

An aerial photograph of a town at dusk. A large river flows through the center, reflecting the sky. The town is illuminated with warm lights, and a golf course is visible in the foreground. The sky is a mix of blue and orange.

# HOUGHTON COUNTY RECREATION PLAN 2019-2023

**PREPARED BY: WESTERN U.P. PLANNING  
& DEVELOPMENT REGION**

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# Acknowledgments

The purpose of this plan is to set forth a recreation strategy for Houghton County that addresses the forces of change, confronts future challenges, and provides direction for decision-making regarding investment in recreation projects in the County. This plan was developed in accordance with the guidelines for *Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans* published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). A five-year, DNR-approved Recreation Plan is necessary for governmental entities to pursue DNR-administered grants.

## **Houghton County Board of Commissioners:**

Tom Tikkanen —Commissioner, District 1  
Al Koskela –Commissioner, District 2  
Glenn Anderson – Commissioner, District 3  
Gretchen Janssen – Commissioner, District 4  
Roy Britz – Commissioner, District 5

## **Recreation Committee:**

Evan McDonald – Planning Commission  
Bruce Peterson – Portage Township Supervisor  
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This plan was prepared by the Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region. All opinions and results contained in this document belong to the authors and do not represent positions taken by any of the above-mentioned agencies or institutions. All errors remain the responsibility of the authors.

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# Introduction

Recreation plays an important role in Houghton County residents' quality of life as well as the broader economy. Houghton County, like much of the Upper Peninsula, is blessed with an abundance of natural outdoor amenities ranging from world class recreation trails, scenic forestland, crystal clear Lake Superior water, a myriad of streams and inland lakes for boating and fishing, and so much more. These assets offer residents unparalleled, year-round opportunities to enjoy the outdoors and entice tourists to visit our communities stimulating the local economy through spending on lodging, restaurants, and shopping. Recognizing the value of these amenities, economic development organizations and employers are leveraging our outdoor recreation assets to attract new employees to our region.

Houghton County is one of many local and regional recreation asset stewards, with the broader network of assets owned and maintained by local governments, nearby counties, state agencies, conservancies, institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, recreation organizations, and private entities. The combination of these assets affords residents and tourists alike an abundance of recreational opportunities and makes Houghton County an incredibly unique destination for outdoor enthusiasts. It also emphasizes the importance of regional partnerships and collaborations, particularly on projects which cross municipal and county boundaries.

Because recreation is important to both our local livelihoods and our lifestyles, Houghton County has developed its 2019-2023 Houghton County Recreation Plan to guide future recreation development and improvements. To develop the plan, the Houghton County Recreation Committee was established in July of 2017. With assistance from the Western U.P. Planning & Development Region (WUPPDR), the committee completed an inventory of existing recreation assets and a county-wide survey to determine recreation goals, identified future needs, and established a program of facility improvements.

### **2018 Houghton County Flood**

On June 17, 2018, Houghton County experienced a significant precipitation event that devastated much of the region's recreation infrastructure. Over six inches of rain falling in a few hours resulted in an estimated \$20 million in damages to the region's trail assets. The Churning Rapids non-motorized trail system, along the Swedetown Creek corridor, received significant damage when three bridges were washed downstream by flood waters. Some trails in Nara Nature Park, particularly the wetlands boardwalk section, were severely damaged. For motorized trails, losses were concentrated along the connecting route from Hancock to Lake Linden, and on the Bill Nicholls trail from Houghton to Twin Lakes. The flood also contaminated water bodies preventing the use of public beaches, boating, fishing and other water activities for most of the summer. Fixing and maintaining both community and DNR recreation trails is a significant priority for the community and reflected in the results of the public survey completed in the fall of 2018.



*Trail washout after the Jun 17, 2018 Houghton flood. Photo courtesy of Keweenaw ATV Club.*

## Part 1: Community Description

Houghton County is located on the Keweenaw Peninsula in the Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan (See **Figure 1**). It is approximately 667,900 acres (1,044 square miles), with 139 inland lakes and has 51 miles of Lake Superior shoreline. The county's population is estimated to be 36,628 according to the 2010 U.S. Census. Houghton County has 14 townships, two incorporated cities, and five incorporated villages. It has numerous unincorporated small former mining communities ("locations") which are remnants of larger settlements.

The county's population is concentrated in the northern half of the county. This includes two primary population centers, 1) the Cities of Houghton and Hancock, opposite each other on Portage Lake/Canal near the center of the county, and 2) the Villages of Calumet and Laurium in the northern tier of the county. The City of Houghton is the county seat.



*Houghton County Courthouse*





**Figure 1:** Houghton County Location in State

The population of the Western Upper Peninsula reached a peak in the 1920s and 1930s when mining and lumbering activities were booming. Since that time there has been a considerable out-migration of residents in response to the decline of those industries. Houghton County’s population stabilized around 1970 and achieved moderate growth due to the continued expansion of Michigan Technological University (MTU), along with government and service sectors. This trend has continued in recent decades, with Houghton being one of the few Upper Peninsula counties to see population growth from 2000 to 2010. The county also has a relatively youthful population by Western Upper Peninsula standards. This is largely due to an abundance of college students at MTU and nearby Finlandia University located in Hancock. Demographics from 2016 are shown in **Table 1**.

**Table 1:** Houghton County demographic information

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent of Total</i>
<b>TOTAL PERSONS</b>	<b>36,565</b>	
Male	19,817	54.2%
Female	16,748	45.8%
Under 5 years	1,929	5.3%
5 to 19 years	7,753	21.2%
20 to 34 years	9,333	25.5%
35 to 44 years	3,391	9.3%
45 to 64 years	8,275	22.7%
65 to 84 years	5,108	14.0%
85 years and over	776	2.0%
White	34,184	93.5%
Black	282	0.8%
American Indian, and Alaska Native	154	0.4%
Asian or Pacific Islander	1,088	3.0%
Other (including listings of two or more races)	850	2.3%
<b>Other County Characteristics</b>		
Disabled (% of total population)	4,167	11.4%
Poverty: All Ages (% of total population)	8,337	22.8%
Under 19 years (% of age range)	1,898	19.6%

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>18,622</b>	
<b>Vacant Housing Units</b>	<b>5,244</b>	<b>28.2%</b>
<b>Occupied Housing Units</b>	<b>13,378</b>	<b>71.8%</b>
Owner-occupied Housing Units	9,293	69.5%
Renter-occupied Housing Units	4,085	30.5%
Average Household Size	2.57	
Average Family Size	3.22	
<b>Median Household Income</b>		<b>\$39,080</b>

\* Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The largest employers in the area include MTU, Portage Health System, Aspirus Keweenaw, Calumet Electronics Corporation, and Midwest Loan Services. Other major employers in the area are retail, service, construction, and manufacturing businesses, public schools, and government and human service agencies. Tourism is also a major contributor to the area’s economy. Traditionally a summer destination, the Copper Country and Keweenaw Peninsula are drawing more winter enthusiasts including skiers and snowmobilers. Tourists are drawn during all seasons to the excellent trail systems (hiking, snowmobiling, skiing, and mountain biking), abundant snowfall, and unique character of the area. The Keweenaw National Historical Park is promoting the region’s many cultural offerings, and the Copper Country Trail National Byway connects many of these assets as a cohesive human and natural environment.



*Michigan Technological University is one of the largest employers in the county. Photo courtesy of Michigan Technological University.*

Houghton County is served by two major highway systems. U.S. Highway 41 serves as the primary access to and through the county, spanning from the Baraga County line to the Keweenaw County line. Michigan Highway M-26 branches off U.S. 41 in Hancock, running along the Portage Lake shoreline then upward to Calumet and Laurium where it rejoins U.S. 41. M-26 also runs southerly through the county to the Ontonagon County line. M-203 skirts the western

shoreline in the northern half of the county and connects Hancock and Calumet. Baraga and Ontonagon Counties are joined together by M-28 and M-38, which run east-west through the southern portion of Houghton County. A well-maintained county road system complements the federal and state system.

