

56-1345



United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Brockway Mountain Drive
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number	Entire length of Brockway Mountain Drive				not for publication
city or town	Eagle Harbor and Grant Townships				vicinity
state	Michigan	code	MI	county	Keweenaw
		code	083	zip code	49950

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally x statewide ___ locally. See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Bruce Conway
Signature of certifying official/Title

5/25/17
Date

MI SHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.
See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Brockway Mountain Drive
Name of Property

Keweenaw
County

Michigan
State

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
entered in the National Register.
___ See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the
National Register.
___ See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the
National Register.
___ See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National
Register.
- other (explain):

Patrick Andrews

7/24/2017

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
private
 public-local
public-State
public-Federal

Category of Property
building(s)
 district
structure
site
object

Number of Resources within Property

contributing:	noncontributing:
buildings	buildings
<u>9</u> sites	sites
<u>77</u> structures	<u>17</u> structures
objects	objects
<u>86</u> total	<u>17</u> total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources
previously listed in the National Register:

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

TRANSPORTATION: road-related (vehicular)
RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

Current Functions

TRANSPORTATION: road-related (vehicular)
RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification

OTHER: NPS Rustic

Materials

FOUNDATION: N/A
WALLS: Stone
ROOF: N/A
OTHER: Road mix (surface)

Narrative Description

See continuation sheets.

Brockway Mountain Drive
Name of Property

Keweenaw County
County

Michigan
State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION
SOCIAL HISTORY
TRANSPORTATION
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1933-1967 (Criterion A)
1933-c.1940 (Criterion C)

Significant Dates

1933-c.1940

Significant Person

None

Cultural Affiliation

None

Architect/Builder

Keweenaw County Road Commission
Civil Works Administration (CWA)
Works Progress Administration (WPA)

Narrative Statement of Significance

See continuation sheets.

Brockway Mountain Drive
Name of Property

Keweenaw County
County

Michigan
State

9. Major Bibliographic References

See continuation sheets.

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible for the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # ___
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # ___

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government – Keweenaw County
- University
- Other – Michigan Tech Archives

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: Approximately 110 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	16N	419243	5257163	3	16N	430452	5257298
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	16N	426992	5257218	4	16N	432050	5257780
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

name / title	Greg Rainka / Architectural Historian	date	May 2017
organization	Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc.	telephone	414-446-4121
street & number	8669 N. Deerwood Drive	zip code	53209
city or town	Milwaukee	state	WI

Brockway Mountain Drive

Keweenaw

Michigan

Name of Property

County

State

12. Additional Documentation

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map indicating the property's location (Figure 1)
A sketch map for districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources (Figure 2)

Photographs Representative photographs of the property (Photos 1-30)

Additional Items Historic Photographs (Figures 3-8)

13. Property Owner

name / title	Gregg Patrick / Manager		
organization	Keweenaw County Road Commission		
street & number	1916 Fourth Street	telephone	906-337-1610
city or town	Mohawk	state	MI
		zip code	49950

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

Narrative Description*Summary*

Brockway Mountain Drive is a nine-mile scenic road in Keweenaw County, Michigan, between the communities of Copper Harbor and Eagle Harbor (Figures 1 and 2). It follows a rolling east-west ridgeline on the north side of the Keweenaw Peninsula, rising to an elevation over 700 feet above the surface level of Lake Superior. Nine overlooks spaced along the length of the road provide incomparable views of Lake Superior to the north and expansive, forested valleys and hills to the south. From west to east, the overlooks are known as West Bluff, East Bluff, Beaver Dam, West Cracked Rock, Cracked Rock, On the Edge, Hartman's, 1937, and Brockway's Nose.¹ Brockway Mountain Drive was constructed in the 1930s during the Great Depression to provide work for the unemployed and increase tourism in the region. The impressive scenic qualities of the roadway have continuously attracted visitors to the area.

Roadway Overview

Beginning at the western terminus at state highway M-26 near Eagle Harbor, Brockway Mountain Drive makes a gradual ascent through wooded terrain on a mostly straight alignment. The first scenic overlook, known as West Bluff, is located at the road's summit at mile 4.9 and includes a circular turnout for parking vehicles. West Bluff Overlook stands at an elevation of 1,326 feet above sea level or about 725 feet above the surface of Lake Superior (which has an average elevation of 600 feet) and offers Brockway Mountain Drive's widest panoramic views. Lake Superior fills the view to the north (Photo 1), while seemingly endless forest sprawls in the opposite direction. Lake Medora and the peak of Gratiot Mountain can be seen in the distance to the southwest (Photo 2). At the bottom of the steep drop-off to the south is Upson Creek (Photo 3).

The south side of the West Bluff turnout is lined with a series of free-standing stone barrier walls, each ten feet long and spaced a few feet apart (Photo 4; Figure 3). Modern interpretative signs are located on the north and west sides of the turnout. Within the island created by the circular turnout are three concrete footings (Photo 5), which are the only remains of a non-extant communications tower erected in 1975.² There is also a small, square stone structure (Photo 6) that appears to be a remnant from the original Skytop Inn (Figures 4 and 5), a gift shop that was privately constructed in 1935 and replaced by a second Skytop Inn in the 1960s.³ Following acquisition of 340 acres of West Bluff land by Eagle Harbor Township in 2013, the second Skytop Inn was

¹ Names have been assigned to the overlooks/pullouts for the purposes of this nomination based on information provided in *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story* (Lavanway 2008) and Parts 1 and 2 of "A Drive in the Mountains" (Forgrave 2015). The latter resource also provided elevations.

² "West Bluff, Keweenaw's Scenic Summit is Vital," *The Daily Mining Gazette*, July 26, 1975.

³ Paul La Vanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, prepared for the Keweenaw County Historical Society (October 2008), 10.

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Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

demolished. Around the same time, two restroom structures were built (Photo 7).⁴

From West Bluff Overlook, Brockway Mountain Drive begins a gradual descent toward Copper Harbor (Photo 8). Immediately east of West Bluff is a series of free-standing stone barrier walls (Photo 9). From here, the road winds through a valley before rising to the next overlook at mile 5.5, known as East Bluff. At an elevation of 1,261 feet or about 660 feet above Lake Superior, East Bluff Overlook is the second highest viewpoint along Brockway Mountain Drive. The overlook consists of a small pullout area on the south side of the road, which is lined by a long stone barrier wall (Photo 10). Views are primarily of the forested valleys and hills to the south. Escarpments at West Bluff Overlook can also be seen to the west, and Lake Superior is visible to the north.

Six miles in from the Eagle Harbor end of the road, at an elevation of 1,202 feet, is Beaver Dam Overlook. This pullout area is defined by a long stone barrier wall along the south side of the road (Photo 11; Figure 6). From this vantage point, a small pond (ostensibly created by a beaver dam) can be seen in the valley immediately to the south (Photo 12). East of the Beaver Dam Overlook are West Cracked Rock (Mile 6.3) and Cracked Rock (Mile 6.5) Overlooks, which are collectively lined with four sections of long stone barrier walls on the south side of the road (Photos 13 and 14). Garden Brook, a small stream leading from the aforementioned pond to Lake Fanny Hooe in Copper Harbor, is visible.

Continuing east, Brockway Mountain Drive dips to an elevation of 1,040 feet as it passes through a valley, before ascending approximately 100 feet to On the Edge Overlook at mile 7.1, which has 300 feet of stone barrier wall and views to the south (Photo 15). The road then descends to 1,120 feet before rising to Hartman's Overlook at mile 7.4. At an elevation of 1,175 feet, the overlook has a long stone barrier wall and unobstructed views inland to the south and southeast (Photo 16). East of Hartman's Overlook, at mile 7.9 and an elevation of 1,090 feet, is 1937 Overlook, which has a series of free-standing stone walls and views inland to the south and east (Photo 17).

From 1937 Overlook, Brockway Mountain Drive enters a steep descent (Photo 18). Adjacent to a hairpin turn at mile 8.3 is Brockway's Nose Overlook (Photo 19). At an elevation of 880 feet, it includes an observation platform constructed in 2012 with views to the north toward Lake Superior and to the east toward Copper Harbor, Lake Fanny Hooe, and Fort Wilkins State Park (Photos 20 and 21).⁵ Brockway's Nose Overlook is the last overlook on Brockway Mountain Drive. From here, the road switches back—the "Big Curve"—through wooded terrain (Photo 22), quickly dropping more than 200 feet in elevation, before reaching its eastern terminus at M-26 in Copper Harbor.

⁴ Gregg Patrick, Keweenaw County Road Commission, interview by Commonwealth Heritage Group, April 27, 2016.

⁵ Stacey Kukkonen, "Brockway Project Coming to a Close," *The Daily Mining Gazette*, August 24, 2012.

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Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

Associated Resources

Roadway and Overlooks – 1 Contributing Structure and 9 Contributing Sites

Brockway Mountain Drive extends nine miles between M-26 near Eagle Harbor and M-26 in Copper Harbor and features nine scenic overlooks. Construction began in the spring of 1933 and the road officially opened on October 14, 1933. Aligning and leveling the road was done by eye during construction without the use of survey tools. Work the following year, in 1934, primarily consisted of refining curves, leveling the driving surface, and widening the road. By 1935, the roadway essentially was complete.

The roadbed was originally finished in beach gravel collected from Lake Superior, which did not provide much traction for drivers. Actual paving occurred in two phases, beginning with the eastern seven miles in 1938. The remaining two miles were paved in 1946, after World War II. Rather than using asphalt, the roadway was surfaced with a “road mix.” The material was manufactured on site and consisted of gravel and tar blended together, rolled into place, and then sealed. This was a cost effective paving method and could be undertaken by the Keweenaw County Road Commission relatively easily.

Apart from some asphalt patch repairs (Photo 23), the roadway remains paved with “road mix.” In addition, the alignment of Brockway Mountain Drive, its typical cross section, and the locations of the nine overlooks have not changed since the period of construction. At approximately 22 feet in width, the road is wide enough to allow for two-way traffic, although there have never been pavement markings. There also are no shoulders; rather, the edges of the roadway are mostly lined with grass. The overlooks are paved or gravel pullouts, or slightly widened areas of the road, so visitors can safely access the roadside vistas. There is no physical separation between the roadway and each overlook.⁶

For the purposes of this nomination, the overall roadway is considered one structure and each of the nine overlooks is considered a site.

Type 1 Stone Barrier Walls – 9 Contributing Structures

The first stone barrier walls on Brockway Mountain Drive were constructed in 1934. They are long “rock guard rails.”⁷ Each wall consists of ten-foot segments joined by square rock piers, which together give the appearance of a battlement or crenelated parapet (Photo 24). The wall segments and piers are constructed of cut and fitted fieldstone and capped with a concrete wash, which both protects the walls and provides a level surface. The concrete has worn away in some areas. Nine of these walls were constructed, totaling approximately 1,900 feet

⁶ LaVanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 3-9; Paul LaVanway, *A 75th Anniversary Celebration of Lakeshore and Brockway Mountain Drives*, prepared for the Keweenaw County Historical Society (July 2009); Patrick.

⁷ LaVanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 7.

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Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

in length.⁸ They are located at six of the overlooks: East Bluff, Beaver Dam, West Cracked Rock, Cracked Rock, and On the Edge. Other than minor repairs and a missing ten-foot segment at Beaver Dam Overlook, there are no alterations of note to these walls.

For the purposes of this nomination, each of the nine Type 1 stone barrier walls is considered a structure.

