Ice Age National Scenic Trail
"TAILGATE SAFETY SERIES"

LYME DISEASE PREVENTION

The best defense against Lyme disease is to invest time and effort to protect yourself from tick bites. While it may be impossible to avoid contact with ticks altogether, these guidelines will decrease your chances of being bitten by a tick.

- Ticks prefer areas with brush and tall grass—avoiding these habitats will reduce your exposure to tick concentrations
- The months of May, June, and July are the most active for ticks that transmit Lyme disease—take extra precautions then
- Stay to the center of the trail whenever possible, minimizing your contact with grass, brush, and leaf litter
- Use insect repellent with 20% - 30% DEET on exposed skin and clothing to prevent tick bites
- Wearing long pants, long sleeves, and long socks will help keep ticks off your skin
- Wear light colored clothing to spot ticks more easily
- Tuck in shirts, and tuck pants legs into socks or boot tops to help keep ticks on outside of clothing
- If you will be in tick-infested habitat for extended periods, you may consider taping shut the area where your pants and socks meet for added protection
- Perform periodic "tick checks," and inspect yourself thoroughly at the end of your outing
- Remove imbedded ticks with fine-tipped tweezers—monitor yourself for symptoms of Lyme disease (bulls-eye rash, fatigue, fever, soreness, etc.)—consult your physician if you suspect the onset of Lyme disease

References:
Center for Disease Control— http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/LYME/Prevention/ld_Prevention_Avoid.htm