

# Devil's Kettle

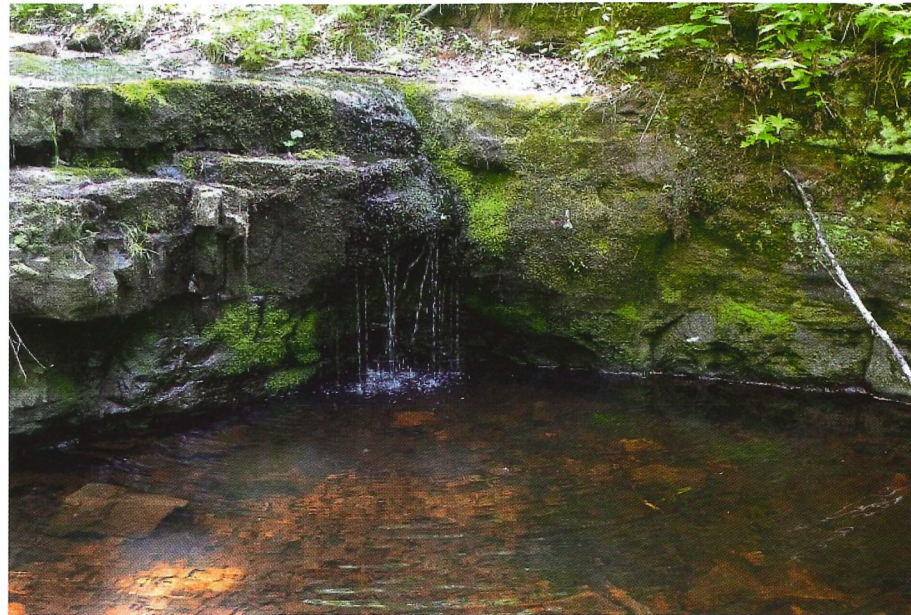
Difficulty: Easy

Distance: .62 Miles Round Trip

Topo: Strickland 7.5'

## Description:

Like several of the other areas, Devil's Kettle is located just west of the glacier's edge from the last ice age. Most of the Blue Hills' bedrock is made of quartzite, but the Kettle area also has sandstone.



## Driving Directions:

From the intersection of County Highways O and W by the Blue Hills Inn, drive about .9 miles south on W. From Old 14 Road drive 3.8 miles north on County W. Look for an ATV trail leading west from the road.



## Hiking Directions:

Go west on the faint trail (waypoint 001) .16 miles until you reach the intersection with the small stream with rock outcrops (waypoint 002). Go north following the stream for .15 miles until you find the large drop pool that is the Devil's Kettle (waypoint 003, N45°28.392', W91°30.181'). This route and the Devils' Elbow can be done easily in one day.

# Devil's Elbow

Difficulty: Easy

Distance: .7 miles roundtrip

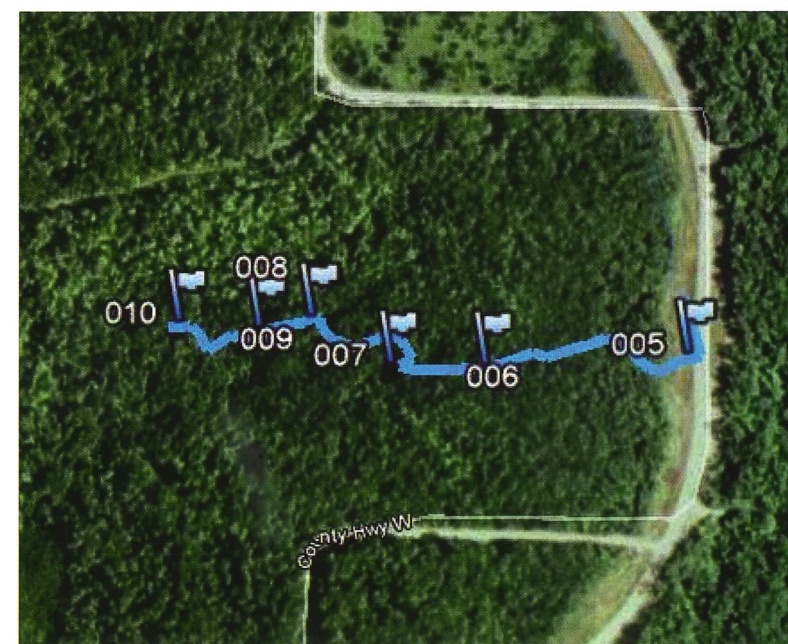
Sandstone Cliffs Topo: Strickland, 7.5'

