



Request for Proposals:

Poplar River Reroute

Issued: December 2, 2022

Proposals Due: December 30, 2022

The Superior Hiking Trail Association (SHTA) seeks proposals from individuals and businesses with expertise and extensive experience in constructing new hiking trail according to modern, sustainable construction techniques and standards, including, but not limited to: clearing; building tread; installing puncheon and boardwalk; using local, on-site stone to build retaining walls and other trail improvement features.

About the SHTA:

The SHTA is a non-profit organization tasked with the maintenance and renewal of the approximately 320-mile long Superior Hiking Trail (SHT) that follows the rugged terrain along Minnesota's north shore of Lake Superior from the Wisconsin border at its Southern Terminus to the Canadian Border at the Northern Terminus.

About the Project:

The reroute is located approximately halfway on the trail section that travels from Ski Hill Road at the western end to the Caribou Trail at the eastern end in Lutsen, MN. The project is located entirely within the Superior National Forest, managed by the US Forest Service.

The project is for construction of approximately .75 miles reroute (~3960 LF) near the Poplar River. The new trail will bypass about a one-mile section of unsustainable trail that contains about 1200 linear feet of decrepit puncheon and about 600 feet of trail that is much too close to the river.

The new route has been professionally laid out and flagged; pink flagging denotes the corridor, blue flagging is used to mark the start and beginning of puncheon, and green flagging is used where raised tread may be required.

The trail must be built with a finished tread width of 18 inch, full-bench construction, with a cleared corridor width of approximately 36 inches on either side of the center of the trail, for a total cleared width of 72 inches, or six feet. Trail can be roughed in with machinery, not to exceed 48-inch track width, but must be finished with a hand crew.

Due to the fact that there is only access at one end of the reroute, if machinery will be used, it may be best to rough-in the trail all the way to the end, and then turn around and start the finish work back to the access point to avoid having to drive machinery over the finished trail.

Deliverables:

1. **Tread Construction.** Most of the work will involve tread construction (just under 4000 lf), roughly half of which is standard full-bench trail, and the other half may need to have some combination of raised tread, and maybe uphill ditching. This will be determined based on the quality of the native soils for tread construction and the presence of hillside seeps (which are common on the SHT).
2. **Structure Construction.**
 - a. In addition, there is an estimated 340 feet (in six separate locations) of wooden structure construction (puncheon) necessary to cross small drainages and streams. SHTA will purchase the lumber and hardware, **please keep this in mind and calculate labor only for installation.**
 - b. SHTA will provide design specifications and plans for all wooden structures (puncheon and boardwalk) that are SHTA-preferred methods of construction. Other styles or construction methods are permissible (if they meet or exceed the standards of the designs provided) but must be discussed with SHTA prior to construction.
 - c. SHTA will try to get some or all of the lumber freighted in this winter, but if that does not happen, it will be the contractor's responsibility to bring in the lumber and hardware.
3. **Decommissioning of Old Trail and Removal of Materials.**
 - a. Attention must be paid at each end to blend the new trail into the old in such a way that the eye is drawn in the direction that we want people to travel, which will aid in keeping people on the new route.
 - b. In order to discourage people from using the old (decommissioned) trail once the reroute is completed, the Contractor should obliterate any evidence of the decommissioned trail, especially at each end, and possibly block off with trees, brush, or other obstructions.
 - c. At the western end of the reroute, there is an existing campsite **beyond** where the reroute begins, so the old trail must be kept open to retain access to this campsite. **The old trail will be decommissioned after the campsite.**
 - d. Lumber from the structures on the decommissioned trail (approximately 600 linear feet) should be torn up, hauled out and disposed of properly.

