Portage Trail Outfitters and Resort

**Home**

Welcome to Portage Trail Outfitters, nestled on the pristine banks of Ensign Lake, part of northern Minnesota’s world famous Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW). At Portage Trail Outfitters, we pride ourselves on catering to your idea of an outdoor wilderness experience. Whether your sense of the great outdoors is a luxurious private cabin, or a bunkhouse to crash in before a peaceful and secluded trip into the wild, we can help you out.

In addition to various lodging options, Portage Trail Outfitters offers full service outfitting and guide services for your wilderness trip. Do you have the majority of your own gear, but forgot something? No problem, you can rent equipment à la cart.

At Portage Trail Outfitters, keep your eyes open for a rare moose sighting, ears open for the soothing evening song of the Minnesota loon, and your heart open for one of the most memorable experiences of your life.

Enjoy your stay!

**Outfitting Packages**

Save the stress and let us get the gear together for you. Portage Trail Outfitters offers only the most reliable and lightest weight gear. All packages are designed for two paddlers. For a solo trip outfitting prices or a custom quote please contact us. Portage Trail Outfitters is also proud to offer fully guided trips. Take advantage of our wilderness experience and vast knowledge of the areas scenic beauty and wildlife hotspots.

**The Minimalist Package- $100/night**

Nothing fancy here, just the basics to get you and your partner through the week:

\*2 Lightweight Sleeping bags

\*2-person tent

\*2-person Camp kitchen

\*14 dehydrated meals (two servings each)

\*Water filter

\*17’ Kevlar canoe for lightweight portaging

\*3 paddles

\*2 life vests

\*2 Duluth Packs

**The Leave No Trace Package - $150/night**

Items in the Minimalist Package plus:

\*7 days of fresh coffee

\*2 lightweight camp pillows

\*1 Windproof butane lighter

\*2 self-inflating mattress pads

\*2 ultra light fishing rods

\*A variety of lead (and pollution) free fishing tackle

**The Wilderness Act Package - $225/night**

All items in both the Minimalist and the Leave No Trace plus:

\*1 satellite phone for emergencies

\*1 first aid kit

\*2 emergency survival kits

\*2 mosquito head nets

\*2 lightweight rain suits

\*1 2-in-1 hatchet/saw combo

\*1 biodegradable toiletries kit (toilet paper, shampoo, toothpaste, sunscreen, bug spray)

\*2 8-oz steaks for your first night

\*6 farm-fresh eggs for your first morning

\*1 bear proof food container

Interested in outfitting yourself? Download our suggested packing list for a weeklong stay in the wilderness. Feel free to use the list to help prepare for your trip, or to order any items that you may be missing. Items with an asterisk can be rented individually for ala cart pricing. Please email any needs to info@portagetrailoutfitters.com for a custom quote.

**Lodging**

**Bunkhouse (3 available)**

For the adventurous. Used primarily as a landing spot before heading into the BWCAW.

\*Sleeps 6

\*3 sets of bunk beds

\*$60 per night

\*Includes blankets, pillows, sheets, and an occasional spider.

\*Access to a community kitchen/rec area to fry up the catch of the day or to play some cards.

**Small cabins (4 available)**

Our most popular option, these cabins give you a taste of the great outdoors while offering comfort, ample space, and a private dining area.

\*Sleeps up to 8

\*$150/night or $900/week

\*Free Wi-Fi

\*Private kitchen/dining area

\*Loft area for sleeping with two queen beds and two sets of bunk beds.

\*Fish cleaning services

\*50 inch LED smart TV

**Luxury Cabins (2 available)**

Sleeps 8

$250/night

Two master suites, each with king beds and private baths

2 Hideaway beds in living room

Private Hot tub area

Fully stocked beverage cooler

**History of the BWCAW**

**wilderness**

[wil-der-nis]

noun

1. a wild and uncultivated region, as of forest or desert, uninhabited or inhabited only by wild animals; a tract of wasteland.

