

Course Description & Trail Maps

Written by Dave Pramann

Monday, 11 October 2010 09:38 - Last Updated Sunday, 24 December 2017 15:30



[Arrowhead State Trail Map](#)

[Arrowhead Ultra spectator map](#) be advised, not everything on earth depicted and you are using at your own risk, we are so lucky a nice race friend made these!

[Arrowhead Ultra in-depth trail map \(large file\)](#) be advised, not everything on earth depicted and you are using at your own risk, we are so lucky a nice racer made these! and 3rd/final checkpoint is not at Crescent this year but at maybe mile 110 about 1.5 miles before Mt.

Wakemup

at junction with

Winnefred

Rd.

[Arrowhead Course Description \(GPX file\)](#) . For you GPS Exchange format newbies (like me), I downloaded and imported this GPX file into my Google Maps whilst on my laptop. This map is now available in the Google Maps app of my phone. My guess is there are many other applications that can read this file.

To read this GPX file into Google Maps on a computer browser:

- Download this GPX file to your computer.
- Go to <http://google.com/maps> . You'll need a Google account (not Gmail) account to share this on your mobile device.
- In the little menu in the upper right, click Your Places, then Maps in the toolbar, then Create at the bottom.
- Import the GPX file and name it accordingly.
- It will then be available on the Google Maps app on your mobile device (assuming you've logged into your Google account on the Maps app).

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The 135 mile Arrowhead State Trail is a multipurpose, snowmobile, ski, hiking, mountain biking, sled dog, horseback riding and ATV trail extending from International Falls, MN to the intersection with the Hwy 77 on Lake Vermillion (near Tower). The natural surface trail is used primarily for snowmobiling. For the most part, it follows parallel to U.S. Highway 53. The trail is wide, well groomed and extremely well marked at every intersection with brown State trail signs. It crosses many roads and ski trails near International Falls and again south of the town of Orr.

Approximately 69 miles of the trail are suitable for horseback riding, mountain biking and hiking in the summer, however there may be wet areas. The trail is relatively flat between International Falls and the Ash River. This northern portion of the trail goes through a number of areas that have standing water in the summer which makes this section of the trail mostly suited to winter use. In the winter, you may see moose or wolf tracks on the trail, as well as other wildlife such as deer, lynx, fox and snowshoe hare. There are few cross roads on this section of the trail. After about travelling about 7 miles you will encounter the first trailside shelter. After that, a shelter will be about every 12 miles with longest between shelters of 23 miles. (See the [above pdf map](#)).

The southern part of the Arrowhead is very different from the northern part. It features rugged, rolling hills with numerous lakes and streams. At about midway (about mile 69), northeast of the town of Orr, the racers may follow signs pointing to a shortcut across Elephant Lake on the snowmobile trail to the checkpoint at [MelGeorge's Elephant Lake Resort](#), located about 14 miles northeast of Orr on the South side of the lake, off Highway 180.

Many of the hills south of Orr have large areas of exposed rock and enormous boulders, leftovers of mountain ranges worn down by glacial erosion. The areas of bedrock formation known as the Canadian Shield have some of the oldest volcanic rock on earth. There are scenic vistas overlooking the lakes and old iron ore mines. This part of the trail is rugged and heavily timbered with a mix of hardwoods and conifers. There are snowy owl, osprey and bald eagle nests along the trail.

The typical winter weather in this part of Minnesota is frigid with subzero temperatures, even dipping to (minus) -60 degrees Fahrenheit in Tower; however, be ready for anything as an early thaw is always possible. Proper winter camping gear is critical. Nine trail waysides offering camping shelters, fire pits and sanitation facilities are located along the trail. There are many camping resorts near the lakes around Orr.

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The course finishes near Lake Vermillion where the Arrowhead Trail turns left and intersects at Highway 77.