

## Split Rock River Wayside Trailhead to Lax Lake Road Trailhead

### BEGINNING TRAILHEAD

**Directions and GPS Waypoints:** At MN-61 milepost 43.5 on north side of highway. GPS: 47.265963, -91.309545

**Facilities:** Kiosk

**Size:** Large

**Overnight parking:** No. Overnight parking is allowed within Split Rock Lighthouse State Park near the fee campground parking area. Permit required. Check in with state park staff. The overnight parking area inside the park adds 1.5 miles on state park trails to reach the SHT.

**Winter access:** Yes

**Special notes:** Among the most popular trailheads to access the Superior Hiking Trail and the Split Rock River Loop, expect to encounter other users throughout much of the year, and have a backup plan to recreate elsewhere if the parking area is full. An additional parking option is at the Cove Point Trailhead (At MN-61 milepost 50.2, turn south on Cove Point Lodge Rd. Continue 0.1 miles to parking lot on right. GPS: 47.248200, -91.313058) located at Cove Point Lodge accessible via a spur trail.

### SECTION SNAPSHOT

**Trail Atlas maps:** C-4, C-5

**Total distance:** 13.2 miles (Additional 0.5-mile spur trail from Split Rock River Wayside Trailhead)

**Elevation change:** Dramatic. There is significant climbing and descending in this section.

**SHT campsites:** Seven

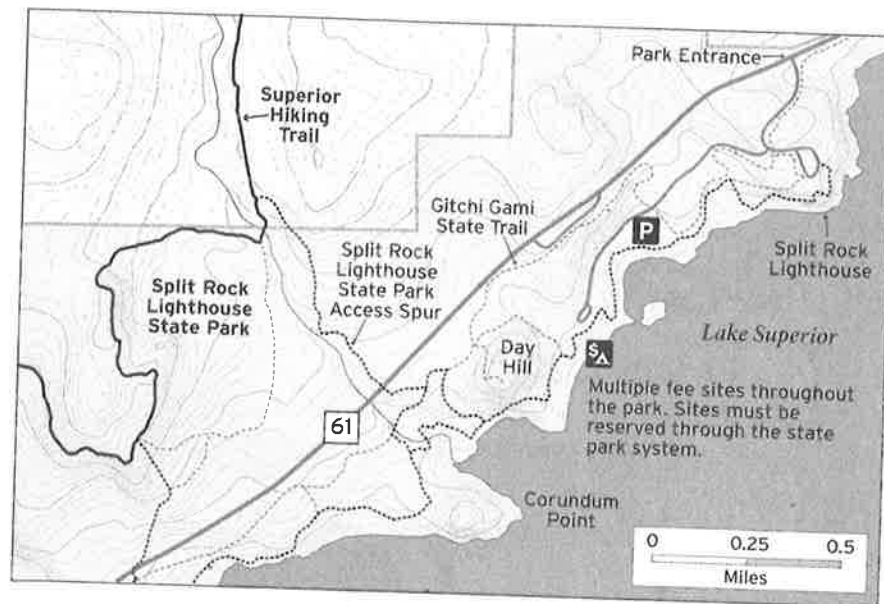
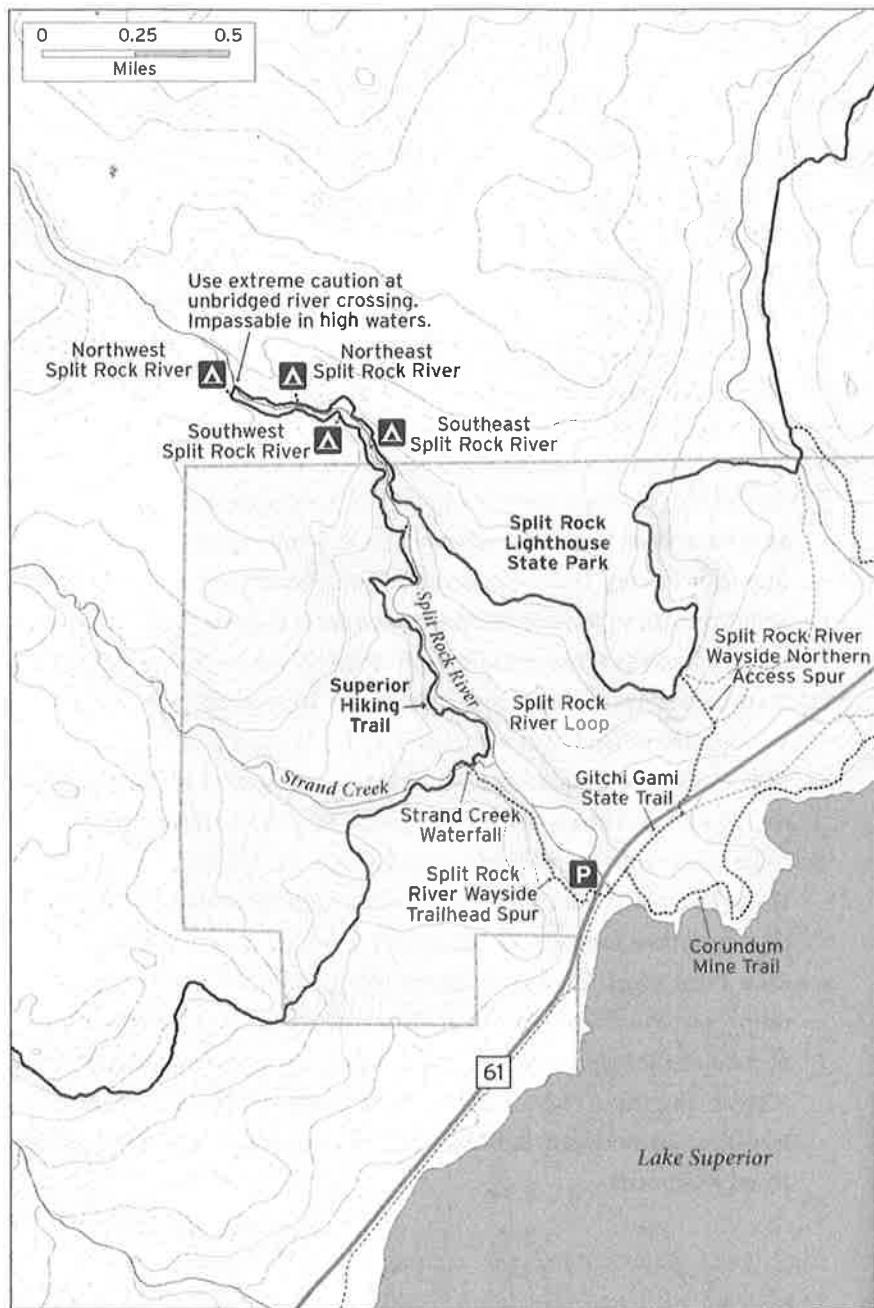
**Hazards and concerns:** Poor condition of tread, particularly along Split Rock River Loop. A natural, unbridged crossing of the Split Rock River. Steep, rocky terrain.

