



Isle Royale Info – Trip Packages

The Feldtmann Ridge Loop



Total Miles	30.4
Difficulty Clockwise	6.768
Difficulty Counter-Clockwise	6.434

The Feldtmann Ridge loop is a great trail to do in 4-7 days and offers a good representation of the island. It is the trip I usually recommend for a first trip to the island if it is possible to come from Minnesota or, via the float plane. It is relatively easy and the trail is very easy to follow.

This loop features a beautiful inland lake, a spectacular campground on a bay on Lake Superior, a campground in the forests of the interior and a hike along the famous “Greenstone Ridge Trail” to end.

This description and itinerary starts from Windigo taking the Voyageur from Grand Portage, Minnesota to there. It is also possible to book the floatplane from Houghton to land in Windigo. It is also possible to take the boats from either Houghton or Copper harbor to Rock Harbor then, the next day, take the Voyageur from Rock Harbor to Windigo to begin the trip. To get back, you would take the Voyageur from Windigo to Rock Harbor to catch your return boat. However, this adds days and cost to the overall trip.

Contents

The Feldtmann Ridge Loop	1
Contents	2
Sample Itineraries.....	3
Short	3
Medium.....	3
Long.....	3
Trip Maps.....	4
Windigo to Feldtmann Lake – North Section	4
Windigo to Feldtmann Lake – South Section	5
Feldtmann Lake to Siskiwit Bay – West Section.....	6
Feldtmann Lake to Siskiwit Bay – Center Section	7
Feldtmann Lake to Siskiwit Bay – East Section	8
Island Mine Trail	9
Island Mine Trail to Washington Creek – East Section	10
Island Mine Trail to Washington Creek – West Section	11
Route Descriptions.....	12
Windigo to Feldtmann Lake	12
Feldtmann Lake to Siskiwit Bay	14
Siskiwit Bay to Island Mine Campground.....	16
Island Mine to Greenstone Ridge	17
Washington Creek Trail to Washington Creek Campground and Windigo.....	19
Campground Descriptions.....	19
Feldtmann Lake Campground	19
Siskiwit Bay Campground.....	20
Island Mine Campground	21
Washington Creek Campground	22
Points of Interest	24
Rainbow Cove.....	24
Feldtmann Tower.....	24
Senter Point	24
Island Mine Well	24
Island Mine Ruins.....	24
Island Mine Cemetery	25
Sugar Mountain	25
Windigo	25
Contacts	26
Notes & Credits.....	27

Sample Itineraries

Short

Days	Nights	Avg. Miles/Day
4	3	7.60

Day One:

Ferry from Grand Portage (leave 8:30 Eastern) to Windigo (arrive 10:30 Eastern)

Windigo to Feldtmann Lake Campground – 8.8 miles

Evening hike to Rainbow Cove – 0.8 miles

Day Two:

Feldtmann Lake Campground to Siskiwit Bay Campground – 10.3 miles

Day Three:

Siskiwit Bay Campground to Washington Creek Campground – 11.0 miles**

Day Four:

Washington Creek Campground to Windigo – 0.3 miles

Windigo (leave 2:00 eastern) to Grand Portage (arrive 4:00 eastern)

[**Option: Instead of walking all the way to Windigo on day three, it is possible to walk 4.4 miles to Island Mine Campground and get up early the next morning to walk the 6.9 miles (mostly downhill) from Island Mine to Windigo to catch the boat at 2:00 pm.]

