Transportation

Roads and Highways

The local road and highway system is comprised of approximately 124 miles of interconnected roadways. Total mileage for the Town of Round Lake is 93.42 miles. This number does not include County or State roads within the Town. Of the 93.42 miles of road, 31.76 are gravel roads; 59.73 miles are paved and 1.93 miles are unimproved. Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

Roads within the Town are classified by their functional use and by the amount of traffic they carry. **Table 3.1** indicates the functional classification of the Town of Round Lake's roadway network. Functional road classification (**Map 3.1**) for rural areas include principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors (major & minor) and local roads.

- 1) **Principal arterials**—Principal arterial roads provide connections between cities and regions. They move large volumes of traffic on reasonably direct routes. More often than not, private property access, parking and traffic signals are often limited to help facilitate smooth traffic flows through rural areas. There are no principal arterials in the Town of Round Lake.
- 2) **Minor arterials**—In conjunction with the principal arterials, minor arterials serve cities, large communities and other major traffic generators providing intra-regional and inter area traffic movements. Minor arterials in Round Lake include State Highway 77.
- 3) Collectors (major and minor)—Collector roads generally provide major and/or minor connections within a community or neighborhood and link local roads to arterial roads. Parking and private property access is generally available on these roads. WisDOT identifies several major collector roads in Round Lake including all or parts of County Highway's "A", "B", and "S".
- 4) Local Roads—Local roads are all other roads that are not classified as arterials or collectors. Local roads handle the least amount of traffic volume, but provide direct access to private property. They are generally narrower than the other types of roads and they generally allow parking.

Table 3.1: Functional Road Classification				
Classification	Miles of Roadway	Percent of Total		
Principal arterials	0.0	0.0%		
Minor arterials	10.13	8.2%		
Collectors (major/minor)	25.68	20.7%		
Local Roads	88.28	71.1%		
Total	124.09	100.0%		

Source: WisDOT, 1/2008

In the Town of Round Lake there are no principal arterials. State Highway 77 is classified as a minor arterial. County Highways "A", "B", and "S" are classified as major collectors; Twin Lakes Road is classified as a minor collector. These roadway corridors serve as the

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primary road routes into, out of, and through the Town. The majority of the roadways in the Town of Round Lake are local roads. While not included within the functional classification system or the official Town road mileage report, "private" access roads link many homes to the roadway network. Included as private access roads, these include lanes, streets or other improved surfaces on privately owned lands that are designated and ordinarily used for vehicular travel within a commercial, business, industrial or residential development.

Since part of the Town is in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, a large part of the area road system consists of roads designated as forest roads. In the Town, these roads include Forest Road 164, 173, 174, 302, 305, 306, 310, 315, 319, 320, 321, 715, 718, 729, 741, 758, 1643, 1647, 1648, 1650, 1658, 1663 and 1666. These forest roads were developed for logging purposes and are still used for logging but are also now used for a variety of recreation activities. They are sometimes referred to as fire lanes. Some roads are used as a way to reach hunting and elk viewing areas, and some are designated as snowmobile and ATV/UTV trails. Most of them are gravel.

Two roads located within the Town pass through property owned by the state of Wisconsin. Shuler Road and Fromme Road pass through the Chief River Wildlife Area, a state-owned public hunting ground managed by the WDNR. Both roads are public roads that connect Chief River Road to private property, which borders the Chief River Wildlife Area. To protect public safety and welfare and to provide for emergency services, Sawyer County has established a comprehensive road naming and numbering system for structures, parcels and facilities. Sawyer County is responsible for creating and establishing regulations for these systems, and provides for their administration, control and enforcement.

Commuting

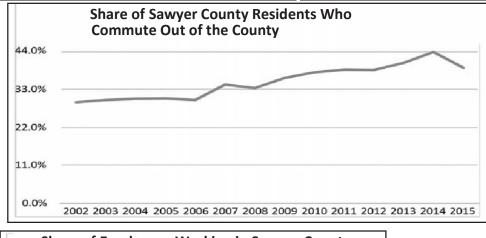
Commuting is the process of traveling between places whether by automobile, recreational vehicle or non-motorized means. Table 3.2 illustrates commuting choices for Town residents who are employed and 16 years and older.

