

## Directions

The Chippewa Flowage is located in central Sawyer County in northwestern Wisconsin.

Access from the south is via either State Highway 27 & 70 to County Highway CC or from the north via County Highway B and CC.

Access points are located off County Highway CC in the central portion of the property, County Highway B on the north or via County Highway G to Dam Road on the southeast side.

The property office is located on Highway 27 at the DNR Service Center in Hayward.

## Information

For additional information about the Chippewa Flowage, contact:

### DNR Service Center

10220 State Rd 27  
Hayward, WI 54843  
(715) 634-7433

### Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest

USDA Forest Service  
604 Nyman Ave  
Hayward, WI 54843  
(715) 634-4821

### Lac Courte Oreilles Conservation Department

13394 W. Trepania Rd.  
Hayward, WI 54843  
(715) 634-0102

**Additional information about the Chippewa Flowage may be obtained by visiting the following websites:**

<http://www.CFLA.us> or <http://www.Chippewaflowage.com>

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Lands/chippewaflow/>

<http://www.cfapoa.org>

## Emergencies: Dial 911

**Sawyer County Sheriff Department**

**Non-emergency number: (715) 634-5213**

Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources' Violation Hotline program provides Wisconsin citizens with the opportunity to confidentially report suspected wildlife, recreational, and environmental violations using a toll free number: 1-800-TIP-WDNR (1-800-847-9367)

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, audio tape, etc) upon request. Please call 608-267-7490 for more information.

# The Chippewa Flowage



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## Introduction

The Chippewa Flowage, a 15,300-acre impoundment, is located in central Sawyer County, 15 miles east of Hayward. First filled in 1924, the "Big Chip" was created as a means to augment downstream water flow for power generation and flood control. Dotted with approximately 200 undeveloped islands, it is Wisconsin's third-largest lake and boasts a highly irregular, wooded and generally undeveloped 233-mile shoreline. Although Xcel Energy still owns and maintains the dam that creates the Chippewa Flowage, the Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) Band of Lake Superior Chippewa operates an electrical power generation facility at the dam on the Chippewa River near Winter, Wisconsin.

For decades, the Flowage has been highly regarded throughout the Midwest for its spectacular natural scenery and high-quality recreation, especially fishing. Historically, the Chippewa Flowage has been considered a premier muskellunge lake and earned the reputation as the waters that produced the world record musky. It also provides some of the finest walleye fishing in Wisconsin.

The Flowage offers a fishing experience generally found only on lakes farther north in Minnesota or Canada. Its seemingly endless maze of islands, points, bays, floating bogs and channels offers visitors numerous opportunities for exploration, discovery and a feeling of wildness within the northern forest landscape. Camping at one of the primitive island campsites is an opportunity not common in Wisconsin. Visitors rate the natural scenery, undeveloped "wild" character, "uncrowded" atmosphere and the fine fishing as the Flowage's outstanding attributes.

The local topography is a mosaic of rolling hills, valleys, streams and bogs that reflect the glacial origin of the landscape. The Flowage's shorelands are generally forested with a mixture of aspen, birch, pine, northern hardwoods and oak. Mature aspen forests predominate but in many places, longer-lived hardwoods and conifers are gradually replacing them. Almost all birds and animals that are indigenous to northern Wisconsin are found within the area and include bald eagle, osprey and loon. Wildlife viewing opportunities enhance the attractiveness of the Flowage to visitors.

## Partners for the Future

In August of 2000, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USFS) and Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (LCO) formally joined efforts under the guidance of the Chippewa Flowage Joint Agency Management Plan. This plan dedicates the cooperative efforts of these three partners to the long-term management of the Flowage to protect the natural features and to provide uniform regulation. The overall management goal is "to perpetuate the undeveloped shoreline character of the Chippewa Flowage and to manage for compatible resource opportunities."

In 2007, The Hughes Jeffords Chippewa Flowage Conservation Fund was created through a generous donation from Chris and Patricia Jeffords of Couderay, Wisconsin. This permanent endowment will help to provide a perpetual source of support for the preservation, protection and enhancement of the Flowage's lands, waters and wildlife. Administered by the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, the fund will support the various agencies charged with managing the Chippewa Flowage including the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe, and the U.S. Forest Service.

More information on the Natural Resources Foundation and the Hughes Jeffords Chippewa Flowage Conservation fund can be found at: [www.wisconservation.org](http://www.wisconservation.org) or by contacting the Natural Resources foundation at:

Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin  
P.O. Box 2317  
Madison, WI 53701  
Phone: (608) 264-4096



## Management

The islands and surrounding shorelands on the Flowage are owned by public, tribal and private landowners. Of the 233 miles of shoreline, the State owns about 50%; remaining land ownership is approximately 30% Tribal, 12% National Forest and 8% privately owned.