Type 2 Stone Barrier Walls – 66 Contributing Structures

Between 1936 and 1939, 66 free-standing (unjoined) stone barrier walls were constructed by WPA workers on Brockway Mountain Drive.⁹ They are located at West Bluff Overlook and between Hartman's Overlook and Brockway's Nose Overlook. The walls are constructed of a combination of rubble stone and waste rock ("poor rock") from the local mines, and each is topped with a simple rectangular concrete cap (Photo 25). Forms were used for their construction, which made them both easier and less expensive to fabricate. Concrete was poured into the center of the form after rocks had been stacked along the sides. There is visible evidence of this construction method, as concrete appears to seep from some of the joints between rocks. Each wall is ten feet long and they are spaced a few feet apart.¹⁰ Other than minor repairs, there are no alterations of note to these walls.

For the purposes of this nomination, each of the 66 Type 2 stone barrier walls is considered a structure.

Skytop Inn Remnant – 1 Contributing Structure

A small, square stone structure is located within the island of the West Bluff Overlook turnout. As previously noted, it appears to be a remnant from the original Skytop Inn, a gift shop that was constructed in 1935 and had a prominent stone fireplace. The structure is roughly three feet square and four feet tall.

Wood Delineator Posts – 1 Non-contributing Structure

In many locations along Brockway Mountain Drive, particularly at curves, the edge of the roadway is lined with a series of wood posts. They are approximately four feet in height and are painted white for maximum visibility (Photos 26 and 27). Delineator posts are original to the road according to c.1940 photographs (Figure 7), but historically they have been replaced approximately every ten years. Due to budget constraints, the current posts are roughly 20 years old.¹¹ Although the present posts are wholly consistent with the appearance, material, size, scale, and locations of the original posts, they are not of historic age and thus are considered non-contributing.

⁸ LaVanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 7.

⁹ LaVanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 8-9.

¹⁰ LaVanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 9, 13.

¹¹ Patrick.

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Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

For the purposes of this nomination, the wood delineator posts are considered one non-contributing structure.

Communications Tower Concrete Footings – 1 Noncontributing Structure

A 50-foot lattice communications tower was erected within the island of the West Bluff Overlook turnout in 1975. It has since been removed, but its three concrete footings remain in the ground.

Modern Log Signs – 5 Noncontributing Structures

There are five log signs on Brockway Mountain Drive, each of which is considered a noncontributing structure. These include two entrance signs with stone bases, one at each end of the road, as well as a large three-part sign at the West Bluff Overlook with three signboards providing a map of Keweenaw County and information about the history of the region (Photos 28, 29, and 30).¹² There are also two log traffic signs at the West Bluff Overlook. None of the existing log signs date from the historic period, though there were similar signs historically, which can be seen in c.1940 photographs of West Bluff and Beaver Dam Overlooks (Figure 8).

Brockway's Nose Observation Platform – 1 Noncontributing Structure

A two-tiered observation platform was constructed at Brockway's Nose Overlook in 2012.¹³ It features U-shaped concrete decks with metal railings between stone piers.

Modern Interpretative Signs – 7 Non-contributing Structures

Several small interpretative signs are located at West Bluff, Over the Edge, and Brockway's Nose Overlooks (Photo 31). They were erected in 2013 and provide information about the history of the area and its natural resources.¹⁴ There are a total of seven signs, each of which is considered a noncontributing structure.

West Bluff Restrooms – 2 Non-contributing Structures

Two modern restroom structures are located on the north side of Brockway Mountain Drive at West Bluff Overlook. The simple wood-framed structures were constructed by Eagle Harbor Township following its acquisition of 340 acres of land at the road's summit in 2013.¹⁵

¹² The signboards are removed during the winter season and were not attached at the time of the site visit in April 2016.

¹³ Kukkonen, Stacey, "Brockway Project Coming to a Close," *Daily Mining Gazette*, August 24, 2012.

¹⁴ Kukkonen.

¹⁵ Patrick.

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Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

The following table provides a summary of the resources associated with Brockway Mountain Drive:

Resource Name	Resource Type	Construction Date	Classification
Brockway Mountain Drive Roadway	Structure	1933	Contributing
West Bluff Overlook	Site	1933-1939	Contributing
Type 1 Stone Barrier Walls	Structures (9)	1934	Contributing
East Bluff Overlook	Site	1934	Contributing
Beaver Dam Overlook	Site	1934	Contributing
West Cracked Rock Overlook	Site	1934	Contributing
Cracked Rock Overlook	Site	1934	Contributing
On the Edge Overlook	Site	1934	Contributing
Skytop Inn Remnant	Structure	1935	Contributing
Type 2 Stone Barrier Walls	Structures (66)	1936-1939	Contributing
Hartman's Overlook	Site	1936-1939	Contributing
1937 Overlook	Site	1936-1939	Contributing
Brockway's Nose Overlook	Site	1936-1939	Contributing
Wood Delineator Posts	Structure	c.20 yrs. old	Noncontributing
Communications Tower Concrete Footings	Structure	1975	Noncontributing
Modern Log Signs	Structures (5)	Unknown	Noncontributing
Brockway's Nose Observation Platform	Structure	2012	Noncontributing
Modern Interpretive Signs	Structures (7)	2013	Noncontributing
West Bluff Restrooms	Structures (2)	2013	Noncontributing

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Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

Brockway Mountain Drive meets National Register *Criterion A: Event* on the local level in the areas of Transportation, Entertainment/Recreation, and Social History. Its construction during the Depression era represents a concerted, and successful, effort to initiate a much-needed public works project, develop the local tourism industry, and provide relief to the unemployed. Since opening in 1934, Brockway Mountain Drive has been a leading attraction for visitors to the Keweenaw Peninsula, offering unparalleled views of the picturesque region of Michigan. The scenic road, together with two other Depression-era projects, Lakeshore Drive and the Keweenaw Mountain Resort and Lodge, helped Keweenaw County to diversify its economy and emerge from its dependence on mining. The initial construction of Brockway Mountain Drive, and its continued improvement throughout the remainder of the 1930s, was undertaken by the Keweenaw County Road Commission with the support of various federal relief programs, and put hundreds of local people to work, many of whom were unemployed miners. The impact of the road was dramatic from the outset and its importance continues to be apparent today. The period of significance is 1933, the year construction began, to 1967, the 50-year threshold point. Fifty years ago is used as the closing date because Brockway Mountain Drive has continued to possess significance in the area of Entertainment/Recreation for its role in the local tourism industry.

Brockway Mountain Drive also meets National Register *Criterion C: Design/Construction* on the state level in the area of Landscape Architecture. Michigan's generally undramatic topography provides few opportunities for scenic drives that climb to heights overlooking steep drop-offs and offering long vistas across wooded valleys and over the open water of the Great Lakes. Brockway Mountain Drive is unique in Michigan as a scenic highway built expressly as a scenic drive through rugged country to provide access to grand scenery for the public's enjoyment. Although the road was not planned and built with any direct involvement by the National Park Service (NPS) as far as can be determined from the available documentation, Brockway Mountain Drive is distinctly representative of landscape design principles developed and widely employed by that federal agency, particularly during the Depression era. Distinguishing design characteristics of the road that are consistent with NPS practices include its winding, rolling alignment across a ridgeline, numerous overlooks, and distinctive stone barrier walls. The simplistic construction of Brockway Mountain Drive and inclusion of rustic roadside features created a uniquely scenic route for many to experience while minimizing impacts to the topography and environment. The period of significance is 1933 to c.1940, encompassing the years of construction of its contributing resources.

Historical Overview

Prior to the construction of Brockway Mountain Drive in the 1930s, Keweenaw County's roads were largely limited to those developed and used for mining, logging, and military purposes, three interests that historically

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Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

shaped and defined the region. Improving the roads serving the outer, northeastern reaches of the Keweenaw Peninsula was not a priority during the first decades of the twentieth century, as the Keweenaw Central Railroad provided adequate passenger and freight service to the area.¹⁶

Increased attention toward the county's road system began with the establishment of the Keweenaw County Road Commission in 1913. Exactly twenty years prior, the state legislature had passed the County Road Act, which enabled counties, by a vote of their respective people, to create local road commissions and levy road taxes.¹⁷ Counties were encouraged to do so by the larger grass-roots movement to improve rural highways known as the "Good Roads Movement." By 1916, 59 of the 83 counties in the state had established county road commissions.¹⁸ Another boon to the good roads effort in Michigan was the enactment of a new state law that, taking effect in 1907, required payment of road taxes in cash. This made more money available for road projects, the hiring of trained personnel, and the purchase of equipment. Previously, a statute labor system was in place that permitted landowners to perform labor on local roads in lieu of paying taxes for improvements to them – such efforts accomplished little. As a result of the change, the quality and efficiency of road development greatly improved.¹⁹

The initial focus of the Keweenaw County Road Commission was the development of roads in the southwestern part of the county, the most populated part of this entirely rural county. This included completion of improved roads from the communities of Mohawk and Ahmeek to the south into Houghton County, and to the north to Eagle River, the county seat. Michigan's State Trunk Line Act of 1913, which authorized the routing and designation of a state highway network, facilitated the early work of the Keweenaw County Road Commission. The legislation initially called for 3,000 miles of state trunk line highways and a significant portion of the cost to build and maintain the new state-designated trunk line roads was reimbursed to the counties and townships performing the work.²⁰

As noted, due to the presence of the Keweenaw Central Railroad little attention was afforded at first to improving the roads in the less populous, northeastern part of the county. The 32-mile rail line traversed the middle of the Keweenaw Peninsula, passing through the communities of Mohawk, Ojibway, Phoenix, Central, Delaware, and Wyoming, before splitting at Lac La Belle Junction and terminating to the north at Mandan and the south at Lac La Belle. There was no direct access by rail to the north shore communities of Eagle Harbor and Copper Harbor, but there was a short spur near Phoenix that led to Crestview, a day-use park overlooking

¹⁶ Paul La Vanway, *A History of Keweenaw County's Roads and Highways*, prepared for the Keweenaw County Historical Society (August 2007), 10-12.

¹⁷ La Vanway, *A History of Keweenaw County's Roads and Highways*, 10-11.

¹⁸ Dorothy G. Pohl and Norman E. Brown, "The History of Roads in Michigan," Michigan Highways, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://www.michiganhighways.org/history.html>.

¹⁹ La Vanway, *A History of Keweenaw County's Roads and Highways*, 11.

²⁰ La Vanway, *A History of Keweenaw County's Roads and Highways*, 11.

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Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

Lake Superior. Following a period of mine closings along its route, the railroad was abandoned in 1918.²¹

Roadway improvements in light of the loss of the railroad were not immediate. In the 1920s, the road between Calumet, Houghton County, and Copper Harbor, Keweenaw County, was in “deplorable condition,” consisting of “sharp rocks and mud.” Similarly, the road between Copper Harbor and Fort Wilkins, a distance of approximately one mile, “aroused the condemnation of tourists [and] of Copper Country people.” At that time, the approximately 100-mile round trip up the peninsula from the city of Houghton in neighboring Houghton County to Fort Wilkins State Park and back would take an entire day by automobile and often included numerous flat tires. The final stretch, the Copper Harbor-to-Fort Wilkins road, was finally improved in the late 1920s, when Keweenaw County received state funding for the project.²²

The Depression era was especially trying for Keweenaw County. The stock market crash of 1929 led to a steep decline in copper mining, the region’s primary economic driver. Copper production reached a low of 47 million pounds in 1933, less than twenty percent of its peak output in the mid-1910s. Copper mining had also undergone a decline in the years immediately following World War I, but not nearly to the same degree. The lumber industry, which had taken on a greater economic role in the 1920s, also succumbed to the Great Depression. Cutover farming intensified in the 1930s, but few, if any, agricultural operations were more than subsistence-level given the harsh climate and generally poor soil. As a result, Keweenaw County experienced widespread economic hardship. In the early 1930s, approximately two-thirds of the county’s non-agricultural workforce was unemployed, and by 1935, 74 percent of the population was receiving some form of government relief.²³

As its major industries faltered, Keweenaw County turned to automobile tourism. A major component of President Roosevelt’s “New Deal” to combat widespread unemployment was “make work” transportation improvement projects, which the Keweenaw County Road Commission did not hesitate to pursue. To provide employment to the largest number of people possible, provisions limited workers to 30 hours per week and specified the use of hand labor rather than machines for certain types of jobs. Road-related work, including highway construction, brought employment opportunities close to the homes of the jobless, and it was estimated that for every person directly employed on roads, at least two others were working in the manufacture and transportation of roadway materials and equipment. Besides being a leading solution to unemployment, Depression-era road projects produced physical improvements that were needed in practically every county in every state.²⁴

²¹ Alvah Littlefield Sawyer, *A History of the Northern Peninsula of Michigan and Its People*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1911), 490-492; La Vanway, *A History of Keweenaw County’s Roads and Highways*, 12.