Air service is available at the Houghton County Airport, located between Hancock and Calumet, with daily flights to Chicago United Airlines. The Cities of Houghton and Hancock and the Baraga-Houghton-Keweenaw Community Action Agency also operate public transit systems serving the large communities. Transportation to Isle Royale National Park is available in Houghton. The Ranger III makes round trips to the island during the park season. A seaplane service is also locally available for those desiring a quicker commute to the island.



*Kayak beach launch at Houghton Waterfront. Photo courtesy of Michigan Technological University.*

While the landscape varies greatly within the county, northern hardwoods characterize the predominant forest cover, covering approximately 338,155 acres, or 50 percent, of the county. These forestlands support a strong forest industry while also providing for numerous recreational pursuits such as camping, mountain biking, and snowmobiling in areas permitting them.

The wildlife within the county consists of whitetail deer, raccoons, skunks, rabbits, porcupine, squirrels and a variety of bird species. Outside the developed areas species such as black bear, fox, otter, cougar, and beaver are also present. Less common, but occasionally seen, are wolves and moose. The region's many lakes and streams offer abundant habitat for many types of fish and other aquatic animals. Fishing recreationalists have access to lake trout, walleye, perch, pike, whitefish, salmon, and many others. The extensive forests and numerous species provide for countless fishing and hunting opportunities.

## Part 2: Administrative Structure

The five-member Houghton County Board of Commissioners is responsible for County-owned recreation facilities. The County Administrator has some responsibility for day-to-day operations and budgeting for these facilities.

Houghton County leases the Houghton County Arena to Portage Lake Multi-Educational Services, a non-profit entity which manages and maintains the facility. The Houghton County Fairgrounds, which are adjacent to the Arena, are managed by the Fair Board. The Houghton County Board of Commissioners appoints one of its own members to be a voting member of the Fair Board. Another County Board committee, the Marina Board, manages the marina and runs it as an enterprise fund. In 2018 the Marina brought in revenues of approximately \$235,000, and expenses were approximately \$195,000. The Marina Board also oversees a seasonal harbormaster who runs the marina daily.

Houghton County provides occasional financial support to or serves as a grant applicant for local recreation development projects. This would be true in the case of any future grants. The County also encourages and supports the efforts of local units in addressing their recreational objectives.

**Figure 2** depicts the County's organizational recreation structure.

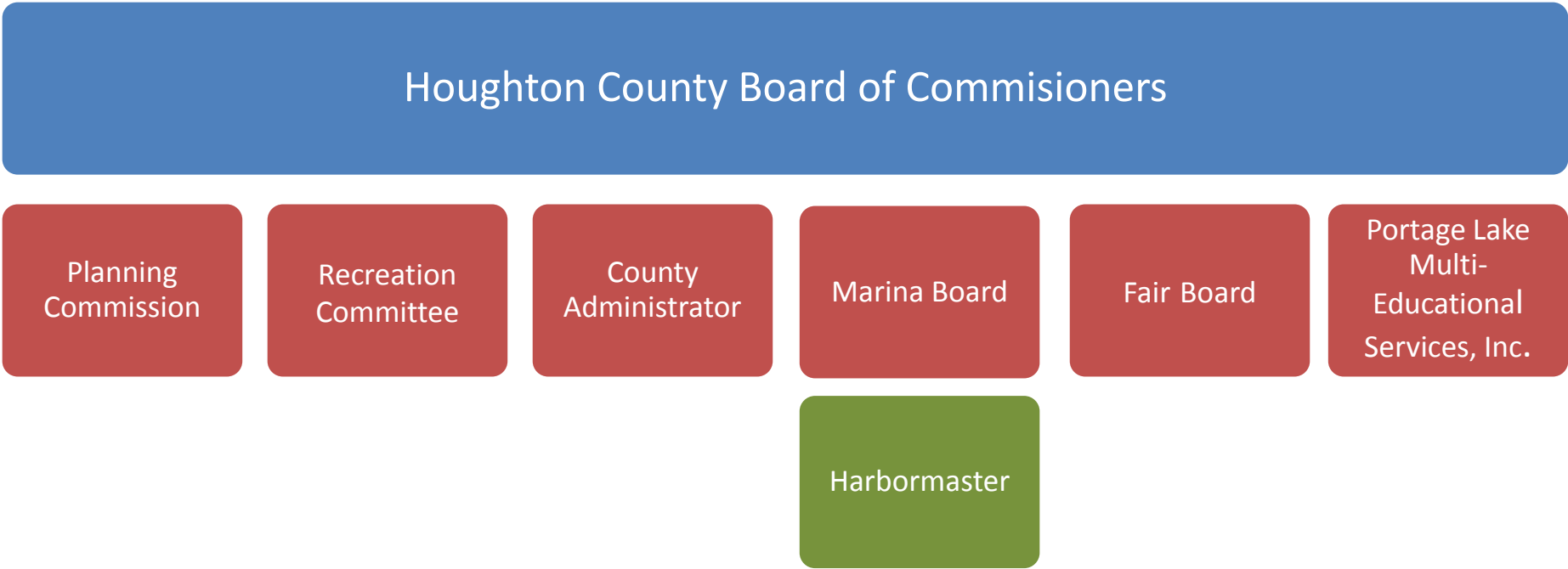


Figure 2: Houghton County recreational organization chart

## Part 3: Recreation Inventory

The following section examines and inventories the recreational facilities that are currently available in Houghton County. While Houghton County only owns three recreation facilities, the public has access to a wide variety of parks, other sites, and trails through the villages, townships, cities and state and federal government properties (see inventory beginning on page 18).

Accessibility assessments and rankings are provided for each County-owned site based on the parameters outlined in the “DNR Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans” as follows:

- 1=none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 2=some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 3=most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 4=the entire facilities/park meets accessibility guidelines
- 5=the entire facilities/park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design

More than just an item on a checklist, universal design is an integral part of recreation facility development. The approach helps to maximize the return on investment in recreation by making facilities as safe and user-friendly as possible. Assessments were completed by members of the Houghton County Recreation Committee with support by WUPPDR staff.

Houghton County has two previous DNR grant-funded projects on record:”

### **Grant number: CM00-190”**

- Facility Houghton County Arena
- Year: 2000
- Development scope item: Ice refrigeration equipment (in operating condition and in use)
- Status: The arena’s ice plant was replaced in 2018 with an ammonia-based system due to the phase out of refrigerant R-22.

### **Grant number: RP16-0099**

- Facility: Houghton County Arena
- Year: 2016

- Development scope item: Development of modern engineered aluminum seating to improve spectator safety and facility improvements to provide access to persons with disabilities.
- Status: The project has been completed and all capital improvements are in good working order.



*Houghton County Arena. Photo credit: <http://houghtoncountyarena.com/facilities.php>*

In addition, the County Marina has been supported by previous DNR Waterways Program grants, including its initial construction, most recent marina master plan (2007) (50% cost share), and a current pier replacement project (50% cost share)

## Facilities Owned by and Located in County

County-owned recreation facilities are inventoried and described below and shown in **Figure 3**.

### **Houghton County Arena**

The Houghton County Arena is located in Hancock and is managed and operated by Portage Lake Multi-Education Services (PLMES). The arena is a multi-purpose facility, which serves many County residents through various programs and services. The facility was constructed in 1974 through a cooperative effort by several community groups, individuals, the City of Hancock, Houghton County, and with financial assistance provided by the Michigan Urban Recreation Bond Program.

The arena is used for a variety of activities throughout the year. It serves as the primary practice and game facility for over 600 Junior Hockey players including senior and high school teams. Figure skating and public skating for youth and senior citizens are also scheduled at the facility. Ice is maintained at the facility for seven months of the year beginning in October. The arena generates most of its revenue through a combination of ice rink rental time and advertising. The upstairs Wiitanen Room can also be rented out for special events but can only be accessed via stairs. Major users of ice time include Finlandia University men’s and women’s hockey team, Hancock’s high school hockey team, and other youth hockey leagues. During the winter, the ice rink is heavily used in the evenings and on weekends. However, there is a lot of availability during the week (Monday through Friday) between 8 am and 5 pm.



