

Canoeing Wilderness and the Gunflint Trail

Contributed by Administrator
Monday, 21 July 2008
Last Updated Monday, 21 July 2008

The huge Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness , west of Grand Marais, is also accessible from Tofte and especially from easygoing Ely , home of the intriguing International Wolf Center (May-Oct daily 9am-5pm; Nov-April Fri-Sun 10am-5pm; \$5.50). The wilderness is a paradise for canoeing, backpacking and fishing. Overland trails or "portages" link more than a thousand lakes; in winter you can ski and dogsled cross-country. The unpaved sixty-mile Gunflint Trail from Grand Marais cuts the wilderness in two; otherwise there are no roads in this outback, let alone electricity or telephones. Most lakes remain motor-free. Stringent rules limit entry to the wilderness. In summer you need a date-specific permit (\$10 reservation fee and a \$20 deposit; tel 1-800/745-3399, 1-877/550-6777 or 218/365-7561 or 7562), which local outfitters can issue. For those who don't want to rough it, several rustic lodges lie strung out along the trail. The Gunflint Trail Association can offer good advice at 1-800/338-6932 or 218/387-2870, .