Isle Royale

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Isle Royale National Park

Boating Guide 2016

The regulations of Isle Royale National Park are intended to protect park resources and appropriate visitor experiences. Regulations place strong emphasis on preserving wilderness character and values. Visitors are responsible for adhering to park regulations. Isle Royale National Park's boundary extends 4-1/2 miles into Lake Superior from Isle Royale and the outer islands, or to the international boundary. **No pets** are allowed within park boundaries.

Permits

Permits are required for all overnight camping, including anchoring out. Permits may be obtained at Houghton, Rock Harbor, or Windigo Visitor Centers. As a convenience, you may permit, at least four days in advance, at www.nps.gov/isro. Visibly display permit when at dock or anchorage. When staying ashore display permit on tent or shelter door.

User Fees

Visitors to Isle Royale, including those fishing in park waters, are required to pay a $4 per person per calendar day user fee. Children 11 and under are free. Boaters have the option of either paying the daily fee or purchasing a Season Boat Rider Pass or an Individual Season Pass.

Camping and Docks

All dock space and small party campsites (including shelters) are available on a first-come, first-served basis. They may not be reserved or held for others. From late-July to the end of August, expect to find crowded conditions at docks and campgrounds. Boaters already set up at a campsite or shelter and who have a valid camping permit must be given priority access to space at the dock (when not in camp, many boaters leave fenders attached to the dock to indicate occupancy of a campsite.) Observe consecutive night stay limits for each campground, in effect from June 1 through Labor Day. You may only use one shelter and shelters may not be used solely for cooking or gear storage. Do not use staples or nails on shelters. A tent may be erected inside, but not outside a shelter. Do not change the landscape by digging, trenching, etc.

Generally, only docks that adjoin campgrounds are open for overnight use. The Rock Harbor Marina provides nightly slip rentals with utility service hook-ups.

The following docks are open for day use only from 6am until 10pm Eastern Time:

* Mott Island Docks
* Any NPS or concession fuel dispensing dock
* Edisen Fishery Dock
* Hidden Lake Dock
* Wright Island Dock
* Raspberry Island Dock
* Passage Island Dock
* Amygdaloid Island Dock
* Crystal Cove Dock
* Any shipwreck mooring buoy
* Any other dock posted or signed as closed to overnight use

The following docks are closed to public use:

* *Ranger III* Dock at Rock Harbor
* North side of the Malone Bay Dock
* *Ranger III* Dock at Mott Island
* *America* Dock
* Any other dock posted or signed as closed to public entry

Restricted Activities

Water skiing and personal watercraft (including vessels referred to as jet skis, waverunners, sea-doos, wet bikes, or surf jets) are prohibited. Inland lakes and streams can only be explored by paddling. Vessels with motors (even if not in use) are prohibited on inland lakes and streams.

The operation of electronic and motorized devices such as stereos, televisions, radios tuned to commercial stations, and portable generators is not permitted except in developed and open water motorized zones. Developed areas include Windigo, Rock Harbor and Mott Island. Open water motorized zones include Lake Superior waters outside of designated Quiet/No-Wake Zones.

Aquatic Invasives

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) pose a serious threat to the native fish and other species at Isle Royale. Spiny water fleas and low levels of sea lamprey are found in Isle Royale Park waters. Zebra mussels were discovered in 2009. Regulations have been enacted to help prevent the spread of these and other AIS. All vessels (including non-motorized craft), visiting or transiting within the bounds of Isle Royale National Park, along with associated equipment including all dive gear **must be decontaminated by an approved method** prior to entering the waters of the park. See park newspaper for details on decontamination methods. For large non-trailered vessels, owner shall inspect vessel hull, outdrives, trim tabs, and motors for AIS.

On-board Generators

The operation or use of permanently installed (by manufacturer) on-board vessel generators **is allowed** from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. EDT in developed zones, and at the following docks: Beaver Island, Belle Isle, Caribou Island, Grace Island, Hay Bay, Malone Bay, Rock Harbor, Tobin Harbor and Windigo.

The operation or use of permanently installed on-board vessel generators **is prohibited** at the following public docks: Birch Island, Chippewa Harbor, Daisy Farm, Duncan Bay, Duncan Narrows, McCargoe Cove, Merritt Lane, Moskey Basin, Siskiwit Bay, Three Mile, Todd Harbor, and Tookers Island.

The operation or use of permanently installed on-board vessel generators is permitted between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. EDT by vessels at anchor within Quiet/No-Wake Zones except when anchored within 1/4 mile of designated park docks (listed above) where on-board generator use is prohibited.

Quiet/No-Wake Zones

These zones protect the natural quiet and wilderness values sought by most Isle Royale visitors and reduce wake impacts on park resources and paddlers. Within Quiet/No-Wake Zones, vessels must not exceed 5 mph OR create a wake in excess of surrounding seas. Quiet/No-Wake Zones are not marked by buoys. Boaters are responsible for knowing the locations of Quiet/No Wake Zones. See center page of the park newspaper for locations.

Fishing

A Michigan Fishing license is required for fishing in Lake Superior, including narrow bays and harbors, and when transporting fish from the island to the mainland. Licenses are not required to fish the inland waters. **Michigan size, season, and possession limits generally apply.** See park newspaper for exceptions.

All fish in your possession count toward your limit, regardless of where and when you caught them. All fish in your possession must be measurable and identifiable by species.

Only barbless hooks and artificial lures may be used in inland lakes, streams and creeks. The possession or use of fish or fish parts as bait for fishing within the Lake Superior waters of the park is limited to fish and/or fish parts that are caught within the park. Transporting fish or fish parts for use as bait to the park is prohibited.

Disposal of Fish Remains

Lake Superior Campgrounds: In Rock Harbor and Windigo use the fish cleaning station. At campgrounds and docks, clean fish away from the dock and campsites. Do not throw pieces to gulls or into the water near shore. Scrub up and rinse away all blood and slime from any onshore surfaces. Boat out and dump chopped remains in 50 feet or deeper water.

Firewood

Fires are allowed only in provided metal rings and grates. Very few campgrounds allow fires. Dead wood on the ground may be collected for use as fuel for campfires. Do not bring wood from mainland as it may harbor disease or insect pests.
Take your trash with you, do not burn it.

Ferry and Tour Boat Schedules

The following docks are closed to accommodate passenger ferry operations according to the following schedule. Times listed in Eastern Daylight Time.

Daisy Farm	Tues/Thurs/Sun	9:00 to 10:00 a.m.
Chippewa Harbor	Tues/Thurs/Sun	9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
Malone Bay	Tues/Thurs/Sun	10:30 a.m. to noon
McCargoe Cove	Mon/Wed/Sat	2:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Belle Isle	Mon/Wed/Sat	2:30 to 3:30 p.m.
Windigo-northeast	Thurs/Sun (7/15 – 8/17)	12:00-2:30 p.m.
Windigo-southwest	Daily	10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

The following docks are closed to accommodate the Rock Harbor Lodge tour boat *The Sandy* according to the following schedule. Times are listed in EDT.

Passage Island	Wed	10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
	Mon and Fri	2:30 to 5:30 p.m.
Hidden Lake	Tues and Thurs	9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Edisen Fishery	Tues and Thurs	2:30 to 5:00 p.m.
	Sat	9:30 to 12:30 p.m.
Raspberry Island	Tues and Fri	8:00 to 9:00 p.m.
	Wed	3:00 to 5:00 p.m.