MEISSNER MEMORIAL WETLANDS PRESERVE

The Nature Conservancy; Department of Natural Resources; Meissner Trust

8587 South Highland Road, related to Peil Creek

Area, 65 acres. Miles of hiking trail: 1.5. Hiking time: 1.5-2 hrs.

See attached map and trails of this Preserve. An information sign at the parking area describes the establishment of this Preserve.

Walk the grassy trails from the preserve sign down toward the marsh and onto a narrow crossing of the marsh proper. A culvert under the crossing allows for fish, including northern pike, to swim throughout the marsh during their spring spawning period. You'll see various wetland plants such as bog arrow grass, sedges and rushes from this crossing area. You will see a variety of birds here, some fishing for young northern pike during their spawning season. White egret, sand hill crane, osprey among other birds can be sighted hovering over the marsh. This sedge marsh is unusual in that it is rich in calcium carbonate derived from ground water sources that contribute to its unique ecology. Most interestingly, this marsh among several in Door County is one of the few remaining sites that are home to the rare Hine's emerald dragonfly. The largest populations in USA of this endangered dragonfly are in Door County. Several kinds of dragonflies are present in the area, but if you see a bright green-eyed, 2.5-inch long dragonfly hovering near you, it could well be this rare insect.

These waters are the source of Peil Creek that flows into the north end of Kangaroo Lake two miles to the south. Continue on the trail through the arbor-vitae, hemlock, and larch woods where you'll walk among shin leaf, grass of parnassus, orchids and other wildflowers, and then up the hill that has been recently reforested. The trail leads down into a dense grove of arbor-vitae, adjacent to a wetland of black ash, where you can observe the northern portion of the marsh and more unusual plants along its shore. The trail then returns to the hill, and will circle back to the trail. You can, if you wish, rest on the bench on the hill that overlooks this beautiful marsh before hiking back to the parking area.

To get there: from Baileys Harbor, take Cty F about 2 miles to intersection with South Highland Road. Turn left onto South Highland Road and travel 1.5 miles to the Wetland Preserve sign at entrance to parking area on left side of road.

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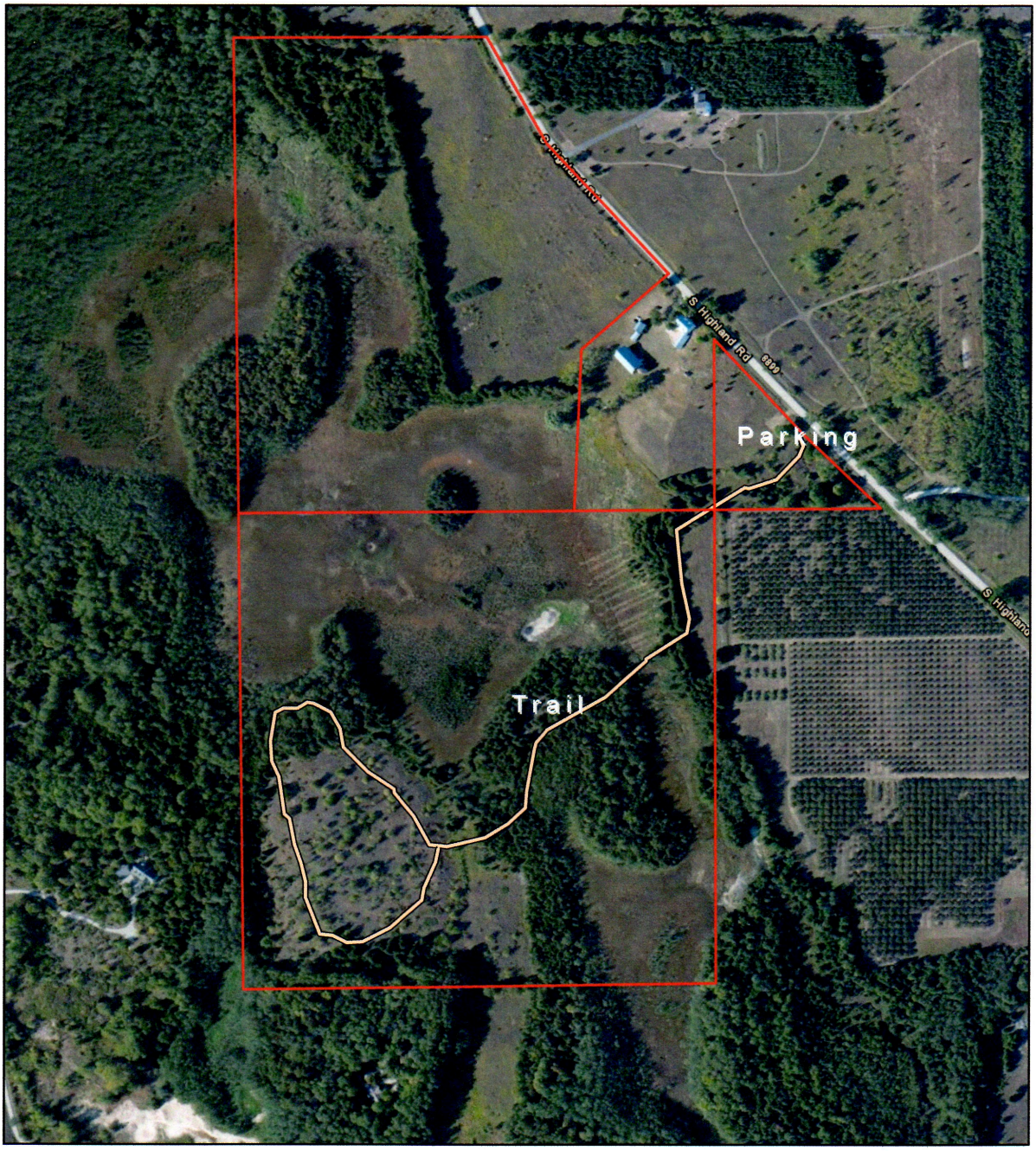
Map and Hiking Trails