

Edge of the Wilderness

Travel this spectacular, winding byway by many pristine lakes, forests, swamps, rolling hills, and other unique features. Outdoor recreation, interpretive sites, and other exciting opportunities await the traveler. During fall, the northwoods is adorned with the brilliant colors of red sugar maples, bronze oak trees and glowing gold aspen and birch.



Length: 47 miles / 75.2 km

Time to Allow: Three hours to visit the entire byway

Local Information

Edge of the Wilderness Resort Area

888-754-0011

thefriendlyfolks@edgeofthewilderness.com

Edge of the Wilderness Discovery Center

218-832-3161

Grand Rapids Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

Visitor Services

Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities



Pedestrian and bicyclist facilities are not provided along the byway. However, there are numerous hiking and mountain biking trails that spur off of the byway. Facilities are also available at the Scenic State Park near Bigfork as well as a bike trail that runs from Gunn Park to Grand Rapids. For more information, check out the website for either [Biking in the Chippewas](<http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/chippewa/flyer/biking.htm>) or [Hiking in the Chippewas](<http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/chippewa/flyer/hiking.htm>).

Camping



The nearest campsite on Recreation.gov, the Winnie Dam Campground, is located along the Avenue of Pines Byway. To reserve a campground there, visit Recreation.gov at the link below: * [Winnie Dam Campground](http://www.recreation.gov/camping/Winnie_Dam_Campground_Mn/r/campgroundDetails.do?contractCode=NRSO&parkId=73242&topTabIndex=CampingSpot)

Food



There are places to buy food along this byway.



Gasoline

There are gas stations at various areas along the route.



Information

A self-guided Forest History Auto Tour is available. For more information, check with the Edge of the Wilderness Discovery Center. Information is available at the Grand Rapids Depot Visitor Center and at the Edge of the Wilderness Discovery Center.



Lodging

There is overnight lodging along this byway.



Phone

Public phones are available along this byway.



Restrooms

There are toilet facilities along this byway.



Retail

There are places to shop along this byway.

Special Considerations

Highway 38 courses up and down and curves often -- that's part of its charm. Locals named it "Highway Loop-de-Loop" in the early days. As you drive the 47-mile byway, be aware of the lower speed limits, other traffic on the highway, and weather conditions. This is a working roadway with trucks carrying logs and other local products. A self-guided Forest History Auto Tour is available. For more information, check with the Edge of the Wilderness Discovery Center.

Restrictions

The byway is open year-round. For information on construction along the byway, check at local offices.

Seasons

Best Time to Drive

Fall foliage season (end of September, beginning of October)

High Season

July and August

Map and Directions



Legend:

Point of Interest	Campground	Featured Byway	Water	State Border
Park	Picnic/Rest Area	America's Byways	Wildlife Refuge	Urban Area
Mountain	Interstate	Other Byway	Wilderness Area	Tribal Nation
City	U.S. Highway	Other Road	Other Federal Lands	Military Base
Capital	State Highway	Trail	Other State Lands	

Driving Directions

- The Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway begins at the intersection of U.S. Highway 2 and State Trunk Highway 38 in Grand Rapids.


- It proceeds north on STH 38 through the Chippewa National Forest and the towns of Marcell and Bigfork.
- The byway then ends in Effie, Minnesota.

Getting to the Byway




Nearby cities

Duluth, MN (80 miles / 128.75 km, 1 hour 55 minutes)

- Start:**  MN-194 westbound, Duluth, MN
N 46.794° W 92.093° [?]
- Take MN-194 west toward Saginaw where it becomes US-2.
- Directions:**
- Follow US-2 northwest to MN-38 in Grand Rapids where the byway begins.
- Junction with byway:** * Intersection of US-2 and MN-38, Grand Rapids, MN
N 47.236° W 93.533° [?]



St. Paul, MN (137 miles / 220.48 km, 3 hours 24 minutes)

- Start:**  I-35 northbound, St. Paul, MN
N 44.955° W 93.091° [?]
- Take I-35 north to Moose Lake.
 - Get on MN-73 and go north to Floodwood.
- Directions:**
- Take US-2 northwest to MN-38 in Grand Rapids where the byway begins.
- Junction with byway:** * Intersection of US-2 and MN-38, Grand Rapids, MN
N 47.236° W 93.533° [?]