During summer months, the arena has also been used as a site for roller derby events. The grounds also serve as a rest station for the adjacent Maasto Hiihto trails. The facility is used extensively for 4-H, the County Fair, and other community and recreation programs and organizations.

PLMES is actively looking to maximize ice rental opportunities and explore new Arena uses during the spring, summer and fall seasons. Traditionally, PLMES begins the arena hockey season in October, but started a month earlier in 2018 due to increasing demand. Potential alternative uses for the arena outside the hockey season include: shoulder-season indoor soccer, temporary batting cages, racquet sports, skateboarding, etc.

The arena has undergone substantial renovation and expansion since it was built. In 2005, a \$900,000 project included a 12,000 sq. ft. addition, while water, sewer, and other utilities were laid in. New locker rooms and a sprinkler system were installed, and the original lobby area was completed. Earlier improvements included an upgraded ice refrigeration plant funded by the DNR as described above. In 2016, new bleachers were installed along with new energy efficient lighting, and accessibility improvements to the first-floor restrooms and front entrance. A new dehumidifier was installed to prevent fogging in the facility. And in 2017 a new roof was installed at a cost of approximately \$440,000 paid for by the County.

Several improvements are needed to continue operating the arena. It requires an elevator and/or stair-lift to allow access for individuals with mobility limitations to the second floor. A restroom is also needed on that level and the scoreboard needs to be replaced.

- Accessibility Rating: 2-3 = some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- Type: Indoor sports facility
- Size: 38,400 square feet
- Service Area: Houghton County

### **Houghton County Fairgrounds**

The County Fairgrounds, located adjacent to the arena, are used primarily for the County Fair but also equestrian, motocross and other events. The Timber Trails Riding Club holds horse shows at times other than the County Fair. The fairgrounds also provide winter storage space for a fee.

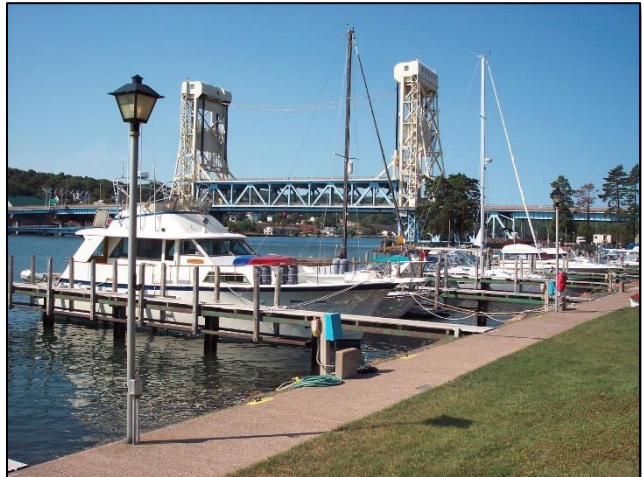


*Houghton County Fair. Photo credit: Houghton County Fair Facebook Page*

- **Accessibility Rating:** 2 = some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- **Type:** Outdoor space for community events
- **Size:** 11.1 acres
- **Service Area:** Houghton County

### **Houghton County Marina**

The Houghton County Marina is located on Portage Lake, part of the Keweenaw Waterway, a body of water connected to Lake Superior. The marina is situated on the north side of the waterway, east of the Portage lake Lift Bridge that connects the cities of Houghton and Hancock. It is located immediately off DNR Multi-Use Trail #3 which connects Hancock to nearby communities such as Dollar Bay, Lake and Lake Linden and is near the historic Quincy Smelter.



*Houghton County Marina*

- **Accessibility Rating:** 1 = none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- **Type:** Marina (boat docking/storage)
- **Size:** Approx. 2.25 acres
- **Service Area:** Houghton County; seasonal tourists

The following information provided below is intended to remain eligible for grants from the DNR Waterways Program.

- General Purpose: The marina is full-service, offering 54 slips, gas and diesel fuel, transient slips, a pump-out station, concrete boat launch ramp, picnic facilities for boaters, an ice cooler, and nautical charts. The site allows for parking (both vehicle and trailer), and the Harbormaster is on duty from May 1st through October 31st.
- ADA: The facilities on site are in need of upgrades to comply with ADA standards and improve individuals' access to site amenities. Reducing on-site access barriers has been identified as a priority for the County. Deficiencies include:
  - Lack of access space at doorways into the restrooms
  - Lack of an accessible shower and toilet stall
  - Sinks and mirrors at incorrect positions
  - Drains and supply lines under sink not wrapped
  - Lack of chair lifts for watercraft access from docks
  - Lack of paved surface access to from the parking lot to amenities
- Site Development Plan: A marina master plan (MPP) was completed in 2007 and identified development options for the marina. An update to the MPP would be helpful given the length since the last study. However, the plan identified the following development options:
  - Add 9-19 additional boat slips;
  - Increase parking by adding 20 vehicle parking spaces and 9 trailer parking spaces;
  - Renovate existing restrooms and shower facilities to meet ADA compliance standards;
  - Add a new restroom facility on the east end of the property;
  - Upgrade selective services to dock pedestals

**Appendix A** provides site maps for these potential projects. In addition, the 2018 Houghton County Recreation Survey identify paddle craft launch sites as a high priority for the marina.

- Right Sizing: The Houghton County Marina was last expanded in 1976. Historically, the marina has a waiting list for seasonal slip rentals, and a survey completed in 2014 indicates slow growth in Lake Superior boating with growth in occupancies at marinas with newer facilities and the capacity to serve larger boats. An improved marina facility could attract additional seasonal slip rentals. However, a local developer has received permits from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the Army Corps of Engineers for a 50-slip marina near Dollar Bay. This project, if it comes to fruition, would likely mitigate the need for an expansion at the County Marina.
- Marketing/events/partnerships: The County does not have a marketing plan for the marina. This can be partially attributed to the already high usership rate of seasonal

slips creating a perception that one is unnecessary. However, given the marina is a major county asset, it can be more fully leveraged to generate recreation value for community members by following the recommendations below. Amenities, such as nearby shopping, restaurants and interesting things to see and do, are key factors to attract transient boaters. The Keweenaw Waterway and Houghton/Hancock are perceived as an interesting place to visit with scenic and historic attractions, two historic downtown districts within easy walking distance with shops and restaurants. The service and facilities are rated well by visiting boaters.

- *Events & Attractions:* The marina is located just outside of Hancock on M26. With ample parking, close proximity to the County's population centers, picnic facilities, electricity access and restroom facilities, the marina could be used as a location for small to medium sized outdoor public events. Its proximity to DNR recreation trails also makes it a potential venue for trail-based events. Water-trail related events could also be an option. There are also a number of historically significant assets nearby, including the Quincy Smelter, Quincy Mine, and Quincy Dredge in addition to others.
- *Social Media:* The County does not use social media to promote government operations or its recreation assets. Utilizing tools like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube can be cost effective forms of marketing. It can also be used to conduct customer satisfaction surveys and get input from the general public on improvement opportunities for the marina.
- *Web site:* Houghton County does have a website ([www.houghtoncounty.net](http://www.houghtoncounty.net)), and the marina is included in the departmental listings. Contact, location and hours of operation information are listed. A brief description of the marina is provided as well. This page can be updated to include additional information such as seasonal slip rental pricing and events as well as capital planning information.
- *Partnerships:* Potential partnership include, but not limited to:
  - Local units of government (e.g. Cities of Houghton & Hancock, Portage Township; Franklin Township, etc.)
  - Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce
  - Keweenaw Convention Visitors Bureau
  - Recreation groups
  - Houghton County Historical Society
  - Michigan Technological University and Finlandia University
- Dredging: A storm-water outlet/intermittent stream flows between slips 25 and 26. This has resulted in the accumulation of sediments and shallow water depths at these piers. During the summer flood of 2018, debris and sediment were deposited and required

dredging to regain use of at least one slip. Dredging of this area should be considered for future improvements to the facility, but maintenance dredging on a more frequent interval should not be necessary due to slow rate of siltation. The flow at this outlet is generally very minimal and has no effect on a vessel moored in this area.

