

Grand Island Trail Marathon Course Beta

Miles 1 - 4

Only a few gentle rollers in the first mile then flat. Dirt forest road and two tract (mile 2.7- 4). Beautiful views of Murray Bay (miles 0.5 - 1.5) to the east. Duck Lake on left near two mile as you enter a dense old growth hemlock. The island's Tombolo is encountered from 2.5 to 4.1 miles.

Miles 4 - 7

This sections starts with a steep climb into the island's Thumb. Most of this stretch is a meditative tunnel of mature maple trees. There are few openings in the canopy that allow large beams of light through. Turn around at the end of the tunnel. This is the only real out and back section of the marathon course. Very fast descent during mile 7.

Mile 7

Trout Bay Beach. Carribbean style white sand beach framed by large sandstone cliffs on the west and east flanks. I recommend running on the wet packed sand. This mile is slow because of the sand but this is one of the most beautiful stretches of shoreline in the Lake Superior Basin. Soak it in.

Miles 8 - 9.5

After leaving Trout Bay, you encounter the first single track on the course and then it climbs 200 ft on to a ridge over looking Trout Bay from west to east.

Miles 9.5 - 15.5

Wide easy dirt and grassy trail. You are up high on a cliff the entire stretch. Many opportunities to view the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore to the east.

Mile 15.5 - 15.8

North Beach. Simply extraordinary. One of the most beautiful places on Planet Earth. Remote, peaceful white sand beach with tall 300 ft, amber & cream colored sandstone cliffs flanking the beach. Rare flowers and beach grasses near the creek. Please respect these.

Mile 15.8 - 16.1

Steep, very rugged climb back up to the ridge. Watch your footing. Many rocks and uneven footing.

Mile 16.1 - 24.5

Trail along the west rim of the island with remarkable vistas of Lake Superior. Gradual downhill. Trail has abundant sections atop tall cliffs. Trail is moderate to easy in difficulty. There are some sections through lush hardwood forests where you can really cruise. Near mile 24 runners reach Treasure Beach before heading east into the forest.

Mile 24.5 to Finish

One mile flat section through hardwood forest before turning right onto dirt forest road. This road leads to the finish. Fifty meters past the finish line is a beautiful beach where many runners go swimming immediately after they finish.