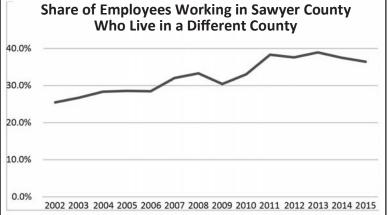
Table 3.2: Commuting to Work				
	Number			
Workers 16 years and over	515			
Car, truck, or van—drove alone	68.7%			
Car, truck, or van—carpooled	17.7%			
Public Transportation (including taxi cab)	0%			
Walked	1.2%			
Other means	1.0%			
Worked at home	11.5%			
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	25			

Source: American Fact Finder 2016

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Employees Working in Sawyer County (2015)			Sawyer County Resident are Employed (2015)	s who	
County of Residence (n = 6,40	94)	County of Employment (n = 6,699)			
County of Residence	Count	Share	County of Employment	Count	Share
Sawyer County, WI	4,069	63.5%	Sawyer County, WI	4,069	60.7%
Washburn County, WI	697	10.9%	Washburn County, WI	304	4.5%
Bayfield County, WI	242	3.8%	Barron County, WI	235	3.5%
Barron County, WI	192	3.0%	Eau Claire County, WI	151	2.3%
Douglas County, WI	104	1.6%	Rusk County, WI	151	2.3%
Ashland County, WI	91	1.4%	Ashland County, WI	98	1.5%
Oneida County, WI	76	1.2%	Douglas County, WI	96	1.4%
Rusk County, WI	73	1.1%	St. Louis County, MN	91	1.4%
Eau Claire County, WI	63	1.0%	Dane County, WI	80	1.2%
Polk County, WI	63	1.0%	St. Croix County, WI	79	1.2%
All Other Locations	734	11.5%	All Other Locations	1,345	20.1%





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Employees from other areas who work in the Town of Round Lake (2015)		Town of Round Lake residents who work out-of-town (2015)			
City, Village or Town of Residence (n = 271)			City, Village or Town of Employment (n = 419)		
From	Count	Share	e Area where employed Count		Share
Hayward Town (Sawyer, WI)	47	17.3%	Hayward city (Sawyer, WI)	101	24.1%
Lenroot Town (Sawyer, WI)	39	14.4%	Hayward Town (Sawyer, WI)	85	20.3%
Hayward city (Sawyer, WI)	20	7.4%	Bass Lake Town (Sawyer, WI)	24	5.7%
Round Lake Town (Sawyer, WI)	18	6.6%	Round Lake Town (Sawyer, WI)	18	4.3%
Bass Lake Town (Sawyer, WI)	17	6.3%	Lenroot Town (Sawyer, WI)	14	3.3%
Spider Lake Town (Sawyer, WI)	11	4.1%	Eau Claire city (Eau Claire, WI)	11	2.6%
Hunter Town (Sawyer, WI)	7	2.6%	Spider Lake Town (Sawyer, WI)	9	2.1%
Edgewater Town (Sawyer, WI)	4	1.5%	Hunter Town (Sawyer, WI)	8	1.9%
Barksdale Town (Bayfield, WI)	3	1.1%	Stinnett Town (Washburn, WI)	8	1.9%
Cable Town (Bayfield, WI)	3	1.1%	Cable Town (Bayfield, WI)	7	1.7%
Couderay Town (Sawyer, WI)	3	1.1%	Duluth city (St. Louis, MN)	6	1.4%
Meteor Town (Sawyer, WI)	3	1.1%	Rice Lake city (Barron, WI)	6	1.4%
Bass Lake Town (Washburn, WI)	3	1.1%	Ashland city (Ashland, WI)	5	1.2%
Crystal Town (Washburn, WI)	3	1.1%	Wausau city (Marathon, WI)	5	1.2%
Long Lake Town (Washburn, WI)	3	1.1%	Milwaukee city (Milwaukee, WI)	5	1.2%
Ashland city (Ashland, WI)	2	0.7%	Ladysmith city (Rusk, WI)	5	1.2%
Rice Lake city (Barron, WI)	2	0.7%	ChippewaFallscity(Chippewa,WI)	4	1.0%
Barnes Town (Bayfield, WI)	2	0.7%	Madison city (Dane, WI)	4	1.0%
Drummond Town (Bayfield, WI)	2	0.7%	Menomonie city (Dunn, WI)	4	1.0%
Grandview Town (Bayfield, WI)	2	0.7%	Superior city (Douglas, WI)	3	0.7%
Summit Town (Douglas, WI)	2	0.7%	La Crosse city (La Crosse, WI)	3	0.7%
Amery city (Polk, WI)	2	0.7%	Sand Lake Town (Sawyer, WI)	3	0.7%
Draper Town (Sawyer, WI)	2	0.7%	Spooner city (Washburn, WI)	3	0.7%
Sand Lake Town (Sawyer, WI)	2	0.7%	Marshfield city (Wood, WI)	3	0.7%
Winter Town (Sawyer, WI)	2	0.7%	Apple Valley city (Dakota, MN)	2	0.5%
All Other Locations	67	24.7%	All Other Locations	73	17.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2015).

