

## **Other trail: Laughing Whitefish Falls Spur**

Trail adopter(s): Lon/Lynn Emerick, 906-942-7879 / lemerick@up.net  
Segment length: 2.3 miles (round trip from NCNST to falls and back is 4.6 miles)

Last update: March 2010

Website: [www.northcountrytrail.org/nct/LaughingWhitefish.htm](http://www.northcountrytrail.org/nct/LaughingWhitefish.htm)

On the trail:

- **Westbound:** From the intersection of the NCNST, Segment 4 Rumely Road, and the spur trail at N46 24.167 W87 03.502 the trail goes southwest following the ridge above the Laughing Whitefish River. As you make a turn about a 0.9 mile down the trail you will pass a small unnamed waterfall and gorge. Hop across the stream and continue through the woods emerging out on an old logging road after approximately 0.6 miles. Turn right and follow the road for 0.5 mile until it intersects with the MI DNRE trail to the falls. Turn right and the top of the falls is just another 0.3 mile. There are steps leading down to the bottom of the falls with great views. Worth the effort, but of course, you will have to climb all 150 steps back up.
- **Eastbound:** From the MI DNRE Laughing Whitefish Falls Scenic Site parking area take the trail past the signboard to the falls, a distance of approximately 0.5 mile. Be sure to view the falls from both the top and the bottom of the 150 steps. Then head back west on the trail to the intersection with the Laughing Whitefish Falls Spur, about 0.3 mile from the top of the falls. Turn right (north) and follow the old logging road for about 0.5 mile where it turns to the right into the woods. After about 0.6 mile you will come across a small stream where the trail turns sharply right. There is a nice little unnamed waterfall and gorge here so enjoy before continuing on the last 0.9 mile to the intersection of the spur trail with Segment 4 Rumely Road of the NCNST.

**Connecting segment:** 4 Rumely Road to Peter White Road

Vehicle access to this trail is via Sundell Road off M-94 6.3 miles east of the US-41 and M-94 East intersection.

- At Sundell Road, turn north and go to the Michigan DNRE Scenic Site Sign, approximately 2 miles. Follow east on the Michigan DNRE Scenic Site Road to the Laughing Whitefish Falls parking area, approximately .42 miles from Sundell Rd.

The Laughing Whitefish Falls Scenic Site Trail begins here. There is a nice signboard with a map of the area. A rare restroom is also available. The Laughing Whitefish Falls Scenic Site Trail heads east towards the falls. The NCT Connecting Spur will intersect in approximately one-quarter mile. At this time,

there is no directional sign where the connector spur to the NCT leaves the Laughing Whitefish Falls Scenic Site trail.... look for ribbons and blazes on the left side of the Laughing Whitefish Falls Scenic Site trail before the falls. The connector trail is well marked and fairly level from its intersection with the main trail to Laughing Whitefish Falls to the signed intersection with the North Country Trail just above a long set of stairs down to the Laughing Whitefish River. This area is subject to windfalls and there are some wet spots as the trail winds down from old woods roads to benches above the river. The trail passes some lovely sandstone cirques and spring waterfalls.

If you are on the NCT trail, Segment 4 Rumely Road to Peter White Road, the spur to the Laughing Whitefish Falls begins 0.30 miles east of the Rock River NCT footbridge. There is a NCT trail sign at the intersection, pointing in the direction of the spur and the Scenic Site parking lot near the end of the spur. The spur angles southwesterly through pleasant woods. A small waterfall can be heard and seen as it cascades into a small but striking canyon scene. At this point the trail heads more westerly and includes a small jump over the stream feeding the waterfall. Shortly the NCT spur intersects with the Laughing Whitefish Falls Scenic Site Trail. Turn east to follow the Laughing Whitefish Falls Scenic Site trail to the falls. At the top of the falls there is a platform to view but there are also a series of 154 steps descending to the bottom of the falls. The multiple views from the platforms as you descend, and eventually ascend, are well worth the extra effort.

Waypoints (east to west)	Latitude	Longitude	Distance to next
Sign (north end of spur)	N 46° 24.1717'	W 87° 3.4892'	1.25 mi
Small falls	N 46°23.4637'	W 87° 4.1157'	.73 mi
Scenic Site Trail Intersection	N 46°23.0140'	W 87° 4.4290'	.28 mi
Laughing Whitefish Falls	N 46°23.0500'	W 87° 4.1400'	.55 mi
Parking at Scenic Site Entrance	N 46°22.8991'	W 87° 4.6294'	.42 mi
Road to LWF Falls Parking	N 46°22.8685'	W 87° 5.1076'	

For more detailed information about the Laughing Whitefish Falls see Eric Hansen's *Hiking Michigan's Upper Peninsula*, pp. 106–109, and also Laurie, Bill and Ruth Penrose's *A Guide to Michigan Waterfalls*, pp. 21.

As you get out and hike this or any of our segments, please contact the trail adopter or Cliff Stammer (906–228–9897 / cnstammer@charter.net) with reports of trail conditions, including blow-downs, washouts, and inadequate blazing.