

# Water Trails: Conduits to Conservation

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Fox River (IL) Summit  
Burlington, WI

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**WATER TRAIL:** a series of safe, legal, and sustainable access sites along a waterway



# Why water trails?

- Conservation and stewardship: water + corridors
- Link urban + rural communities
- Economic development/ecotourism
- Physical activity
- Recreation/solitude
- Cultural + historical appreciation





# Recreation Trends

- Kayaking increased 34.6 % (473,000 ) 2009 -2010; 10 million nationwide (Outdoor Fdn. April 2011)
- Sea kayak sales (all genres) surpassed canoes
- Heritage + ecotourism as a form of recreation increasing
- Water trails exploding nationally + internationally



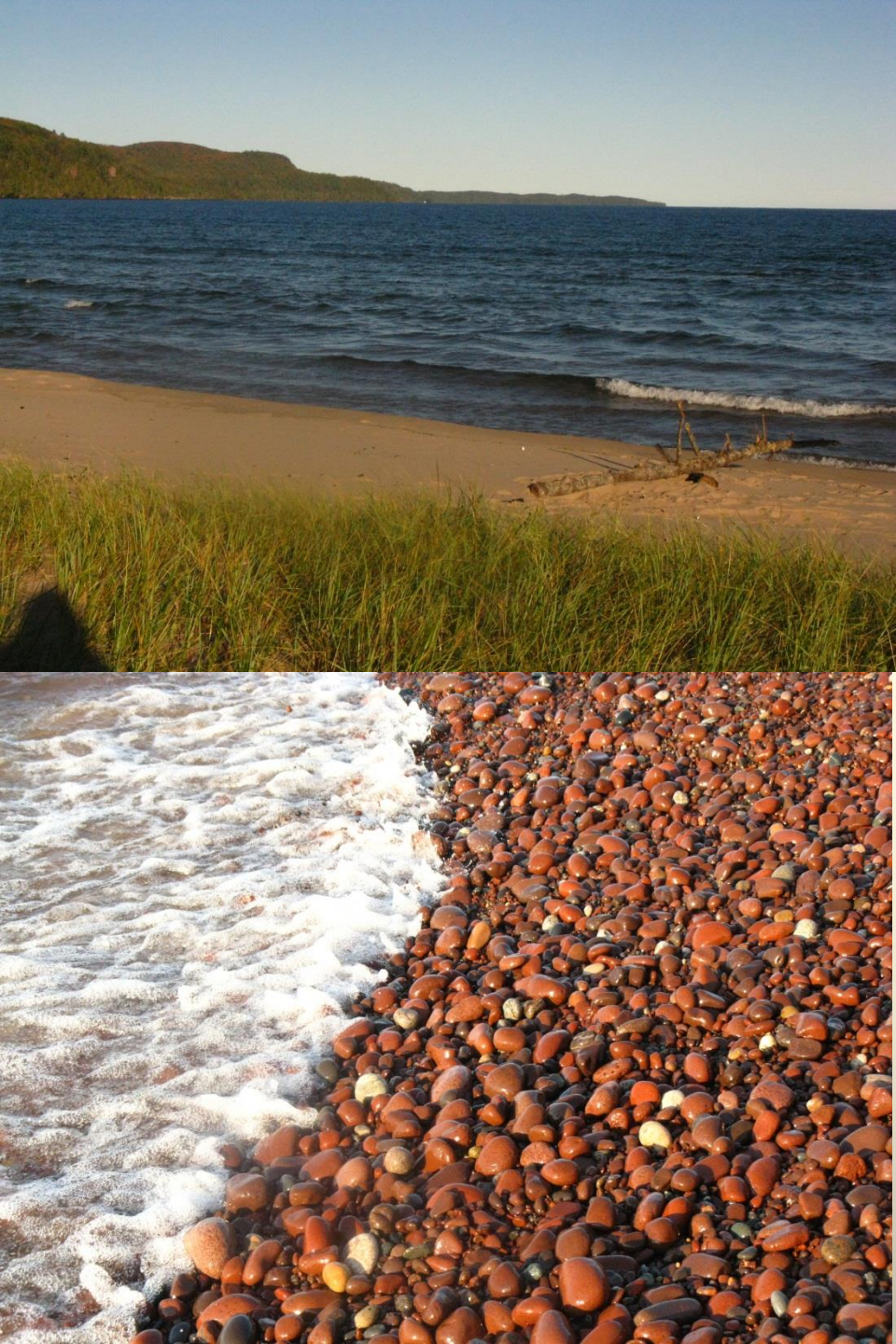
# Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program

