

Marathon Information Centre



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Geology in Marathon and Surrounding Area

Gold Mines at Hemlo – Wonder at the richness of gold deposit that supports two of the largest gold mines in the world! Hemlo Gold Mines are highly mechanized gold mining and milling operations.

To view the mines from Highway 17, drive east 27.4 km from the Information Centre to Moose Lake.

Pebbles Beach – This picturesque cobble beach at Lake Superior's shore is a great picnic spot. There are tables, play equipment, and a parking lot large enough for trailers. The entire beach can be seen from the parking lot, but a short, easy walk along a sandy path brings you onto the beach. The oval and round pebbles, cobbles, and boulders that make up the beach were deposited at this location by a continental glacier. The rock fragments were picked up by the advancing ice sheet between one million and 100,000 years old.

Pebbles beach is 10.7 km from the Marathon Information Centre. Drive west to Peninsula Road, turn south (left) and stay on this road through town. Once over the railway tracks, turn left at Stevens Avenue. Proceed to Howe Street and turn right. Drive to the very end of this street, where you will find the parking lot. **Please do not remove pebbles from the beach!**

Sand Dunes at the Mouth of the Pic River – Huge sand dunes tower over a spruce forest, smothering trees in their shadow. The long beach is windswept and covered in driftwood of a dead forest. All this sand was deposited by meltwater, running off of continental glaciers, about 10,000 years ago. The Pic River was much larger than it is today and carried this huge load of sediment. As the river entered the lake, it lost its energy and thus its carrying power. The sand was dumped near the mouth of the river, and over the years, the wind and water have shaped it into a beach and dunes.

From Marathon Information Centre, it is 16.2 km to the dunes. Drive east to Highway 627, turn south, and just before the bridge over the Pic River, turn right. Follow this road into a campground area. Park and walk out into the beach area.

Mink Creek Falls – A beautiful waterfall in a lush forest setting washes away your everyday cares. A short (100 m), but steep trail brings you to the falls. This trail continues along the west side of Mink Creek, all the way to Lake Superior (about 1 km). The natural jointing in the syenite rock has led to the creation of the ledges, forming this waterfall. This red syenite is nepheline-bearing, and formed about one billion years ago, when this area had active volcanoes.

Drive west from the Marathon Information Centre for 20.3 km. Park on a wide gravel road on the north side of the highway. Be careful crossing the highway and look for a trail at the top of a low rock cut outcrop. Take your camera with you!