

It's time to register for SHTA's Hike Fest 2016 and to schedule a volunteer work weekend!



The Baptism River rushes to Lake Superior, powered by the force of spring run-off. Rivers and streams along the SHT will be running high and fast for many weeks.

Greetings!

Spring can be a tough time for an enthusiastic hiker.

Hazards of Spring Hiking

Snow, rain, ice, mud, standing water, downed trees. All are hazards of spring. But the good news is that with each passing week, these conditions get better. Snow melts. Rainy skies give way to sunny ones. Trail crews remove downed trees and clear winter blowdown from the trail (read on to learn more about spring volunteer work projects). We hope that you will give the SHT time to dry out before you hike it; but if you just can't wait here's a few things you really need to know to stay safe and have

fun hiking in the spring.

Snow

There's still snow here on the North Shore. A late season storm just dropped as much as 11 inches of the heavy wet stuff in the Finland area and there is now 8"-30" of snow on the trail. It will cling to shaded, north facing slopes for weeks to come. It is slick (especially in the morning when cold nighttime temperatures have turned it to ice), it can be soft (post-holing is common), and it can obscure the trail. It is not unusual to have late season snow throughout the month of April.

Cool and Wet

Conditions can change quickly any day of the year on the SHT, but particularly in the spring. Every hiker should carry rain gear and several layers of clothing, and anticipate changing the layers often to combat rain, wind, and mists from rivers and waterfalls. It's easy to get chilled.

Mud and Downed Trees

Mud and blowdowns are byproducts of our northern winters and are the two most common trail issues that SHTA's trail maintenance team combat each year. What should you do when you hit the trail before a trail crew can get out and fix it?

If you possibly can, stick it out and slog right through that mud or under that downed tree. When hiker after hiker tries to skirt a problem spot, fragile vegetation is damaged, and erosion can occur.

Nasty Roads

Secondary roads used to access SHTA Trailheads may be wet and muddy. Roads and trailhead parking areas that were unplowed over the winter may still be impassable, particularly on the northern end of the trail.

The Joys of Spring Hiking

Now that we're done telling you about the hazards of spring, let us remind you of a few of the many joys to come:

- Waterfalls swollen with snowmelt.
- Unfurling fern fronds emerging from the duff.
- Raindrops sparkling on the trees as the sun pokes out from the clouds.
- Marsh-marigolds, Bloodroot, Violets and Spring Beauty brightening the way.
- Hiking without bugs.

Trail conditions will change very quickly this time of year. Check the [SHTA Conditions Page](#) before heading out.





SHTA HIKE FEST

Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center

May 13 - 15, 2016

On-line Registration is now open!

Make your plans to attend the Superior Hiking Trail Association's annual rite of spring! Join us for three days of hiking, outdoor adventure presentations, and trail maintenance work. Enjoy the beautiful Wolf Ridge campus and on-site accommodations. Share good food and interesting conversation. Shop the huge Silent Auction -- all proceeds support the Superior Hiking Trail!

Our Friday night speaker will be Larry Weber, a local naturalist, author, and regular contributor to outdoor programs on WTIP and KUMD public radio stations. He'll share the natural wonders he's found along the Superior Hiking Trail.

Saturday night we'll be treated to the beautiful nature photography of Rudi Hargesheimer and the history of the SHT. Rudi's been closely involved with the trail and the Association as a board member and 4-term president. See a preview of his photography by visiting his website, [North Shore Photo Art](#).

This event is open to all - individuals and groups, members and friends. [Go to our website](#) to see the list of hikes, presentations and other fun activities we have planned; you can register online! You may also print and return your completed registration and payment by mail.

30th Anniversary Trivia - The first SHTA Annual Meeting was held on May 7, 1988 at Split Rock State Park and was attended by 40 members!

Planning a Trip?

While you wait for the trail to dry out, why not start planning your 2016 Superior Hiking Trail adventures?

Guidebook and Maps - The Guide to the Superior Hiking Trail, Seventh Edition is the go to reference for planning a trip on the Superior Hiking Trail. The SHTA publishes the guidebook and set of 6 pocket maps covering the length of the trail. The guidebook features mile-by-mile descriptions of trail sections, directions to trailheads, campsite descriptions including water sources. Maps feature topographic background, mileage, and elevation profiles. Purchase through our [SHTA Online Store](#), or at our retail store/office in Two Harbors. Also available at select retail stores and outfitters.

Planning Reference Sheets - Check out the [Backpacking Information](#) page on the SHTA website for sample backpacking itineraries, mileage reference, re-supply options, and other trail services.

Transportation and Shuttle - Find [Transportation](#) options on our website. Information for commercial transportation links between Minneapolis/St Paul and Duluth, Duluth city options, and North Shore shuttles.

Volunteer Work Weekends For Spring Trail Clearing

The dates have been set for three volunteer work weekends to help with trail clearing on the North Shore sections of the SHT. We'll need the help of our certified chainsawyers and others with hand saws and loppers to help remove winter blowdowns and droopy brush from the trail.

Make sure that you are on our active volunteer email lists by clicking on the "Update Profile" link at the bottom of this newsletter.



Work Weekend Dates and Locations

- May 7-8 -- Schroeder

- May 21-22 -- Finland
- May 28-30 -- Grand Marais

Start Building Your Volunteer Hours in the 30 for 30 Program.

This year, we invite you to help celebrate 30 years and 300 miles of trail by contributing 30 hours on SHTA volunteer activities. Hours must be performed as trail adopters, as part of an official SHT volunteer event, or as coordinated with the SHTA office.

Volunteers who donate 30 hours this year can stop in the office and pick up a free trail poster of their choice as a thank-you.

To join the 30 for 30 program or to learn more about volunteering, contact Jo Swanson at volunteer@shta.org or 218-834-2700.

Upcoming Dates: Put these on your Calendar!

March 24 - Long Distance Hiking -27 Day Solo Trek on the SHT - 6:30 presentation by Karen Amundsen at Midwest Mountaineering, Minneapolis MN

April 22-24 - Spring Outdoor Expo, Midwest Mountaineering

May 13-15 - SHTA Hike Fest, Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center, Finland MN

The Superior Hiking Trail is built, maintained, and supported by volunteers.

- Donate or become a member [online](#) or by calling the SHTA office at 218-834-2700.
- Volunteer for a project or campsite.
- Help us find others like you -- share this message with your friends and family.

| EMAIL hike@shta.org | PHONE 218-834-2700 | WEBSITE shta.org

STAY CONNECTED:

