



Iron Ore Heritage Trail 2021 Updates

Board Members: Don Britton, Chair; Glenn Johnson, Vice Chair/Secretary; Lauren Luce, Treasurer; Al Reynolds, Executive Committee At-large member; Jim Brennan, Dawn Hoffman, Larry Bussone, Bob Hendrickson, Nick Leach

Staff: Carol Fulsher

2021 Overview

2021 was supposed to go “back to normal” after the pandemic year of 2020. However, while in-person events came back on line, there were also virtual options. In-person board meetings started up again, but Zoom continued as well, projects started but supply issues delayed the finish time, and our new trailhead scheduled for 2021 is getting a late start due to staffing issues. While we meander through this new world, we are grateful that our users are patient people, our trail is becoming much more popular, and we provided a mental health break for a lot of residents and visitors.

Our biggest projects this year are in various stages of completion.

- **Negaunee’s Carp River Weather Shelter/Viewing Platform/Fishing Piers (done)**

The good news is that while a beaver family moved in and flooded the Carp River in Negaunee at the exact spot of our proposed weather shelter, Canadian National came to the rescue and broke open a dam under their r/r in time for construction.

We built a weather shelter/wildlife viewing platform and three accessible fishing piers at the Carp River crossing in Negaunee. Some birders mentioned seeing the elusive American bittern and Alder flycatcher from this spot.



Carp River Flooded Spring 2021, Negaunee



New Weather Shelter and fishing pier @ Carp River, Negaunee, Summer 2021

- **Negaunee Township Weather Shelter with Steps to Pine Hill Pond (done)**



New Steps Down to Pond and Weather Shelter

Further east along the trail in Negaunee Township, we built another weather shelter with steps down to the Pine Hill Pond, one of the most photographed areas of the trail.

- **Republic Trail Upgrade (done)**
Upgraded 2.5 miles of trail in Republic Township incl. two culvert extensions and bike path aggregate for total of \$61k— Reimbursed \$10K from ORV Grant Funds



- **Negaunee's New Jim Thomas Pavilion (done)**
Worked with City of Negaunee for new signage at Jim Thomas Pavilion



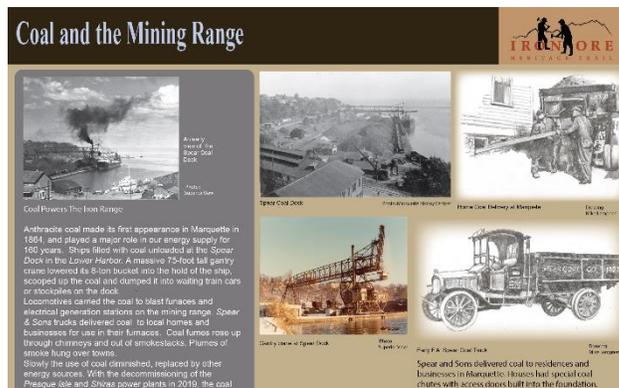
New Jim Thomas Pavilion and Signage

- **ORV Upgrades (Done)**
Invested \$35.5K in trail grading, new culverts, culvert extensions, Winthrop Junction widening
- **Negaunee Township Trailhead (Starting in December 2021)**
Bid out project and awarded to Oberstar for \$126K. Project includes clearing, paved parking, signage, lighting, vault toilet, bench, bike racks, and landscaping. Was awarded a \$73,300 Recreation Passport Grant for this project.
- **5 New Interpretive Signs + New Kiosk Maps (Done)**
Ten new kiosk maps printed and installed.