Access for the Project (see map in Appendix):

Access for the project is on a snowmobile trail from the Caribou Trail (off the Homestead Road trailhead, which is about 1.5 mi from Hwy 61) just north of Lutsen to where it intersects the SHT. Distance in the snowmobile trail is approximately 2.25 miles. The snowmobile trail forks after about ¾ of a mile, take the right fork. The trail climbs steeply and is fairly rugged after this. There are a couple of wet spots that may benefit from drainage if you have machinery to do so. There is a washed-out culver near the end that will need either a temporary bridge over it, or to get filled in with rock before it can be crossed.

When you reach the intersection with the snowmobile trail and the SHT, it is intended that you will use the SHT to access the beginning of the reroute, which is about 500 feet from the intersection. This portion of the SHT may need to be widened or improved, depending on what machinery, if any, is used.

It is the contractor's responsibility to repair any damage done to the access route (the snowmobile trail and the SHT) at their expense. Access route will be inspected before and after the project by either the SHTA or the US Forest Service.

Specifications:

1. **Duties and Responsibilities of Contractor.**
 1. Contractor is expected to possess the necessary experience, skills and craftsmanship to build high quality and sustainable natural surface hiking (or experience with similar) trails meeting or exceeding accepted industry standards.
 2. Contractor, crew, and any subcontractors associated with this project are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times.
2. **Field Layout and Design.** The reroute has been carefully laid out, but some minor adjustments may be permitted. Certain parts of the alignment are more sensitive (see a and b below), while other parts will have more flexibility. Contractor and SHTA should discuss this in advance, preferably during the initial site visit, to identify these specific areas. If the contractor deviates from the established route, or outside any agreed upon buffer without permission, they may be required to fix the work without additional compensation.
 1. Corridor width shall be 6 feet wide, or 3 feet to either side of the centerline, and 8 feet high.
 2. Contractor should try to preserve large trees (8+” DBH) within this corridor and move the trail around them if possible
3. **Site Meeting/Visits.** Contractor will participate in an on-site construction meeting with the SHTA to discuss the project prior to commencement of work. SHTA will perform regular site visits as the project continues. Contractor needs to schedule a meeting with the SHTA any time there is uncertainty with the project.
4. **Trail Construction.** Contractor and all crew members shall be required to be knowledgeable of and have proven capability of meeting or exceeding the trail building standards as defined in the MN DNR's Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines along with all general standards and conditions defined in this RFP or otherwise adopted for this project prior to and during construction. Specifics include:
 1. **Trail building techniques.** The Contractor is expected to be fully versed in the techniques used to build sustainable hiking trails; this includes, but is not limited to, understanding and applying rolling grades, inslope/outslope tread, knicks,

grade reversals, rock armoring and trail hardening (including wooden structures), climbing/descending turns, water diversions, etc.