## Information:

These cliffs are sometimes called the Devil's Elbow and are the reason Highway W has to swing to the east. While mostly sandstone, there are some quartzite outcrops. Sandstone usually has a more rounded appearance while quartzite tends to fracture in straight lines.

## Driving Directions:

From the intersection of Highways O and W, proceed south 2 miles to the middle of the outside of the curve in W. From Old 14 Road, drive north 2.7 miles to the middle of the curve. The start of the hike is at the metal culvert with an intermittent stream.



## Hiking Directions:

Start at Waypoint 005 and follow the stream west. After .13 mile (006) you will see cliffs on your left. At .18 (007) mile, work up the slope to the north. You will eventually find a second cliff band with the main cliffs at Waypoint 009, .6 miles, N45° 28.447 W91° 30.063. You can also approach the cliffs from the logging road that goes southwest off the old, square corner north of this route, but there are thick briars.



## Blue Hills Felsenmeer

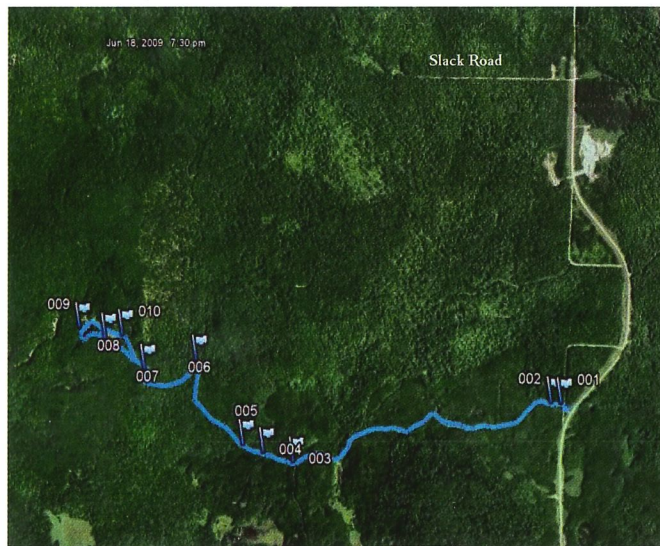
Difficulty: Hard (Intermediate to overlook, only)  
Distance: 4 miles round trip to overlook.  
Topo Map: Strickland, 7.5'

### Information:

"Felsenmeer" is a German word meaning "sea of rocks". There are several of these formations in the area but the most famous is the Blue Hills Felsenmeer, which was created at the time of the last glaciation. True felsenmeers are formed when large boulders shatter in place due to freezing/thawing. Recent studies show that these slopes may be talus. First glacier melt water cut through the ground to make a canyon. Later, quartzite rock fell from cliffs, filling this gorge. The Felsenmeer is 82 feet deep and about 1000 feet long. There was cool air in the valley bottom on the hot day we hiked it. The Felsenmeer has been a State Natural Area since 1969 because of the unique geology and plants. No logging or vehicles or are allowed on these 75 acres .

### Driving Directions:

Starting from the intersection of Old 14 Road and W, drive 2.3 miles north to a gravel turn-off just after the beginning of the curve in the road. Driving south from the County O/County F intersection, go 2.7 miles. If you have high vehicle clearance, you can drive down the gravel road and park. The hiking route starts heading west on the gated logging road. (There is a shorter approach to the Felsenmeer from the end of Slack Road, which is north of the curve on County W. Slack Road is usually not plowed in winter.)