To protect the natural character of the lakeshore there are 100- and 200-foot wide shoreline protection zones on approximately half of the Flowage shorelands. Deed restrictions on these lands prevent changes within these zones, including cutting of native vegetation and placement of buildings and signs.

On the islands and mainland shoreline easily visible from the water, vegetation is managed for a natural-appearing landscape. Emphasis is placed on promoting long-lived tree species, big tree character and mature vegetative communities. Management also focuses on providing nesting and brood-rearing areas for endangered, threatened and sensitive species and includes suitable habitat for eagles, osprey, great blue herons and loons.

On backland areas not seen from the water, vegetation is managed for a mosaic of forest stands of different ages to provide a broad range of habitats for a variety of native wildlife and plant species.

Under the plan, protecting the natural aesthetics of the Flowage for the long term is the principal management goal. Under the continued good stewardship of the three partners, the Chippewa Flowage will remain a valuable resource for its visitors and inhabitants.

Visitors must do their part to protect the Flowage by complying with use regulations and by stridently protecting the natural lakeshores that draw people to the Flowage. Visitors also hold an obligation to understand the use regulations and identify whether the lands are publicly owned, tribal or private.

Public access and use regulations differ between DNR, LCO and USFS managed lands. Tribal lands, except for designated public campsites, are not open to the public.

## History of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band

The Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin has been centered on several lakes in the area of the headwaters of the Chippewa River since the mid-eighteenth century. The name comes from a large lake on the reservation's western boundary. Although the French name, Lac Courte Oreilles, literally translates to "Lake of the Short Ears," the intention of the name is unknown. Regardless of its origin, the name describes a significant Ojibwe tribe, a beautiful lake and the Tribe's "Reserve Tract," or reservation, as established by treaty.

The first permanent trading post was built in 1800 by the North West Fur Trading Company. John Baptiste Corbin became clerk of the post and the area's first permanent white settler. In the years to follow, "the white man" visited the Lac Courte Oreilles in larger numbers; including Henry Schoolcraft, an Indian agent for the Michigan territory, who visited the area in 1831 and would later discover the headwaters of the Mississippi River.

In 1825, 1837 and 1842, many tribes of the Ojibwe Nation entered into sovereign treaties with the United States, ceding vast territories of land and reserving unto themselves significant rights and privileges.

Please respect tribal property, rights and customs.



## Camping



There are 18 primitive island campsites, shown on the map, available for public use. Some are available on a first-come, first-served basis and some are available by making a reservation. Each public campsite is marked with a sign and has a fire ring, picnic table and open-air box latrine. Campers will need to bring or filter water, as there is no potable water available at the campsites. Potable water is available at CC South boat landing.

Camping is allowed in designated campsites only. **YOU MAY NOT ESTABLISH NEW CAMPSITES OR CAMP AT UNDESIGNATED SITES.**

All campsites are accessible by water only. Due to the remoteness of the campsites, it is recommended that campers leave an itinerary with friends or relatives.

Campsites may be closed or relocated to allow the vegetation to recover and/or to protect threatened, endangered or sensitive species and their habitats. Camping is also available at private resorts on the Flowage.

Black bears are occasionally known to visit some campsites on the islands. Do not leave food items on picnic tables or store in tents. Please keep a clean campsite and deposit all garbage in receptacles located at the public boat landings.

## DNR and USFS Campsites

Of the 18 total campsites on the Flowage, eleven are on Wisconsin DNR islands and one is on an island under USFS ownership with the remainder on LCO tribal-owned islands. DNR and USFS campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis. One campsite, Cedar Tops West, has been improved with accessible facilities and can be reserved by persons with disabilities by contacting the Hayward DNR Office: (715) 634-7433. If not being occupied by a reservation, this campsite is also open on a first-come, first-served basis.

## LCO Campsites

Currently the Lac Courte Oreilles Conservation Department provides island camping by reservation and fee on six island campsites. The fee for camping is \$25.00 for 1-2 nights, \$35 for 3-4 nights, and \$50 for 5 nights. The fee is payable to the LCO Conservation Department. The maximum stay at LCO campsites is five nights with an arrival/departure time of 11 am. Reservations may be made by calling (715) 634-0102 starting April 1st.

Tribal islands have great cultural and historical significance to the Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe. The Ojibwe people have great respect for these waters that now cover areas of their tribal homeland and wish for you to share their respect. While camping on these islands please do not cut wood for fires. Even if a tree is dead, it may not be cut for firewood. Each campsite comes with a picnic table, primitive toilet, fire ring and steel grate for cooking. Please practice leave-no-trace camping.