²² La Vanway, *A History of Keweenaw County’s Roads and Highways*, 12.

²³ La Vanway, *A History of Keweenaw County’s Roads and Highways*, 13; Busch, 17.

²⁴ Ellis L. Armstrong, ed., *History of Public Works in the United States, 1776-1976* (Chicago: American Public Works Association, 1976), 84; Bruce E. Seely, *Building the American Highway System: Engineers as Policy Makers* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 88-89.

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The most notable Depression-era projects in Keweenaw County can largely be attributed to Ocha Potter, a superintendent for the Calumet and Hecla Copper Mining Company and chairman of the Keweenaw County Road Commission.²⁵ Potter was also a leading proponent of harnessing the region's tourism potential. In 1933, he campaigned across the region, presenting his plan to businessmen, community organizations, and other groups for developing the tourism industry on the Keweenaw Peninsula. According to Potter, scenic highways would serve as a leading attraction, and he specifically pointed to the opening of Brockway Mountain Drive as "the real beginning of a new stage in the development of the tourist industry in the upper peninsula."²⁶

Construction of a scenic drive along the ridgeline of the Keweenaw Peninsula was first proposed in the 1920s by Warren H. Manning, a nationally renowned landscape architect and conservation advocate. The idea came to him when he visited the area to design Agassiz Park in the village of Calumet, Houghton County.²⁷ Automobile tourism was gaining momentum in Michigan at that time. In 1925, one of the state's first designated scenic roads was constructed, the Muskegon Scenic Highway along Lake Michigan in Muskegon County. The roadway connected the newly established Muskegon State Park with the resort towns of Montague and Whitehall.²⁸

Serious consideration of such an undertaking did not occur until 1932, when the Keweenaw County Road Commission began pursuing work relief projects and ways to boost the local tourism industry. In addition to Brockway Mountain Drive, the Keweenaw County Road Commission planned a second, complementary scenic road between Copper Harbor and Eagle Harbor along the shore of Lake Superior, appropriately called Lakeshore Drive (present-day state highway M-26).²⁹

The Keweenaw County Road Commission considered three alternatives for Brockway Mountain Drive. The lowest-cost option was an approximately five-mile route following the present-day alignment from the west and ending at a turnaround at West Bluff Overlook. The most expensive and technically challenging option was an approximately 16-mile route following the present-day alignment from the east to West Bluff Overlook, descending to the southwest diagonally across Upson Creek Valley, ascending again to a summit on Mount Lookout (also known as Mount Baldy), and terminating at a road junction to the west. Ultimately Potter, along with Keweenaw County Road Commission Chairman William F. Hartman, fellow member William R. Bolley, and engineer William C. "Clem" Veale, chose the nine-mile route that exists today, which represented a mid-range alternative. To fund the road's construction, a loan was obtained from the Reconstruction Finance

²⁵ La Vanway, *A History of Keweenaw County's Roads and Highways*, 13.

²⁶ "Business Men Hear Address by Potter," *The Calumet News*, November 7, 1933.

²⁷ "Road at West Bluff," *The Daily Mining Gazette*, August 22, 1933.

²⁸ Amy Arnold, *Southwest Michigan Road Map: The West Michigan Pike*, vol. 1, *Historic Context Narrative* (Lansing, Mich.: State Historic Preservation Office, 2010), 279.

²⁹ La Vanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 2.

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Corporation, a federal relief program.³⁰ Who specifically was responsible for designing the road is unclear, though considering Veale was the local road engineer at the time, he likely played a large or key role.

Construction of Brockway Mountain Drive began in the spring of 1933. Within four months, before the end of the tourist season, it was open to traffic, albeit in a crude condition. An average of between 150 and 200 men worked on the project at any given time, many of whom were unemployed miners. The number of workers increased to about 300 in early October as a final push to finish.³¹ A former Keweenaw County Road Commission engineer who worked on the project, John W. Jackson, had the following recollection: "It was all hand work. We had to put a bunch of men to work on a meaningful project. ... The months were short, 10 days. We alternated crews so that each man would get in his time." According to Jackson, the grading of Brockway was entirely manual. "Those were the stipulations the job called for. No machines... We were asked to come up with jobs for the men. And that was it." Dirt was hauled from Copper Harbor by teams of horses and the grades were leveled using fill from the hand-dug ditches along the sides of the road. No survey instruments were used for leveling; instead, it was "all done by eye."³² The four-mile section from Copper Harbor to West Bluff Overlook required the most time and effort, due to the steep elevation changes and treacherous cliffs and escarpments. Construction of the western section of the road was far simpler in comparison, due to its gentler slope and the relative absence of solid rock.³³

Brockway Mountain Drive officially opened on October 14, 1933. At that time, as well as during its construction, the road was simply referred to as the "mountain drive." The Keweenaw County Road Commission officially announced the Brockway Mountain Drive name the week following its opening. It was named after Daniel D. Brockway, a pioneer settler and notable local businessman and mining agent.³⁴ By October 24, 1933, *The Daily Mining Gazette* (Houghton) reported that several hundred cars had already used the road, labeling the attraction "probably the only one of its kind in the middle west."³⁵ Construction of Lakeshore Drive had occurred concurrently, meaning a total of about 23 miles of scenic roadway was added to Keweenaw County in a short period of time, and the enhancement of the county's roads was well received. In the words of Ocha Potter, "Various local and outside visitors who have motored over most of the noted highways of New England, the west and southwest have expressed the opinion the new combined lake shore and Brockway drives compare very favorable with the best they have seen. ... There is certainly no drive between the Rockies and the New England states that can be offered for comparison so far as scenic beauty is concerned."³⁶ The Michigan

³⁰ La Vanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 2-3.

³¹ La Vanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 3; "Work on Mountain Drive in Keweenaw Progressing Fast," *The Daily Mining Gazette*, October 10, 1933.

³² Jim Dorion Rooks, "Brockway Mountain Landmark is a Tribute to a Patriarch," *The Daily Mining Gazette*, June 7, 1986.

³³ La Vanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 5.

³⁴ La Vanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 6; Rooks.

³⁵ "Calumet, Keweenaw See New Drive as Tourist Attraction," *The Daily Mining Gazette*, October 24, 1933.

³⁶ "Plan to Develop Tourist Business Given by Potter," *The Daily Mining Gazette*, November 8, 1933.

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State Highway Department took over construction of Lakeshore Drive earlier in 1933, designating it M-129. It was re-numbered M-26 two years later and has maintained that designation since. Brockway Mountain Drive has remained under the control of the Keweenaw County Road Commission.³⁷

Work on Brockway Mountain Drive continued in the spring of 1934, after the Keweenaw County Road Commission obtained funding from the Civil Works Administration (CWA). The CWA was a short-term public works program administered by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) from November 1933 to March 1934. It served as President Roosevelt's experimental work program for addressing the country's need for infrastructure improvements. The CWA's stated goal of increasing nationwide employment as quickly as possible was achieved, and the program became widely popular as a result. A majority of projects were associated with highway and local road improvements. The program overall, in less than six months, funded nearly \$1 billion worth of work, employed approximately four million Americans, and built or improved over 250,000 miles of roads. The success of the CWA proved that a permanent work program could be established.³⁸

In May 1934 Brockway Mountain Drive was restricted to one-way traffic on Sundays and holidays while a crew of workers widened and leveled the road and smoothed curves. Also at that time, the first stone barrier walls were constructed.³⁹ *The Calumet News* called the work "one of the most important jobs in the county," presumably because of the number of people it put to work and the popularity of the road.⁴⁰ Within a few months, the condition of Brockway Mountain Drive had greatly improved, and the road saw increased use as a result. On July 15 alone, more than 300 cars were counted on the road, almost 50 of which were from out-of-state.⁴¹ The same month, the Keweenaw County Historical Society held a picnic for its members at West Bluff Overlook.⁴² The road also earned high praise from Manthei Howe, society editor of *The Marquette Mining Journal*, who said in August 1934, "In that Drive, Keweenaw County has the scenic treasure of the peninsula for the majority of people. It is astoundingly impressive and extraordinarily beautiful, with a wild and rugged charm that etches deep on the memory."⁴³ Brockway Mountain Drive was quickly becoming the "magnet for tourists" that Ocha Potter envisioned.⁴⁴

In a further effort to build tourism and "make work," Ocha Potter envisioned the development of a resort and

³⁷ La Vanway, *A History of Keweenaw County's Roads and Highways*, 13.

³⁸ Arthur E. Burns and Edward A. Williams, *Federal Work, Security, and Relief Programs* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), 29-35; James S. Olson, ed., *Historical Dictionary of the New Deal: From Inauguration to Preparation for War* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985), 83-84; Seely, 90.

³⁹ "One Way Traffic on Brockway Drive," *The Calumet News*, May 24, 1934; La Vanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 7.

⁴⁰ "836 Employed on Keweenaw Projects," *The Calumet News*, August 17, 1934.

⁴¹ "Hundreds of Cars Use Mountain Drive," *The Calumet News*, July 20, 1934.

⁴² La Vanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 8.

⁴³ "Editor is Thrilled by Mountain Drive," *The Calumet News*, August 27, 1934.

⁴⁴ "Possibilities of Mountain Drive Told by Ocha Potter," *The Calumet News*, October 26, 1933.

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“one of the finest golf courses in the Middle West.”⁴⁵ In the winter of 1933-34, utilizing funding from the CWA, a 167-acre property located about one mile south of Copper Harbor, which had previously been acquired by Keweenaw County from the Keweenaw Copper Company, was cleared by local workers. By June 1935, the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge and Resort was open, featuring a nine-hole golf course and rustic log clubhouse. Twenty cabins were added to the complex by the end of the decade. The property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 and, thoroughly rehabilitated in recent years, remains in use today.⁴⁶

Beginning in 1935, continuing work to improve Brockway Mountain Drive was made possible by another New Deal agency, the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The WPA was created in May 1935 strictly as a work-relief program with a focus on localized labor-intensive public works projects. It supplanted the CWA and was intended to be a permanent program. Road and public building construction were the most common jobs undertaken by the WPA, as these project types supported its mission of making long-lasting community improvements. The use of local materials and local unemployed persons was paramount to its function, served to minimize costs, and was necessary for projects to secure approval. Apart from the fulfillment of public improvements, state and local governments benefited from sponsoring WPA projects because they did not have to finance the labor. WPA workers were classified as federal employees.⁴⁷

By the time the WPA got involved, the construction of Brockway Mountain Drive was essentially complete. As a result, work mainly focused on beautifying the road and improving its overall functionality. Between 1936 and 1939, the following work was completed by WPA workers on Brockway Mountain Drive:

- Clearing and grubbing
- Surfacing
- Roadside cleaning
- Ditching
- Sloping and seeding shoulders
- Improving and extending drainage structures
- Installation of wood post guard rails
- Construction of rubble stone guard rails⁴⁸

The “stone guard rails” were different from the stone walls previously constructed in 1934. Rather than a

⁴⁵ “Possibilities of Mountain Drive Told by Ocha Potter.”

