



Betsie Valley Trail

Winding its way along the banks of the Betsie River and crystal blue Crystal Lake, this 22-mile multi-use trail is one of Michigan's most scenic trail adventures.

The Betsie Valley Trail follows along the former Ann Arbor Railroad that once brought freight cars to Frankfort and Elberta to be ferried across Lake Michigan. The 10-foot-wide trail is paved with asphalt from Frankfort to Mollineaux Road. From Mollineaux Road to Beulah the trail surface is finely screened and compacted crushed limestone. The trail bed on the 12-mile section from Beulah to Thompsonville is surfaced with road aggregate, but is quite smooth and suitable for most bikes with wider tires. Local trail advocates are currently working with the Michigan DNR to have this section of trail paved with asphalt.

The most popular and well-traveled section of the trail is the nine miles from Frankfort to Beulah, a smooth and leisurely ride with stunning views of Betsie Lake, Betsie

River and Crystal Lake. Railroad Point Natural Area between Mollineaux Road and Beulah is a great place to relax, picnic, take in the views, or go for a swim.

From Beulah to Thompsonville the trail is more remote, passing through Pere Marquette State Forest and miles of lush woodlands. The fall colors and spring wildflowers can be quite stunning along this stretch. Just north of Thompsonville the trail crosses over the Betsie River on a restored railroad bridge. This section of trail is also open to snowmobiling during the winter season.

Mineral Springs Park in downtown Frankfort is a great place to begin your journey with ample parking and numerous shops and restaurants. The quaint village of Beulah is also a great destination with several places to shop, eat, enjoy ice cream, or just relax at the public beach on Crystal Lake. Lodging and bike rentals are available in Frankfort, Elberta, Beulah and at Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville.

