

Nature preserves

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North Skegemog Nature

Preserve (37 acres) Located at the northwestern tip of Skegemog Lake, just north of the Elk/Skegemog narrows and is best viewed by boat. The closest public launch sites are Whitewater Township Park on Elk Lake and the MDNR launch

site on Lake Skegemog. 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. To get to the MDNR launch site, take M-72 east from Acme. Turn left on Baggs Rd. At the end of Baggs Rd. turn left on Lakeside Terrace.

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. 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.

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 listed earlier.

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 Neahawanta Rd. Follow Neahawanta 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, one overlooking Pyatt Lake and one overlooking 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

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