⁴⁶ National Register of Historic Places, Keweenaw Mountain Lodge and Golf Course Complex, Grant Township, Keweenaw County, Michigan, National Register #19800618.

⁴⁷ Federal Works Agency, *Final Report of the WPA Program* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1947), 7-15, 53; Federal Works Agency, *Public Roads and the WPA* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1940).

⁴⁸ Information gathered from a series of WPA project proposals from the Keweenaw County Road Commission, copies of which are on file as part of the Paul La Vanway manuscript collection (MS-061) at the Michigan Tech University Archives, Houghton, Michigan.

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continuous structure, 66 free-standing stone barriers were built, each ten feet in length. Forms were used for their construction, making them both easier and less expensive to fabricate. This also eliminated the need for trained stone masons, who earned a much higher wage under WPA-sponsored projects than other laborers.⁴⁹

As a federal-aid project completed during the Great Depression, the design and construction of Brockway Mountain Drive was undoubtedly influenced by the NPS. During the 1930s, the NPS supervised work relief projects nationwide and issued several publications providing technical guidance for designing, constructing, and improving parks and other outdoor recreational facilities, including roads and roadside features. The NPS's Landscape Division, under the direction of Thomas Vint, had developed treatments for park roads that addressed road banks, overlooks, bridges, guardrails, tunnels, parking areas, culverts, curbs, vegetation, and plantings. These also could be applied to scenic roads. In particular, the NPS adhered to the principles of scenery preservation, naturalistic landscape design, and "rustic" architecture.⁵⁰ This mission statement of sorts appeared in a forward written by Arno B. Cammerer, Director of the NPS, for Albert H. Good's 1938 book *Park and Recreation Structures*. It states, in part:

In any area in which the preservation of the beauty of Nature is a primary purpose, every proposed modification of the natural landscape, whether it be by construction of a road or erection of a shelter, deserves to be most thoughtfully considered. A basic objective of those who are entrusted with development of such areas for the human uses for which they are established is, it seems to me, to hold these modifications to a minimum and so to design them that, besides being attractive to look upon, they appear to belong to and be a part of their settings.⁵¹

Although apparently designed without any direct National Park Service involvement, Brockway Mountain Drive reflects specific landscape design principles developed and disseminated by the NPS and employed during the Depression-era by federal relief agencies, such as the CWA and WPA. These are summarized in the multiple property documentation form for Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks.⁵² Those exemplified by Brockway Mountain Drive include:

- Protection and preservation of natural scenery and features;
- Presentation of scenic vistas through the development of overlooks;
- Avoidance of right angles and straight lines in the design of roads and structures;
- Use of native materials for construction; and

⁴⁹ La Vanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 8-9, 13.

⁵⁰ Linda Flint McClelland, *Building the National Parks: Historic Landscape Design and Construction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 4-7.

⁵¹ Albert H. Good, *Park and Recreation Structures* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1938), vii.

⁵² National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Documentation Form, Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks, National Register #64500683.

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- Use of naturalistic techniques in rockwork to harmonize manmade development with natural surroundings

In addition, masonry standards for park guard rails stipulated “irregularity of the stonework pattern ... and the elimination of parallel joints along the top course providing a camouflage effect whereby native stone blended with the surrounding setting.”⁵³ Also, crenelated piers were adopted by the NPS in 1930 to avoid monotony in long walls and became a “distinctive aspect of the masonry work of the National Park Service.”⁵⁴ Therefore, with its winding, rolling alignment across a ridgeline, simplistic construction, numerous overlooks, and distinctive stone barrier walls, Brockway Mountain Drive clearly illustrates the influence of the NPS on landscape design during the period. In essence, the scenic road is a local counterpart to the park roads across the country that the NPS had direct involvement in designing and constructing.

A few commercial developments appeared along Brockway Mountain Drive to capitalize on its popularity. Most notably, the Wescoat family, the owners of the land at the road’s summit, operated a gift shop, the Skytop Inn, from 1935 to 2013. The original building included a wraparound observation deck. The second iteration of the Skytop Inn, constructed in the mid-1960s, was demolished following the acquisition of West Bluff by Eagle Harbor Township in 2013. A far less successful commercial venture was Harold Wescoat’s attempt to operate a ski hill beginning in 1942; it lasted only one winter. Another attempt at a ski hill was made after World War II by Copper Harbor businessman Percy Woods, but it, too, was short-lived. There simply were not many visitors to the area during the winter months.⁵⁵

There is no denying that Brockway Mountain Drive was an immediate success, as it did not take long for it to garner recognition from across the Midwest. In 1935, a tourist from Chicago was quoted in *The Daily Mining Gazette* as saying, “I do not know of anything in the United States to compare with the view of Lake Superior from the top of Brockway Mountain.”⁵⁶ In 1938, Arthur W. Stace, editor of the *Ann Arbor News*, toured Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, including Brockway Mountain Drive, and stated upon his return:

The Michigan mountain drive at the end of the Keweenaw Peninsula surpasses in spectacular charm the newly famed Skyline Drive in the Blue Ridge Mountains. ... Brockway Mountain outlooks are even more thrilling, more startlingly beautiful. ... Michigan’s two most dramatic drives are along the rugged coast of Lake Superior...the low drive is M-26 close to Big Sea Waters...the high drive is along the ridge of Brockway Mountain...many frowned on it as a luxury road. This luxury road has developed into one of Michigan’s most appealing tourist lures and turned into a profitable

⁵³ McClelland, 217.

⁵⁴ McClelland, 218.

⁵⁵ La Vanway, *The Brockway Mountain Drive Story*, 10.

⁵⁶ “Tourist Lauds Area’s Scenic Beauty,” *The Daily Mining Gazette*, September 16, 1935.

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recreational industry asset.⁵⁷

In 1939, Keweenaw County reported that 9,802 automobiles entered the Keweenaw Peninsula through Ahmeek in the period from June 16 to June 30, carrying tourists from 35 states, Canada, and even Panama.⁵⁸ In 1941, the *Chicago Tribune* featured the Keweenaw Peninsula in its Sunday travel section, singling out Brockway Mountain Drive as “a revelation.”⁵⁹ The following year, the *Battle Creek Enquirer* proclaimed it a “striking drive.”⁶⁰ During this time, the Upper Peninsula Development Bureau (UPDB) increasingly advertised the Keweenaw Peninsula as a “summer playground and tourist haven.” In 1954, the UPDB reported that “the automobile, road building by state and federal governments during the 1930s Depression, and the desire of city dwellers to seek recreation, beauty, and peace had caused the local tourist industry to become one of the largest in the Upper Peninsula.”⁶¹ By 1956, Brockway Mountain Drive was deemed “famous” by the *Milwaukee Sentinel*.⁶² Acknowledgement of its significant role within the tourism industry continued. In reflecting on its construction more than 40 years after its completion, *The Daily Mining Gazette* called it “one of the most advantageous projects attempted in the Keweenaw region” during the Depression era. As part of the trio with Lakeshore Drive and the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge and Resort, it “has done tremendously to make the county a popular place to visit.”⁶³

Brockway Mountain Drive is largely unchanged since the 1930s.⁶⁴ Apart from minor repairs to the stone walls and road surface, improvements have been limited to regular in-kind replacement of wood delineator posts, replacement of log signs, the construction of a two-tier observation platform at Brockway’s Nose Overlook in 2012, and the installation of various interpretive signs in 2013.⁶⁵ Land adjacent to the road has been utilized for recreational and conservation purposes, which includes the development of hiking and mountain biking trails and establishment of two nature sanctuaries by the Michigan Nature Association. Eagle Harbor Township added restrooms at West Bluff Overlook after acquiring that land in 2013.⁶⁶

⁵⁷ “Brockway Mountain Praised by Writer,” *Michigan Roads and Construction* (July 7, 1938): 4.

⁵⁸ Arthur W. Thurner, *Strangers and Sojourners: A History of Michigan’s Keweenaw Peninsula* (Detroit, Mich.: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 235.

⁵⁹ Frederic Babcock, “Now Copper Country Cops Tourist Cash,” *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, September 7, 1941.

⁶⁰ “Keweenaw Holds Vacation Charms,” *Battle Creek Enquirer*, September 6, 1942.

⁶¹ Thurner, 234.

⁶² “Tourist Boom in Keweenaw,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, September 2, 1956.

⁶³ “Keweenaw Scenic Delight is its Brockway Drive,” *The Daily Mining Gazette*, September 1, 1971.

⁶⁴ Patrick.

⁶⁵ Kukkonen.

⁶⁶ Patrick.

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Evaluation

Four criteria are used to evaluate properties (buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts) for the National Register. To qualify for listing, a property must be associated with significant historic events or trends (*Criterion A*) or the lives of significant persons (*Criterion B*), possess significant design or construction value (*Criterion C*), or yield information important in history or prehistory (*Criterion D*). Brockway Mountain Drive meets National Register *Criterion A: Event* in the areas of Transportation, Entertainment/Recreation, and Social History.

Criterion A stipulates that a property must be significantly associated with a specific event, pattern of events, or trend important to history. Roads are inherently important to the communities they serve and many have had far-reaching impacts. The introduction of a road to an area, for instance, can play a critical role in stimulating growth and development and expanding the local economy. Roads can also provide more efficient means of transporting people and goods long distances, improve access to remote areas, and aid exploration.

The historical significance of Brockway Mountain Drive under *Criterion A* is three-fold. Firstly, its construction was important in the development of transportation on the Keweenaw Peninsula. It provides invaluable access to an inimitable locale that was inaccessible for automobiles, and largely unknown, prior to the road's construction. Secondly, and relatedly, Brockway Mountain Drive was central to an effort that began in the early 1930s to develop automobile tourism in the region. At the onset of the Great Depression, Keweenaw County's major industry, mining, was already in a declining state. In addition, secondary industries, such as agriculture and logging, were proving largely unproductive. The Keweenaw County Road Commission saw this as an opportunity to improve its network of roads and open up the distinctively scenic peninsula to visitors and increased recreational use. Brockway Mountain Drive, specifically, was touted as a key component in the development of the tourist industry by Ocha Potter, chairman of the Keweenaw County Road Commission. Potter heavily promoted the region's tourism potential, and Brockway Mountain Drive achieved instant popularity. Progressively, more visitors were drawn to the area as the road was improved throughout the 1930s. Before the road was built, few people could enjoy the spectacular views afforded by the high ridgeline above Lake Superior. Since its opening, Brockway Mountain Drive has received constant recognition, and it has continually been one of the Keweenaw Peninsula's most visited attractions. The significance of the road from a local tourism perspective is irrefutable.

Lastly, the physical act of constructing Brockway Mountain Drive contributed in a meaningful way to the welfare of the local community. The road was built during the Great Depression, when much of Keweenaw County's workforce was unemployed. Funding initially was provided by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and the CWA, two federal relief programs, and an average of between 150 and 200 men worked on the project at any given time. In the second half of the 1930s, improvements to the road were undertaken by the WPA, perhaps the best-known of the federal relief programs, and which sought to bring relief in the form of work. Brockway Mountain Drive perfectly embodies the WPA, as the work was accomplished by local

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unemployed people using local materials and represents a long-lasting improvement to the community. This was not the only Depression-era relief project in Keweenaw County, but it was certainly one of the most influential. Taken altogether, the road demonstrably has local significance for its important role during the Depression era in combating unemployment and stimulating the economy by means of a public works project.

Properties that qualify for the National Register under *Criterion C* are notable for their design and/or construction qualities. They may embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; exemplify the work of a master; possess high artistic merit; or represent a significant unified entity (a district) whose component resources lack individual distinction. A road may have unique engineering values or represent trends in engineering or a design innovation. To possess artistic value, it must express an aesthetic ideal or particular design concept more fully than other examples of its type.