- **Maintenance and Infrastructure Replacement Schedule:**
  - *Annual maintenance schedules:* the Houghton County Harbor Master is responsible for the regular maintenance and operations of the marina Annual maintenance includes updating or maintaining existing equipment, picnic areas, walkways, restroom and shower facilities, and grounds.
  - *Capital improvements schedule:* After more than 40 years of service, the Marina is need of several repairs and updates. Many of the piers need to be replaced due to exposure to the elements and a boat accident in 2016. The worst piers are being replaced thanks in part to a grant from the DNR with work expected to be completed in the spring of 2019. However, additional work may be warranted.
    - 2019: Pier replacements; Marina Master Plan & Feasibility Study Update
    - 2020: ADA accessibility improvements
    - 2021: Paddle craft launch
    - 2022: TBD
    - 2023: TBD

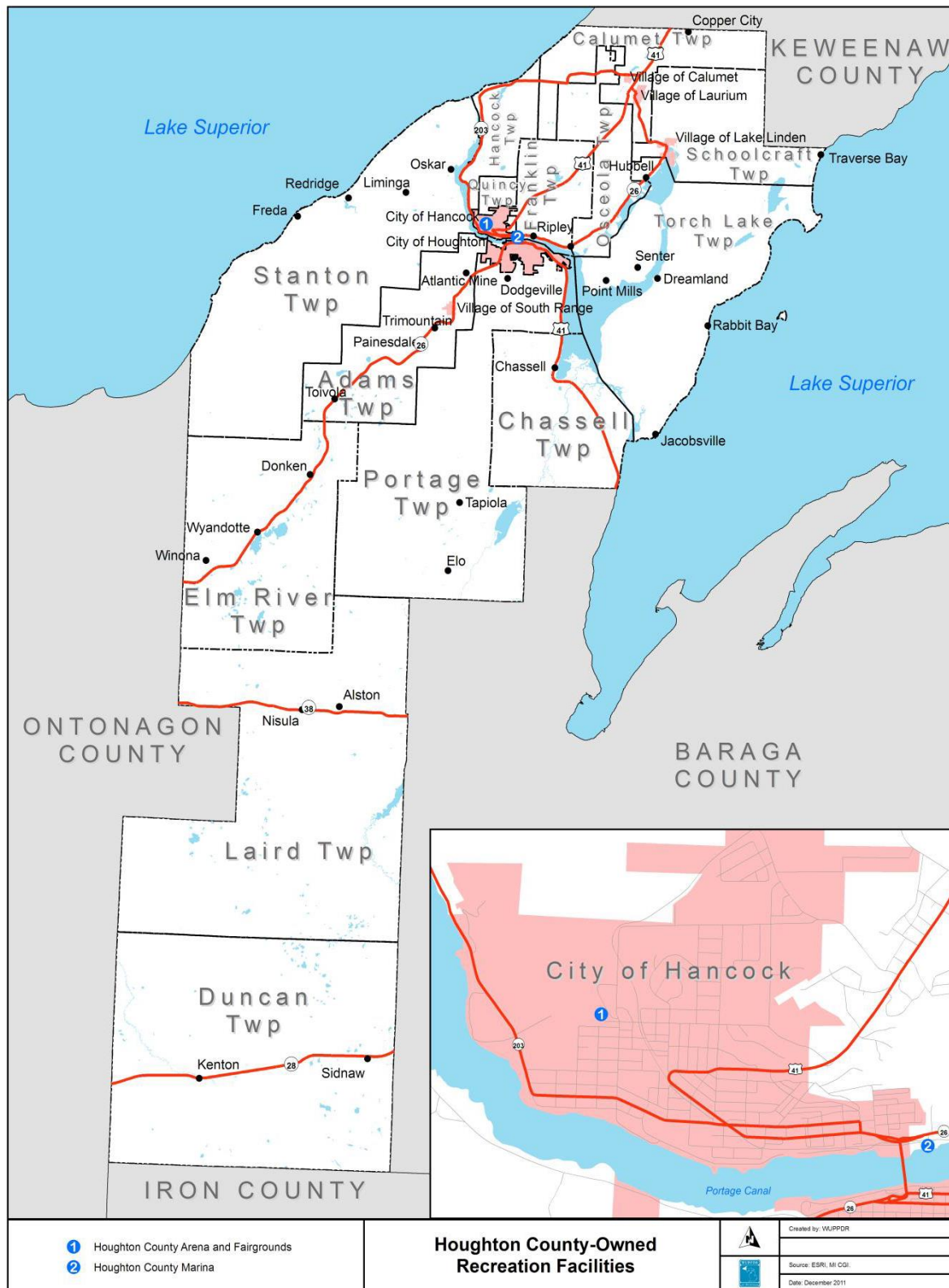


Figure 3: Houghton County-owned recreation assets

## Non-County Owned Facilities Located within Houghton County

**Table 2:** Adams Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Atlantic Mine Playground	Adams Township	Playground
Baltic Recreation Center	Adams Township	Indoor ice rink, basketball court, and senior citizens center
Jeffers High School Playground	Adams Township Schools	Playground (located behind post office)

**Table 3:** Calumet Village recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Agassiz Park	Calumet Village	Basketball court, picnic area, restrooms, benches
Calumet Theatre Park	Calumet Village	Historical marker
CLK Football Field – Track	Calumet School District	Football/track stadium
Italian Hall Park	National Park Service	Benches & historical markers
Red Jacket Road Park	Calumet Village	Benches

**Table 4:** Calumet Charter Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Calumet Colosseum & Community Center	Calumet Township	Indoor ice rink, event room, and concession stand
Calumet Dam Area	Calumet Township	Campsites & walking trails & disc golf
Calumet Schools	Calumet School District	Gymnasiums (4) & playground
Centennial Heights Playground	Calumet Township	Playground
Centennial School	Baraga-Houghton-Keweenaw Child Development	Playground & future nature trail
CLK School Forest	CLK S	
Copper Country Curling Rink	Copper Country Curling Club	Indoor curling facility
Douglas-Houghton Falls	State	Waterfall
Legion Field	Calumet Township	Soccer/baseball field
Railroad Depot	Calumet Township	Historic site

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Lions Club Park	Calumet Township	Picnic site, walking trail, greenspace, paddle craft launch
Gardenview Garden	Private	Assisted living center facility for senior citizen use
Swedetown Ponds	Calumet Township	Fishing & picnic tables
Swedetown Trails	Calumet Township	Cross-country ski, snowshoeing, hiking and mountain biking trails, sledding, lights, toilets, concession
Waterworks Park	Calumet Township	16 acre park with 1,600 feet of Lake Superior shoreline, pavilions (3), picnic sites, playground, horseshoe pits, baseball field, basketball court. Site includes a 43 acre wooded parcel adjacent to lake frontage with nature trail, primitive campsite
Wolverine Ballfield	Calumet Township	Baseball field, toilets, concession

**Table 5:** Chassell Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Chassell Ski/Snowshoe Trails	Chassell Township	10+ km ski & snowshoe trails (1-km lighted)
Chassell Township Centennial Park	Chassell Township	Boat launch, docks, fishing, picnic area, pavilion, playground, horseshoe pits, toilets
Chassell Township Schools	Chassell Township School District	Playground & multi-purpose field
Ice Rink	Chassell Township	Ice rink with warming shack
Misslitz Field	Chassell Township	4-acre grounds; ballfield & playground
Sturgeon River Sloughs Access Site	State	Boat launch, pier, picnic area, nature trail

**Table 6:** Copper City Village recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Village Hall	Copper City Village	Community building
Village Park	Copper City Village	Playground equipment