### Hiking Directions:

The hike starts at Point 001, quickly followed by the gate at Pt. 002. Go right at the trail intersections at 1.03 miles (Pt. 003) and at 1.14 miles (Pt. 004). At 1.22 miles, take another right up a steep, rocky logging trail (Pt. 005). Turn left after crossing a small rocky stream at 1.56 miles (Pt. 006). Turn left on a trail at 1.82 miles (Pt. 007); there is a yellow sign for the Scientific Study Area. Go northwest and you will find a nice overlook of the rock valley (Pt. 008, 2 miles, N45 28.361, W091 31.949). We added a loop going through the center of the valley. There is relatively easy access in a gully at Pt. 010. Wet lichens are slippery and the rocks on the valley sides can be unstable and treacherous.

## Gundy's Canyon

Rating: Intermediate Terrain  
Difficult Navigation  
Total Distance : 2.35 Miles  
Round Trip  
Topo Map: Strickland, 7.5'

### Driving directions:

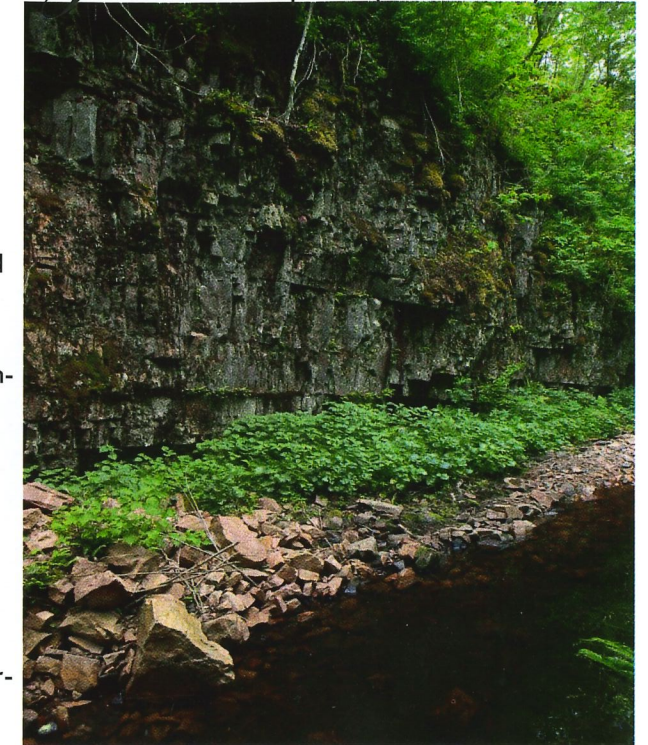
Turn west off County W on Slack Road ( 1.3 miles south of the W/O intersection or 3.3 miles north of the Old 14/W intersection. Park in the circle at the end of Slack Road (.6 miles).

### Information:

Gundy's Canyon is a area of quartzite cliffs located along rock creek in western Rusk county. The cliffs are up to thirty feet high and have rare plants. This area is incorrectly labeled on maps as Grundy's canyon. Gundy's Canyon is named after the Gundersen family who operated the nearby farm and gave sleigh rides in winter. The Rusk County Board supports changing the name back to Gundy's Canyon.

### Route Description and Hiking Instructions:

Please note that approaches from County Roads C/O, Mansfield Road, and following Rock Creek from the east all cross private land and need owners' permission. The route described below is on Rusk County Forest public land.



Park in the circle at the end of Slack Road (Waypoint 001). Take the grassy logging road bearing WNW. Go right at the trail fork at .27 mile (Pt 002). Also go right at the trail fork at .38 mile (Pt 003). Enter an open meadow (.49 mile, Pt. 004) and follow the right side of the opening. Around Pt. 005, (.59 mile N45°29.279' W091°31.286', the track becomes faint). At Pt. 006, .8 mile, the track becomes hard to follow, set compass course NW. At .88 mile, Pt. 007, passed an outcrop of pipestone. Rock Creek is at .88 mile, Pt 008, N45°29.316' W91°31.610'. **Turn left, downstream** (if you go upstream you will reach private property in 200-300 yards as the valley widens out). Also note that we hiked at low water levels.



