

STATE ❖ TRAILS

In an emergency call 911

Law Enforcement

State Patrol
 Itasca County Sheriff
 Koochiching County Sheriff 218-283-4416
 St. Louis County Sheriff (Virginia) 218-749-7134
 (Hibbing) 218-262-0132
 *Evenings and weekends 218-749-6010

Area Police Departments

Ely
 Tower
 Virginia
 Grand Rapids

Medical/Hospitals

Ely
 Virginia
 Hibbing
 Grand Rapids

❖ OTHER INFO

The Taconite and Arrowhead State Trails were authorized by the Minnesota Legislature in 1974-5. These long-distance trails were developed primarily for winter use. As a result, sections of these trails may be impassible during warm weather months when the ground is not frozen, due to wet soils and standing water. Mountain bikers and horseback riders are urged to call the nearest Trails and Waterways Area office before leaving for their destination to inquire about local trail conditions and amenities.

PARKING AVAILABLE

At Taconite:

- McCarthy Beach State Park
- Minnesota Hwy 73
- U.S. Hwy 53
- Minnesota Hwy 1
- Minnesota Hwy 169, Peyla
- Minnesota Hwy 135, Tower

At Arrowhead:

- 2 Mi. West of Hwy 169 on Hwy 1

CAMPING AVAILABLE: (Taconite only)

- McCarthy Beach State Park
- Pfeifer Lake, National Forest
- Bear Head Lake State Park
- Several rustic campsites along trail

*All communities along the Taconite and Arrowhead trails have food, fuel, lodging and retail areas available to campers.

TACONITE COMMUNITIES:

- Grand Rapids
- Tower
- Ely
- Side Lake

ARROWHEAD COMMUNITIES:

- Tower
- Cook
- Orr
- International Falls

❖ NATURAL FEATURES

THE ARROWHEAD TRAIL is relatively flat between International Falls and the Ash River. The higher ground is mainly forested with aspen; lower ground has a mix of spruce and ash. The trail goes through a number of areas that have standing water in the summer which makes these portions of the trail mostly suited to winter use.

The southern part of the Arrowhead is very different from the northern part. It features rolling hills with numerous lakes and streams. Many of the hills have large areas of exposed rock and enormous boulders. This part is heavily timbered with a mix of hardwoods and conifers.

This mix of trees on the Arrowhead is spectacularly colorful in autumn.

The trail user may see a ridge of solid white pine changing to a ravine of mixed hardwoods, then a ridge of aspen, birch and basswood blended with maples.

THE TACONITE TRAIL winds through forests of birch and aspen intertwined with pine, leading the visitor by many isolated lakes and streams. From Grand Rapids heading north, you see the impact of the taconite and iron mining industry. Between McCarthy Beach State Park and Ely the terrain is rolling and tree covered as it winds through state and national forest land.

The trail links three state parks: Bear Head Lake, Soudan Underground Mine and McCarthy Beach. The landscape in and around Bear Head Lake State Park resembles the BWCAW. The park's land is very rolling and rocky, elevations ranging from 1,450 feet up to 1,590 feet.

Soudan Underground Mine State Park is located on a rugged ridge and contains the historic Soudan underground mine. It is Minnesota's only underground iron ore mine open to the public. Tours descend 27 levels to the bottom of the mine, where there is a constant year-round temperature of 52 degrees. The park also contains picturesque stands of old-growth white and norway pines mixed with balsam fir and aspen. The lower elevations are dominated by white cedar interspersed with balsam fir, tamarack, black spruce, ash and muskeg.

Native northern Minnesota wildlife is abundant along both trails. Some species to watch for are moose, timber wolf, brush wolf, white-tailed deer, black bear, lynx, porcupine, red fox, snowshoe hare, fisher, pine marten and red squirrel.