2. **Trail grades.** Grades shall not exceed guidelines as defined in referenced manuals, typically not exceeding ten percent (10%), unless approved by the SHTA. All trail grades must be sustainable, as determined by the Contractor.
3. **Surface water control features.** The trail shall use rolling contour or grade system, with the trail traversing hills or side slopes and incorporating natural grade reversals (which are typically required every 20 feet to 50 feet. If a grade reversal is not feasible, other surface water drainage structures at the same frequency to minimize the effects of water flow and erosion shall be required, such as rolling grade dips and knicks; the Contractor is expected to be fully versed in trail building techniques commonly used to prevent trail erosion and ensure long-term sustainability.
4. **Trail Construction in Flat Terrain.** Where the trail needs to be constructed on flat ground, Contractor needs to take added and adequate measures (trail hardening, including, but not limited to: boardwalk, stonework, or elevated tread and/or ditching) to ensure that the trail is sustainable and wetlands are protected.
5. **Tread Construction.** The Contractor shall typically follow these basic steps to construct a **full bench** cut sustainable trail, including:
 1. **Excavating the tread.** Cutting the entire specified trail width into the side slope; excess soil shall be broadcast down slope of the trail (failure to disperse material down slope and away from the trail tread will not be allowed).
 2. **Cutting the backslope.** Backslope shall be compacted and naturally blend into the slope above the trail; maximum backslope shall be at natural angle of repose, but not exceed 45-degrees angle unless approved by Construction Manager.
 3. **Outslope the tread.** Typically 5 percent to ensure proper sheet flow of water across the trail tread, rather than down the trail tread; where the existing surface sideslope is less than 5 percent, the outslope shall conform to the existing sideslope; removed material shall be broadcast down slope of the trail in a thin layer; the critical point where the trail tread meets the downhill slope shall be rounded and well compacted.
 4. **Fine rake and compact the tread.** The entire width of the trail tread shall be evenly raked and then compacted by mechanized equipment furnished by the Trail Builder; soil compaction shall be completed with adequate soil moisture content to ensure proper compaction; fine raking shall leave the trail tread flat and even, with no areas for water runoff to pocket.
 5. **Finish the tread and trail corridor.** Remove any flagging and broadcast organic material originally raked off of the trail tread location down slope over the loose soil from the tread excavation; 'leave no trace' principles will apply; the area adjacent to the trail shall be restored to appear undisturbed; restoration of disturbed areas shall include but not be limited to raking and leveling disturbed soil adjacent the trail tread, spreading leaves and other similar organic material over exposed soil, and removing all evidence of construction and equipment.
5. **Mechanized Equipment Best Practices.** It is the intent of the SHTA to minimize the impacts of construction, especially mechanized equipment. As such:
 1. All equipment will be clean and free of debris before being introduced to the work site. Equipment is subject to inspection at the start and during the project.

2. All mechanized equipment shall be in good mechanical condition, free of any fluid leaks and be equipped with spark arrestors if applicable.
3. Each machine will be equipped with a readily accessible fully charged fire extinguisher.
4. Machine service and fueling is not permitted within 500 feet of a wetland or drainage.
5. A spill kit suitable for five gallons of fluid will be onsite and within 500 feet of mechanized equipment whenever equipment is being operated.
6. Using mechanized equipment equipped with tracks is strongly recommended. All track marks will be raked smooth and affected areas will be finished to have a natural shape, e.g., spoils piles rounded, smoothed and cleared of significant brush, blade edges blended.
7. Scarring of trees within and outside the corridor is to be avoided.
8. Machine access is restricted to the trail corridor, separate access routes may only be created and used with prior written permission of the SHTA. Any approved access route must be retired and reclaimed back to its original condition upon project completion. Any proposed turnarounds shall be approved prior to construction and must be retired and reclaimed back to its original condition upon project completion.

Any equipment that does not meet these criteria shall be shut down until in compliance. If not correctable, it will be removed from the project site at the request of the Owner and at no additional cost to the Owner. As part of their bid package, the contractor will be asked to supply the expected list of mechanized equipment required to complete the project.

6. **Performance and Progress Assessment.** If the SHTA feels that the project is not moving according to schedule, or that the work is not up to industry standards, the Contractor will be notified and must take steps to remedy the matter. If improvements are not made satisfactorily, the SHTA reserves the right to remove the Contractor from the project.
7. **Quality Control and Crew Expectations.** As previously defined, the Contractor shall employ workers skilled and experienced for the specific task required. The Contractor and crew leaders are responsible for the performance and professional manner of all crew members. Any crew or crew member acting in a nonprofessional or inappropriate manner that jeopardizes the health, safety and welfare of other crews working on the site, or the public at large, will be cause for dismissal of that member or the entire crew, at the discretion of the SHTA. Failure to immediately address such issues may be cause for cancellation of the contract.
8. **Backcountry Protocol/Safety.** The Contractor and crew members shall be familiar with backcountry operation and safety protocols as well as be familiar and adept at "leave no trace" practices. Cell reception is spotty. Having back-up communication and navigation devices is strongly recommended. Contractor is responsible for providing all necessary Personal Protective Equipment. Crew members operating machinery or a chainsaw should work in close proximity with at least one other person. Each crew should have an OSHA-compliant first aid kit readily available.
9. **Construction Facilities and Site Protection.** The Contractor is responsible for maintaining the work site in a safe and responsible manner. This includes erecting and maintaining fences and barricades when necessary to provide adequate protection for their own and other crews, and other authorized project members. The Contractor shall secure, properly cover and protect his own equipment, materials and work against