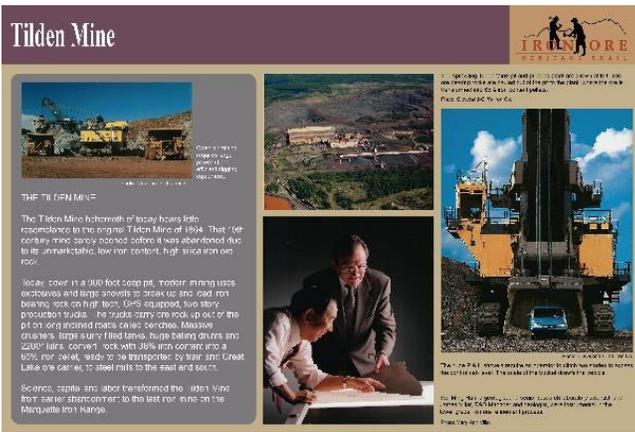


One of ten new kiosk "you are here" maps

Five new interpretive panels researched, written, designed and printed. Two at Cliffs Shaft Mine Museum, one at Howard Oil about Tilden Mine, and two for Lower Harbor Marquette about Coal and Energy



Coal and the Mining Range – placed near Lower Harbor Ore Dock



Tilden Mine at Howard Oil, Ishpeming

- **3 mile markers, 2 new benches, several trail cameras, and 40 new Trail Etiquette signs placed along trail (Done)**



Ishpeming Ski Club XC Ski Grooming Contract (Continuation)

Continued xc ski trail grooming with Ishpeming Ski Club

- **General Maintenance (Done)**

Tree cutting, mowing, sweeping, brushing, culvert

cleaning, gate repairs, new pedestrian/bike crossing signage and paint on Vandenboom and Stoneville Roads.

- **Preparations for 1137 linear feet of asphalt repair in 2022 and research into longer lasting asphalt/concrete repairs (2022 project)**

Operations

- Submitted Trust Fund Grant Request for acquisition of 176 acres in Marquette and Negaunee Townships abutting the trail and presented to MNRTF Board on Acquisition Grant (was not included in grant award this year)
- Submitted Trust Fund grant request for boardwalk in Negaunee which will bring non-motorized usage into the wetlands of east Negaunee (included in grant award funding list)
- Working with City of Negaunee on long term lease of IOHRA property. Negaunee to build and operate a campground and trailhead
- IOHRA leased property from Perkins Construction for us to build and manage ORV/horse trailer parking area
- In-person municipal member updates
- Preparation of 2022 millage renewal
- Working with Sheriff's Department on gate damage
- Researching 5-mile extension to Lakenenland—route, funding, financials
- Signed resolution for CUPPAD Build Back Better Grant
- Developed 2022 Budget proposing \$644,000 in capital improvement projects
- Awarded an ORV Grant of \$48,665 for 2022
- Managed 9 Adopt-A-Mile Groups for Trail Clean Up and Brushing

Marketing

- **Ribbon cutting for Republic trailhead opening**

TV 6 Story The town also opened a new welcome center where the Iron Ore Heritage Trail ends. “When {people} can get to either end of the trail and learn about how these communities grew and established, how they thrived, and how we’ve struggled,” McBroom said when talking about the Welcome Center, “I think that’s something really important to share our larger story with the rest of the world.”

- **Pure Michigan video interview and footage for their 2022 viewing on Pure Michigan social media platforms**

