

## Nature preserves

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the northwestern tip of Skegemog Lake, just north of the Elk/Skegemog narrows and is best viewed by boat. To get to Whitewater Township Park from Traverse City, take U.S. 31 N. to Acme. In Acme, turn right (east) on M-72. Take M-72 to Williamsburg and turn left on Elk Lake Rd. (County Rd. 605).

#### Palastra-Holm Nature Preserve

(19 acres) This preserve is best viewed by boat. You cannot access it from the road without crossing private property. It is located along one of the last stretches of undeveloped shoreline on Elk Lake, south of Whitewater Township Park, where there is a public boat launch.

#### Palmer-Wilcox-Shah Nature

**Preserve** (35 acres) From Traverse City, take U.S. 31 north to Elk Rapids. At the stop light in Elk Rapids, turn left and then take an immediate right on N. Bay Shore Dr. The preserve is approximately two miles up on the left-hand side, where there is a sign and pull-off. There is a short trail from the parking area to the beach.

#### Elisabeth Parr Nature Preserve

(Five acres) Located just a few miles north of Frankfort. To get there from Traverse City, take U.S. 31 south to Beulah/Benzonia. Just after the town of Beulah, turn right on M-115. Take M-115 to Frankfort but turn north on M-22. Off of M-

22, turn left on Ness Rd. Follow Ness Rd. to the end and park at the dirt turnaround. The preserve starts at the last driveway. This preserve contains a towering bluff overlooking the water and 400 feet of shoreline. The inland property contains a northern hardwood forest. There is a short trail from the turnaround to the bluff.

**Pearl Lake** (251 acres) From Traverse City, take M-72 west to Coleman Rd. (County Rd. 669) and turn left (south). Follow 669 four miles and turn right at the intersection of 669 and 610. Immediately after the intersection, turn right again on Almira Rd. (610). Go approximately two miles and turn right on Rayle Rd., a small dirt road. Follow Rayle Rd. a little less than one-half mile to an iron gate. Park here and follow the old two-track down to the lake. There is a rustic boat launch located further down Rayle Rd. on state property.

#### Pamela L. Polaczyk Preserve

(Five acres) See directions to Bauer Preserve above.

#### Pyatt Lake Nature Preserve

(140 acres) Located just 20 minutes from Traverse City. From Traverse City, follow Peninsula Dr. north approximately 10 miles. Just past Bowers Harbor Marina, turn left on Neahtawanta Rd. Follow Neahtawanta Rd. one-half mile to Pyatt Rd. Turn right on Pyatt Rd. The parking area is one-quarter mile down Pyatt Rd. A bus turnaround is located just past the parking lot. Visitors can follow a loop trail, with numbered interpretive stops, around a portion of the

140-acre preserve and to viewing platforms, overlooking Pyatt Lake and a Sedge marsh.

**Railroad Point Natural Area** (61 acres) From Traverse City, take U.S. 31 south to Beulah/Benzonia. Just after the town of Beulah, turn right on M-115. Take M-115 to Mollineaux Rd. and turn right. Railroad Point Natural Area is one-half mile down Mollineaux Rd. Look for a small dirt parking area on the right. The trail at Railroad Point Natural Area consists of a two track, which leads to the bluff.

#### George and Ada Reffitt Nature

**Preserve** (83 acres) Adjacent to the TART trail, not far from the Traverse City State Park. In Traverse City, turn south on Three Mile Rd. Then turn right on Parsons Rd. (at the light) and park immediately on the left (next to the TART trail). The Reffitt Nature Preserve trail starts immediately south of the railroad tracks on the left (east) side of Three Mile Rd. For handicap access: From U.S. 31 N. (Munson Ave.) in Traverse City, turn south on Four Mile Rd. The first road on the right is Pine Dr. Follow Pine Dr. approximately one-quarter mile and you will see the preserve right ahead of you. There is a small parking area marked by a kiosk and gate. One-quarter mile of the trail is handicap accessible from this point. There is a 1.7 mile loop trail and boardwalk around the preserve.

