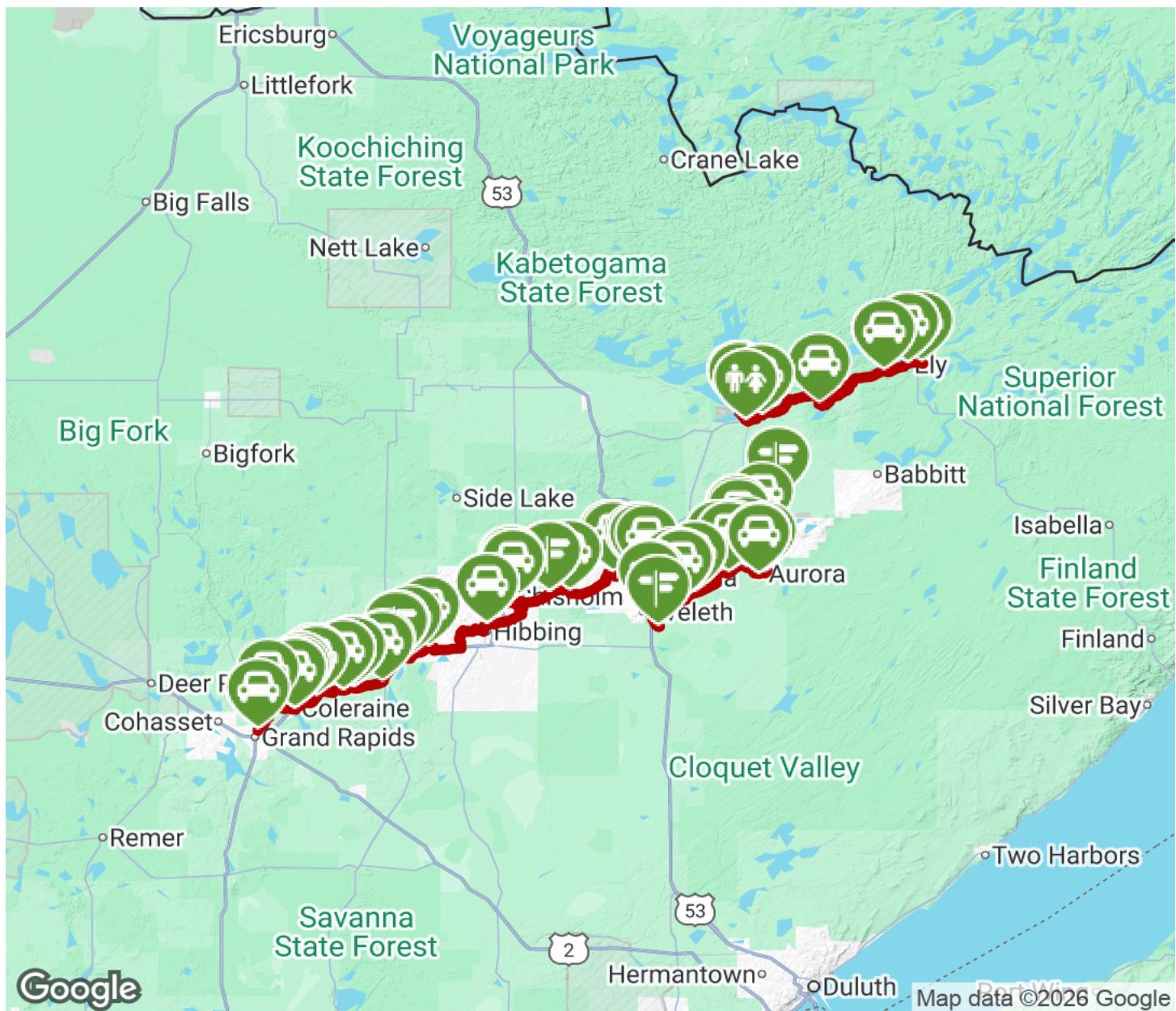
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Mesabi Trail

Minnesota



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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