



Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

What's New / What's Cool in 2016

National Park Centennial and Find Your Park

- 2016 is the National Park Service's Centennial! Events began in 2015 and will continue through 2016.
- Park staff and members of the Friends of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore provided information to hundreds of paddle sport enthusiasts Canoecopia in Madison, WI (March 11-13). Neil Howk and John Frank (author of a new paddling guide to the park) did presentations on Paddling in the Apostles at Canoecopia (over 400 people) and the Midwest Mountaineering Expo in Minneapolis (April 22-24).
- The 10th annual Chequamegon Bay Birding and Nature Festival (May 19-21) will include numerous guided trips in the park and a keynote presentation on the NPS Centennial by assistant chief of interpretation Neil Howk.
- A permanent, outdoor, public mural celebrating the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore will be completed and dedicated in a public ceremony in the park's newest gateway community of Ashland, WI on June 25.
- A National Park Service Trivia contest featuring two teams of contestants from the park's gateway communities is scheduled for July 4 at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center.
- A new wayside exhibit commemorating the "Dedication and Sacrifice" of the people who protect national parks around the world will be dedicated at the Bayfield Visitor Center on World Ranger Day, July 31.
- The NPS Centennial is the theme of the 2016 Apple Festival October 7-9. Apostle Islands National Lakeshore will staff a booth during the festival and prepare entries for the venetian boat parade and the Apple Fest parade.
- As part of Find Your Park, the Lakeshore is partnering with mental health provider Northwest Passage to provide an underwater photography experience to groups of at-risk youth (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpp-WYZWcr0>).

Park Planning

- A cultural landscape study is being completed for Sand Island, documenting surviving cultural landscape resources at East Bay (with a focus on Hansen Farm). Recommendations for landscape management are being developed from this study.
- A workshop with experts from within and outside the NPS was held in April to review the known science and traditional ecological knowledge to better understand the significance, history, status, and possible futures for the island-based barrens ecosystem on Stockton Island.
- Planning continues for replacement of the Little Sand Bay Visitor Center. Construction is planned to occur in 2017-2018.
- Planning for replacement of the docks at Raspberry Island will begin in 2016, with dock replacement planned in 2017. The docks will have the same configuration as the current docks and be slightly lowered as an adaptation to climate change.

Major Projects Scheduled for 2016

Light Stations

- Raspberry Light Station will be receiving some tender loving care with fresh new paint, plaster repairs, and a general Centennial sprucing up of the park's best known lighthouse. Repainting and repairs to three outbuildings will also take place.
- The Old Michigan Island Light will reopen in late August and feature new exhibits on the first floor of the 1856 Michigan Island Lighthouse. The theme for these exhibits is: *The lighthouse on Michigan Island serves as an icon that represents changing times and how these changes impacted people in the region.* An audio description component will be added later to provide access to these exhibits to a wide range of visitors. Also, historic 1920s garden beds will be re-established with the help of Friends of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore and other volunteers.

Dock and Marina Work

- The public dock at Sand Island, East Bay will be replaced with a dock that has an L for better protection from easterly winds, a flow-through section to minimize sediment build-up, and is longer, improving access during lowered lake levels. The project is scheduled to be completed in late summer/early fall.
- The park is working with the Town of Russell to improve the boat launch at Little Sand Bay. Repairs are scheduled for this spring.

Other Infrastructure Projects

- The foundation at the Manitou Island Governor's Cabin will be repaired in late season 2016.
- In addition to the dock replacement at East Bay on Sand Island, campsites at Justice Bay and Lighthouse Bay will be added, an accessible group and individual site will be developed, and accessible boardwalk will be installed from the dock to accessible campsites.



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- Park staff, along with help from youth with the Minnesota Conservation Corps, will be doing trail maintenance on Outer Island.

Sustainability and Climate Change

- The Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center is hosting several school groups in 2016 as part of the curriculum component of the exhibit "Changing Climate...Changing Cultures." The curriculum is entitled "Gikinoo'wizhiwe Onji Waaban (Guiding for Tomorrow)", or G'WOW. This program integrates climate science with place-based evidence relating to climate change's effects on culture, specifically the Ojibwe culture. The fifth annual G'WOW teacher/educator institute, which is cosponsored by Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, is scheduled for July 18-21. The purpose of the institute is to increase climate literacy by learning about and applying place-based cultural evidence of climate change in our area.
- The park has several energy conservation projects planned for buildings at Little Sand Bay.

Resource Management

- A cooperative project with UW Madison and Northland College to study wildlife species using trail cameras will continue in 2016 and expand in 2017 (Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding) with a special emphasis on the State-endangered American marten. Cameras will be used to determine presence and distribution. Scat and hair traps for marten will be used for genetic analysis. DNA analysis can confirm presence of marten, as well as origin and relatedness.
- The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative continues to assist the park with funding for invasive species management, including surveys and control, and interpretation to help communicate the threat of invasive species.
- Surveys to determine the impacts of deer browse in the park will continue. Surveys on Sand and York Islands have shown that Canada yew has begun to recover now that deer numbers have been significantly lowered.
- A multi-park project to monitor bats for white-nosed syndrome that was begun in 2015 will continue in 2016. Monitoring conducted in 2015 documented seven species of bats in the park, including the Federally threatened northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*).
- Cooperative projects with the NPS Great Lakes Inventory and Monitoring Network include: amphibian monitoring; breeding bird surveys; dragonfly surveys and contaminant testing; monitoring water quality; and mapping coastal areas.
- 2016 is the second year of a five year project by the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology to update the state bird atlas. Several islands will be surveyed over this time to provide data for this effort.
- Archeologists from the NPS Midwest Archeological Center will be conducting archeological surveys at Little Sand Bay and Oak Island this summer.
- Park cultural resource staff will be conducting condition assessments on over 100 archeological sites, historic structures, and cultural landscapes at a variety of park locations throughout the summer.
- Resource staff will be working with agencies and partners to monitor for the presence of zebra mussels, an aquatic invasive which has been observed in Lake Superior waters adjacent to the park.

Partnership Activities

- The NPS Midwest Regional Director recognized over 40 of the park's community, interagency, and non-profit partners with the 2016 "Excellence in Partnering" award for the extraordinary cooperation during the remarkable 2014-15 ice cave seasons.
- The Friends of the Apostle Islands NL have been awarded a grant for \$12,500 from the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation for an educational program called "4th Graders-Giving a Voice to Water" which will fund a day on the water and in the park for 4th grade students from area schools.
- Piping plover monitors will once again be stationed out at Long Island to monitor and protect these endangered birds, as well as provide information to visitors. The monitors will work closely with the NPS, but will be Bad River employees, funded through the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Coastal Program. This project is only possible through a partnership with the Wisconsin DNR, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bad River Tribe, The Nature Conservancy, and the Johnson Foundation.
- The Real-Time Wave Observation System (RTWOS) at the Mainland Sea Caves will continue to provide wave heights and wave pictures via the internet at: <http://wavesatseacaves.cee.wisc.edu/index.htm> A digital display at Meyers Beach allows kayakers to check conditions before they paddle to the caves. A new grant will develop an Autonomous Real Time Stereo Imaging System (ARTSIS) that can provide both summer wave characteristics and winter ice conditions in the sea caves. System development is led by the University of Wisconsin and UW Sea Grant. Wisconsin Coastal Management, and the Friends of the Apostle Islands (<http://www.friendsoftheapostleislands.org>) have been important supporters and contributors to this project.