Brockway Mountain Drive is an exemplary scenic road that is significant as a local counterpart to the naturalistic and rustic park roads designed and constructed across the country by the NPS during the same period and according to the federal agency's own established landscape design ethic. Even though the road was apparently not designed and built with any direct National Park Service guidance, it nevertheless reflects the naturalistic, rustic aesthetic promoted by NPS. Although Brockway Mountain Drive is not associated with a national or state park, it meets the registration requirements specified in the multiple property documentation form for Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks. In addition to being an example of developing a natural area for public recreational use, Brockway Mountain Drive reflects characteristic landscape design principles and practices of the NPS, including protection and preservation of natural scenery and features; presentation of scenic vistas through the development of overlooks; avoidance of right angles and straight lines in the design of roads and structures; use of native materials for construction; and use of naturalistic techniques in rockwork to harmonize manmade development with natural surroundings. For these reasons, Brockway Mountain Drive qualifies for the National Register under *Criterion C*.

Integrity

In addition to eligibility under one or more evaluation criteria, a property must also possess integrity, or the ability to convey its significance. There are seven aspects of integrity to consider—*location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association*—and a property must retain at least several, and usually most, of these qualities. The evaluation of integrity for a road essentially consists of determining if it retains the identity for which it is significant.

Brockway Mountain Drive retains integrity with regard to all seven aspects of integrity. Its appearance has largely remained the same since its construction, which is quite remarkable for a road. The alignment and typical cross section have not been altered and the roadbed remains a mix of gravel and tar, not an overlay of asphalt, as is commonplace today. The character-defining stone barrier walls exhibit only minor repairs. The most significant alteration is the loss of the Skytop Inn at West Bluff Overlook, but that does not mean the entire

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road has lost its significance. The wood delineator posts that line many sections of the road are modern replacements, but they have an identical appearance and location as the historic period. Similarly, the log signs at each entrance to the road and West Bluff Overlook are not of historic age, but they have a similar appearance to the road's historic log signs. One notable addition, apart from a handful of small interpretive signs along the length of the road, is the observation platform constructed at Brockway's Nose Overlook in 2012. Although it introduces a distinctly modern feature, an overlook has always been at this location. It does not detract from the road's ability to convey its significance as a Depression-era road and longstanding tourist destination. The modern restrooms at West Bluff Overlook are also of little consequence, as they do not obstruct the expansive panoramic views paramount to Brockway Mountain Drive's summit area. Land adjacent to the road has been utilized for recreational and conservation purposes, but this has not impacted the road or the integrity of its natural setting. Most importantly, the visual effect of driving Brockway Mountain Drive and experiencing its scenic overlooks is unchanged.

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United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 3

Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

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Section 10 Page 1

Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

Verbal Boundary Description

The historic boundary for Brockway Mountain Drive follows the centerline of the road from its west terminus at M-26 near Eagle Harbor to its east terminus at M-26 in Copper Harbor. The boundary extends 50 feet from the centerline on each side of the road, consistent with the right-of-way widths.

Boundary Justification

The historic boundary corresponds to the right-of-way, encompassing the roadway and associated roadside resources, particularly the stone barrier walls and nine scenic overlooks. Land adjacent to the road that has been utilized in recent decades for recreational and conservation purposes is not included as part of the historic boundary because it is not historically associated with the development of Brockway Mountain Drive, nor does it contribute to the road's significance.

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Continuation Sheet

Section **Photos** Page **1**

Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

Name of Property:	Brockway Mountain Drive
City or Vicinity:	Copper Harbor, Eagle Harbor
County:	Keweenaw
State:	MI
Name of Photographer:	Greg Rainka
Date of Photographs:	April 2016
Location of Original Digital Files:	8669 N. Deerwood Drive, Milwaukee, WI 53209
Number of Photographs:	30

Photo 1. View West at West Bluff Overlook

Photo 2. View Southwest at West Bluff Ovelook

Photo 3. View East from South Side of West Bluff Overlook

Photo 4. View Southwest of Stone Barrier Walls at West Bluff Overlook

Photo 5. View Southwest of Concrete Footings at West Bluff Overlook

Photo 6. View Southeast of Concrete Structure at West Bluff Overlook

Photo 7. View Northeast of Modern Restroom Structure at West Bluff Overlook

Photo 8. View East at West Bluff Overlook

Photo 9. View West of Unnamed Pullout Immediately East of West Bluff Overlook

Photo 10. View West at East Bluff Overlook

Photo 11. View Southeast at Beaver Dam Overlook

Photo 12. View South at Beaver Dam Overlook

Photo 13. View East at West Cracked Rock Overlook

Photo 14. View West at Cracked Rock Overlook

Photo 15. View West at On the Edge Overlook

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Section **Photos** Page **2**

Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

Photo 16. View East at Hartman's Overlook

Photo 17. View East at 1937 Overlook

Photo 18. View East at "Big Curve"

Photo 19. View East of Modern Observation Platform at Brockway's Nose Overlook

Photo 20. View East at Brockway's Nose Overlook

Photo 21. View South of Descent Near Eastern End of Brockway Mountain Drive

Photo 22. Representative View of Patch Roadway Repairs

Photo 23. Representative View of Type 1 Stone Barrier Wall

Photo 24. Representative View of Type 2 Stone Barrier Walls

Photo 25. Representative View of Wood Post Barriers

Photo 26. Detail of Replacement Wood Post Barrier

Photo 27. Modern Log Entrance Sign at West (Eagle Harbor) End

Photo 28. Modern Log Entrance Sign at East (Copper Harbor) End

Photo 29. Modern Three-Part Log Sign at West Bluff Overlook

Photo 30. One of the Seven Modern Interpretive Signs Erected in 2013

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Continuation Sheet

Section **Figures** Page **1**

Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

Figure 1. Brockway Mountain Drive Location Map

Figure 2. Brockway Mountain Drive Sketch Map

Figure 3. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View East from West Bluff Overlook

Figure 4. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View West of West Bluff Overlook

Figure 5. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View Northeast of West Bluff Overlook and Skytop Inn

Figure 6. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View West from Beaver Dam Overlook Toward West Bluff Overlook

Figure 7. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View West from Beaver Dam Overlook of Wood Delineator Posts

Figure 8. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View North of West Bluff Overlook Signs

