

**FROM: PAUL BEACHNAU
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
989-732-6333**



Otsego County An Outdoor Lover's Paradise

A well known Michigan vacation spot for decades, Gaylord is an outdoor lover's paradise. Set amidst the rolling, forested hills of Northern Michigan, Gaylord and Otsego County offers an abundance of outdoor recreation.

Otsego County boasts over 90 small Lakes, with the 7 mile long Otsego Lake being the largest. Otsego Lake is home to a State Park featuring a large sandy beach, day use area, boat launch and 110 improved campsites. Otsego Lake also boasts the Otsego Lake County Park, a beautiful shady park which features a boat launch, two covered pavilions and 80 improved campsites.

With the highest elevation of any incorporated city in Michigan, the Gaylord area is home to 5 major rivers including the Pigeon, Sturgeon, Black, Upper Manistee and the North Branch of the Ausable. These scenic rivers provide excellent fly fishing for Brook and Brown Trout.

The crown jewel of outdoor resources in the region is the Pigeon River Country State Forest. The Pigeon River Forest was established in the early 1900's and encompasses over 100,000 acres of state land managed as a wild area by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Bordering three Counties, no major roads or highways intersect the forest leaving a quiet pristine habitat for numerous wildlife species. There are 5 rustic camping areas, the shingle mill pathway and numerous scenic viewing areas. Three of the 5 major rivers in the County flow through the forest, these being the Black, Sturgeon and Pigeon Rivers.

Of course the most unique aspect of the Pigeon River Country State Forest is the largest free ranging elk herd east of the Mississippi River. Transplanted in the early 1900's the herd has prospered in this area with over 1,000 animals. The Michigan DNR conducts two annual elk hunts by lottery selection in order to carefully manage the herd's growth.

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Some of the other excellent outdoor recreation opportunities are the City of Gaylord's Aspen Park with 1.7 miles of paved pathway, tennis courts and 6 mile mountain biking single track, the 6 mile long Pine Baron pathway used for hiking and cross country skiing and the new Gaylord to Mackinac Rail Trail.

At 62 miles the North Central State Trail rail trail from Gaylord to Mackinaw City is the longest improved non-motorized pathway ever funded by the Federal Transportation enhancement program. This brand new trail consists of a compacted, crushed limestone surface. The trail begins in Gaylord and travels north thru Vanderbilt, Wolverine, Indian River, and Cheboygan arriving in Mackinac City. This scenic trail has amazing countryside views, crosses the Sturgeon River 5 times and travels along Mullet Lake for nearly 9 miles. This new trail is considered Michigan's finest rail trail ever constructed.

Otsego County is home to a 300 mile snowmobile trail network, two downhill ski areas and numerous cross country ski areas. Known as "America's Summer Golf Mecca" the region boasts 17 championship caliber 18 hole golf courses.

For more information about the excellent outdoor activities, look us up at www.gaylordmichigan.net or call us toll free at 800-345-8621.

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