**At high water levels Rock Creek is difficult to cross and the following route may not be feasible.** At Pt 009, 1.08 miles, there is one of the highest cliffs on the north side of the creek (N45°29.309', W91°31.886'). At the downstream end of the cliffs (Pt .010, 1.17 miles, W45° 29.277' W91°31.919') leave Rock Creek heading east along a ridge to Pt 060 (a GPS is helpful for this) and return to the parking place at Slack Road.



# Spring Creek Felsenmeer

Difficulty: Intermediate hiking and navigation  
 Distance: 3.25 miles round trip  
 Topo Map: Mikana, 7.5'

### Hiking Directions:

Start at Highway F (Waypoint 001 N45 31.519 W091 30.022) and hike west on old tote road. Take branch to right at Pt. 002 (.62 miles) going north and then northwest. At Pt. 003 (1.19 miles) there is no clear trail, set a compass course west. At Pt. 004, 1.51 miles) reached the upper part of the south Felsenmeer (N45 31.815, W091 31.461). We followed the Felsenmeer west then dropped to the base of the talus slope at the west end, Pt. 005, 1.63 miles (N45 31.808 W091 31.539) then turned east and walked along the base to the end of the talus, Pt. 006, 1.8 miles. Then we followed a GPS course back to Pt. 003, completing the loop and returned to the County F via Pts. 002 and 001. In winter, you can snowshoe over beaver ponds along the creek. This is more direct but there are alder thickets that are slow going.

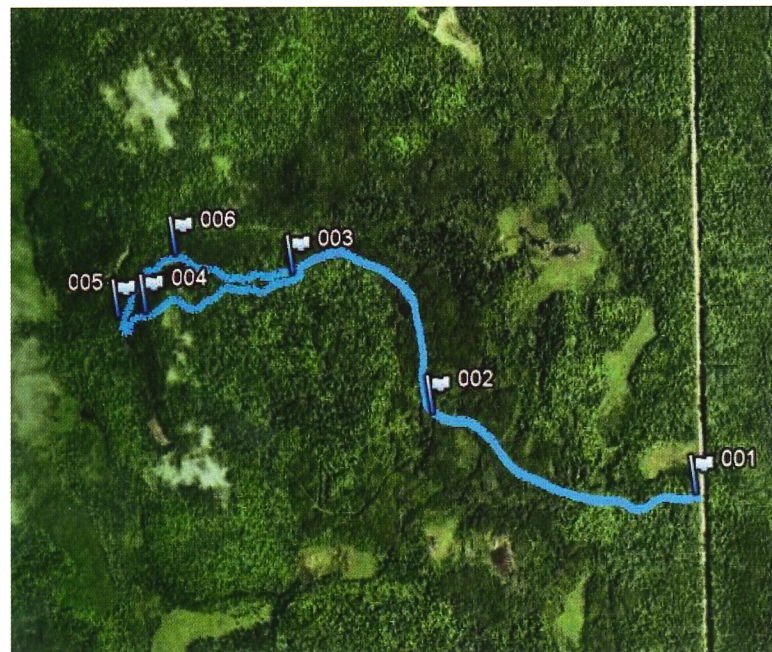


### Driving directions:

Drive 1.1 miles north from the intersection of County O on County F. Look for an old tote road on the left (west) just south of a marshy area.

### Information:

This area is one of the three large felsenmeers in Rusk and Barron County but it is not well known and is rarely visited. Unlike the Blue Hills Felsenmeer, the north and south boulder fields are separated by a stream, rock swales, and a wooded area. There are rare plant species like the squashberry and hawthorn-leaved gooseberry. Approaches from Barron County are across private property.