Brockway Mountain Drive National Register Nomination

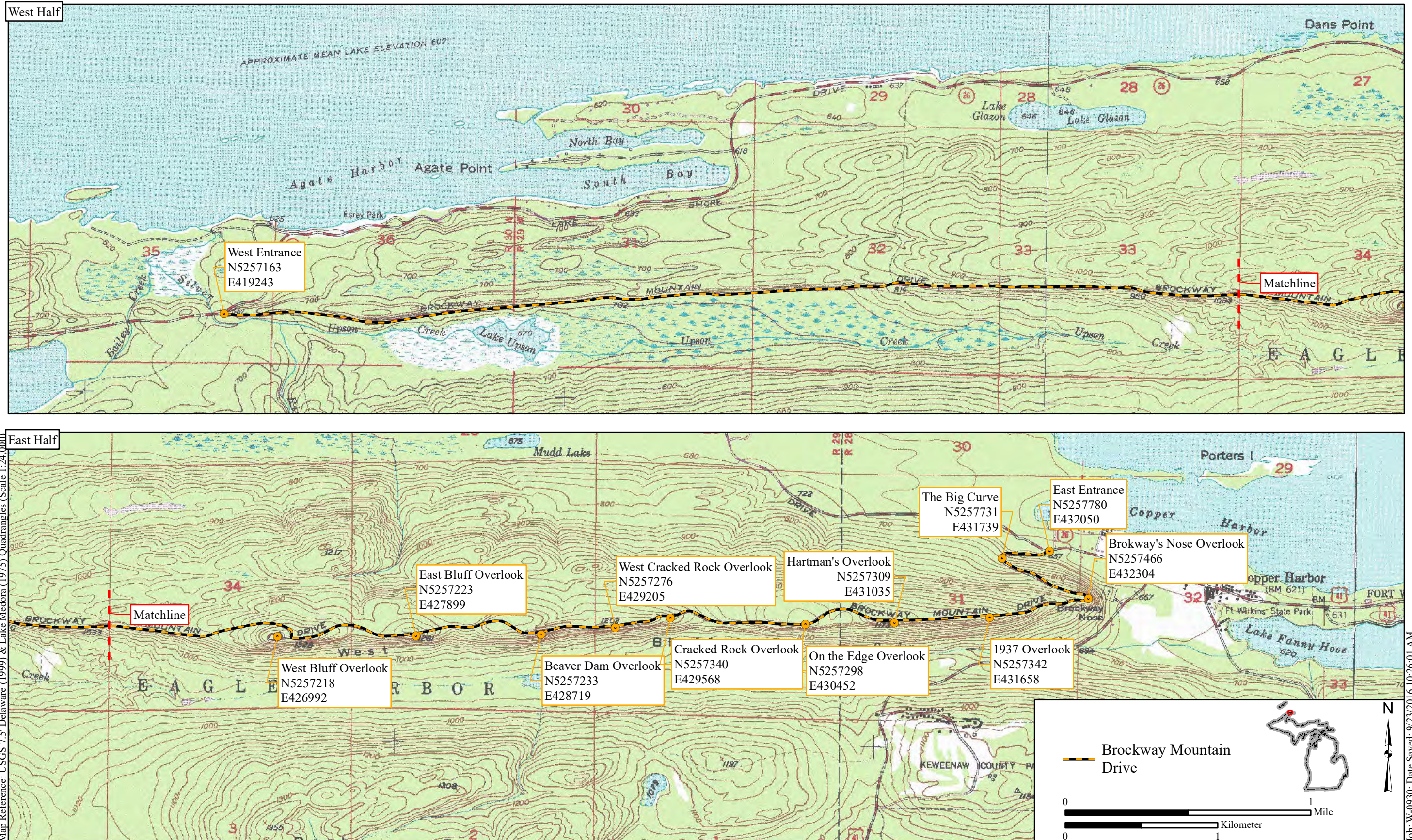


Figure 1. Location of Brockway Mountain Drive, Keweenaw County, Michigan

Brockway Mountain Drive
Keweenaw County, Michigan

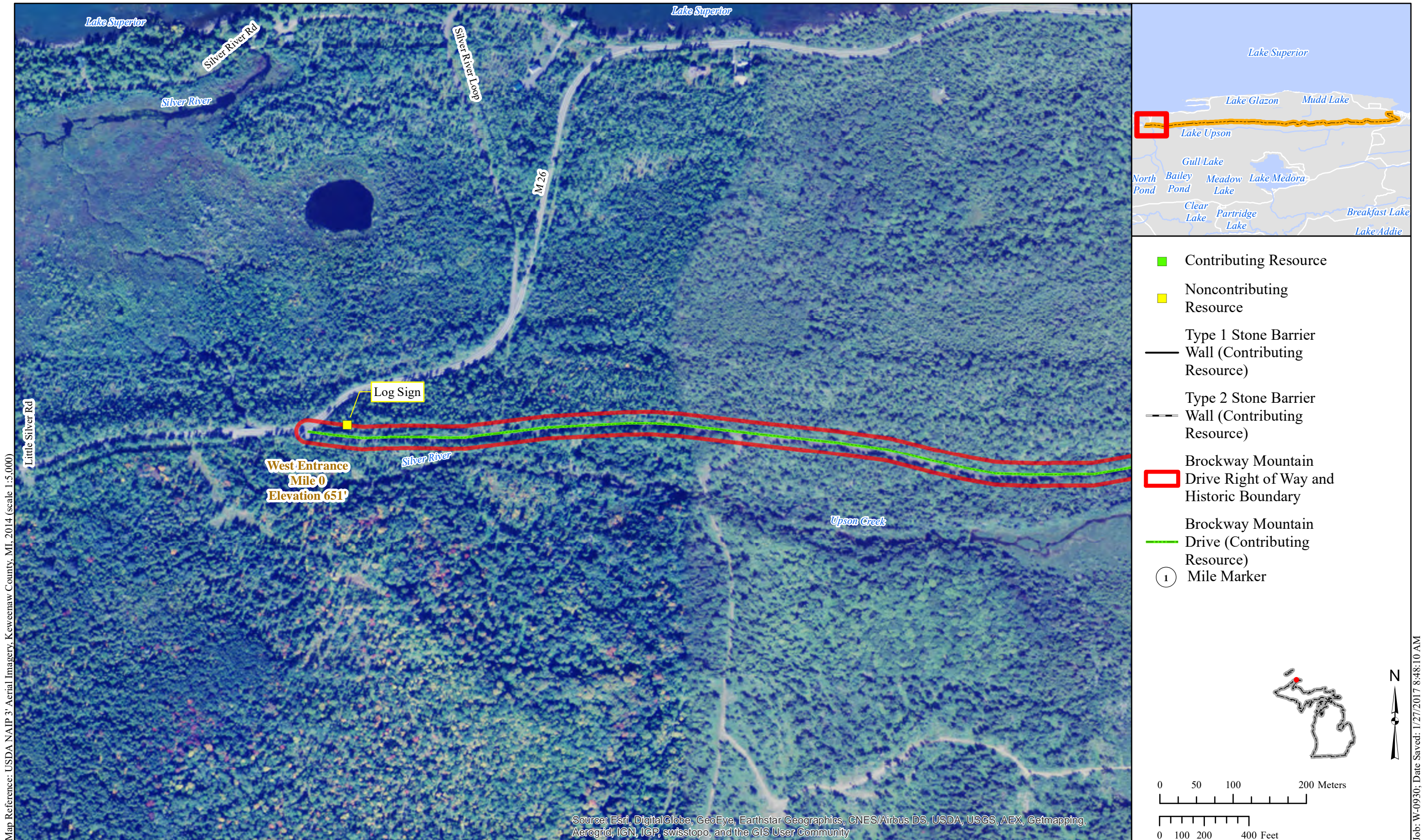


Figure 2a. Brockway Mountain Drive Site Plan

Brockway Mountain Drive
Keweenaw County, Michigan

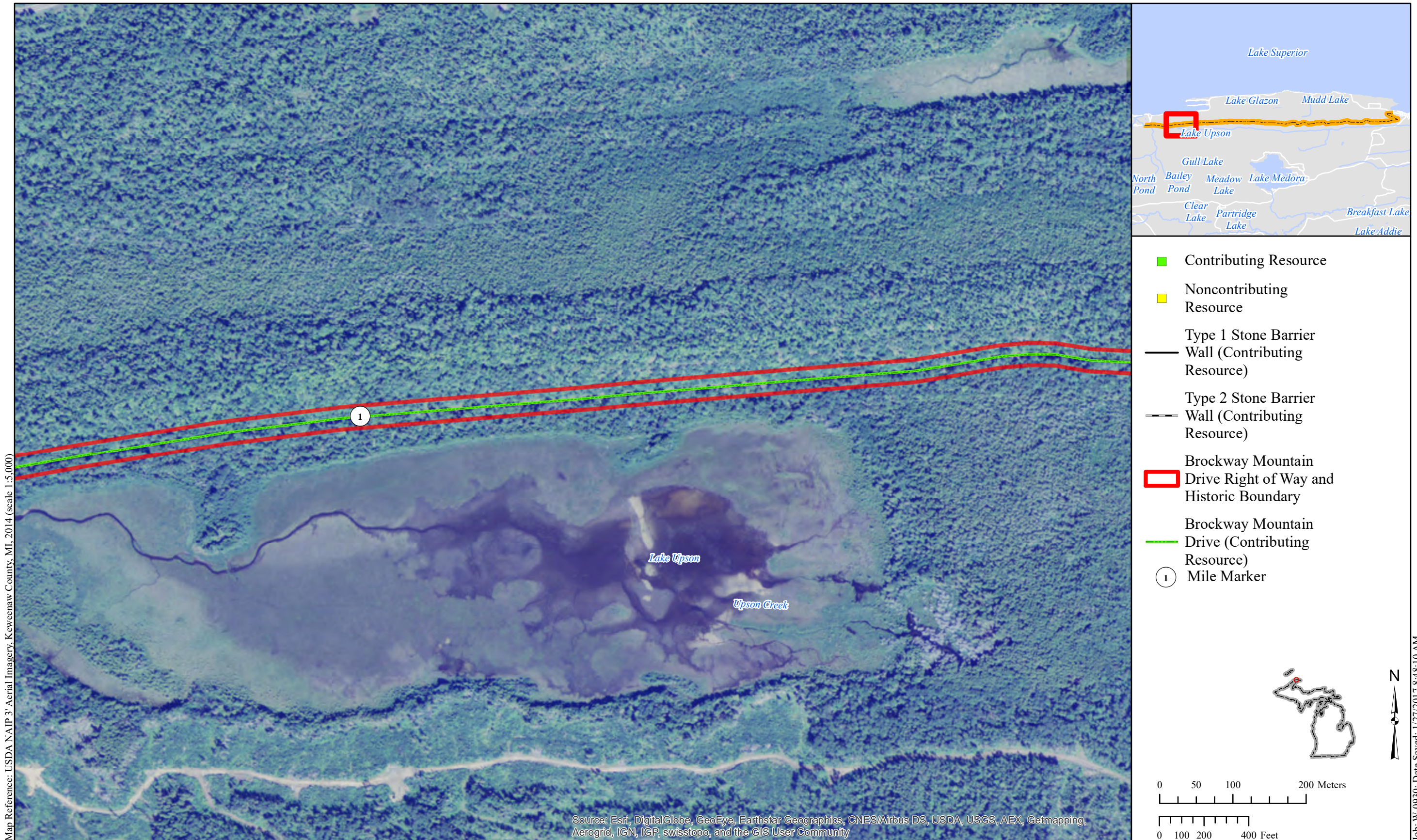


Figure 2b. Brockway Mountain Drive Site Plan

Brockway Mountain Drive
Keweenaw County, Michigan