**Table 7:** Duncan Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Lower Dam Lake	U.S. Forest Service	Waterfront access (former campground) & bench
Sparrow Rapids Campground	U.S. Forest Service	Rustic campsites (5) & access to river
Sparrow-Kenton Wayside	U.S. Forest Service	Picnic area, access to river, toilet

**Table 8:** Elm River Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Clear Lake Access Site	State	Boat launch & toilet
Elm River Township Public Access	Elm River Township	Boat launch & playground
Emily Lake State Forest Campground	State	Campsites, boat launch, toilet
Pike Lake	State	Boat launch & toilet
Sandy Lake	State	Boat launch & toilet
Twin Lakes Recreation Center	Elm River Township	Indoor basketball court (summer) & ice rink (winter)
Twin Lakes State Park	State	Campsites (62), restrooms, swimming, boat launch
Wyandotte Hills Golf Club	Private	Golf course & club house

**Table 9:** Franklin Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Boston Pond	State	Boat access & swimming
Mount Ripley	Michigan Tech	Downhill skiing, chairlift, t-bar, terrain park
Paavola Wetlands Nature Area	Keweenaw Land Trust	215 acre nature preserve with walking trails and historic features
Ripley Location	Franklin Township	Future waterfront park (fishing, swimming, picnic facilities)

**Table 10:** City of Hancock recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Driving Park	City of Hancock	Baseball/adult softball field, little league field
East Hancock Stairway Park	City of Hancock	Scenic view, benches, flag display
Hancock Beach	City of Hancock	Volleyball courts (3), horseshoes, swimming, pavilion
Hancock Campground	City of Hancock	72 campsites (58 RV sites with electric access and 14 tent sites) & restroom/showers
Hancock Elementary School	Hancock School District	Playground, outdoor basketball court, soccer field, small pavilion, gymnasium, nature trail
Hancock Trail	State	All-season recreation trail
Copper Country I.S.D. Playground	Copper Country Intermediate School District	Playground
Klondike Park	City of Hancock	0.1-acre lot
Laurin-Grove Park	City of Hancock	Outdoor ice hockey rink with warming shelter, playground, basketball court, tennis court, roller hockey, horseshoe pits
Maasto Hiihto Trails	Private landowners	Cross-country skiing/biking/hiking/snowshoeing trails (connects to Churning Rapids Trails)
McAfee Field	Finlandia University	Football/soccer field & restroom/shower facility
Memorial Park	City of Hancock	Tables, benches, war memorial
Montezuma Park	City of Hancock	Playground, benches, open field, picnic facilities
Paavo Nurmi Center	Finlandia University	Gymnasium, swimming pool, bowling, fitness center
Pine Park	City of Hancock	Open area, table, benches, playground
Porvoo Park	City of Hancock	Pavilion, restrooms, volleyball, fishing piers
Ryan School	Baraga-Houghton-Keweenaw Head Start	Playground
Terrace Park	City of Hancock	Softball sandlot, picnic facilities, playground, tennis/basketball/volleyball courts
Third Street Park	City of Hancock	Basketball, playground, picnic facilities

**Table 11:** Hancock Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Churning Rapids Trails	Private	Cross-country skiing/biking/hiking/snowshoeing trails (connects to Maasto Hiihto Trails)
McLain State Park	State	Campsites, restrooms, beach, swimming, playground, lighthouse, picnic area, and trails
Swedetown DNR Lake Access	State	Boat launch

**Table 12:** City of Houghton recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Bridge Street Basketball Courts	City of Houghton	Basketball courts (2)
Bridgeview Park	City of Houghton	Boat mooring facility, pavilion, viewing deck
Central Houghton Greenspace Nature Area	City of Houghton Keweenaw Land Trust	4.5 acre park, walking trail, wildlife habitat
College Avenue Park	City of Houghton	Scenic site with seating
Danielle Heights Playground	Michigan Tech	Children’s playground facilities
Dee Stadium	City of Houghton	Ice rink for hockey & figure skating, event space (all indoors)
East Houghton Greenspace Park	City of Houghton	0.77 acre park with wildlife habitat and walking trail
East Houghton Waterfront Park	City of Houghton	Pavilion, boat docks, restrooms/showers; adjacent boat slips, fishing piers, picnic tables
Franklin Square and Mott’s Park	City of Houghton	Planters, statue, and welcome sign
Garnet Street Park	City of Houghton	Tennis court, playground, picnic area, and horseshoe pits
Gates Tennis Center	Michigan Tech	Tennis courts (5)
Houghton Elementary School	Houghton-Portage Township Schools	Playground & gymnasium
Houghton High School	Houghton-Portage Township Schools	Track/football field, gymnasium, pool; Bugni Park adjacent
Houghton RV Park	City of Houghton	Campsites (25) with hookups; picnic tables; park host
Houghton Skatepark	City of Houghton	Opening in Spring 2019; Facilities for skateboarding including ramps, rails
Huron Street Fishing Piers	City of Houghton	Fishing piers, picnic tables, gazebo

<i><b>Establishment</b></i>	<i><b>Ownership Entity</b></i>	<i><b>Type/Facilities</b></i>
Isle Royale National Park	National Park Service	Boat dock at park headquarters
Lakeshore Drive Boardwalk	City of Houghton	A 0.5 mile boardwalk with fishing piers, picnic facilities, boat slips, and paddle craft ramp
Michigan Tech Football Field	Michigan Tech	Football stadium/track
Michigan Tech Softball Fields	Michigan Tech	Ballfields
Michigan Tech Student Development Center	Michigan Tech	Indoor recreation center
Michigan Tech Trails	Michigan Tech	35k Cross-country/biking/hiking trails (7k lighted trails), adjacent disc golf course
Nara Nature Park	City of Houghton	115 acre park offering cross-country skiing/biking/hiking/snowshoeing trails (connecting to Michigan Tech trails), boardwalk, fishing piers, chalet building
Prince’s Point Park	Michigan Tech	Beach, picnic table, fire pit, volleyball court
Raymond C. Kestner Waterfront Park & Chutes and Ladders	City of Houghton	Play area, swimming beach, fishing piers, boat docks, picnic area, pavilion
Waterfront Trail	City of Houghton	4.5-mile paved multi-use trail (summer non-motorized/winter snowmobile)
West Houghton Park	City of Houghton	0.7 acre park with outdoor hockey and skating rink and warming facility
Woodhaven Park	City of Houghton	Playground equipment and soccer field
Veterans Park	City of Houghton	Memorial site with scenic views
Verna Mize Park	City of Houghton	Scenic site

**Table 13:** Laird Township recreation assets

<i><b>Establishment</b></i>	<i><b>Ownership Entity</b></i>	<i><b>Type/Facilities</b></i>
Bob Lake	State	Camping, boating, canoeing, fishing, hunting, hiking
Echo Lake	State	Walk-in canoeing, fishing, hunting
Ed Tossava Ice Rink	Laird Township	Pavilion/ice rink, warm-up shed, bathrooms, grills, picnic tables
Mike Jylha Stadium Baseball Field	Laird Township	Ball field, grandstand, concession, playground, picnic facilities
North Country Trail System	State	Hiking trail access
Penegor Lake	State	Walk-in canoeing, fishing, hunting

Prickett Lake Access Site	State	Boating, canoeing, fishing, hunting
Silver Mountain	State	Hiking & hunting
Six Mile Lake	State	Fishing, hunting, walk-in canoeing
Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness	Forest Service	Hiking & hunting
Triangle Falls	State	Hiking, fishing, hunting

**Table 14:** Lake Linden Village recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Lake Linden Recreation Area	Lake Linden Village	Inline skating rink, volleyball, swimming, bathroom facilities, tennis court, basketball court, baseball field, climbing wall, tot lot
Marina	Lake Linden Village	Boat dock & 12 slips (8 seasonal & 4 electric)
School Playground	Lake Linden-Hubbell School District	Playground
Village Campground	Lake Linden Village	Campsites (20 electric & 6 rustic) with picnic tables & fire rings; restrooms; showers; pavilion; nature trail