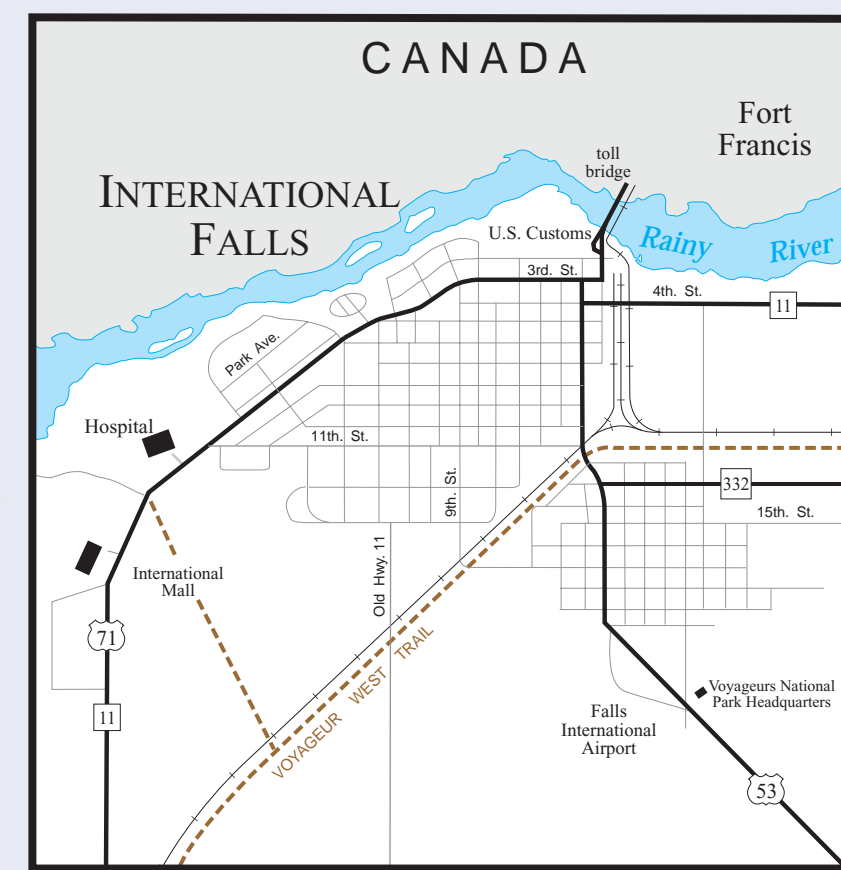
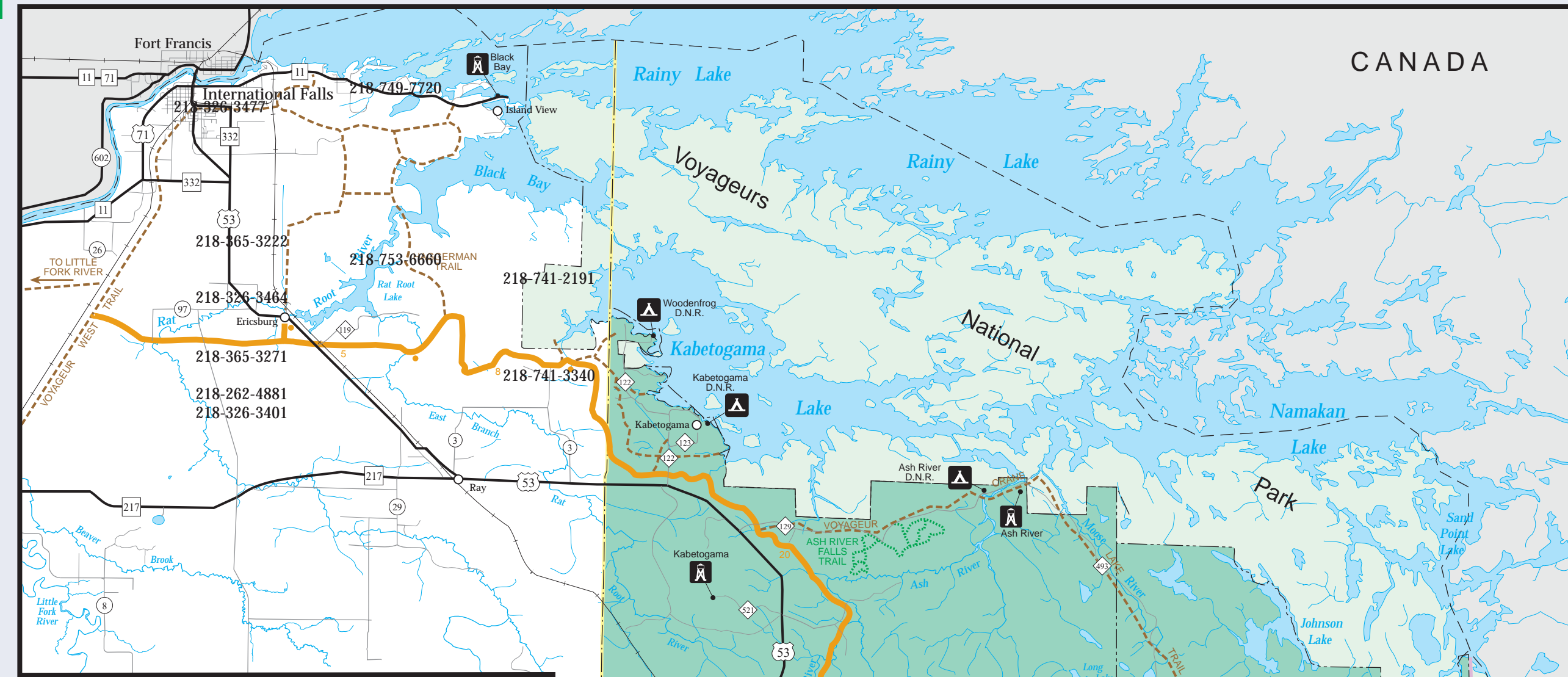
Over 100 varieties of birds live in the area. Some birds, like the grosbeaks, nuthatches, chickadees and pileated woodpeckers, inhabit the area year-round. Birds like the snow bunting and snowy owl migrate south from the arctic for the winter; the bald eagle, osprey, warblers and fly catchers migrate north to this area for the summer.