Medium

Days	Nights	Avg. Miles/Day
6	5	5.06

Day One:

Ferry from Grand Portage (leave 8:30 Eastern) to Windigo (arrive 10:30 Eastern)

Windigo to Feldtmann Lake Campground – 8.8 miles

Day Two:

Feldtmann Lake Campground to Siskiwit Bay Campground – 10.3 miles

Day Three:

Day hike to Big Siskiwit River and Senter Point

Day Four:

Siskiwit Bay Campground to Island Mine Campground – 4.4 miles

Day Five:

Island Mine Campground to Washington Creek Campground – 6.6 miles

Day Six:

Washington Creek Campground to Windigo – 0.3 miles

Windigo (leave 2:00 eastern) to Grand Portage (arrive 4:00 eastern)

Long

Days	Nights	Avg. Miles/Day
7	6	4.34

Day One:

Ferry from Grand Portage (leave 8:30 Eastern) to Windigo (arrive 10:30 Eastern)

Windigo to Feldtmann Lake Campground – 8.8 miles

Day Two:

Evening hike to Rainbow Cove – 0.8 miles

Day Three:

Feldtmann Lake Campground to Siskiwit Bay Campground – 10.3 miles

Day Four:

Day hike to Big Siskiwit River and Senter Point

Day Five:

Siskiwit Bay Campground to Island Mine Campground – 4.4 miles

Day Six:

Island Mine Campground to Washington Creek Campground – 6.6 miles

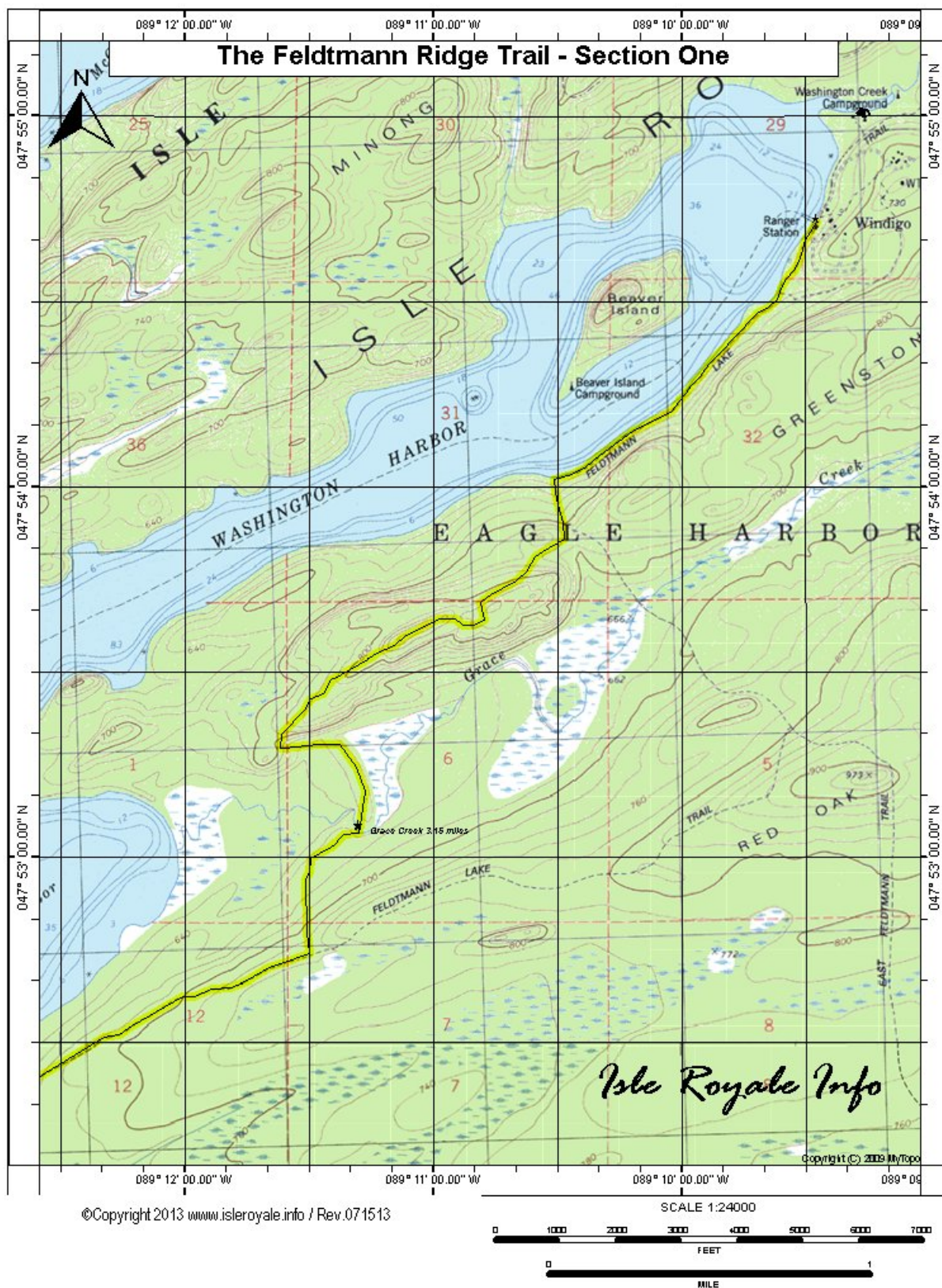
Day Seven:

Washington Creek Campground to Windigo – 0.3 miles

Windigo (leave 2:00 eastern) to Grand Portage (arrive 4:00 eastern)

Trip Maps

Windigo to Feldtmann Lake – North Section



Route Descriptions

Note: The detail maps are captured from maps at 1:24,000 scale and reduced to 50%.

Windigo to Feldtmann Lake

Counter-Clockwise

Rating		Miles		Max Elev.	Min Elev.	Gain	Loss	Elev. Diff.	% Max Grade	% Avg. Grade
Direction	Reverse	Map	GPS							
6.5	6.5	8.80	8.64	850'	612'	548'	-502'	46'	18.7/-18.1	2.4/-2.3

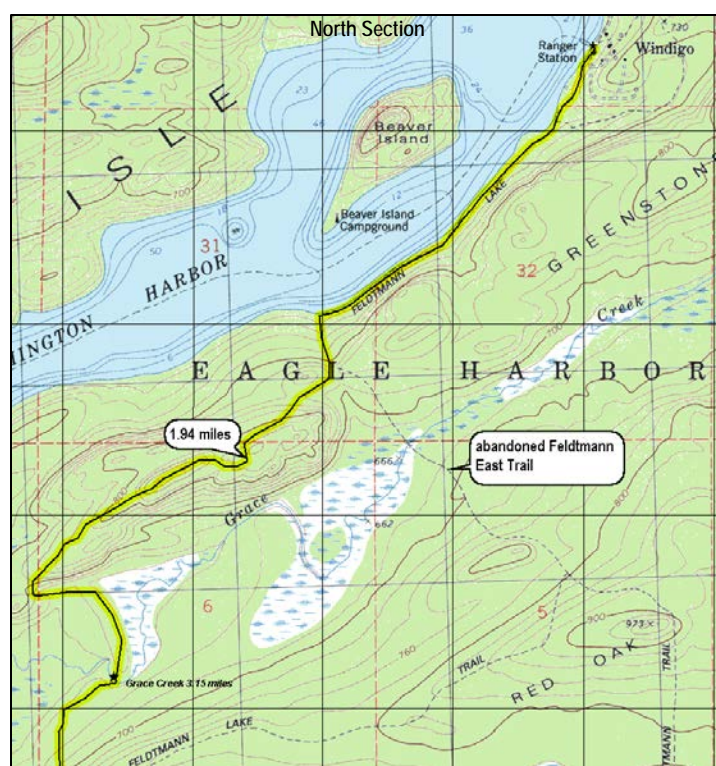


Overview: This trail is relatively easy and a very nice walk. The hardest part is climbing up a ridge, which is completed within the first 2 miles. After that, there is one more minor climb and there are some rock and root sections that can be dangerous if wet, and a couple of sections of boulders on the trail. It provides a good cross section of the Western end of the island.