damage of any kind until this project is complete and the SHTA takes possession. The Contractor shall maintain a neat and orderly job site and shall promptly remove all debris and dispose of the debris legally off site. The Contractor shall remove all temporary fences, barricades, signs, etc. upon completion of the work.

10. **Tree and plant protection.** The Contractor shall protect trees and root systems outside of the defined trail tread, front slope, and back slope area from damage from construction equipment or damage due to soil compaction. The Contractor shall erect snow fences or flagging around any trees or plants designated by the SHTA to be protected or at other locations as directed.
11. **Working with Volunteers.** Volunteers may be involved with this project in some capacity; the Contractor must indicate whether they are willing and able to work with, or supervise, volunteers, and how that affects bid pricing

Invasive Species Prevention

Contractors must follow Minnesota DNR's Operational Order 113, which requires preventing or limiting the introduction, establishment and spread of invasive species during activities on public waters and DNR administered lands. This applies to all activities performed on all lands under this grant-funded contract and is not limited to lands under DNR control or public waters. Duties are listed under Sections II and III (p. 5-8) of Operational Order 113 which may be found at: http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/grants/habitat/heritage/oporder_113.pdf.

Prevailing Wage

All State funded or partially State funded work against this contract is subject to the prevailing wage requirements pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 177.41 to 177.44 and corresponding Minnesota Rules 5200.1000 to 5200.1120 as established by the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry. Specifically, all contractors and all tiers of subcontractors must pay all laborers and mechanics the established prevailing wages for work performed under the contract. Failure to comply with the aforementioned may result in civil or criminal penalties. The Department of Labor and Industry has a web page with Frequently Asked Questions about prevailing wages at:

<http://www.dli.mn.gov/business/employment-practices/prevailing-wage-information>.

For questions regarding the Prevailing Wage Laws, contact the Department of Labor and Industry at 651.284.5091.

Please include the following information with your proposal:

1. Cost estimates for the project, broken down into mobilization costs, labor, travel and lodging.
2. Labor costs should be broken down into:
 1. Transport of materials for puncheon from the trailhead to the project site
 2. Tree and brush clearing and removal, if this is an additional cost
 3. Tread construction on reroute
 4. Structure (puncheon) construction
 5. Removal and disposal of approximately 600 lf of old puncheon
 6. Decommissioning/closure of the old trail
3. Your availability, or potential start date.

4. Your qualifications for constructing a natural surface trail and your past experience building and maintaining hiking trails or other recreational trails, including creating accurate cost estimates.
5. Documented evidence (photos, organizational newsletters or other material) of trail construction or repair projects you have overseen or participated in.
6. At least two references from customers of your work. (If you work for a nonprofit organization, please provide testimonials or references from volunteers who have worked with you.)
7. A list of all equipment (make, model, year and width) that will be used on this project must be submitted with bid for approval.
8. A list of all equipment operators with hours of experience on each piece of equipment must be supplied with bid.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL NO LATER THAN December 30, 2022.