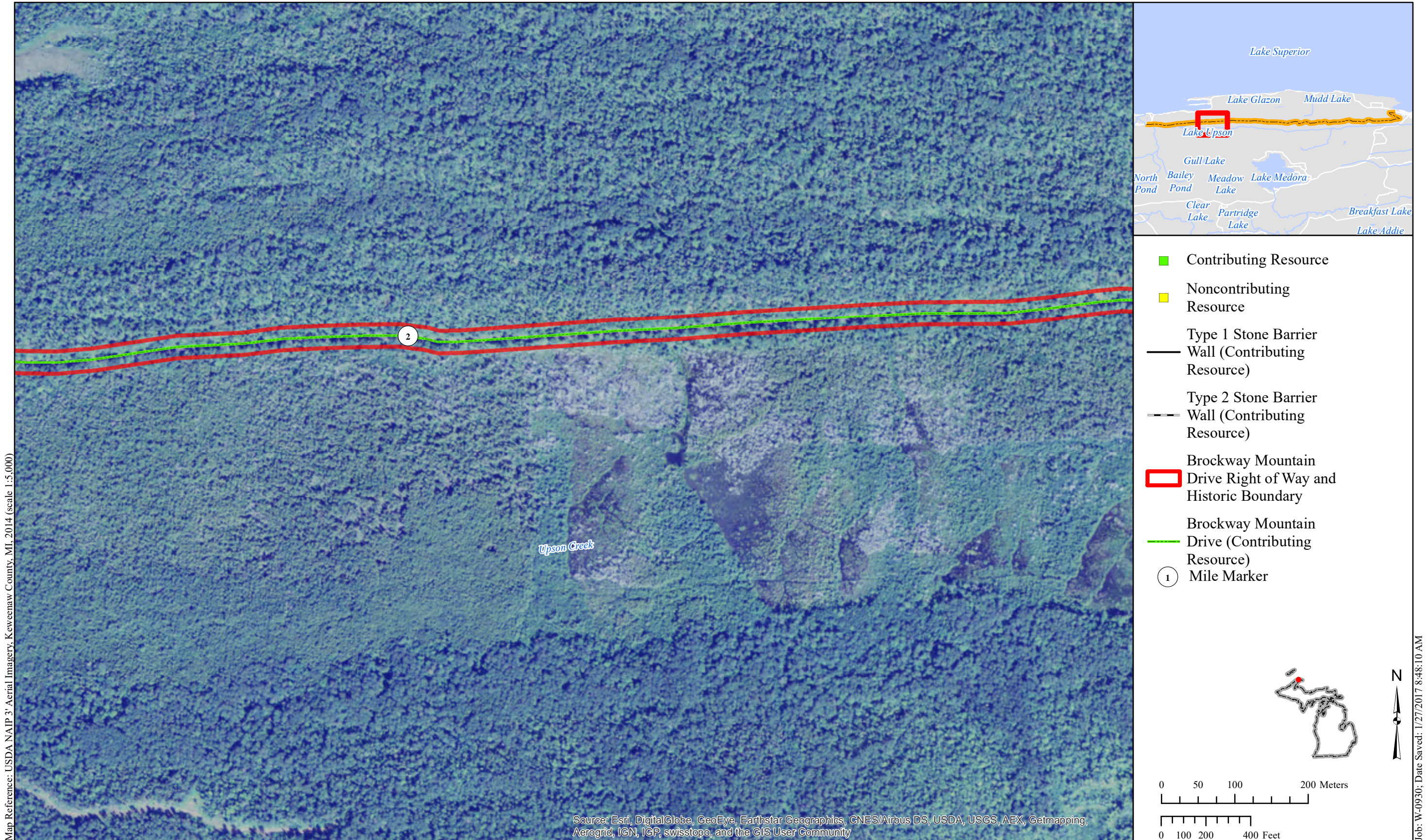


Figure 2c. Brockway Mountain Drive Site Plan

Brockway Mountain Drive
Keweenaw County, Michigan

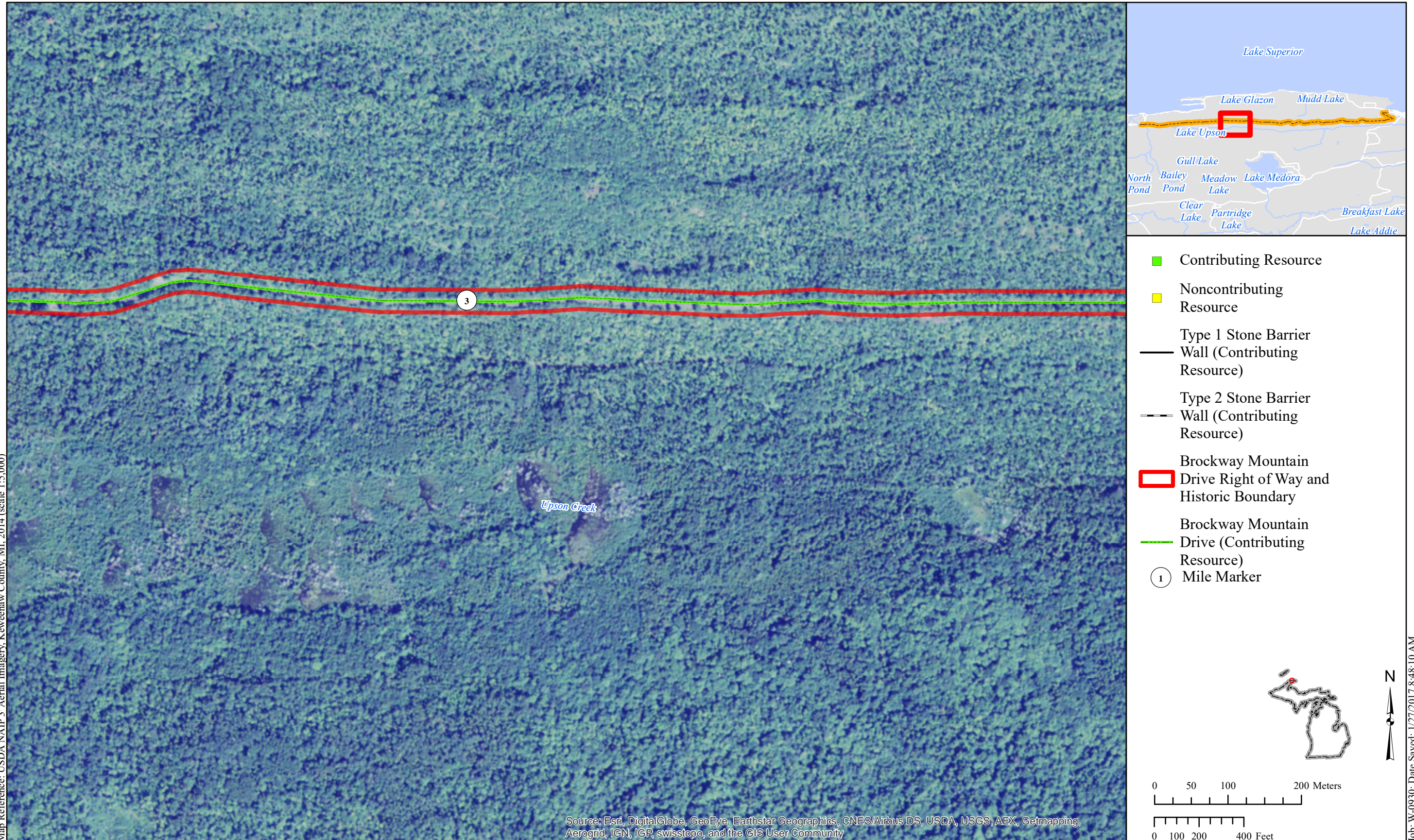


Figure 2d. Brockway Mountain Drive Site Plan

Brockway Mountain Drive
Keweenaw County, Michigan

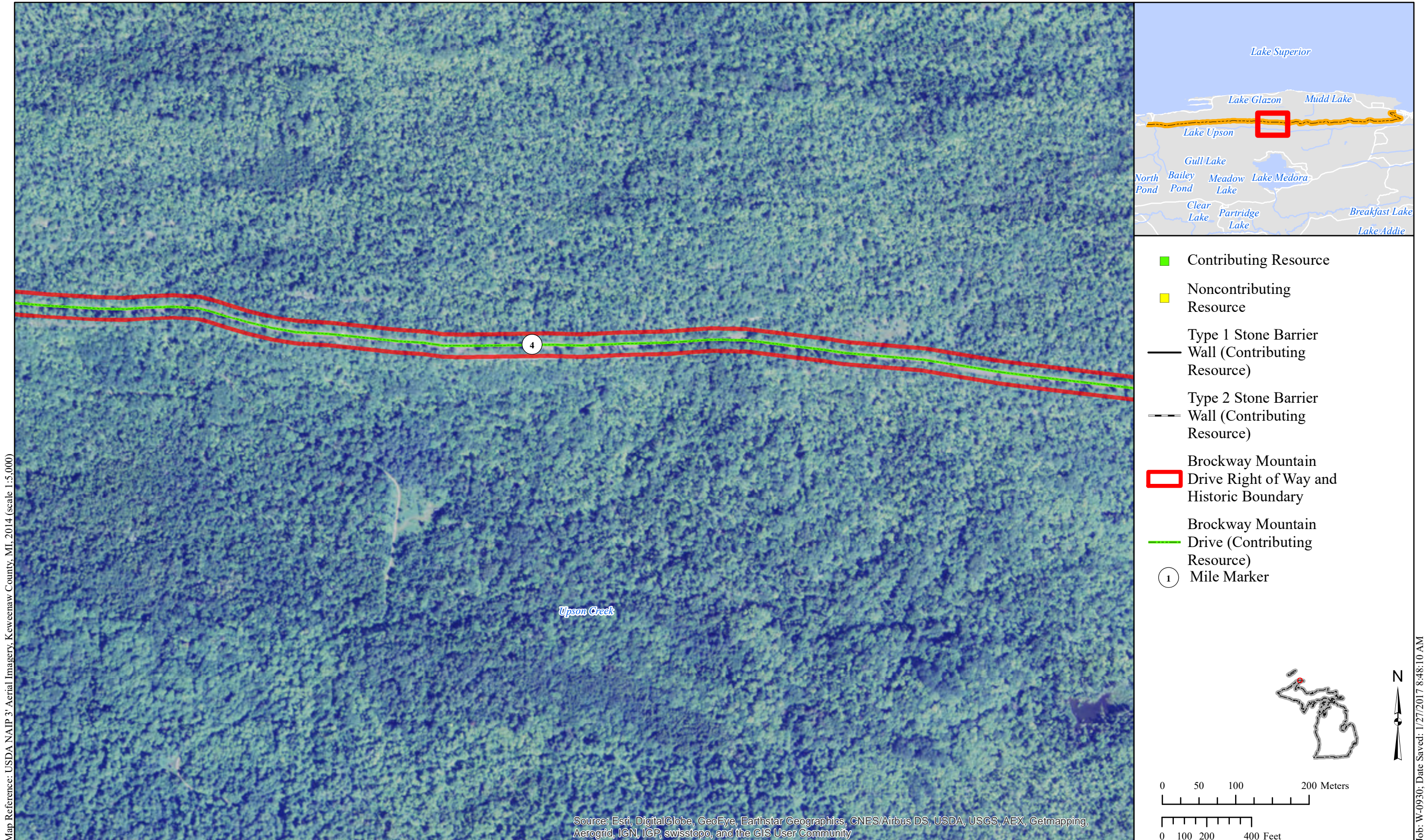


Figure 2e. Brockway Mountain Drive Site Plan

Brockway Mountain Drive
Keweenaw County, Michigan

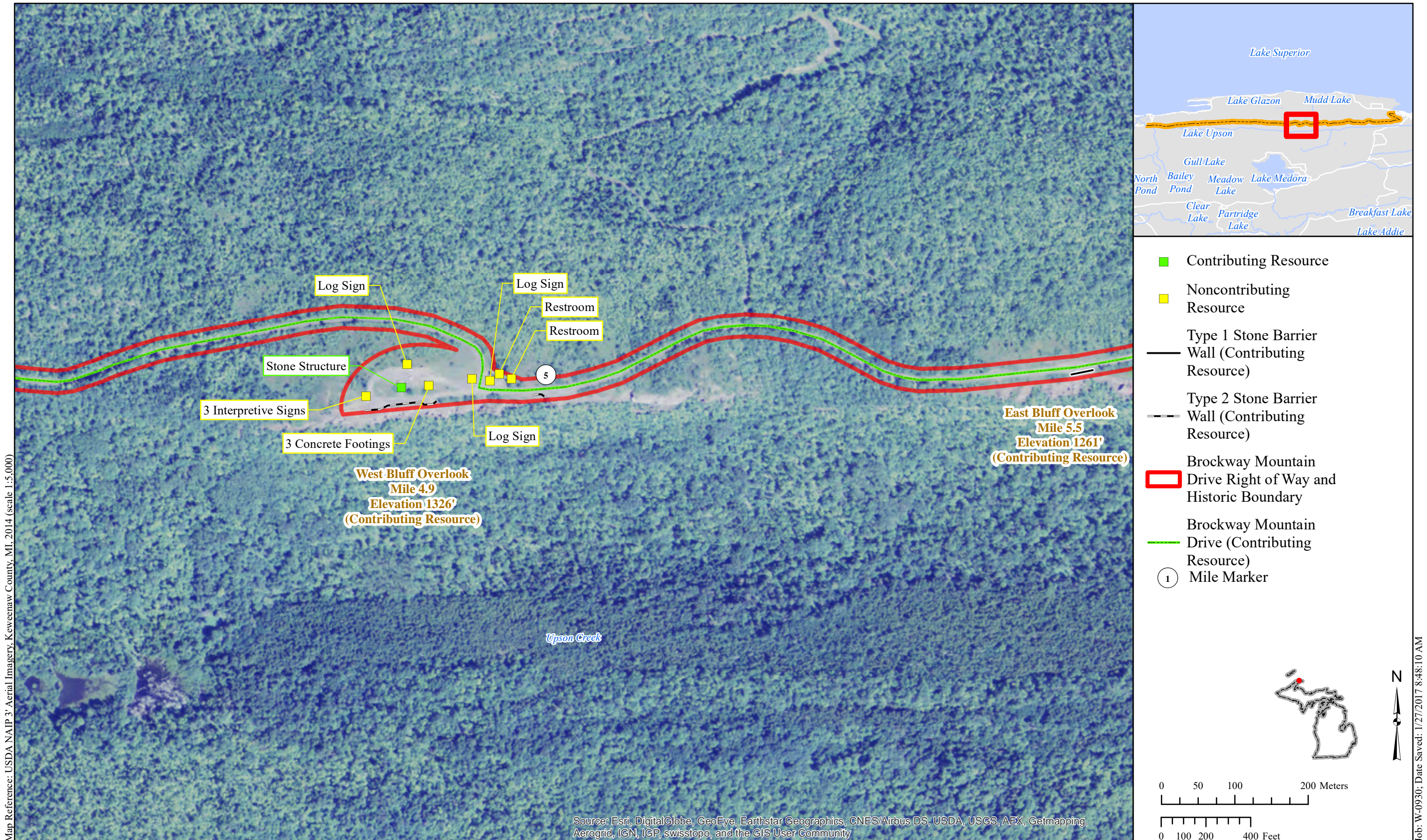
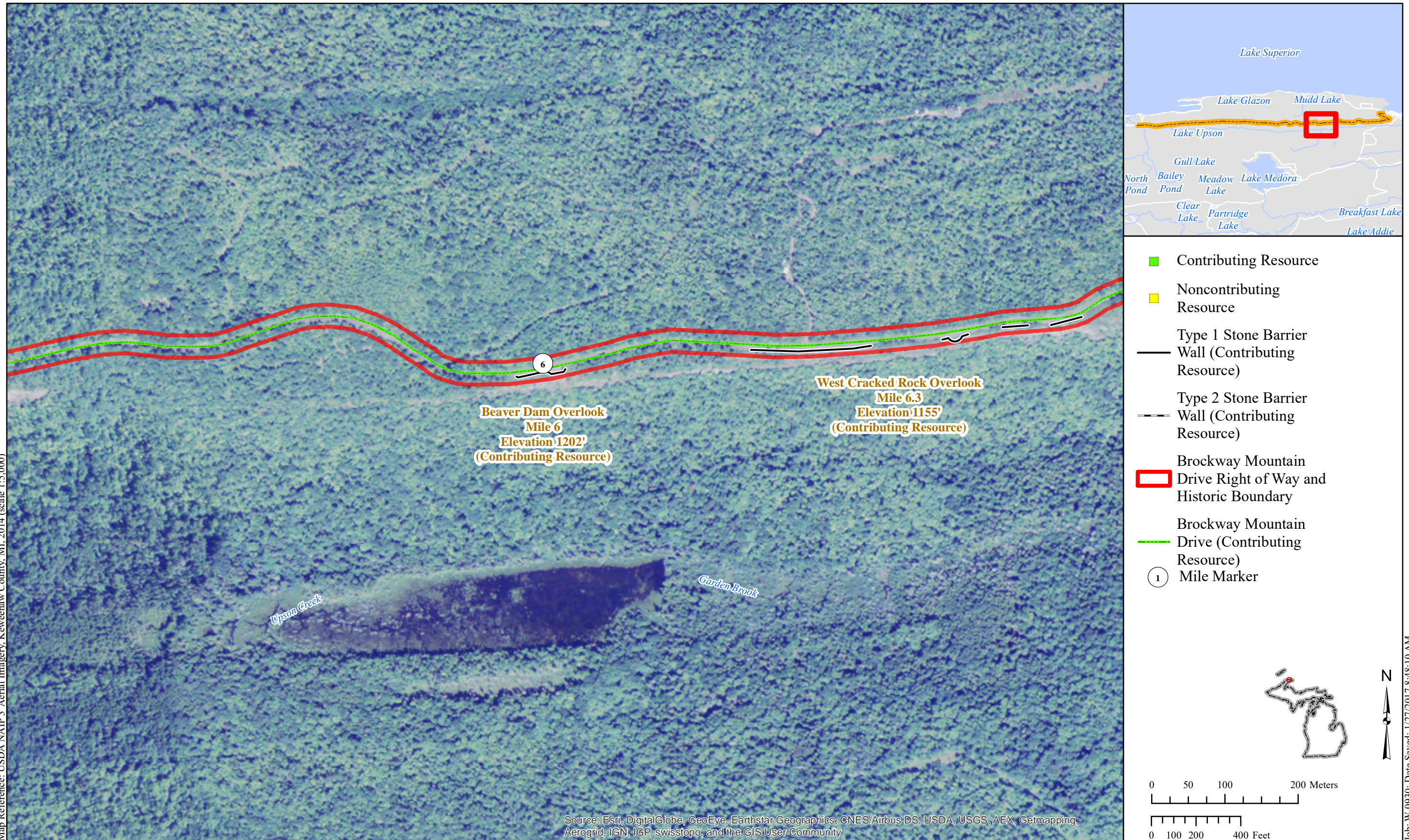