This trail has been re-routed a few times. I am not sure when exactly it was changed, but as of 1985, the trail did not climb the ridge that it does now, and went farther south, going over Grace Creek early and going south until Red Oak Ridge, before turning west towards Lake Superior. At this junction, where it went west, there was another trail called the “East Feldtmann trail” that continued south and bypassed Feldtmann Lake meeting the Feldtmann Lake trail east of the lake and at the beginning of the Feldtmann Ridge proper.

Key Points:

- 0.00 - Windigo Dock
- 1.15 - Cuts inland away from harbor
- 1.94 - Top of the ridge (Grace Ridge)
- 3.15 - Grace Creek
- 8.64 - Feldtmann Lake campground



Spring view from first ridge with wetlands and Lake Superior in background.



Details: The trail leaves Windigo following the shore of Washington Harbor. When immediately leaving from the dock heading west, the trail reaches a fork. You want to stay on the trail near the harbor. The other fork is a dirt two-track leading to park service buildings and the moose enclosure. Leaving the fork the trail climbs a mellow 25' ascent then goes back down and reaches the west end of the Windigo Nature Trail at 0.25 miles. It continues to follow along Washington Harbor and comes to board steps, leading to a bridge over a small creek at 0.31 miles, then begins cutting inland a bit, and while going up another 20' only to go back down and follow near the lake again. The trail then becomes relatively level with no major changes in elevation until 0.7 miles, when it begins a short ascent of 30' and goes back down gently and stays very close to the shoreline. It follows the shore until 1.19 miles, when the trail cuts south, away from the harbor, just west of the head of Beaver Island. The dock for Beaver Island Campground can be seen about 1500' across the water from there. Heading away from the harbor, the trail begins an ascent of 120' at a 10 to 15% grade until 1.36 miles, when it

miles, where there are a couple of board sections. The trail then becomes level until going down slightly and immediately back up and dropping 50' at a steep 15% grade until 3.6 miles, to stream/rocks then ascending 80' at a 10% grade to 15% grade until 3.7 miles, near a creek with cedar that it follows for a bit before going up and into woods. The trail then stays rolling hills with a tendency downward until 4.5 miles, where it descends 60' on almost road grade until 4.8 miles. It comes to wetlands with cedar and boards at 5.2 miles, and then hits the long road down the side of hill dropping a total of 220' until 5.8 miles. This used to be a road up the side of a hill. At the end of this the trail, it makes its first ascent in a while, climbing a short 30' and immediately descending along the side of a hill with some short, somewhat rocky, switchbacks and descends another 90' until 5.89 miles, then crosses a cedar swamp after a brief leveling and crossing a couple of corduroy and boards, but mostly flat until coming to the trail post at the junction of the Washington Creek Campground at 5.97 miles.

Washington Creek Trail to Washington Creek Campground and Windigo

The Greenstone Ridge Trail ends at the Washington Creek Trail. Washington Creek Campground is 0.3 miles from this point. The group sites are 0.2 miles from this point. Windigo is 0.3 miles from the campground.



Campground Descriptions

Feldtmann Lake Campground

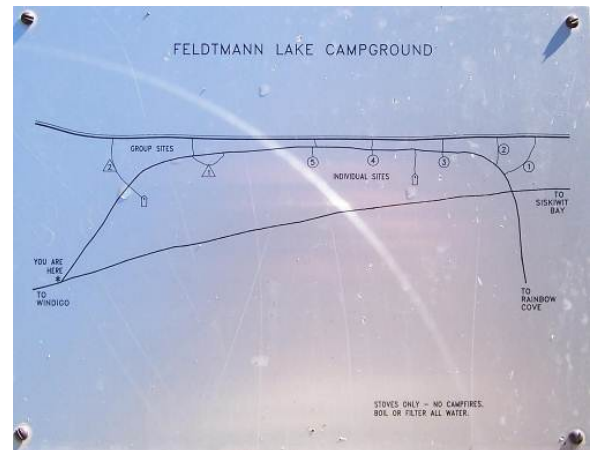
Shelters	Tent	Group	Fires	Tables	TP	Gen	Dock	Wild	Elev.
0	5	2	N	N	N	N	N	8	666'