## Chippewa Flowage Island Campsite Rules:

These simple rules are enforced to provide you with a clean, quiet and safe experience on the Chippewa Flowage. Please enjoy your outing on the Flowage!

- Camping is allowed only at designated, signed island campsites. No new campsites may be established.**
- No unattended camping gear may be left to save a campsite overnight. Sites must be occupied the same day that they are set up.**
- Camper maximum stay is 10 days.**
- Please use the pit toilet provided at each campsite.**
- Campsites are to be kept free of litter, rubbish and other flammable materials.**
- Fire Safety: Please burn only paper products and wood in fire pits and extinguish fires completely using water or clean soil. Do not leave fire unattended.**
- All plastic, cans, glass and trash must be carried out and disposed of properly when leaving. Trash receptacles are provided at public landings.**
- Please do not cut, carve or deface trees, tables or benches, or drive nails into trees. Please do not hang lanterns from trees.**
- Chainsaws, generators and fireworks are prohibited.**
- Please be considerate of others. Keep noise to a minimum. Please clean up after your pet. Leave the campsite cleaner than you found it.**

## Trails

There are two miles of hiking and ski trails located on Department of Natural Resources land on the north side of the Flowage which can be accessed via a parking area adjacent to County Highway B between Moss Creek and Hay Creek. No motorized vehicles are allowed on this trail.

## The Fishery



The Chippewa Flowage is renowned not just for its scenic beauty but also as a world class fishery. With over 15,000 acres of water, hundreds of miles of shoreline and countless bays, islands, points and bars the "Chip" offers a fishing experience for anglers of any type.

The flowage is world renowned as a musky fishery and still boasts the Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame record for Louis Spray's 69 lb. fish caught in 1949. Musky remain an important part of the fishery and attract thousands of anglers each year to toss plugs or soak suckers in some of Louis' old haunts. Big fish can be found on the main lake bars, particularly on the east side. Musky fishing heats up in the fall when anglers can try bank fishing from the islands, an old Chippewa Flowage tradition.

Walleye are another angler favorite and a shore lunch staple. The east side of the flowage and the connecting rivers hold good numbers of walleye, particularly early in the season. As you get into summer target sunken bogs, old river channels and deep wood for larger "eyes".

Panfish are a popular target for anglers of all ages. The Chippewa Flowage supports good numbers of both bluegill and crappie with big yellow perch found on occasion. May and June are great times to target crappie and bluegill as they invade the shallow bays to spawn. In the winter, look for panfish to be over deep holes, particularly during drawdown years. Anglers are encouraged to harvest only what they need as panfishing quality can be hurt by too much harvest.

Northern pike are found in high numbers in some parts of the Chippewa Flowage. The weedier, clearer west side is a good bet for anglers targeting pike in both summer and winter. Pike make for an excellent fish fry and keeping their numbers in check is beneficial to the overall health of the fishery.

The Chippewa Flowage holds both largemouth and smallmouth bass. Smallmouth bass are more common on the rock bars and river channels of the east side. Adventurous anglers can even explore the east and west forks of the Chippewa River for smallmouth action. Largemouth are more common on the west side. While a few bigger largemouth are present, as a general rule this species grows slowly in the Chip. Some harvest of smaller largemouth is encouraged while catch and release for smallmouth and big largemouth is common practice.

Anglers should be aware of special size and bag limits as well as season dates for the Chip. Please consult the DNR website, regulations pamphlet or boat landing signs before hitting the water.

## Wildlife



The waters and surrounding lands of the Flowage provide abundant aquatic and terrestrial habitats. A diverse variety of northern forest and aquatic wildlife find food, nest sites and shelter along the many miles of undeveloped mainland and island shoreline.

The state-owned lands on the Chippewa Flowage are open to hunting. Consult Wisconsin hunting regulations for season dates, times and bag limits.

The Flowage provides exceptional nesting habitat for eagles and common loons. Keep your distance from eagle nests and boat slowly around loon nests for large wakes can destroy them. There is a large great blue heron rookery on Banana Island; keep your distance from May through July to prevent disturbance. Mallards, wood ducks and hooded mergansers are common. Ospreys are spotted occasionally. Large numbers of waterfowl use the Flowage during spring and fall migration. Over 130 species of birds have been observed on the Flowage or in the nearby forests. Deer coming down for a drink at the lake, otters popping their heads out of water or a family of raccoons carousing along the shoreline are common sights. Occasionally black bears, fishers and wolves are reported.

Most of the animals found on the Flowage can be observed at close range if they are approached slowly and quietly, especially with a boat. Be particularly careful not to disturb nesting birds or animals with small young.

