



MUKOODA TRAIL

Glacial erratic

Welcome to Voyageurs National Park's Mukooda Trail! With support from the National Park Foundation, REI, and Voyageurs Conservancy, the National Park Service and Student Conservation Association crews built this 2.7-mile trail in 2019 and 2020, 20 years after a similar trail had fallen into disrepair.

As you hike between Mukooda and Sand Point lakes, you are seeing the remnants of glacial movement from the Ice Age (the Pleistocene epoch, which ended 13,000 years ago). These mile-tall walls of ice greatly impacted the land, forming the ridges that the loop trail follows, and left indentations in the earth that filled with melt water, forming the inland lakes (like Mukooda) we enjoy today. As the glaciers went through natural, cyclical periods of moving forward and melting back (advancing and retreating), boulders would get trapped in the ice. These boulders were eventually released and deposited in seemingly random spots, which is why we call these boulders glacial erratics.

Mukooda Lake is one of these marks left behind by glacial movement, and some of its inhabitants learned how to thrive in its cold, isolated waters. Cut off from surrounding populations, the Lake Trout in Mukooda Lake adapted to survive in their home lake's unique conditions, and they developed a unique genetic code different from other strains of Lake Trout.

At the southern terminus of the trail lies the remains of the Filben Cabin. Once called The St. Paul Club, the cabin was a popular hideout among Minnesota's Prohibition era (1920 - 1930s) gangsters. A guest among the Minnesota gangsters taking refuge on the shores of Mukooda Lake was infamous Chicago robber John Dillinger. The cabin was removed in 1995, leaving behind the foundation and the legends of Minnesota's shadowy past.



Filben Cabin

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EXPLORE ON YOUR OWN

Sound Map:

- Pick a spot to sit or stand for a few minutes. If you have paper and pen, draw a symbol in the center of the paper to represent you, and use words or pictures to represent the sounds you hear and where they are coming from. Don't worry about identification or accuracy; do your best to listen carefully.
- If you don't have paper, spend some time in your spot, close your eyes if you'd like, and listen carefully.
- Experiment with letting all of the sounds wash over you at once or focusing on different sounds individually.
- What do you think this place sounded like 50 years ago? 100 years ago? 1,000 years ago?
- Do you hear more natural or people-made sounds? How does the soundscape (the collection of sounds unique to a certain place, like a landscape of noises!) here compare to the soundscape where you live?

What Hides in the Shadows:

- As you walk, notice how the plant life casts shadows onto the ground. What do you notice?
- What does this tell you about the weather or the ecosystem (the community of plants and animals here)?
- What words or ideas come to mind as you watch the shadows? Write them down, share them with your hiking partner, or let them dance and grow in your head. Maybe you can write a poem, short story, or song based on what you notice.

Habitat Hideout:

- Notorious 1920's Chicago gangster John Dillinger hid out along the shores of Mukooda Lake at the Filben Cabin.
- Without disturbing any animals or their homes, do you see signs of critters that make this place their home? Are their homes hidden?
- If you lived here, what type of animal would you want to be? Where would you build your home?

Scent Search:

- Take a deep breath. How does the air smell? Does it have a taste?
- What memories are coming up? Are there any new smells that you want to explore?
- As you are hiking, see if you can discover a smell that is new to your nose and create a new memory on Voyagers' newest trail!



[About Voyagers Conservancy](#)
 The Voyagers Conservancy is the official nonprofit partner of Minnesota's Voyagers National Park. In partnership with the National Park Service, the Conservancy works to preserve the wild character and unique experience of Voyagers by funding projects and programs that will sustain it for generations to come.