**Synopsis:** This section follows the Split Rock River for several miles before climbing to a ridge with views of Lake Superior and Split Rock Lighthouse. Several other overlooks on ridges and rock outcroppings provide lake and inland views.

**Pro tip:** To avoid the natural crossing of the Split Rock River, a Highway 61 underpass near the wayside leads to the Gitchi-Gami State Trail. Follow this paved trail to another SHT spur trail which accesses the north side of the Split Rock River Loop.

### SPUR TRAILS

- **Split Rock River Wayside Trailhead.** The 0.5-mile spur trail leads to the Superior Hiking Trail near Strand Creek Waterfall.
- **Split Rock River Wayside Northern Access.** A 0.7-mile spur trail leads under Highway 61, across the Split Rock River on the paved Gitchi-Gami State Trail, then crosses Highway 61 and ascends to the Superior Hiking Trail.
- **Split Rock Lighthouse State Park Access.** A spur trail follows state park trails and leads either 1.5 miles into Split Rock Lighthouse State Park and its overnight parking lot, or 2.1 miles to the Split Rock River Wayside. This intersection with state park trails means that countless loops can be created by studying a state park map.
- **Cove Point Loop.** Compared to the Split Rock River Loop, the 5.5-mile Cove Point Loop is much less-traveled, yet features great views and no challenging river crossing. This lollipop-style loop makes for a great day trip. It also offers another entry or exit point for those travelling in between the Split Rock River Wayside and Lax Lake Road trailheads.



#### CAMPSITES

- ▲ **Southwest Split Rock River Campsite**  
**Size:** Medium  
**Water source:** Split Rock River  
 Campsite is often heavily used during peak periods.  
 10.1, 3.9 ⊕ ⊕ 0.3, 0.5
- ▲ **Northwest Split Rock River Campsite**  
**Size:** Medium  
**Water source:** Split Rock River  
 Campsite is near the river crossing.  
 4.2, 0.3 ⊕ ⊕ 0.2, 0.5
- ▲ **Northeast Split Rock River Campsite**  
**Size:** Large  
**Water source:** Split Rock River  
 Campsite is the best option for groups in this area.  
 0.5, 0.2 ⊕ ⊕ 0.3, 4.9