**Table 15:** Laurium Village recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Park Daniell	Laurium Village	Band shell, concession stand
George Gipp Recreation Area	Laurium Village	Ice arena, baseball fields (4), playground, tennis courts (2), basketball court, bocce court, horseshoe pits, volleyball courts
Gipp Memorial Park	Laurium Village	Fountain
Laurium Ball Fields & Playground	Laurium Village	Ballfields (3), playground, concessions

**Table 16:** Osceola Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Calumet Golf Course	Private	Golf course, driving range, clubhouse/restaurant
Centennial Park	Osceola Township	Sitting area

Dollar Bay Community Garden	Osceola Township	0.3-acre lot and future home to a community garden
Dollar Bay Recreation Facility	Osceola Township	Ice rink, warming hut, tennis court, basketball court, horseshoe pit
Dollar Bay Head Start Playground	Dollar Bay/Tamarack City Area Schools	Gymnasium, playground and basketball court
Electric Park	Osceola Township	40-acre historic site and former public recreation area.
Gooseneck Park	Osceola Township	4-acre green space located on M-26 just outside of Dollar Bay
Hungarian Falls	Keweenaw Land Trust	10 acres of hiking trails, waterfalls, scenic views
Quincy Dredge	Osceola Township/Houghton County Historical Society	6.4-acre site featuring a partially submerged dredge and smokestacks
Sandy Bottom Park	Osceola Township	Swimming beach, picnic area, pavilion, boat launch, fishing
Tamarack Hill Location	Osceola Township	0.5-acre lot with electricity access.
Tamarack Mill Park	Osceola Township	Basketball court, playground, and pavilion
Tamarack City Recreation Area	Private/Osceola Township	2-acre area, undeveloped green space near Tamarack Mill Park
Veterans' Field	Veterans of Foreign Wars	Baseball/soccer field & barbeque pit

**Table 17:** Portage Charter Township recreation assets

<b><i>Establishment</i></b>	<b><i>Ownership Entity</i></b>	<b><i>Type/Facilities</i></b>
Dodgeville Recreation Area	Portage Township	Covered and lighted ice rink/pavilion with warming shack, playground equipment, basketball court, horseshoe pits, restrooms
Hurontown Recreation Area	Portage Township	Playground equipment, benches, restroom (summer 2012), softball field, soccer fields, 2 tennis courts, 4 horseshoe courts
Portage Lake Golf Course	Michigan Tech	Golf course, pro shop, restaurant
Otter Lake Recreational Area	Portage Township	Pavilion/ice rink, softball diamond & dugout, playground equipment, vault toilets
Pilgrim Estates Tennis Court	Portage Township	Tennis court
Tapiola Recreation Area	Portage Township	Pavilion, ballfield, playground equipment, covered ice rink

**Table 18:** Quincy Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Maasto Hiihto Trails	Private landowners	Cross-country skiing/biking/hiking/snowshoeing trails (connect to Churning Rapids Trails)
Hancock Middle School/Central High School	Hancock School District	Gymnasium & sports fields

**Table 19:** Schoolcraft Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Big Traverse Boat Launch	Schoolcraft Township	Boat launch, restroom, parking
Big Traverse Campground	Schoolcraft Township	Rustic (tent) campsites, water, restroom
Big Traverse Picnic Grounds	Schoolcraft Township	Picnic facilities
Schoolcraft Township Ball Park	Schoolcraft Township	Ballfield, playground equipment

**Table 20:** South Range Village recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Range Town Veterans Memorial Park	South Range Village	40-acre site; softball & baseball fields
South Range Community Park	South Range Village	Playground equipment, picnic tables, tennis court and basketball court
South Range Elementary School	Adams Township School District	Gymnasium, outdoor basketball court, playground

**Table 21:** Stanton Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
E.B. Holman School	Stanton Township Schools	Playground, basketball court, gym, baseball diamond
Freda Tennis Court	Stanton Township	Tennis court
Heikkinen School	Private	Playground
Kenner Dome & Oskar Bay Recreational Park	Stanton Township	Ice rink, basketball court, sand volleyball court
North Canal Park	Stanton Township	Primitive campsites, picnic facilities, playground equipment, horseshoe pits, beach, toilets
Stanton Township Ball Diamond	Stanton Township	Ball diamond

Stanton Township Community Center	Stanton Township	Skating rink with building (warming shack)
Stanton Township Park/Agate Beach	Stanton Township	Campsites (30 including 6 electric), pavilion, fire boxes (20), picnic facilities

**Table 22:** Torch Lake Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Bootjack Boat Launch	State	Boat launch & toilet
“Ernie” Poisson Hubbell Park	Torch Lake Township	7.3 acre park, boat launch, docking facilities, beach area
Lake Linden-Hubbell School Forest	Lake Linden-Hubbell School District	400 acre forested lot with hiking, cross-country, and snowshoeing trails, log cabin, archery range, fire pit area, and geocache sites
Rice Lake Boat Launch	State	Boat launch & toilet
White City Park	Army Corps of Engineers (owner); Torch Lake Township (operator)	Beach, picnic facilities, DNR boat launch

## Other Significant Recreation Assets in County

### **F.J. McLain State Park**

Located along M-203 north of Hancock on Lake Superior, this 443-acre State Park is a popular destination for visitors and locals. Activities at the park include camping, hiking, rock picking, beachcombing, swimming, sightseeing and skiing. There are approximately 100 modern campsites including 5 pull through and 2 ADA sites. This park also offers three picnic shelters with grills (two with fireplaces), two playground locations, a dedicated area friendly for leashed pets, and (during camping season) a concessionary/store. In 2018, a new toilet and shower building was constructed with plans for future campsite expansion.



*Keweenaw Heritage Center at St. Anne's. Photo courtesy of Keweenaw NHP.*



### **Keweenaw National Historical Park**

The Keweenaw National Historical Park commemorates the heritage of copper mining on the Keweenaw Peninsula and its mines, its machinery and its people, using 20 existing Heritage Sites located throughout the Keweenaw Peninsula. The Calumet Visitors Center in the historic Union Building is open to the public year-round and has two floors of fully accessible interpretive exhibits and a bookstore.

### **Pilgrim River Forest Project**

South of Houghton along and between Superior and Paradise Roads is more than 1,300 acres of prime recreational land with trails, a trout stream, and peaceful woods open for public recreation. The Pilgrim River Forest Project (also referred to as the Pilgrim River Conservancy Project) is next to the Pilgrim River Community Forest and located just a few miles away from Houghton. The property includes over three miles of the Pilgrim River, including a good portion of the River's headwaters. In addition to the stretch of Pilgrim River corridor, the project area includes 1,295 acres of prime forestland with varied topography. Most of this land offers public outdoor recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, bird watching, hiking, cross-country skiing, wildlife viewing, and snowshoeing. The project is a result of a partnership between DNR, the Keweenaw Land Trust, private landowners, Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited and several others.

Along with sustainable forest management and public recreational access, the Pilgrim River Forest Project:

- € Ensures habitat for both game and nongame wildlife species, such as black bear, white-tailed deer, bald eagle, fisher, pine marten, mink and otter.
- € Protects an area internationally renowned for serving as a portion of the migratory bird flyway for both migrating raptors and songbirds crossing Lake Superior in the spring and fall.
- € Protects from development 10 percent of the entire Pilgrim River watershed, including the main channel, several tributaries and streams, and wetlands.

The Pilgrim River Forest Project is important to the County because it fulfills a need for more publicly accessible recreation land, especially near areas of relatively high population. For more information visit <http://pilgrimriverwatershed.org>.

### **Pilgrim Community Forest**

The Pilgrim Community Forest was established by the Keweenaw Land Trust in the fall of 2014. The 276-acre forest is just minutes from Houghton and part of the larger Pilgrim River Conservancy Project. This conservation area has a variety of forest and habitat types, with about one mile of the Pilgrim River's main channel and a 2.5-mile recreation trail. The trail system features both loop trails and down-and-back trail types which take advantage of the area's natural contours and rolling elevation changes.