# Ice Age Trail Hemlock Creek

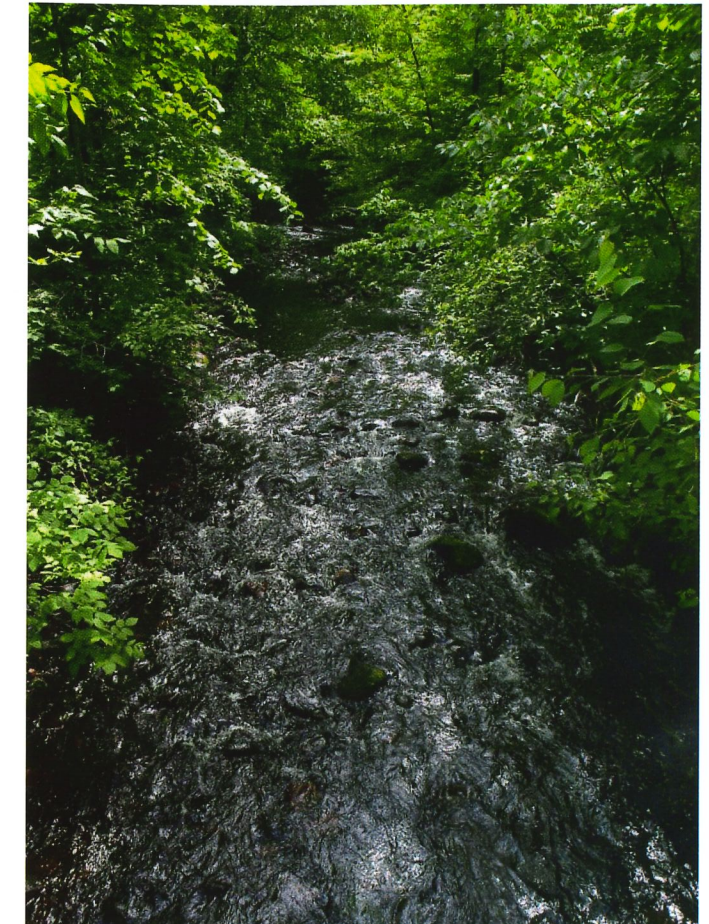
Difficulty: Easy  
 Distance: 2..8 Mile Loop  
 Topo: Mikana, 7.5'

### Information:

This is one of the nicest sections of the Ice Age trail and can be made into a loop by also following the old trail on the south side of Hemlock Creek. Hemlock Creek was an important route for moving logs early in the twentieth century. You can see the remnants of an old log dam along the route. In 1970, a storm washed out the dams on this creek at Buck's Lake, Murphy Flowage, upstream from this trail, and Bolger Flowage, which was downstream. The Buck's Lake and Murphy Flowage dams have been rebuilt. County F has been rerouted slightly east, and the old bridge is used for foot travel.

### Driving Directions:

Drive 4.5 miles north on County Highway F from the intersection with County Highway O. Park on the west side of County F at the Murphy Flowage Recreation Area picnic area just south of Hemlock Creek.