Average Annual Daily Traffic

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation collects traffic data throughout the state to better understand the long-term trends and volumes. Traffic counts are generally collected every three years in the summer during a three-to-five weekday period. **Table 3.3** illustrates the change in traffic use from 1985 through 2011 in the Town of Round Lake.

Table 3.3: Average Annual Daily Traffic in Town of Round Lake 1985-2011								
	1985	1988	1991	1995	1998	2001	2005	2011
Site 570233: CTH B	N/A	2500						
SE of Hopp Rd								

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Table 3.3: Average Annual Daily Traffic in Town of Round Lake (continued)								
Site 570180: Hwy 77	600	600*	750	1,100	1,100	930	800	760
E. of CTH A								
Site 570225: CTH A	310	310*	640	350	450	610	320	280
south of Hwy 77								
Site 570232: CTH B	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,900	2,100	2,900	2,400	2500
west of McClain								
Site 570234: CTH B	1,000	1,020	1,250	1,400	1,400	1,900	2,200	1500
east of CTH CC								
Site 570348: CTH A	N/A	330						
between CTH B and								
Chief River Rd								

Source: WisDOT & Town of Round Lake

Traffic Safety

Accidents are an unavoidable part of any community in which automobile use is the primary means of transportation. From January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2018, 111 automobile accidents were officially reported in the Town, based on data provided by the Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory.

Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER)

Once every two years (odd calendar year), a Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) for all Town roads is completed in accordance with Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) requirements. Based on 2017 data, roadways in the Town were inventoried in terms of their surface condition, drainage and road crown. Paved roads were rated from 1 to 10 (10 being the best) and gravel roads were rated from 1 to 5 (5 being the best). **Table 3.4** represents Town ratings for paved roads.

Table 3.4: Paved Road Ratings 2017				
Description of Road Ratings	Percent of Paved Roads			
1. Failed – Needs total reconstruction.				
 Very Poor – Severe deterioration. Needs reconstruction with extensive base repair. 	0.66%			
3. Poor – Needs patching and major overlay or complete recycling.				
 Fair – Significant aging and first signs of need for strengthening. Would benefit from recycling or overlay. 	6.7%			
 5. 5 Fair – Surface aging, sound structural condition, Needs sealcoat or nonstructural overlay. 				
 Good – Show signs of aging, Sound structural condition, could extent life with sealcoat. 	23.08%			

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Table 3.4: Paved Road Ratings 2017 (continued)				
7. Good – First signs of aging, Maintain with routine crack filling.				
 Very Good – Recent sealcoat or new road mix, little or no maintenance required. 	65.48%			
9. Excellent – Recent overlay, like new.				
10. Excellent – New Construction.	4.07%			

Source: WISLR *Based on 53.64 miles of paved rated roads

Town/County/State Road Improvements

Currently, road improvements are done at the discretion of the Town of Round Lake board on a yearly basis. A capital improvement plan for necessary road improvements that would prioritize the necessary improvements to maintain the local road system over the short- and long-term is not yet in place. The Sawyer County Highway Department maintains a Future Road Construction Project schedule however, there are no road projects scheduled by the Sawyer County Highway Dept through 2019 or beyond. Road inspections are done in the Town every spring by the Town board members and the Town of Round Lake road crew foreman. At that time improvements that need to be addressed are noted. The budget requirements determine how many of those improvements can be made in that year. In the spring, the Town of Round Lake Town imposes restrictions to lower the allowable weight of vehicles traveling on all Town roads. This is in recognition of the instability of the road caused by frost and to prevent road damage. In addition to the local restrictions, Sawyer County imposes vehicle weight restrictions on all County highways in the Town. No restrictions are placed on all state highways or on County Road B.