## Boating

There are six boat access sites that provide public access to the Chippewa Flowage:

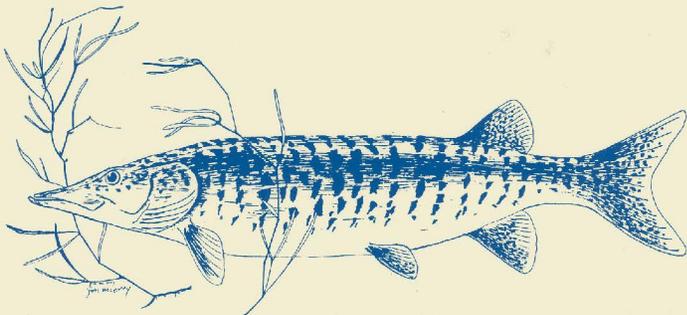
- CC South Landing (DNR) is the largest and offers the most amenities, including a large parking area and toilet facilities and is the only public landing that has drinking water available.
- Winter Dam Landing (DNR) offers a paved parking area and toilets.
- CC North and Hay Creek Landings (both DNR) have large gravel parking areas and offer portable toilet facilities on a seasonal basis.
- Blueberry Flats Landing (Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe) is off County Highway CC across from the intersection with County Highway H. It is a primitive boat landing best suited for small boats.
- Chief Lake Landing (Town of Hayward) is at the end of Chief Lake Road off County NN.



The Chippewa Flowage has an abundance of sand and rock bars, stumps, floating bogs and floating driftwood, which makes for good fish and wildlife habitat but could damage boats. These navigation hazards are not shown on the provided map and it should not be used for navigation. Boaters should be aware of changing conditions on the Flowage, especially fluctuating water levels and should always exercise caution.

Wisconsin Boating Regulations (available from the DNR) are strictly enforced, especially **“speed that is no greater than reasonable or prudent.”** Several slow-no-wake zones are present on the Chippewa Flowage and are identified by slow-no-wake buoys. It is also illegal to operate a motorboat at greater than slow-no-wake speed within 100 feet of the shoreline of all Wisconsin lakes. Slow-no-wake speed means a speed at which a boat moves as slowly as possible while still maintaining steering control.

Visitors to the Chippewa Flowage come to enjoy the quiet beauty and the wild natural surroundings. Please respect the rights of others, heed boating regulations, watch your wake, go slow, keep noise to a minimum and enjoy wildlife from a distance.



## Snowmobiles and ATVs

There are a number of snowmobile trails on public and private lands near the Flowage, some trails cross the Flowage on the ice. Snowmobiles are allowed on public lands on designated trails only. There are ATV trails on the Chequamegon National Forest property near the Flowage. Please ride responsibly and respect the property and rights of all landowners.

Snowmobiles and ATVs are allowed on the ice of the Flowage, however, before venturing out onto the ice make sure conditions are safe and you know where you are going. Some areas are hazardous throughout the winter because of currents under the ice and fluctuating water levels can create uneven ice conditions. Stay on the marked trails.

Please refer to the Sawyer County snowmobile trail map before snowmobiling on the property to determine those areas that are legal for snowmobile use.

Request snowmobile trail maps or ATV trail maps from the Hayward Lakes Visitor and Convention Bureau, PO Box 1055, Hayward, WI 54843. Phone: (715)634-4801 or (800)724-2992

## Protecting Your Flowage

### Aquatic Invasive Species

Exotic species are one of the biggest threats to our natural environment. You can help prevent introduction of invasives to the Flowage.

- Do not release live bait including worms, minnows or crayfish into the environment.
- Drain all water from your boat including live wells, bilges and bait buckets before you leave any lake, river or stream.
- Do not transport any live fish away from a lake, river or stream unless they are bait fish purchased from a bait dealer and have not been exposed to water from that water body.
- Inspect your boat and trailer and remove all aquatic plants, animals and mud before leaving any lake, river or stream.
- Spray/rinse your boat and equipment with hot and/or high-pressure water or dry your equipment for 5 days before going to another water body.

### Fires and Firewood

Firewood can harbor pests such as gypsy moths, emerald ash borer and oak wilt that threaten the local forest. New regulations regarding the transport of firewood are aimed at stopping the threats. It is now illegal to bring firewood to this or any other state property from more than 10 miles away. You should consider purchasing locally harvested firewood to bring to your campsite. There are several local businesses that sell bundled campfire wood. For added assurance against introducing forest pests please burn all your firewood. Do not leave it for the next camper and do not transport it away from the area.

### Driftwood

Driftwood provides valuable fish and wildlife habitat and adds to the unique character of the Flowage, as well as providing stabilization for banks and the lake bottom. It is rapidly disappearing through natural processes and from illegal harvest.

State law prohibits removal of driftwood from the property. We also ask that you not try to burn driftwood. Generally, driftwood is water logged and does not burn well even if it appears dry on the outside.