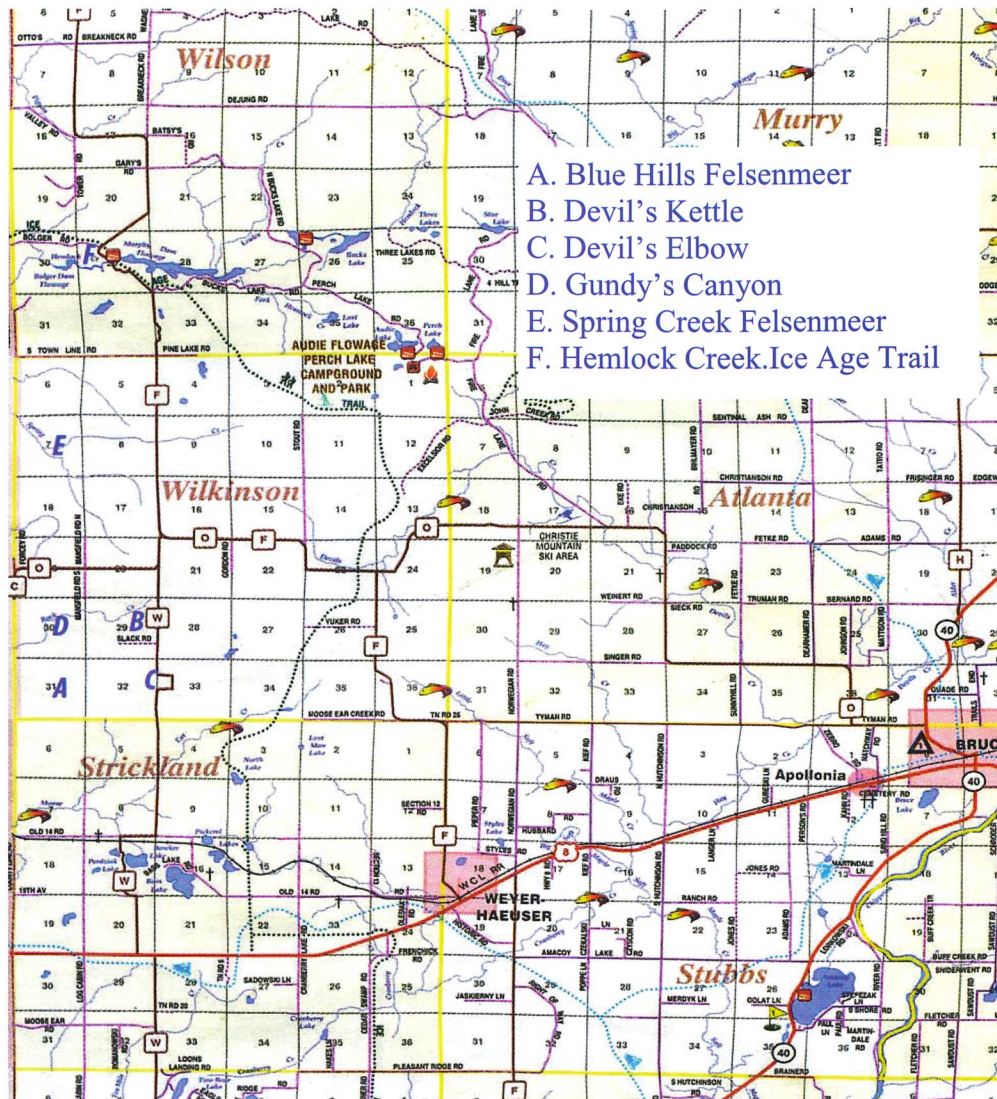
### Hiking Directions:

This is a loop route going west on the old Ice Age Trail south of Hemlock Creek and returning on the current Ice Age Trail. The old trail has white markings and the current trail has yellow markings. Waypoint 001 is at the parking lot. Pt. 002 is .16 miles south, turn west/right at the Ice Age Trail sign. Pass an area that was clear cut a few years ago and cross a swampy area on a bridge. At Pt. 004 (1.01 miles) is an overlook of a pond and at Pt. 005 (1.23 miles) is an overlook for an old log dam. Take the trail branch to the right at 1.28 miles and climb a glacial ridge with a view of the creek. Cross Hemlock Creek on the 30 year old Sierra Club Bridge (Pt. 007, 1.57 miles). Turn right at the intersection with the current Ice Age Trail (009. 1.7 miles) and shortly afterwards view the old log dam from the north. Continue east and cross a footbridge across a beaver pond. Cross old Highway F bridge (Pt. 12, 2.75 miles in sight of the parking lot).





## Overview Map of Blue Hills Scenic Areas



Reminders: These routes were hiked in June, 2009. Over time new logging roads may be put in, others may get grown over, so things may look different in the future. Be prepared for ticks and mosquitoes. Wear sturdy boots hiking in rocky areas. Never leave the map you need in the school van.

Other Resources: We usually used Google Earth satellite images because the road information is more up to date. We recommend that you also use USGS 7.5 topographic maps which are listed for each page. The Rusk County road map shows the County Forest. The Rusk County Plat Book also shows private land; this is mostly a concern hiking to Gundy's Canyon.

This Project: The Outsiders are Weyerhaeuser High students who develop leadership through outdoor activities. Some of these students wrote a grant that was awarded by the Rusk County Community Foundation to support this project. The grant writers are Joey Bates, Katrina Bauspies, Jammie Beres, Angel Brueske, and Satin Eiffler. Field research and brochure development was done by Satin Eiffler, Lynette Niznik, Travis Sewilo, Steven Wodarck, and Mr. Pete Olson. The Outsiders advisors are Mrs. Shanna McMullin and Mr. Pete Olson. He can be reached with suggestions or questions about this Guide at 715/415-1812 or [fwsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:fwsd.k12.wi.us).

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