General Transportation Aids (GTA)

The GTA program is the second largest program in WisDOT's budget. It returns to local governments roughly 30 percent of all state collected revenues (fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees). The funds are intended to help offset the cost of road construction, maintenance, traffic and other transportation-related costs. GTA funds are distributed to all Wisconsin counties, cities, villages and Towns based on a six-year spending average or a statutorily set rate-per-mile.

Table 3.5: General Transportation Aids 2013 – 2018				
2013	\$197,982			
2014	\$197,982			
2015	\$205,931			
2016	\$205,711			
2017	\$205,711			
2018	\$233,180			
Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation				

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Air Transportation

No commercial flights are available in Sawyer County. The nearest airports providing commercial flights to domestic and international destinations are in Duluth, Minnesota or Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota. Private passenger jet service is also available out of Duluth and Rice Lake. At present, Sawyer County has a total of six airports/airfields.

Table 3.6 - Sawyer County Airports/Airfields						
Airfield/Airport	Location	Owner / Operator	Status			
Sawyer County Airport	Hayward Twp.; T41N, R9W, S. 24	Sawyer County	Public			
Rainbow Airport	Ojibwa Twp.; T39N, R6W	Tod Torgerson	Private (turf strip)			
Lake Chippewa Field	Hunter Twp., T40N, R7W	(No owner listed)	Private (turf strip)			
Florida North Airport	Edgewater Twp, T37, T9, S29	Ronald & Wanda Masek	Private (turf strip)			
Round Lake Seaplane Base	Round Lake Twp.; T41N, R8W	John Frisbe	Private (water)			
Kitty-Wompus Airport	Weirgor Twp., T37N, R7W	Jordan Arvold	Private (turf)			

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aeronautics

Rail Service

There are no rail lines remaining in the Town. Old rail beds are scattered throughout the countryside where logging and other rail operations were once prevalent. The closest existing rail line is located in the Town of Hayward and terminates west of the City of Hayward. The closest passenger rail terminals are located in Minneapolis-St. Paul, LaCrosse, Wisconsin Dells and Tomah and are operated by Amtrak.

Pedestrian and Bicycle/Electronic Bicycle Transportation

Pedestrian and bicycle (includes electronic bicycles) transportation is limited to trails and roadway shoulders as there are no public sidewalks in the Town. A number of Town roads support walking and bicycling throughout the community. Many have low average daily traffic levels. Pedestrians walk along the side of the roadway and bicycles share the roads with traffic as the majority of Town roads do not have shoulders or designated bicycle/walking lanes. The Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin, in conjunction with WisDOT, created a state bicycle map that includes information on roadway conditions for bicycle travel, bicycle trails, rustic roads, and mountain bike facilities. Within the Town of Round Lake, State Highway 77 is considered to have the "best conditions for biking" based on a number of factors including, but not limited to, paved shoulders and good sight distances. Both County Highway's A and S are also considered to have good conditions for biking, but

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lack shoulders. County Highway B in the Town is considered to have "high-volume, undesirable conditions" for biking. This is based on moderately high traffic volumes, no or narrow paved shoulders, and moderate-to-high truck traffic. Bike enthusiasts may consider using designated trail segments which cross portions of the Town.