Road Trip: Tour of the Edge

Departure: Grand Rapids, Minnesota

Destination: Effie, Minnesota

Time to allow: 1 day

Take a natural and historic tour of the Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway.

Day 1

- **Start: Grand Rapids**

Suggested time at this stop: 30 minutes

From an isolated cluster of cabins to the region's commercial hub, Grand Rapids has marshaled its natural and cultural resources to become the economic and government center of Itasca County.

- **Stop 2: Lind-Greenway Mine**



From previous stop: 7 minutes / 3.4 mi (5.4 km)

Directions: From Grand Rapids, follow State Route 38, or the Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway, northwards for 3.4 miles. The mining compound will be on the right.

Suggested time at this stop: 20 minutes

Tour Minnesota's mining history at the Lind-Greenway Mine, nestled in the Mesabi mountain range along the byway route. Learn about the tenacity of Minnesota's miners, who extracted iron from a relatively poor grade of ore.

- **Stop 3: Birch Stand at Pughole Lake**



From previous stop: 15 minutes / 10 mi (16.0 km)

Directions: From the Lind-Greenway Mine, turn right and continue northward along the Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway for 10 miles.

Suggested time at this stop: 45 minutes

Stop at this stand of birch trees to learn about competition in nature. Slowly but surely, the short-lived birch trees are losing out to hardier species such as pine and aspen. Enjoy a quiet picnic by the lake, or bring a kayak and go for a paddle.

- **Stop 4: Day Lake Civilian Conservation Corps Camp**

From previous stop: 10 minutes / 5.6 mi (9.0 km)

Directions: Continue north along the Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway for 5.6 miles.

Suggested time at this stop: 20 minutes

Explore the Minnesota forest to find the remains of the Day Lake Civilian Conservation Corps Camp. During the Great Depression, this facility housed CCC members who planted hundreds of trees in the surrounding forest. Later, the camp would house German prisoners of war from World War II.

- **Stop 5: Marcell Ranger Station**

From previous stop: 20 minutes / 9.7 mi (15.5 km)

Directions: From the Day Lake Civilian Conservation Corps Camp, travel 9.7 miles northward along the Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway. The ranger station is on the other end of the town of Marcell.

Suggested time at this stop: 15 minutes

The Marcell Ranger Station is the last remaining ranger station in Chippewa National Forest that was built in the Rustic Style. Long redwood logs form the five historic buildings in the station complex, built to accent the nature around it. Find authoritative information on the Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway [here](#). This ranger station is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

- **Stop 6: Gut and Liver Line**

From previous stop: 5 minutes / 1.8 mi (2.9 km)

Directions: From the Marcell Ranger Station, continue north along the Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway for 1.8 miles.

Suggested time at this stop: 15 minutes

This oddly named railroad line once provided lumber shipping all along the Edge of the Wilderness corridor. Visit one of the stations along this line, and form your own theory on the origin of the name. Current local versions include everything from liver sausage to train roadkill.

- **Stop 7: Bigfork**

From previous stop: 15 minutes / 9.5 mi (15.2 km)

Directions: From the Gut and Liver Line, continue 9.5 miles northward along Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway.

Suggested time at this stop: 15 minutes

Bigfork has an extensive logging and fur-trading history. Tour the streets of this town, which still has a large lumberjack influence today.

- **End: Effie**



From previous stop: 10 minutes / 7 mi (11.2 km)

Directions: From Bigfork, travel 7 miles northward on the Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway

Suggested time at this stop: 15 minutes

Our tour of the Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway ends in the town of Effie, another small logging and farming town. Enjoy the small town atmosphere, or time your visit to see the North Star Stampede rodeo.

Totals for Day 1

Total Distance Traveled: 47 miles / 75.2 km

Total Travel Time: 1 hour 22 minutes

Total Stopping Time: 2 hours 55 minutes