*Pilgrim Community Forest*

Visitors are welcome to hike, bike, snowshoe, or cross-country ski on the single-track trail that leads through the beautiful forests and riparian corridor. The Pilgrim Community Forest is open for fishing, hunting and trapping. Currently the property is accessible near the guard rail on the west side of Paradise Road at the intersection with Pilgrim Road, with a Keweenaw Land Trust trail sign identifying the path.

### **Quincy Mine**

One of the largest tourist draws and historical assets in the Keweenaw, Quincy Mine is located in Franklin Township just north of the City of Hancock. Once known as "Old Reliable" due to its consistent economic profitability, copper mining operations at the Quincy Mine have been closed since 1945. The Quincy Mine properties are owned and operated by the Quincy Mine Hoist Association, and the site is preserved as a cooperating site of the Keweenaw National Historical Park. Visitors can participate in guided tours of the grounds, the Nordberg steam-powered hoist engine and hoist house, a ride on a cog-rail tram car down to the mine entrance, and an underground mine tour. The site also contains a museum and a video-tour of the No. 2 Shaft-Rock House.



*Quincy Mine. Photo courtesy of Keweenaw NHP*

### **Copper Country Trail National Byway**

Copper Country Trail National Byway, first designated as a Michigan State Heritage Route in 1994, joined the America's Byways collection in 2005. Defined by its historic significance, the Byway highlights the triumphs and tragedies associated with copper mining. The 47-mile

stretch of US-41 from Houghton to Copper Harbor follows the copper lode that lies deep underground and is the basis of the Byway's exciting and turbulent history. The Byway has a guiding document, The Corridor Management Plan, which highlights goals, including those for public recreation; objectives; and action items for projects in the Byway corridor.

### **Coppertown USA Mining Museum**

The Coppertown USA Mining Museum hosts a variety of exhibits focusing on the region's copper mining heritage and industry. Located in Calumet, the museum's exhibits have included information on regional minerals, prehistoric mining, the Italian Hall Tragedy, and technology used during mining operations at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The museum includes a gift shop with a large selection of copper specimens and minerals. The museum opens for the season in June and closes in mid-October.

### **Trail Networks**

Throughout the region is a network of dedicated snowmobile/off-road vehicle (ORV) and multipurpose trails. Official long-distance trails that traverse multiple jurisdictions include the Bill Nichols Trail from Greenland (Ontonagon County) to Houghton; the Bergland (Ontonagon County) – Sidnaw ORV Route; the Ottawa East Connector ORV Route; the Lake Linden Route from Hancock to Lake Linden to Calumet, and the Jack Stevens Trail from Hancock to Calumet. The North Country Trail, designed exclusively for hiking, crosses east – west in the southern part of the county. Many local trails are also officially and permanently established.

In the summer of 2018, a series of severe rain events washed out several local trail systems in Houghton County. **Appendix B** provides a series of maps identifying DNR trails closed due to the flooding. Trails closed include: the Freda Grade Route running from south of Houghton to Freda; the Bill Nicholl's Route running south of Houghton to Obenhoff Road (for ORV use); the Lake Linden Route east of Ripley to Normand Road in Lake Linden. The Jack Stevens Route from Hancock to Calumet was also damaged but reroutes allowed the trail to remain open. Finally, the non-motorized trail from Chassell to Houghton was also washed out. Given the extent of the damage and the short construction season, much of the repair effort on these trail systems focused on stabilization to mitigate further deterioration and failure.

The remainder of the trail system exists mainly on year-to-year easements granted by private landowners and is in danger of becoming fragmented, jeopardizing access to many popular forms of recreation. The Houghton-Keweenaw Recreation Authority was established in 2012 to address these issues and to develop a multi-use trail system that connects the region's populated areas and trail amenities.

### **Regional Facilities**

Southern Houghton County contains large tracts of the Ottawa National Forest, a nearly one million-acre United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service landholding providing a vast area primarily for dispersed and unorganized outdoor recreation. However, facilities for camping, fishing, boating, trails, and other popular recreational activities are also available. Similar opportunities are provided in a smaller area of State-owned public land to the north, designated as the Copper Country State Forest, focused primarily on Elm River Township. Forest Service and State land are shown along with the trails in **Figure 4**.

Outside of Houghton County are numerous facilities that allow for a variety of recreational pursuits—most notably the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness and Fort Wilkins State Park. The Western Upper Peninsula also has countless sites offering passive recreational opportunities, including Isle Royale National Park, museums, mine tours, and scenic drives.



Figure 4: Regional recreation facilities

## Part 4: Goals and Objectives

The overarching goal of Houghton County is to promote an affordable and achievable capital improvement program for the County that will accommodate increasing use and enhance user satisfaction with County facilities. Houghton County has many recreational opportunities offered by a diverse group of providers (County, townships, municipalities, schools, and private entities) as identified in the inventory. In addition, the County will remain open to acquisition of new recreational sites as they become available. This Recreation Plan focuses on County-owned facilities and their place as a recreation provider within Houghton County. Houghton County has devised the following goals as ways to best capitalize on these facilities:

- Provide recreation facilities, programs, and opportunities to satisfy recreational desires and promote healthy lifestyles for residents and visitors
- Continue to pursue all viable financial opportunities to expand and update current recreation facilities in accordance with changing user preferences
- Provide access to recreation facilities for persons with disabilities
- Promote fiscal self-sufficiency through user fees where appropriate
- Actively seek public involvement from as many user groups as possible in planning any new County recreation facilities or projects

The following goals apply to other recreational assets in which the County may play a role:

- Seek to expand and maintain the county-wide motorized and non-motorized trail network for the long term, assisting with conflict resolution between user groups whenever possible
- Promote bicycling and walking as recreational activities and as means to commute, being mindful of safety concerns related to automobile traffic and actively supporting “complete streets” concepts and policies
- Seek to increase public access to land and access to water bodies for recreational activities
- Maintain certain areas in a relatively wild, undisturbed or minimally regulated state to allow for passive and unorganized activities and “quiet sports”
- Maintain the integrity of ecosystems and the environment wherever public access is currently provided or newly expanded
- Promote carefully controlled timber management where it occurs in close quarters with recreational activities to benefit forestry and public recreation

- Balance the interests of visitors and residents in considering recreation assets and future opportunities, recognizing the potential economic benefits of recreation development
- Foster and facilitate private-public partnerships to accomplish the above goals



*High-performance outdoor recreation during the Clean Snowmobile Challenge at Michigan Technological University.  
Photo courtesy of Michigan Technological University*

## Part 5: Basis for Action Program

The County has determined that an ongoing need exists to upgrade the Houghton County Marina. Expansion of the marina would include updating facilities using universal accessibility design principles to eliminate barriers for individuals with mobility challenges. Upgrades are needed for the restroom and shower area, boat/pier access, walkways, and picnicking facilities. Survey results also indicate a community support for additional paddle craft facilities. These can include canoe/kayak launches as well as storage facilities (e.g. watercraft racks) to help promote day use of the facilities for tourists. Incorporates green infrastructure reduce maintenance needs and stormwater runoff has also been prioritized after the flood events of 2018.

The County Arena needs improvements to provide a barrier-free environment through increased handicapped accessibility, specifically install an elevator for second floor access. Despite its heavy use during the winter months, the managing entity is seeking alternative revenue opportunities during the off-peak season. The community survey has identified a lack of indoor recreation opportunities as an unmet need, and the arena could be used for this during non-winter months.

The County has significant issues with interconnectivity and permanence of trail and pathway routes, both motorized and non-motorized. The following needs have accordingly been identified:

- Repair existing trail networks damaged by 2018 flood event
- Establish new pathways following existing roadway routes within and between population centers in order to make commuting and recreation less dangerous
- Completely connect all compatible long-distance trails by securing permanent easements
- Merge tourist/historic “trails” (generalized travel routes) with recreational trails, particularly in order to connect the two units of Keweenaw National Historical Park and sites along the Copper Country Trail National Byway
- Connect cities, villages, and townships through the Keweenaw region by connecting other existing trails with a priority given to non-motorized trail use.
- Educate users by creating and distributing an up-to-date regional map showing trail locations and types



## Part 6: Action Program

Recreation priorities were identified according to the current and projected needs of Houghton County and are addressed in the following five-year action plan (capital improvements plan).