- Tiger Cat Tour (on-road). The Tiger Cat Tour is 35 miles if the Seeley trailhead is used, or 28 miles if the OO SC Johnson Outdoor Center trailhead is used. The shortest route is rated as easy. The long route includes a few steep hills. The trailhead location is in the unincorporated Town of Seeley, 10 miles north of Hayward, or at the Birkebeiner Ski Trail OO SC Johnson Outdoor Center, three miles east of Seeley on County OO (daily or annual vehicle parking fee applies). On-route attractions include scenic roads through Sawyer County Forest, causeways cutting across the Tiger Cat Flowage, picturesque dam site and the Hayward/Seeley area. Map: http://preview.travelwisconsin.com/On-RoadBikingDirectory.aspx
- Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association Trails (CAMBA) (off-road. Twenty-four miles are accessible if all loops are ridden from Seeley to Mosquito Brook Road and back. Trails range from easy to difficult. Surface types are grassy XC ski trails, logging roads, snowmobile trails, and gravel, paved and sandy forest roads. There is a soft surface in some low spots. Trailhead location is Mosquito Brook Rd / Birkebeiner Trail crossing, six miles northeast of Hayward; or Silverthorn Park, 11 miles north of Hayward. The newly completed Mukwa single-track mountain bike trail follows along the northwest section of the Town of Round Lake in the area known as the Hayward Cluster on the CAMBA maps connecting Mosquito Brook Road to Gravel Pit Road.

Multi-Use / Recreational Trails

Throughout Sawyer County, there are several hundred miles of multi-use trails and a large number of forest roads. This network is used most intensely during the winter months for snowmobiling and in the summer months for ATV/UTV use. The network also provides an alternate means of commuting (other than vehicle travel) for some Sawyer County residents. This network includes:

- Over 600 miles of snowmobile trails
- 200 miles of bike trails
- 135 miles of ATV/UTV trails
- Hiking trailsHorseback trails
- 200 miles of cross country ski trails

In the Town of Round Lake, there are a number of motorized trails. The Town passed ordinances in 2013 and 2015 increasing the recreational trail system. Ordinances and roads now open for travel can be found on the Town's website:

<u>http://www.Townofroundlakewi.org</u>. An important rule regarding motorized trails in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest was became effective December 9, 2005. This rule commonly referred to as the Travel Management Plan, revised regulations governing motor vehicle use on all National Forest System lands, including the use of off-highway vehicles. For updates of accessible roads and trails, see the Chequamegon-Nicolet Forest Service Motor Vehicle Use Map available on the National Forest Service website: <u>http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf/rec/tmr/index.htmland</u> at each Forest Service office. All National and County Forest lands are open to walking and other quiet-sport recreational activities. A number of "hunter walking trails" are located within the Chequamegon–Nicolet National Forest and can be found on the Chequamegon–Nicolet National Forests web site.

Several hunter-walking trails are located within the State owned Chief River Wildlife Area. There are five of these trails, which go north and south off Chief River Road. Four of the trails have small parking areas just off the road, and one of the trails becomes snowmobile route #18 during the winter. Three other hunter-walking trails are located off Shuler Road and one of them has a small parking area.

Water Transportation

No waterborne commerce activity is available. The closest harbor for waterborne commerce and transportation is through the Port of Duluth–Superior. Many miles of lakes, rivers, creeks and streams that exist in the Town are used primarily for recreational purposes or short social commutes.

Public and Specialized Transportation

- The Senior Resource Center (SRC) assists in coordinating rides for individuals 55+ years of age and older. SRC will coordinate, for those who have no means of transportation, rides through the volunteer ride program. The number for the center is 715- 634-3000 and reservations are needed 24 hours in advance. A number of private specialized transportation providers are available to qualifying individuals, based on disability. These companies include Abby Vans (Neillsville), Handi-Lift (Cumberland), Key Care (Ladysmith), New Richmond Transport (New Richmond), Northwoods Transit (Rice Lake), Sawyer County Veterans Services and Ventures Unlimited.
- **NWT Express** provides ground transportation between Hayward and Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport (MSP) and other prearranged destinations. MSP service operates seven days a week with scheduled stops at 12 different communities along the way to MSP. The telephone number for NWT Express is 715-634-5307. <u>www.NWTexpress.com</u>
- Namekagon Transit provides public transportation for all of Sawyer County, southern Bayfield County, Barron County and Washburn County. Their phone is 715-634-6633, and their website is <u>www.namekagontransit.com</u>.

