Great Lakes

The Great Lakes are the world's largest freshwater system, containing 20% of the world's surface freshwater. They are a vital source of drinking water and a key contributor to the global economy.

**Superior Facts**

- **Lake Superior** is the world's largest freshwater lake by surface area. It is also the third largest freshwater lake by volume. Superior Lake is the only lake in the Great Lakes region that straddles both the United States and Canada.
- **Superior Facts**: It is the largest freshwater lake in the world by surface area and the third largest by volume. Lake Superior's basin contains more water (over 40,000 cubic miles) than any other Great Lake.
- **Superior Facts**: It is the largest by volume (Lake Baikal in Siberia and Lake Tanganyika in East Africa contain more water).
- **Superior Facts**: It holds all the water in the other Great Lakes, plus three more Great Lakes.
- **Superior Facts**: It connects the heart of North America to a global economy.
- **Superior Facts**: It is remarkably clean and cold.
- **Superior Facts**: It is a geological newcomer (only about 10,000 years old).
- **Superior Facts**: It is exhibiting a trend in summer surface temperature. Per decade since 1980, surface water temperature in summer has increased about 2 °F (1 °C), while regional air temperature has increased 1 °F (0.5 °C).
- **Superior Facts**: It is managed through a binational agreement involving Canada and the United States, and by the Province of Ontario and the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan.
- **Superior Facts**: It has rip currents that are dangerous to swimmers.

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- **Lake Superior** is the largest freshwater lake in the world by surface area and the third largest by volume. It contains more water than any other Great Lake.
- **Lake Superior** is also the deepest of the Great Lakes, with an average depth of about 490 feet (149 meters) and a maximum depth of about 1,332 feet (406 meters).
- **Lake Superior** is home to a unique ecosystem, with a diverse array of plant and animal life. It is also an important source of drinking water and a key contributor to the global economy.
- **Lake Superior** is managed through a binational agreement involving Canada and the United States, and by the Province of Ontario and the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan.
- **Lake Superior** has rip currents that are dangerous to swimmers.

**Lake Superior holds 10% of the world's fresh surface water that is not frozen in a glacier or ice cap. The water level of this inland sea depends on precipitation and evaporation. Typically, the lake is just over a foot (32 cm) higher in September than it is in March.**

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CLIMATE

Climate is the state of the atmosphere with respect to current temperature, precipitation, wind, and cloudiness. Lake Superior can modify the daily weather through a phenomenon known as "lake effect." Compared to inland temperatures, shoreline temperatures can be noticeably warmer in winter and much cooler in summer. This is because water is slower to absorb and release heat than land.

The "lake effect" can also super-size storms by adding moisture and speed to wind passing over the lake. Michigan's Upper Peninsula is typically buried under six times more snow each year than downtown Duluth because of the lake effect. In summer, a dome of high pressure results in warm, sunny weather.

The regional trend is toward warmer temperatures, and increases in extreme storms and droughts. Winter and spring bring snowfall and lake effect storms, while summer brings thunderstorms and heat waves.

Lake Superior has bragging rights when it comes to fish. Although it produces far fewer fish than other Great Lakes, it supports a robust suite of native species. Sustainable management practices have fostered a modern and commercially important fisheries industry after overfishing and overexploitation.

Lake Superior has been an active mining region since the mid-1800s. Commercially caught fish aren't the only commodities to fish. Although it produces far fewer fish than other Great Lakes, it supports a robust suite of native species. Sustainable management practices have fostered a modern and commercially important fisheries industry after overfishing and overexploitation.

Lake Superior has an annual rite of spring. Fisheries experts aren't sure exactly why, but the small population crashed in 1979 and has stayed low ever since. Underwater, smelt still brave cold Superior waters to net them as an annual rite of spring.

Non-native species can damage the environment as well as local economies. Do your part to prevent the spread of non-native species. Don't release animals and plants into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water. Be sure to clean your boat and gear before leaving a lake, river or stream.