2. a tract of land officially designated as such and protected by the U.S. government.

3. any desolate tract, as of open sea.

Within it’s designated 1 million plus acres, the BWCAW contains over a thousand lakes and attracts visitors with its reputation for canoeing, canoe touring, fishing, backpacking, dog sledding, and remote wilderness character. The BWCAW has nearly 2,200 backcountry campsites and is one of Minnesota's top tourist attractions, drawing visitors from all over the United States as well as abroad.

The Boundary Waters area contains both the boreal forest (taiga) and a mixed conifer-hardwood forest known as the North Woods, which is a transition province between the northern boreal forest and deciduous forests to the south.The ranges of the plants and animals continue north into southern Canada and south into the rest of the upper Great Lakes region. Trees found within the wilderness area include conifers such as red pine, eastern white pine, jack pine, balsam fir, white spruce, black spruce, and white-cedar, as well as deciduous birch, aspen, ash, and maple. Blueberries are common in many parts of the BWCAW, as are raspberries. The BWCAW is estimated to contain some 400,000 acres (1,600 km2) of old growth forest, woods which may have burned but which have never been logged.Forest fires were a natural part of the Boundary Waters ecosystem before fire suppression efforts during the 20th century, with recurrence intervals of 30 – 300 years in most areas.

On July 4, 1999, a powerful wind storm, or derecho, swept across Minnesota and southern Canada, knocking down millions of trees and affecting about 370,000 acres (1,500 km2) within the BWCAW. This event became known officially as the Boundary Waters-Canadian Derecho, commonly referred to as "the Boundary Waters blowdown". Although campsites and portages were quickly cleared after the storm, an increased risk of wildfire continues to remain a concern due to the large number of downed trees.The U.S. Forest Service has undertaken a schedule of prescribed burns to reduce the forest fuel load in the event of a wildfire.

**BWCAW Tips**

We are continually adding more tried-and-true tips to our list. If you have anything to share, please email them to info@portagetrailoutfitters.com

1) Boil your water! – Gary F. from Milwaukee.

2) Always wear a life jacket - Billy K. from Madison.

3) Bring plenty of food – Sally W. from Los Angeles.

4) Camp with the people you get along with – Steph from Ontario.

5) Bring a current map – Bailey C. from Flint.

**Contact**

Contact Information

Portage Trail Outfitters

N6745 West Wilderness Way

Ely, MN 55731

(555) 890-4621

info@portagetrailoutfitters.com

Peak Season Office Hours

Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend

8 AM – 8PM, 7 days a week

Rest of the year

M–F, 10 AM – 4 PM

Saturday and Sunday by appointment

Of course you can always find us on social media. Check us out on Facebook, twitter, and Flickr.

**Area Attractions**

Located 8 miles northeast of Ely, MN there are a variety of activities only a short drive away.

International Wolf Center ( link to <http://www.wolf.org/>)

Did you know that red wolves are larger than coyotes and smaller than gray wolves or that red wolf packs are generally smaller than gray wolf packs? Find out much more about these interesting and intelligent species at the International Wolf Center.

North American Bear Center (link to http://www.bear.org/website/)

Wolve’s not you thing? Visit the North American Bear Center to find out why male bears can lose over 100lbs over the winter months, and to see bears live in captivity.

Dorothy Molter Museum (link to http://rootbeerlady.com/)

Known as the Root Beer Lady, take a guided tour of the home of the last resident of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Widerness. Find out why she was a beloved host to countless travelers prior to 1987.

**Gear for sale**

At Portage Trail Outfitters, we pride ourselves on keeping high quality, up to date gear available to our visitors. Because of this, we cycle our gear out every three years to make room for new items. Below you can find a current list of gently used items available for purchase.

\*Camp Stove

\*Water Filters

\*Hatchet

\*Saw

\*Tent

\*Compass

\*Sleeping Bag

\*Flashlight

\*Kevlar canoe