The Campground is situated right along the shore of Feldtmann Lake, which can be seen from any site, and faces northwest. The total mileage for the loop, from the east post, to the west post, through the campground, is 0.12 miles and 0.13 miles, bypassing the campground. Feldtmann Lake campground is noted for its good moose viewing. When looking across the lake, it also gives you a great view of the Feldtmann Ridge that you will be hiking or have hiked. Looking across the lake, you will see the Greenstone Ridge, with Sugar Mountain being the prominent feature. Looking to the right, you will see the Feldtmann Ridge. The group sites and individual sites are all relatively close to the lake.

The Tent Sites are at the eastern end of the campground.

Tent #1 has 2-3 tent pads, okay to bad seating, not a good view of lake, but it is close to it, with poor lake access. It is open to the rain and semi-open to the wind.

Tent #2 has 3 tent pads and an excellent bench on the lake. 2 of the 3 pads are semi-wind protected from the lake. This site is quite lovely. However, if there are strong winds off the lake, they will be felt. It is pretty rain protected [Spring, 2001 / Spring, 2010]



Points of Interest

Rainbow Cove

Located along the north shore of Lake Superior at the end of Rainbow Cove Trail just north of Feldtmann Lake Campground, it is a beautiful rock beach with a magnificent view of the lake, spectacular sunsets and Rock of Ages Lighthouse.

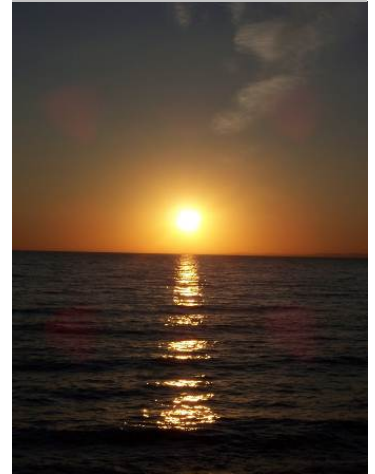
Rainbow Cove at sunset looking east.



Rainbow Cove at sunset looking west.



Rainbow Cove sunset.



Feldtmann Tower

Located about 4.8 miles east of Feldtmann Lake Campground and 5.4 miles east of Siskiwit Bay Campground, the tower is at an elevation of 1173'. Built in 1964, it is 41' tall. It is no longer used except for storage and occasional overnight stays by trail crews. It is possible to walk up the stairs a bit before coming to a locked gate and offers nice views of the area you have walked or, are going to be walking. The remains of the tower this one replaced is located on the trail 0.4 miles east. There are footings on one side of the trail and a pile of wood on the other.

Senter Point

A small peninsula located at about the middle of the west end of Siskiwit Bay. It was the location of a powder house used for Island Mine. The ruins of the powder house are located about 700' east of where the Island Mine trail crosses the peninsula.

Powder house remains in 2012.



Island Mine Well

The Island Mine Well is 1.59 miles south of Island Mine Campground, or 0.32 miles south of Island Mine Ruins and 3.08 from Siskiwit Bay Campground. It consists of a hole approximately 3' in diameter lined with stone and is around 10' deep. A wooden fence surrounds it. Please, do not throw anything into the well, as tempting as it may be.

Island Mine Ruins

The Island Mine ruins are 1.27 miles, south from Island Mine Campground, and 3.4 miles, from Siskiwit Bay Campground. It consists of slag piles, some pits and 2 maybe 3 horizontal shafts. The highlight is a steam engine. It is approximately 12' long and 4' in diameter. It has a very big flywheel and huge gears. Stamped on the plate it says "Baystate C no1".

History: Island Mine operated from 1873-1875 and consisted of three mineshafts and a small village, which was located just East of where the trail leaves Siskiwit Bay. [Source: "Place Names of Isle Royale"]