Send Proposal, or questions to:

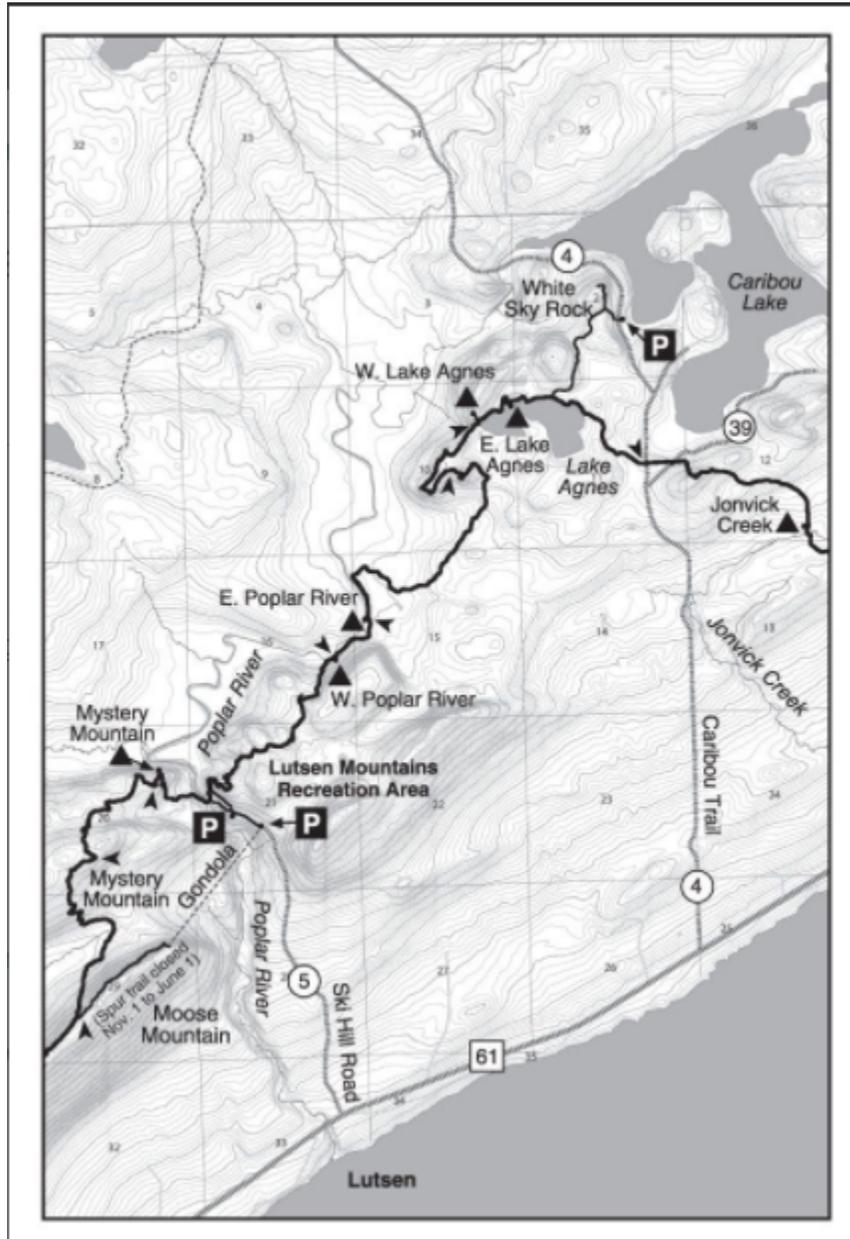
Tamer Ibrahim, Trail Operations Director
Superior Hiking Trail Association
tbrahim@superiorhiking.org
218-370-8393

