

= Black River National Forest Scenic Byway =

The Black River National Forest Scenic Byway is a National Forest Scenic Byway that runs along the Black River in the Ottawa National Forest in the U.S. state of Michigan . The byway follows County Road 513 (CR 513) through Gogebic County in the Upper Peninsula . As a county road , it is maintained jointly by the Gogebic County Road Commission (GCRC) with assistance from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) . The byway provides access to several waterfalls and other visitor attractions in the area . The route of the byway first existed as a wagon road in the 1840s and as a county road in the 1920s . The byway designation was instituted on June 20 , 1992 , and the byway was dedicated later that year .

= = Route description = =

While CR 513 (Black River Road) extends further south to connect with US Highway 2 near Bessemer , the National Forest Scenic Byway designation starts at the intersection with CR 204 (Airport Road) west of the Gogebic @-@ Iron County Airport and north of the Big Powderhorn Mountain . From this southern starting point , the roadway runs northward along the Black River through the Ottawa National Forest . CR 513 runs along the western side of the river , staying shy of the banks as it passes through the woods . The woods through which the roadway passes contain pine , hemlock and hardwood trees . The Royal Palm Ranch , a nationally known equestrian school is located along the road on 100 acres (40 ha) of land next to the river . The byway curves away from the river near Copper Peak , the tallest ski flying hill in the world . The 18 @-@ story facility allows visitors on clear enough days to see 85 miles (137 km) in the distance to places like Minnesota , Isle Royale and Canada .

North of Copper Peak , the road once again roughly parallels the river , but staying away from the river 's course . The road provides access to five sets of waterfalls . The first is Great Conglomerate Falls , followed by Potawatomi , Gorge , Sandstone and Rainbow falls . The falls are connected to the road by four separate hiking trails . The byway continues past these landmarks before terminating at Black River Harbor . The harbor is the site of a 1920s fishing village , one of only two harbors in the National Forest System . The area was also host to three taverns built by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression and a pedestrian suspension bridge used by the North Country Trail to cross the mouth of the river .

= = History = =

According to the surveys of William A. Burt in 1848 , a wagon road ran south from the modern site of the Black River Harbor to Chippewa Hill , the location of Copper Peak . A wagon road was built by the State of Michigan in 1904 to connect the waterfront with Bessemer . The county had purchased the land around the waterfront in 1924 for a park , and a county road running parallel to the Black River was in place by 1927 . The residents of the fishing village were forced to move and settled at Black River Village . The roadway was improved to a gravel surface by 1930 , and fully paved in late 1949 or early 1950 . In 1967 , the Gogebic County exchanged the park land along the river , including the harbor , with the USFS for other land in the area , and the harbor has been under federal maintenance since . Local officials originally proposed the National Forest Scenic Byway designation for the road in April 1991 . The desire was to " showcase a special part of the National Forest " and boost tourism to the area , according to the park ranger in charge of handling the application . The designation was conferred by the USFS on June 20 , 1992 , with a dedication ceremony on September 19 that year .

= = Major intersections = =

The entire road is in Ironwood Township , Gogebic County .