• State, Regional and Other Transportation Plans

It is a requirement of the transportation element to incorporate and address applicable state, regional, and other transportation plans, including: transportation corridor plans; county highway functional and jurisdictional studies; urban-area transportation plans; rural-area transportation plans; airport master plans; and rail plans. Known transportation plans are listed along with a brief summary of some selected plans applicable to the Town of Round Lake.

- Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020

The Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 expects every transportation agency to

make accommodations for bicycling and walking as a routine part of their planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance activities. The Plan 2020 clearly intends for bicyclists and pedestrians to have safe, convenient access to the transportation system, and sees every transportation improvement as an opportunity to enhance the safety and convenience of the two modes. Currently, the Town of Round Lake is considered a rural area. Recommendations include paved shoulders in all new construction and reconstruction of roads used by more than 1,000 vehicles per day.

- Corridors 2020

The Wisconsin Corridors Plan for 2020 is designed to provide essential links to employment and population centers around the state. It is composed of two elements: 1) a backbone system of multilane divided highways connecting all major population and economic centers with each other and to the national highway network; and 2) a connector system of two and four lane highways connecting other significant economic and tourism centers to the backbone system. By the year 2020, the total mileage in the Corridors 2020 system will be expanded to 3200 miles. Currently there are no improvements planned for the Town of Round Lake.

- Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020

The Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020 focuses on the 11,800 miles of state trunk highway routes. The three areas that are emphasized in this plan are: pavement and bridge preservation, traffic movement and safety. These routes affect not only auto and commercial truck travel, but all modes of transportation; thus the importance of keeping the state trunk highways, dependable, safe, and efficient. The SHP 2020 does not identify any traffic congestion in the next 20 years on the highways within the Town of Round Lake. There are no major improvements or changes to the state highway routes in this plan for the Town.

- Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

The Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020 provides an outline for improving and expanding the state trunk highway system, with a strong consideration allowing for bicycle accommodation. The current plan objective recommends suitable space for bicyclists when developing and improving roadway projects within the Town of Round Lake.

- Sawyer County Human Services - Public Transit Plan

Updated in 2008, the plan outlines coordinated transportation services between private and public parties. The plan must address federal transportation funding requirements for a select set of funding programs. Phone715-634-4806.

More information for the following may be found at <u>www.wisconsindot.gov</u>

Connections 2030 Corridors 2030 WI State Highway Plan 2030 WI Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020 Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 WI State Airport System Plan 2030 Sawyer County Human Services – Public Transit Plan

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Transportation Programs and Scenic Routes

A number of transportation-related programs are available to local units of government. The majority of these programs provide financial incentives or assistance to communities to enhance the overall transportation network or travel experience.

- 1. Rustic Roads Program
- 2.Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP)
- 3.Local Bridge Improvement Assistance
- 4.Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
- 5. Traffic Signing and Marking Enhancement Grants Program
- 6.General Transportation Aids (GTA) Program

Rustic Roads Program

The Rustic Roads Program was created in 1973 by the State Legislature to preserve what remains of Wisconsin's scenic, lightly traveled back roads. A Rustic Road may be dirt, gravel or paved. There are eligibility requirements for the designation. As of 2019 the Town of Round Lake has Rustic Road 111 comprised of 25.5 miles of scenic terrain, a portion of which ends in Ashland County. Maps can be obtained from the WI Dept of Transportation website: www.wisconsindot.gov

Color Tours

The Hayward Lakes Visitors and Convention Bureau, in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service, has created three color tours (**Map3.3**). These routes within the county include roads that offer access to outstanding fall colors. Route One passes through the Town of Round Lake on the following roads: Twin Lake Road, County Road A, State Highway #77, County Road S, Moose Lake Road— also known as Forest Road #164, Forest Road #164 to County Road B, then McClain Road, and Twin Lake Road.

Scenic Byways

A portion of State Highway 77 represents the Great Divide Scenic Byway, a National Forest Scenic Byway. Designated in 1988, the 29-mile route on State Highway 77 between Glidden and Hayward takes motorists through the northwestern portion of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. The route's pristine beauty, including some of Wisconsin's best wilderness views, led the U. S. Forest Service to designate it a Scenic Byway. It runs through woodlands that are home to black bears, timber wolves, elk and white-tailed deer, and crosses lakes and swamps alive with beavers, loons and bald eagles.