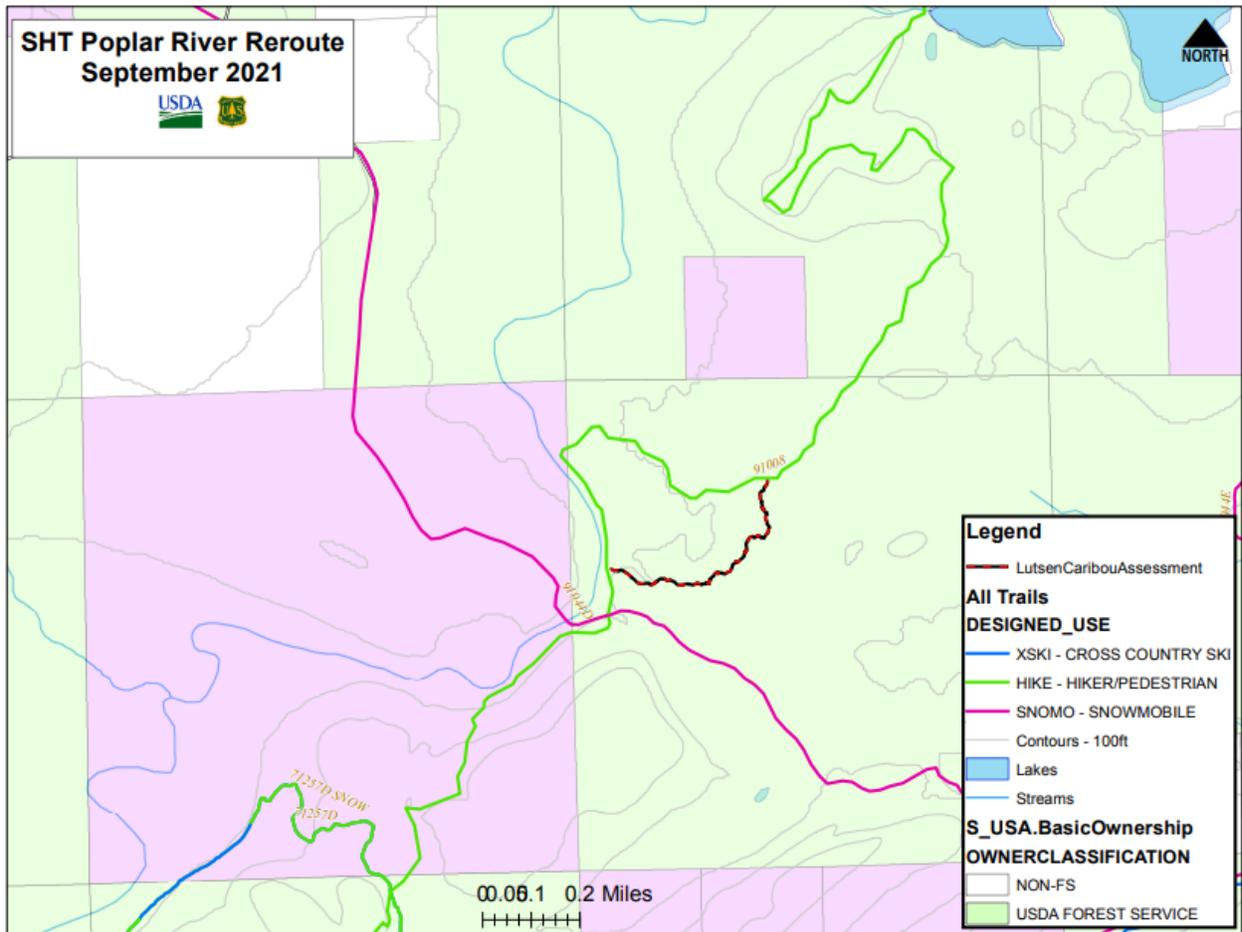
Please contact me with any questions sooner rather than later. I will have limited availability the week of the 18th, but will have more availability the week prior to the deadline. Thank you.