- RTCA implements the natural & cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of NPS **in communities**
- American's Great Outdoors: “Reconnect Americans...especially children...to America's rivers and waterways...community-based recreation and conservation”
- RTCA WT's: since 1992: technical assistance, website, launch
- mission/vision, access assessment + development, public involvement, partnership development, funding resource identification.....
- Lead development of National WT System



# Water Trails in the Great Lakes



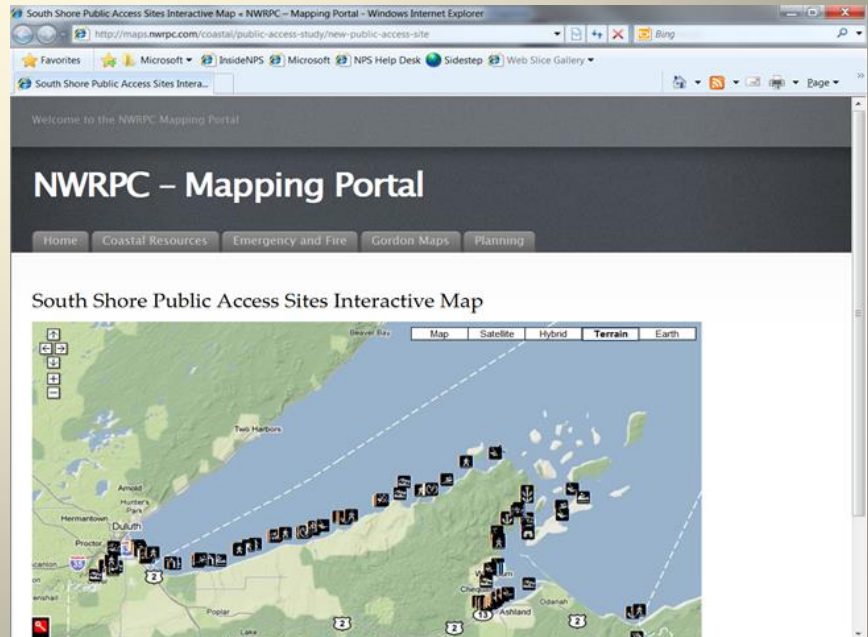


# Lake Superior Water Trail: WI



- Initiated by Inland Sea Society, individual paddlers
- Conservation message was driving force

- “LSWT was formed on philosophy that low-impact rec use & stewardship of land & water protects local natural and cultural resources.”





## Lake Michigan

Wisconsin's Lake Michigan WT	523 mi.
Northeast Illinois Water Trail	29 mi.
Indiana's L. Michigan WT	46 mi.
Michigan Shoreline	1000 mi.

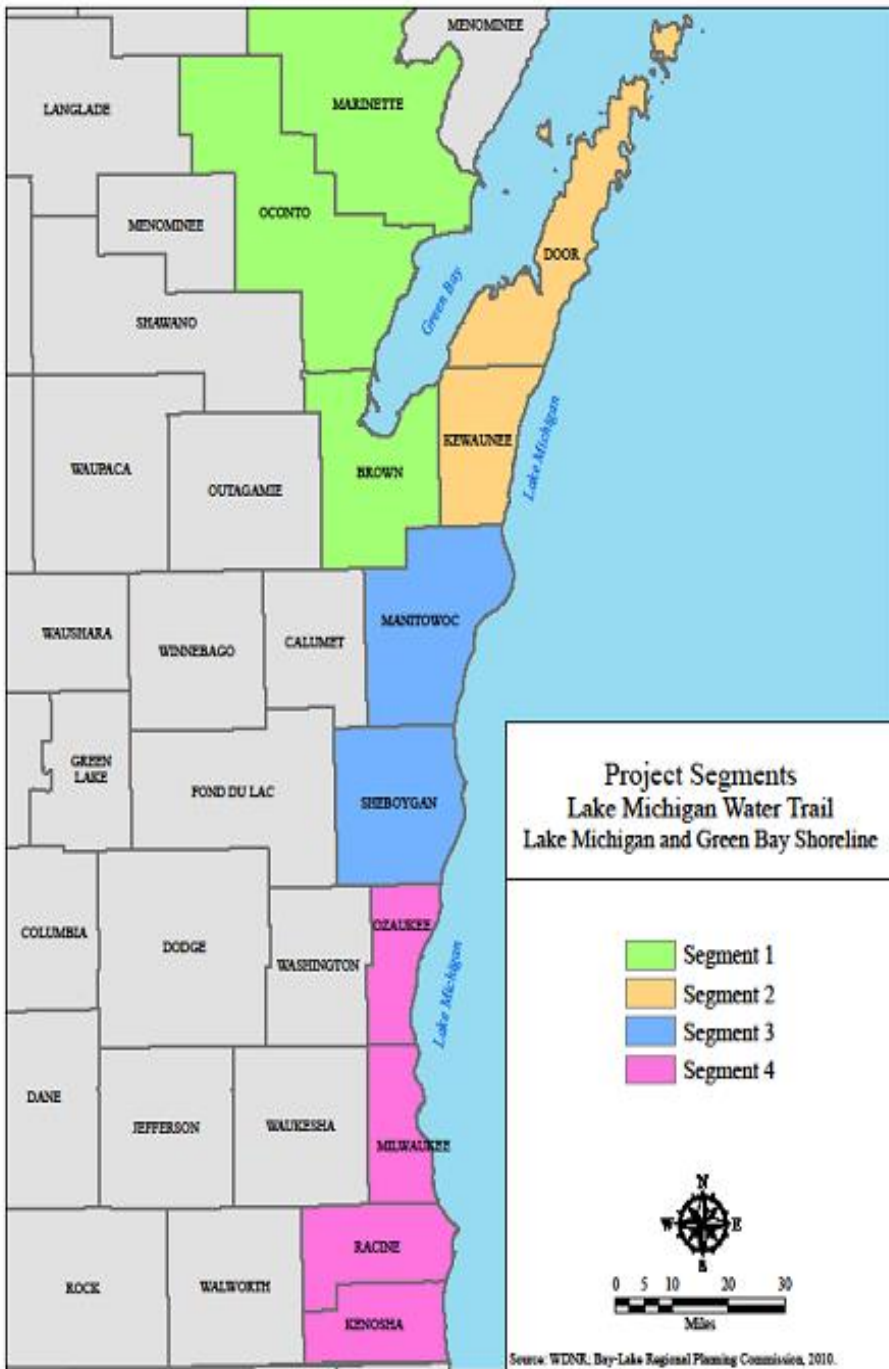
National Recreation Trail Designation 75 mi



# Lake Michigan Water Trail: WI



- Initiated by boaters
- Picked up by WDNR for conservation of lakeshore + public recreation access
- Public access + conserve lake front: NOAA CMP, USEPA's L. MI Management Plan, SCORP, regional + county plans