Figure 2f. Brockway Mountain Drive Site Plan

Brockway Mountain Drive
Keweenaw County, Michigan



Map Reference: USDA NAIP 3' Aerial Imagery, Keweenaw County, MI, 2014 (scale 1:5,000)

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

Job: W-0930; Date Saved: 1/27/2017 8:48:10 AM

Figure 2g. Brockway Mountain Drive Site Plan

Brockway Mountain Drive
Keweenaw County, Michigan

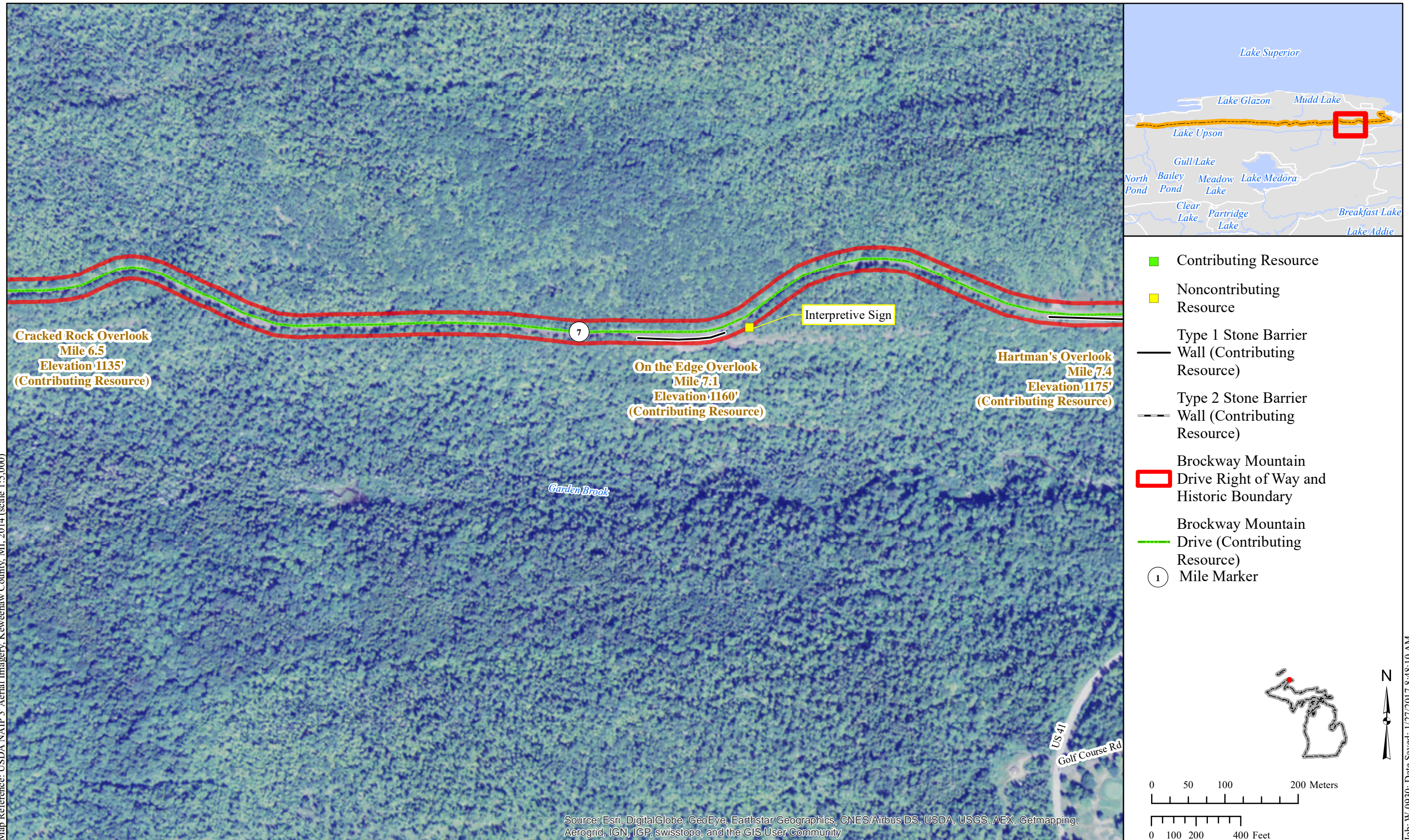


Figure 2h. Brockway Mountain Drive Site Plan

Brockway Mountain Drive
Keweenaw County, Michigan



Figure 2i. Brockway Mountain Drive Site Plan

Brockway Mountain Drive
National Register Nomination



Figure 3. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View East from West Bluff Overlook

Brockway Mountain Drive
National Register Nomination



Figure 4. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View West of West Bluff Overlook

Brockway Mountain Drive
National Register Nomination



Figure 5. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View Northeast of West Bluff Overlook and Skytop Inn

Brockway Mountain Drive
National Register Nomination



Figure 6. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View West from Beaver Dam Overlook Toward West Bluff Overlook

Brockway Mountain Drive
National Register Nomination



Figure 7. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View West from Beaver Dam Overlook of Wood Delineator Posts

Brockway Mountain Drive
National Register Nomination



Figure 8. Historic Photograph (c.1940), View North of West Bluff Overlook Signs























































BROCKWAY MOUNTAIN DR





THE COPPER COUNTRY
 AN ANCIENT VANISHED RACE MINED NATIVE COPPER HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO IN COUNTLESS PITS AND TRENCHES SCATTERED AMONG THE HILLS FROM COPPER HARBOR TO ONTONAGON AND ON ISLE ROYALE. THE EXPLORER, JACQUES CARTIER, REPORTED IN 1536 THAT INDIANS ON ST. LAWRENCE RIVER TOLD HIM OF GREAT HILLS OF NATIVE COPPER FAR TO THE WEST.
 THE JESUIT, FATHER CLAUDE ALLOUEZ, WAS THE FIRST WHITE MAN TO REPORT SEEING COPPER ALONG THE SOUTH SHORE OF LAKE SUPERIOR. THIS WAS IN 1666.
 IN 1771 A COMPANY WAS ORGANIZED IN LONDON, ENGLAND WHICH SENT AN UNSUCCESSFUL EXPEDITION TO THESE SHORES TO MINE COPPER. A TREATY BETWEEN THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND THE CHIPPEWA INDIANS ON MARCH 12 TH. 1843 OPENED THE DISTRICT TO MINING.



WEST BLUFF
SCENIC VIEW
 726 FT. ABOVE LAKE LEVEL AND
 1328 FT. ABOVE SEA LEVEL

DURING THE SUCCEEDING YEARS MINES WERE DISCOVERED THAT FOR TWO GENERATIONS PRODUCED A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THE WORLD'S COPPER. THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL MINE WAS THE CLIFF MINE NEAR PHOENIX ON U.S. 41. IT WAS STARTED IN 1844. THE CONSUMER ATLEIDE AT CALLMET PRODUCED OVER 4,000,000,000 LBS. OF COPPER AND FROD OVER 1,600,000,000 INDIAN DOLLS. SCATTERED ALONG U.S. 41 AND IN 246 YOU WILL FIND ROAD SIDE MARKERS THAT RECORD ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF THE GHOST MINES IN WHICH THE HOPES, THE AMBITIONS AND THE FORTUNES OF A TOUGH AND HARDY GROUP OF PIONEERS LE FOREVER BURIED. WE PAY TRIBUTE TO THEIR MEMORY IT WAS THEIR COURAGE AND CONFIDENCE THAT LED TO THE ENRICHMENT OF MANKIND IN THE PURE AIR AND THE SCENIC BEAUTY OF KEWEENAW LAND WE HAVE AN ODE BODY THAT CAN NEVER BE MINED OUT WE INVITE YOU TO SHARE IT WITH US. WISH YOU A PLEASANT AND MEMORABLE VISIT.



Connecting with Wilderness

Three kinds of corridors make Brockway Mountain a natural high



Skytop Inn, late 1930s. Image courtesy Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections.

A Favorite Drive

Brockway Mountain Drive is one of the Copper Country's most popular driving attractions. In winter, it is also a favorite destination for snowmobilers and skiers.



Built during the Great Depression, this road reflected a larger national trend. Work programs were helping motorists connect with a new array of scenic drives, public lands, and outdoor recreation opportunities.



Epic Bike Trails

In addition to trails for hiking, ATVs, and winter sports, the Keweenaw boasts more than 100 miles of singletrack mountain bike trails. Riders enjoy stunning scenery while traversing old growth forests, historic landscapes, and the edges of lakes, streams and mountainsides.



The International Mountain Bicycling Association recognizes Copper Harbor's trail system as one of only a handful of "Ride Centers" in America.



Highway in the Sky

There's one more travel corridor here. Though invisible, it's the busiest of all.

Twice a year, hundreds of thousands of migrating birds fly across the Great Lakes on their way between breeding and winter habitats. The Keweenaw Peninsula is a critical landfall and rest stop. Here birds feed and gather strength before continuing their journey along the Mississippi Flyway—a "Highway in the Sky."

Current trail maps and conditions are available at the Copper Harbor Visitor Center

Copper Country Trail
National Byway



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Brockway Mountain Drive

Multiple Name:

State & County: MICHIGAN, Keweenaw

Date Received: 6/9/2017 Date of Pending List: 7/18/2017 Date of 16th Day: 8/2/2017 Date of 45th Day: 7/24/2017 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100001345

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 7/24/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept, National Register Criteria A and C.

Reviewer Patrick Andrus *Patrick Andrus* Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2218 Date 7/24/2017

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

EARL J. POLESKI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 25, 2017

Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Brockway Mountain Drive, Eagle Harbor and Grant Townships, Keweenaw County, Michigan**, to the National Register of Historic Places. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register. No written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to our forwarding this nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Todd A. Walsh, Interim National Register Coordinator, at (517) 373-1979 or walsht@michigan.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Brian D. Conway
State Historic Preservation Officer

BDC/taw