**Table 23:** Five-Year Action Plan

Year	Project	Estimated Cost	Possible Funding Source (See Table 24)
2019	Indoor Recreation Feasibility Study	\$20,000	75% DNR; 25% local match
<p><b>Basis:</b> Indoor recreation options continues to be a need in Houghton County specifically during winter and among families with young kids and for seniors. To construct a community center, a feasibility study is needed to flush out the needs of the community and what that center would entail.</p>			
2019	Houghton County Marina Master Plan Update	\$30,000	DNR; Local Match from County/Others
<p><b>Basis:</b> The County’s current Marina Master Plan was completed in 2007 and contains several recommendations for investment that are now out of date. An updated plan will help to identify need for additional capital improvements.</p>			
2020	Houghton County Marina Accessibility Upgrades	\$150,000	75% DNR/ 25% County/Other
<p><b>Basis:</b> Currently, the marina facilities have a few accessibility challenges that need to be mitigated to allow individuals with mobility challenges to fully utilize this asset. The Marina restroom facilities, picnic area, and walkways should be updated at this time for ADA compliance.</p>			
2020	Soccer Field Complex Expansion: Site Selection	\$60,000	DNR; Local Match from County/Others
<p><b>Basis:</b> Soccer is a rapidly growing youth team sport in Houghton County and has been identified as a top 10 priority for a significant amount of the population. Current field options are at max capacity and often wait-listed during peak season. By considering and selecting alternative sites where games can be played, the County can meet the needs of a growing form of recreation in the Western Upper Peninsula.</p>			
2021	Loop Trail Connecting Cultural and Historic Sites (Copper Country Heritage Trail)	TBD	DNR (various grants); Public Lands Highway Discretionary Program (FHWA); Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks (FTA)
<p><b>Basis:</b> The Keweenaw National Historical Park (KNHP) and Copper Country Trail National Byway (CCTNB) offer an opportunity to link historic and cultural assets for both motorized and non-motorized off-road recreational and commuter use. This will require securing of connectivity (easements and/or acquisition) and improvement of infrastructure (construction) for a complete loop trail connecting the KNHP units and sites along the CCTNB (see Appendix B for a map of a proposed trail route). This will require coordination and cooperation of multiple local units of</p>			

Year	Project	Estimated Cost	Possible Funding Source (See Table 24)
government and user groups throughout the Keweenaw region. (FHWA = Federal Highway Administration; FTA = Federal Transit Administration)			
2021	Houghton County Marina Paddle Craft Launch	\$30,000	75% DNR/ 25% County/Other
<b>Basis:</b> According to the public survey, a considerable population would like to see increase access to paddle craft facilities. In addition, as community members age, universally accessible boating facilities is becoming a high priority. Expansion of the marina could meet that need by constructing an ADA-compliant paddle craft launch.			
2022	Houghton County Arena Updates	\$150,000	75% DNR/25% local match
<b>Basis:</b> Building on the work done through the previous recreation plan, the Arena now needs to install elevator access to the second floor, an ADA compliant restroom on the second floor, and install a new scoreboard			
2023	Soccer Field Development	TBD	DNR (various grants); local funds; TBD
<b>Basis:</b> Once the site selection has been executed, the location must be prepped for sod installation, equipment purchased, and proper drainage considered.			

It is the intention of the Houghton County Board of Commissioners to review and amend this plan and implementation schedule as needed to support local efforts in recreational programming.

**Table 24:** Possible project funding sources

<b>Description</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>Source</b>
Local Funds	N/A	County
Community Foundation/Other (local service organizations and businesses)	N/A	Local
Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) (\$15,000-300,000 grant for development projects)	25%	DNR
Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) (\$30,000-300,000 grant)	50%	DNR
Boating Infrastructure Grants (BIG) (Tier 1 funding up to \$200,000)	25%	DNR
Waterways Program Grants	50%	DNR
Recreation Passport Grants (\$7,500-150,000 in 2018)	25%	DNR
Off-Road Vehicle Trail Improvement Program	N/A	DNR
Snowmobile Trail Improvement Program	N/A	DNR
Recreational Trails Program	N/A	DNR
Law Enforcement Grants (Marine Safety, ORV, Snowmobile)	N/A	DNR
Coastal Zone Management (CZM) (\$10,000-\$100,000)	50%	DEQ
Miscellaneous Grants	N/A	Unknown

## Part 7: Description of Planning Process

In order to develop the County's recreation plan, a recreation committee was formed in the spring of 2018. The committee consisted of: Evan McDonald (Chair), Guy St. Germain, John Arnold, Joe Shannon, and Bruce Peterson. The Board contracted with the Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region (WUPPDR) to work with the committee in developing the plan. The committee met on May 25, 2018 to review the County's previous recreation plan and to discuss the required DNR recreation planning process. During the meeting, the committee determined that conducting a community survey would be the best means to establish recreation goals for the plan and to identify project ideas.

On June 12th, the committee reconvened to meet with representatives of the Portage Lake Multi-Education Services (PLMES) to determine the needs of the Houghton County Arena and review projects completed for the arena since the previous recreation plan. The committee met again on July 24th with representatives from the Portage Health Foundation to learn about the impact of the June floods on recreation assets within the county.

The Houghton County Community Recreation Survey was launched on August 17, 2018 to identify recreation goals and projects concepts for the creation plan (see **Appendix D** for a copy of the survey). The survey was implemented online using the survey host Survey Monkey with paper copies available at the County Courthouse. Most of the survey questions focused on identifying popular recreation activities and rating the importance of potential recreation projects and goals. Other questions focused on the impact of the summer floods on recreational activities during the summer. A press release (**Appendix E**) regarding the survey's availability was sent to local media. Online, the survey was publicized through the WUPPDR Facebook account and via email to several recreation groups and community organizations operating in Houghton County. The survey period closed on September 25th, 2018. Nearly 600 responses were received; however, approximately 472 individuals completed the survey. No responses were received to the print version. The full survey, results, highlights, and notable comments can be found in **Appendix F**.

On November 15th the committee met to discuss the outcome of the survey and incorporate public desires into the plan's action plan section, and the plan's goals and objectives were finalized. The plan was released for public review on December 15th (See **Appendix G** for public notice which also included the announcement of the public hearing for comment on the draft recreation plan). The formal review and comment period extended from December 14th, 2018 until January 14th, 2019, during which time the draft could be reviewed at the Houghton

County Courthouse as well as online at the WUPPDR website. **Appendix H** provides a list of comments received.

A public hearing was held on January 15th, 2019 to receive public comment on the draft recreation plan. **Appendix I** provides a copy of the agenda and minutes. Additional time was requested to allow for public comment and review by the County Board of Commissioners. The public comment period was extended to January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to accommodate the request. The 2019-2023 Houghton County Recreation Plan was adopted on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019 by the Board of Commissioners during a special session. The County Board agenda, minutes and resolution of adoption are included in **Appendix J**.

## Appendix

**Appendix A:** Houghton County Marina Site Plan Maps

**Appendix B:** DNR Recreation Trail Closings

**Appendix C:** Proposed Copper Country Heritage Trail

**Appendix D:** 2018 Houghton County Recreation Survey

**Appendix E:** Press Release for 2018 Houghton County Recreation Survey

**Appendix F:** Houghton County Recreation Survey Results

**Appendix G:** Public Review and Public Hearing Notification and Affidavit of Publication

**Appendix H:** Written Comments Received During Public Comment Period

**Appendix I:** Agenda and Minutes from Public Hearing

**Appendix J:** Agenda, Minutes, and Adoption Resolution