- **Story on Gander Newsroom**

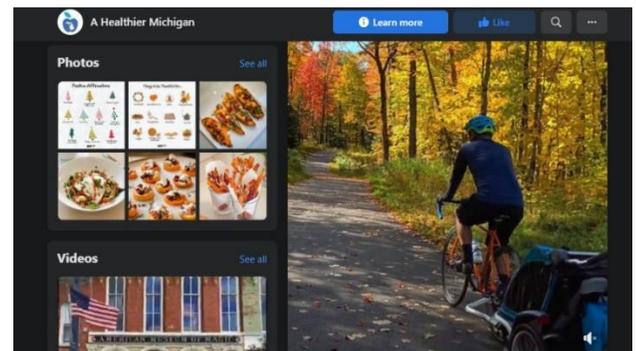


MARQUETTE, Mich.—On these autumn days, Carol Fulsher can be found on her Cannondale mountain bike, framed against the backdrop of orange, red, and yellow speckled trees that crowd the banks of Lake Superior. The 47-mile trail she rides, paved at parts and packed in at others, follows along the route that used to transport iron by rail from the hills of Marquette County to the Lake Superior harbor, where it would be processed and shipped. On this now-defunct industrial excursion, cyclists take in the Upper Peninsula’s natural beauty that conceals historic wealth. Now, Fulsher is the administrator of the Iron Ore Heritage Trail, which recalls the seismic significance of mining life in the Marquette iron range with exhibits and plaques. Along the route, not only do riders—of snowmobiles or bicycles, depending on the season—see the lakeshore, downtown Marquette, and the awe-striking surrounding hills and nature, but they also take in the ride that used to fuel the economy of the Upper Peninsula.

- **Redesigned and printed new IOHT maps (cooperative project with Travel Marquette) and distributed over 1000 maps in 2021**



- **Awarded the Society of Outdoor Travel Writer’s coveted Phoenix Award.** The Phoenix Award recognizes destinations that have made exemplary efforts at environmental, cultural and/or historical conservation preservation and beautification of tourism sites. Winners are nominated by Travel Writers.
- **Featured on Healthier Michigan Facebook page**



- **Ribbon cutting of weather shelters with media interviews**



- **Met with Travel Marquette PR firm and reviewed our project**
- **Hosted the following events: Iron Range Roll, Marquette Marathon, Ishpeturkey Trot,**

Marjigesick, Michigan Iron Industry's Bike Tours



Marquette Marathon



Iron Range Roll

• MEDIA MENTIONS/FEATURES

- **MLive "7 of Michigan's State Park Trails."** "This 47-mile multi-use interpretive trail crosses through the scenic and richly historic Marquette Iron Range, following mostly abandoned railroad corridors once used to shuttle lumber and iron ore to furnaces, forges and the Lake Superior Harbor. Recognized by the DNR and Pure Michigan as a Pure Michigan Designated Trail; nine trailheads make access easy."
- **Travel Awaits "How To Spend A Perfect Long Weekend In Beautiful Marquette, Michigan"** "Explore the Iron Ore Heritage Trail. The 47-mile [Iron Ore Heritage Trail](#) is an outdoor museum of sorts. It's a year-round trail that spans the Marquette Iron Range. You can explore this interpretive trail in so many ways — hike, bike, cross-country ski, run, snowmobile, or use off-road vehicles (ORV.) It is an interpretive trail that includes signage telling the story of the role of the iron ore mining industry in Michigan and throughout the United States.

- **Leisure Group Travel** "Perhaps the most popular snowmobile trail is the 45-mile-long [Iron Ore Heritage Trail](#)"
- **Northern Today Story** "The final leg on the Iron Ore Heritage Trail from Ishpeming to Marquette was the best part. The temperature cooled off and we stopped a lot to take in the amazing scenery before we finished downtown by the ore dock and took a triumphant picture."
- **USA Today 5 Midwest weekend Getaways** "The [Iron Ore Heritage Trail](#) is a 47-mile waterfront trail that's fun to ride, especially if you [rent an e-bike](#) from [West End Ski & Trail](#)."
- **Curbfree with Cory Lee** The [Iron Ore Heritage Trail](#) and Marquette bike paths stretch for 47 miles and 35 of those are wheelchair accessible. I didn't roll the entire path (my wheelchair can't go quite that far on a single charge), but I did roll some of it & had great views of Lake Superior!
- **MiBluemag.com April edition** "One favorite is the 47-mile, multiuse Iron Ore Heritage Trail, with both pavement and crushed granite, that rolls along mostly abandoned railroad corridors once used to bring lumber to furnaces and forges, and iron ore to Marquette Harbor. Interpretive elements along the route showcase the region's iron-mining history."
- **Panethos.wordpress" Favorite Historic Trails to Hike or Bike"** **#1** Presented below are my eleven favorite "historic" hiking and biking trails that have been visited thus far in the United States. The Iron Ore Heritage Trail in Marquette County, Michigan is my personal favorite, though each of these trails are interesting in their own right.



- **Featured on Selective Potential Blog Post**