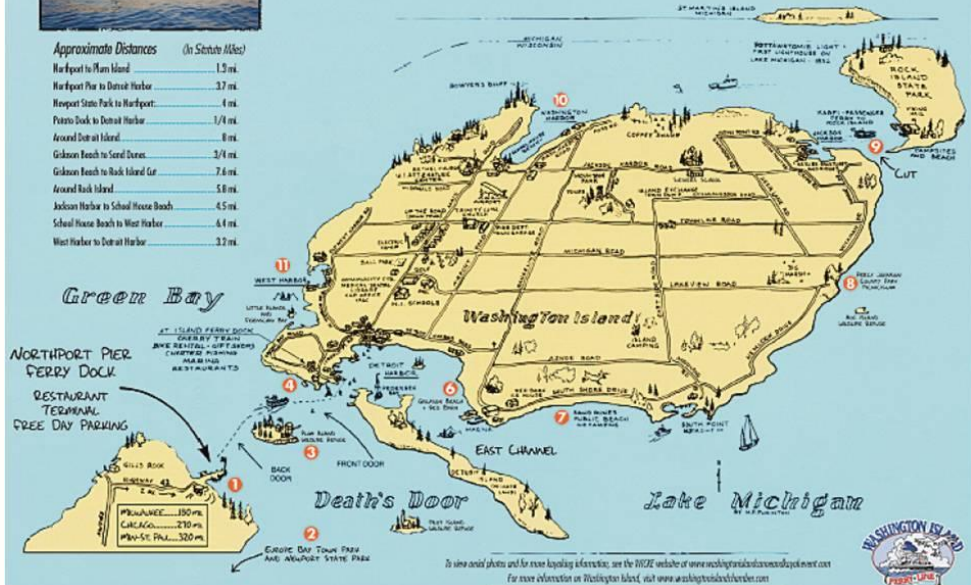


## ISLANDS OF THE DOOR

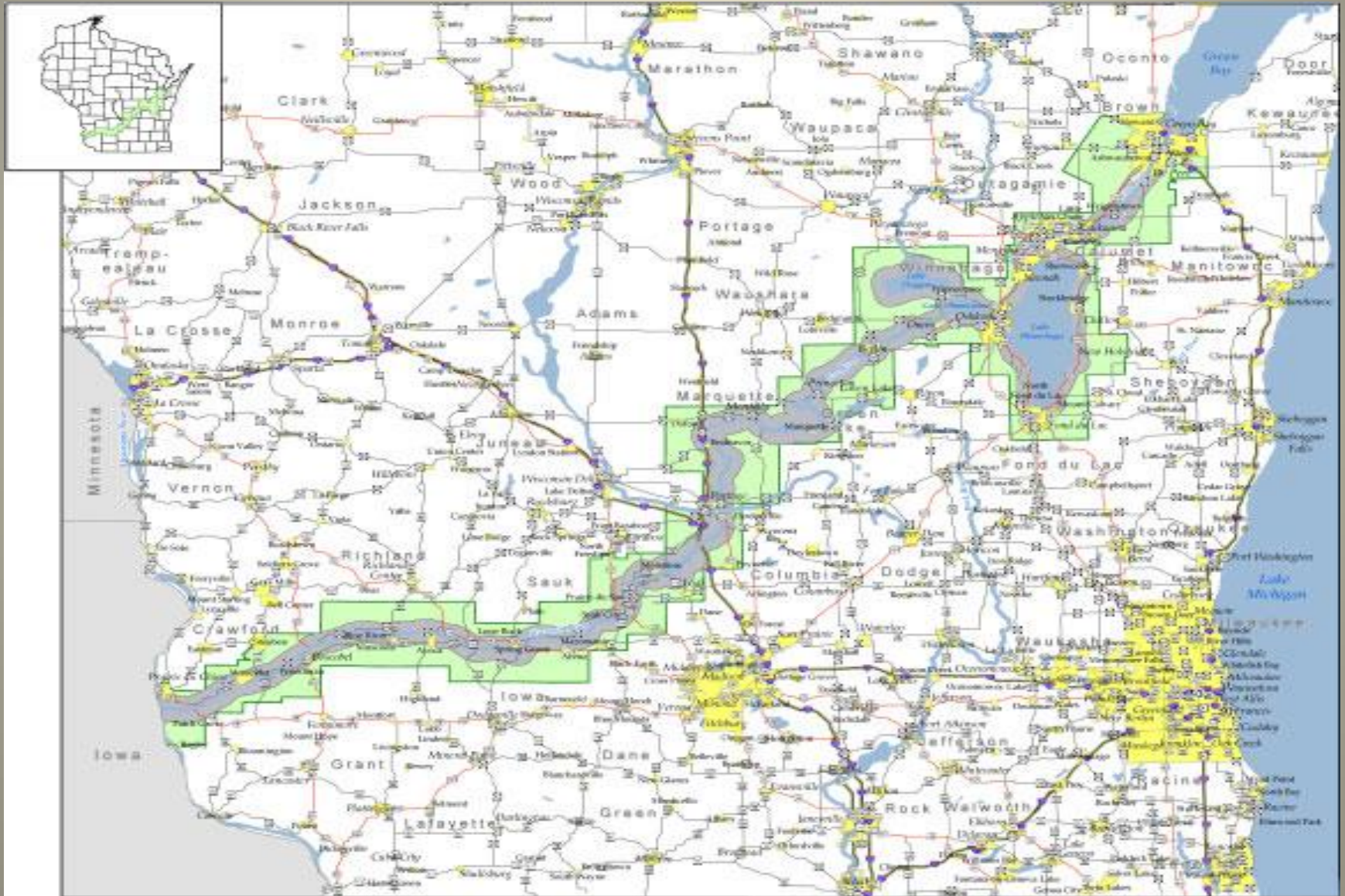
Tip of the Door Peninsula  
 Washington Island/Rock Island/Death's Door

Approximate Distances (In Statute Miles)

Harbortown Pier to Plum Island	1.5 mi.
Harbortown Pier to Death's Door	3.7 mi.
Harbortown State Park to Harbortown	4 mi.
Potato Dock to Death's Door	1/4 mi.
Around Door at Island	8 mi.
Grasson Beach to Seward Dunes	3/4 mi.
Grasson Beach to Rock Island Cut	7.6 mi.
Around Rock Island	5.8 mi.
Jackson Harbor to School House Beach	4.5 mi.
School House Beach to West Harbor	6.4 mi.
West Harbor to Door at Harbor	3.2 mi.



# Fox Wisconsin Heritage Parkway Water Trail – 230 miles



# Milwaukee Urban Water Trail



- Connects urban portions of 3 rivers
- “builds on...efforts to bring life back to the rivers of MKE by improving access, water quality, and wildlife habitat”
- “enjoy rivers in a responsible way”
- Provides “sense of place” + promotes stewardship









**Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, dedicated citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. - Margaret Mead**

