



Vilas County Tourism & Publicity
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Blackjack Springs Wilderness Area, covering about 5,800 acres, is located about 8 miles east of Eagle River north of Hwy 70 and preserved in a natural condition where people are only visitors. No motor vehicles or motorized equipment are allowed.

Chains of Lakes - several lake chains located throughout the county offer a variety of canoeing, boating and fishing activities. The Eagle River/ Three Lakes Chain of 28 lakes is held to be the longest chain of inland freshwater lakes in the world. The Manitowish (10 lakes) and Cisco chains come in a close second. The Lac du Flambeau Chain of 10 lakes boasts three (3) world class muskies. With over 1300 lakes, Vilas County features one of the highest concentrations of lakes in the world.

Trails for hiking, biking, cross-country skiing and nature can lead you to the wild side of Vilas County. Marked and located in many communities throughout the county, many of these trails can be enjoyed year round. Nearly 50% of the land in Vilas County is in public ownership with the majority of ownership by the **Northern Highland American Legion State Forest, Chequamegon National Forest, Nicolet National Forest** and **County Forest**. Maps and information on trails are available from local chamber offices.

Eagles Nests can often be observed along lake shores and riverways wherever there are high trees, open areas and low density population. The Rainbow Flowage south of St. Germain provides excellent viewing. A reminder that Bald Eagles are a protected species. **Please observe but do not disturb!**

State Wildlife Observation Areas such as Powell Marsh, near Manitowish Waters and Thunder Lake Marsh, south of Eagle River near Three Lakes, are great spots for viewing waterfowl and other wildlife.

Beaver Dams and houses are found on many streams and lakes. Prime pelts lured the first European traders and fur trappers to this Northwoods area.

The Continental Divide is clearly evident in this area located on Highway B west of Land O'Lakes and marked by Devil's Lake. Lakes and streams to the north of the highway run toward the St. Lawrence Waterway while south of the highway water runoff is to the Mississippi Watershed. A second East/West divide is marked on Highway 70 about 10 miles east of Eagle River. Waters run east to Lake Michigan or west toward the Missouri River/ Mississippi Watershed.

Dams in Vilas County are also interesting sites. **Rest Lake Dam** at Hwy W in Manitowish Waters was used for driving logs down to the Chippewa and Mississippi Rivers from late 1880's to 1900. Other dams were instrumental in the development of the Northwoods: **Fishtrap Dam** at Fishtrap Lake near Boulder Junction and **Bear Creek** at Lac du Flambeau near the old Indian Village.

Burnt Rollways Dam, located on Dam Road between the Three Lakes and Eagle River Chains provides a boat hoist which can move craft ranging in sizes from runabouts to small family cruisers.

The **Otter Rapids Hydroelectric Plant** located west of Eagle River on Cloverland Road continues in operation today. The section of water backed up by this dam is known as Watersmeet Lake. The water elevated by the dam has served to deepen and connect the lakes of the Eagle River Chain.

Cranberry Marshes near Alder and Little Trout Lakes in Manitowish Waters are among the highest producing bogs in the nation. Free tours are a highlight (July through October). Late September through mid-October features harvesting.

Official Wisconsin Historical Markers throughout the county profile the rich heritage and development of Vilas County.

Cathedral Point is a beautiful timbered point between the North and South basins of Trout Lake. Many of the pines on the east shore of the lake are 120-130 feet tall and grow at what once was an Indian garden.

The mighty **Wisconsin River** is labeled the hardest working river in the nation. It has its beginning in Vilas County on the south shore of Lac Vieux Desert in Phelps. Take this short walk to picnic by the headwaters.

Dillinger's Hideout. Bullet holes remain in the walls of Little Bohemia Lodge in Manitowish Waters. John Dillinger, notorious bank robber, shot his way out of the lodge and escaped an FBI trap in 1934. Shootout memorabilia may be viewed during restaurant operating hours.

Shanty Boy Hill Cemetery in Presque Isle is a memorial to those who lived in rough shanties in the woods—a common circumstance for those men who worked in the logging industry. Take a moment to remember those who toiled in the rugged woodland frontier of the Northwoods - the men who cut the trees that built this nation and gave their lives.

Star Lake Forestry Plantation is the site of an old lumber camp on the banks of Star Lake. Started in 1913 in an effort to show that forest trees could be planted, the plantation was the first venture in silviculture and the start of reforestation in Northern Wisconsin.

Military Road, used during the Civil War to transport men and equipment, runs through the Nicolet National Forest east of Eagle River and the town of Phelps.

Trees for Tomorrow, in Eagle River, is an internationally recognized natural resource education center promoting the wise use and conservation of all natural resources. Visitors can walk the forest trail, see the Talking Tree or visit historic Civilian Conservation Corp buildings.

Lac du Flambeau Indian Museum and Cultural Center located in downtown Lac du Flambeau unfolds the story of the Chippewa and their culture. The Four Season Exhibit shows the living environment of the Chippewa and Indian dances and Pow-Wows can be seen at the **Indian Bowl**.

William J. Poupart, Sr. Fish Hatchery/Trout Ponds, located in Lac du Flambeau, raise walleye, northern, and musky in a state of the art facility. Open year-round.

The **International Snowmobile Hall of Fame**, in St. Germain, is dedicated to preserving and showcasing the rich, exciting history of snowmobiling at recreational and competitive levels through the museum, hall of fame and library. Annual inductions to the hall of fame honor those individuals who have played significant roles in the snowmobile industry.

The **Northwoods Children's Museum**, in Eagle River, encourages hands on learning, allowing participants (young and old) to explore different concepts at their own pace. Exhibits arouse children's curiosity and invite them to learn by doing, seeing, stirring, poking, smelling, hearing and above all feeling the thrill of discovery.

The **Eagle River Historical Society**, located at the Trees for Tomorrow campus, is dedicated to the collection, preservation and display of memorabilia of the area's history starting from 1870's.

The **North Lakeland Discovery Center**, in Manitowish Waters, is a community oriented nonprofit center offering year 'round natural, cultural, historical, birding, and recreational programs on a former DNR Youth Conservation Camp. Housed on 66 acres, the Center includes a main lodge, bunkhouses, trails, beach, recreation field, and a secluded lake.

The **Vilas County Historical Museum**, in Sayner, offers an extensive collection of historic exhibits and pioneer artifacts of the late 1800's in Northern Wisconsin.