A variety of game fish including walleye, northern pike, trout and smallmouth bass are found in the area's large numbers of lakes and rivers. The landscape of the area is a result of the under-lying geology. The area's bedrock formation known as the Canadian Shield is some of the oldest rock on earth. It was formed by volcanic action approximately 2.7 billion years ago. Later, ancient seas laid down the valuable iron ore that is still mined in the area today. Further volcanic activity swept away the sea and formed two mountain ranges. The advancing and receding of glaciers, and millions of years of erosion have worn the mountains down, resulting in the present rugged landscape found along some parts of the trail.

The Arrowhead and Taconite State Trails provide a great opportunity to explore this area. To preserve this opportunity for the future, please respect the area's plant and wildlife communities.



NOTE:
 Some private lands exist within the shaded areas for State & National Forest lands, and State Parks land. Please be aware of your surroundings.



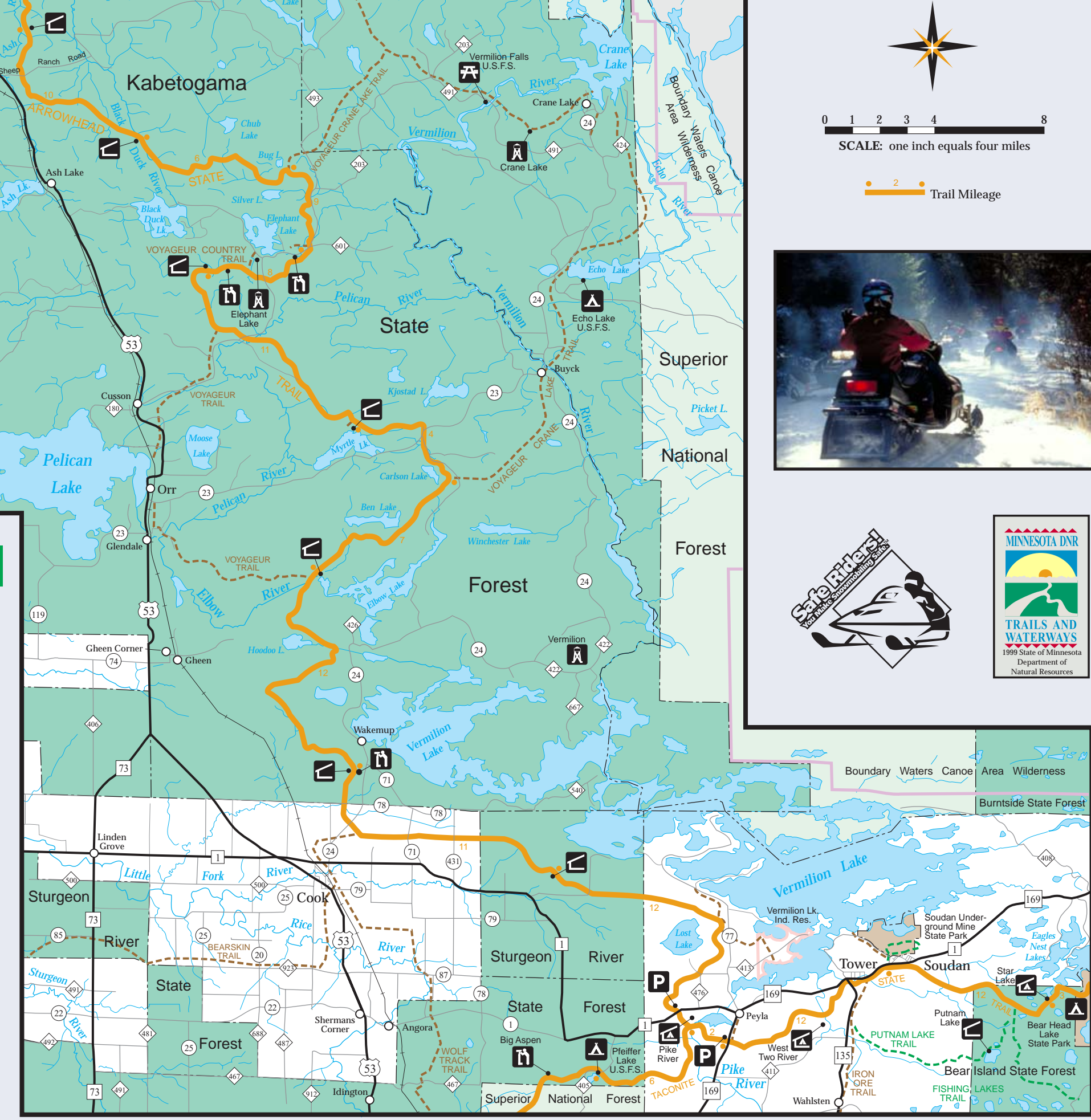
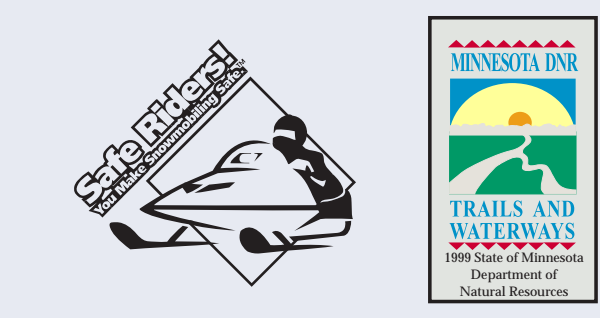
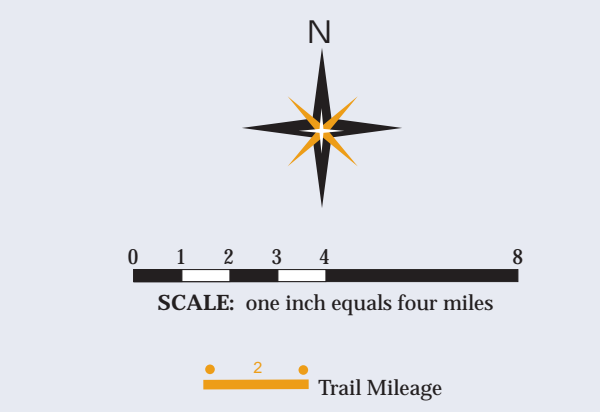
MAP EXPLANATION

TRAILS & THEIR PERMITTED USES

- Arrowhead State Trail**
- State Forest & Park Trail**
- State Forest Ski Trails**
- Grant-in-Aid Trails**

TRAIL SYMBOLS

- Snowmobile
- X-Country Ski
- Hiking
- Shelter/Campsite
- Fire Tower
- Parking
- Campground
- Shelter
- Picnic Area
- Vista



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