

Leisure landscape for Hayward Lakes

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## Leisure landscape

Most people would agree that recreational opportunities have been an important part in the transformation of Hayward Lakes from a rough and tumble lumber camp to a choice for second homes. Therefore, it seems worthwhile to look further into the nature of the primary recreation activities and leisure as a whole in the Hayward Lakes area. I am calling this the leisure landscape. A timeline was constructed to highlight some of the major events related to leisure and having relevance to the area. This is not exhaustive, but serves the purpose of organizing the local history. The sources for this information are numerous and varied, but can be found in the attached local literature database.

### 1920's

- Northern States Power creates Chippewa Flowage
- Famous visitor's help put Hayward on the national map

### 1930's

- Chequamegon National Forest established
- Indian Head Resort Association formed
- State begins active tourism promotion

### 1940's

- Mt. Telemark ski resort opens
- World War II

### 1950's

- 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Musky Festival
- Sawyer County Historical Society formed
- North Wisconsin Logging Camp and Museum (later called Historyland)
- Cal Johnson's Record Muskie
- Mass production of snowmobile
- Ice Age Scenic Trail formalized

### 1960's

- Wilderness Act
- 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Birchwood Bluegill Festival
- National Scenic Trails Act
- Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission

## 1970's

- 1<sup>st</sup> American Birkebeiner cross country ski race
- 1<sup>st</sup> Honor the Earth Pow-Pow
- 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Muskie's, Inc. Fishing Contest
- Firehouse 50 (Midwest's oldest bike race)
- Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame

## 1980's

- 3200 mile North Country National Scenic Trail established by congress
- 1<sup>st</sup> Chequamegon Fat Tire Festival
- President's Commission on Outdoors

## 1990's

- Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association formed
- 34 mile National Scenic Byway created
- World Class Events theme created (Sawyer County Recreation Association)
- Lac Courte Oreilles casino

## 'Sportization' of pastimes

'Sportization' is a term used by Norbert Elias (Elias & Dunning, 1986) to describe the long-term process by which pastimes or recreational activities have become sports. 'Sportization' is very much a feature of a global economy, changing technologies, and discretionary incomes. The key feature here is the way that they have become institutionalized, resulting in added forms of commercialization, social organization and competitiveness. Fishing, historically, is perhaps the most recognizable recreational feature of Hayward, and therefore, probably the best for the highlighting some of these changes nationally and locally.

◆ tournaments and festivals including:

Opener  
Pioneer Sportsmen's Fishing Contest  
Fishing Has No Boundaries  
Treeland's Walleye Challenge  
Muskie Opener  
Birchwood Bluegill Festival (33<sup>+years</sup>)  
Trout Festival  
Walleye Catch and Release Tournament (3<sup>+ years</sup>)  
Muskie Festival and Fishing Contest (48<sup>+years</sup>)  
Kid's Fish O'Rama  
Muskie's Inc. Chapter Challenge Musky Tournament (20<sup>+years</sup>)

- ◆ national television shows
- ◆ magazines and organizations related to specific species of fish
- ◆ record-keeping
- ◆ state licensing and stocking programs
- ◆ National Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame

### Trail based activities

The development of a mapped multiple-use, all season trail system is a major change in the cultural and physical landscape. Many of these trails have been in existence for centuries. However, it is only since the development of the major trail activities and their growth as sports that the facilities have been systematically cared for, mapped, marked and actively promoted. They have also provided year round revenue and recreational opportunities for the area. The National Sporting Goods Association (1993) shows the following information related to trail activity:

- ◆ walking as the number one ranking participatory sport for all persons
  - over half of these persons are female
  - they triple the next closest activity in the over 65 category
  - hiking as a separate category ranked 13<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ bicycle riding as the third ranking recreational activity
  - bicycle sales have tripled since 1980
  - over 90% of bikes sold are mountain bikes
- ◆ cross country skiing ranked 26<sup>th</sup>
  - highest age cohort was 35-44 years
- ◆ snowmobile sales have shown the following:

**Table 1.**  
**Estimated number of snowmobile sales in units sold for the U. S. and worldwide.**

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
U. S.	81,946	87,809	114,057	148,207	168,509	170,325
World	150,000	158,000	181,000	227,443	252,324	260,735

Source: International Snowmobile Manufacturer's Association.

Some other specific features of the 'sportization' of pastimes relating to trail activities will be highlighted below.

- ◆ American Birkebeiner cross-country ski race has literally become an institution with a year round office and foundation.
- ◆ As the largest cross country ski race in North America it is also a part of an international circuit of races.
- ◆ Corporate sponsorships, one of the hallmarks of modern day sports, has seen the "Birkie" acquire a title sponsor making it the Dyno American Birkebeiner.
- ◆ Mountain biking were only invented in the 1970's; it became an Olympic sport in 1996
- ◆ The creation of the Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association officially connects the area to the outside world via the National Off Road Bike Association (NORBA) and the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA).
- ◆ Winterfest attracts people from all across the nation for races of all kinds.
- ◆ Numerous smaller snowmobile clubs combine to form county alliances; these are then a part of the Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC). They help provide lobbying and overall political support.
- ◆ Snowmobiling and mountain biking now recognized as an "extreme sport" by ESPN, providing additional exposure for the growing field of sport sponsorships.

### Conclusions

This morphology of the leisure landscape for Hayward Lakes emphasizes the local and recognizes the global. A more detailed and comparative analysis that looks at the role of leisure activities in the development of multiple places would be useful. However, as it is this provides a solid foundation for understanding a particular place and interpreting the meanings that people attach to this place.