“Funding for this project was provided by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR)”

Appendix A: Project Location

Location Overview





Green Line: existing SHT

Red and Black Line: Poplar River Reroute

Purple Line: Snowmobile Trail

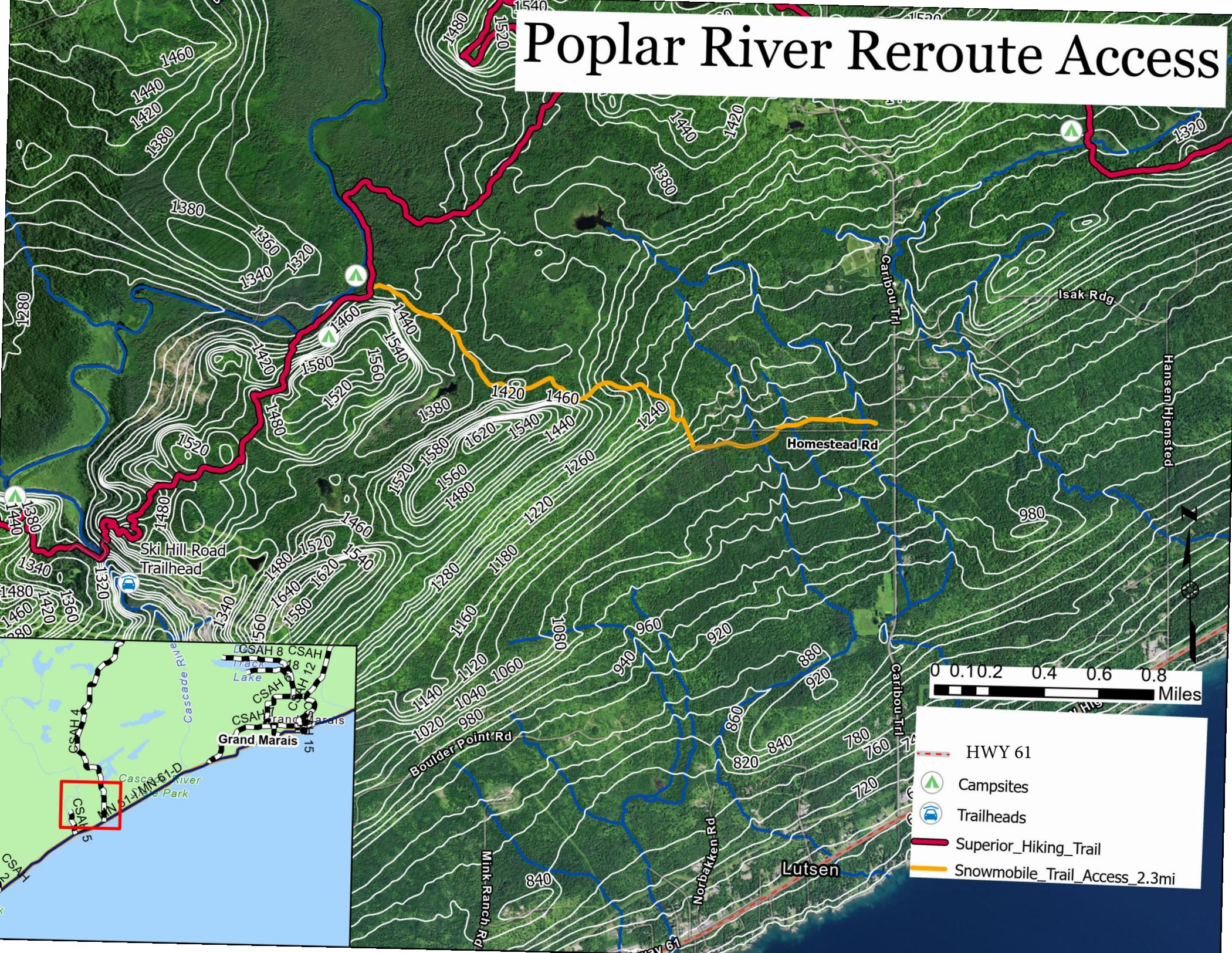


Red and Black Line: Poplar River Reroute

Blue Dots: Approximate location of required structure over streams/drainages

Yellow Dot: Campsite

Poplar River Reroute Access



- HWY 61
- ▲ Campsites
- Trailheads
- Superior_Hiking_Trail
- Snowmobile_Trail_Access_2.3mi