**Sagaser Nature Preserve** (20 acres) From Traverse City, take U.S. 31 south toward Beulah. Just before Beulah, turn right (west) on Crystal Dr. (County Rd. 704),

which follows the northern shore of Crystal Lake. Approximately 1.5 miles along 704, turn right (north-east) on Nichols Rd. (before Warren Rd.). Go to the end of Nichols Rd. and park at the side of the road here.

**Seven Bridges** (314 acres) From Traverse City, take U.S. 31 north to Acme. In Acme, take M-72 east to Hill Rd. and go left. Take Hill Rd. to Rapid City Rd. Turn left on Rapid City Rd. and continue to the town of Rapid City. In town, turn right on Valley Rd. Follow Valley Rd. approximately three miles. The parking area for the natural area is located on the left-hand side, one-half mile past Underhill Rd. From Kalkaska, take M-72 west 1.5 miles to Valley Rd. Turn right (north) on Valley Rd. and go approximately seven miles.

#### St. Clair Lake: Six Mile Lake

**Natural Area** (191 acres) A one hour drive from Traverse City. To get there, take U.S. 31 N. to Atwood. In Atwood, turn right (east) on C-48. Follow C-48, then C-65 to Ellsworth. In Ellsworth, take C-48 east approximately two miles to South Arm Township Park and a small parking area on the right (south) side of the road.

#### Skegemog Lake Wildlife Area

(3,300 acres) To get to the SLWA main entrance from Traverse City, take U.S. 31 north to Acme. In Acme turn right on M-72. Take M-72 east approximately eight miles to Hill Rd. and go left. Follow Hill Rd. to Rapid City Rd. Turn left on Rapid City Rd., go 2.3 miles and look for the sign and parking area

on the left-hand side.

**South Elk Lake Wetland Nature Preserve** (30 acres) With 750 feet of frontage on the southeast shore of Elk Lake, this preserve was established to protect the water quality and shoreline of the lake. No trails or improvements are planned for this ecologically sensitive area. This preserve is accessible by boat only. Whitewater Township Park is the closest public boat launch. To get to Whitewater Township Park from Traverse City, take U.S. 31 N. to Acme. In Acme, turn right (east) on M-72. Take M-72 to Williamsburg and turn left on Elk Lake Rd. (County Rd. 605). Follow Elk Lake Rd. to Park Rd. and turn right. The park and boat launch are at the end of Park Rd.

#### South Island Nature Preserve

(14 acres) Accessible by boat only. Crescent Shores is the closest public boat launch. To get there from Traverse City, take Front St. west (which becomes North Long Lake Rd.). Follow North Long Lake Rd. around the north end of the lake past Gilbert Park beach. Keep going straight on N. Long Lake Rd., which will turn into W. Long Lake Rd. (do not turn right to go to Lake Ann). Follow W. Long Lake Rd. and turn left on Crescent Shores Rd. South Island is located south-east of the boat launch. Getting to South Island by canoe takes approximately 15 minutes. A self-guided nature walk can be followed in a loop trail, which is less than a mile long.

#### Trapp Farm Nature Preserve

(124 acres) Located just a short distance from downtown Beulah. To reach the main entrance from Traverse City, take U.S. 31 S. approximately 32 miles to Beulah. Just past the Cherry Hut, turn left on Narrow Gauge Rd. Follow the road less than one-quarter mile and look for the parking lot on the left.

#### Torch Bay Natural Area

(39 acres) From Traverse City, take U.S. 31 N. 10 miles north of Elk Rapids turn left (west) on Traverse Bay Rd. (the dirt road directly across from Torch Crest Village.) The preserve is located at the end of the road, on the right. There is a small parking lot and a short trail loop.

#### Upper Herring Lake Nature Preserve

(163 acres) Approximately five miles south of the town of Elberta. To get there from Traverse City, take U.S. 31 S. to Beulah/Benzonia. Just south of Benzonia, turn right (west) on Grace Rd. (County Rd. 606). Follow Grace Rd. until you hit M-22. Turn south on M-22 and continue for a few miles. About one mile past Herron Rd., you will see the sign for the preserve on your left (next to an old schoolhouse).

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