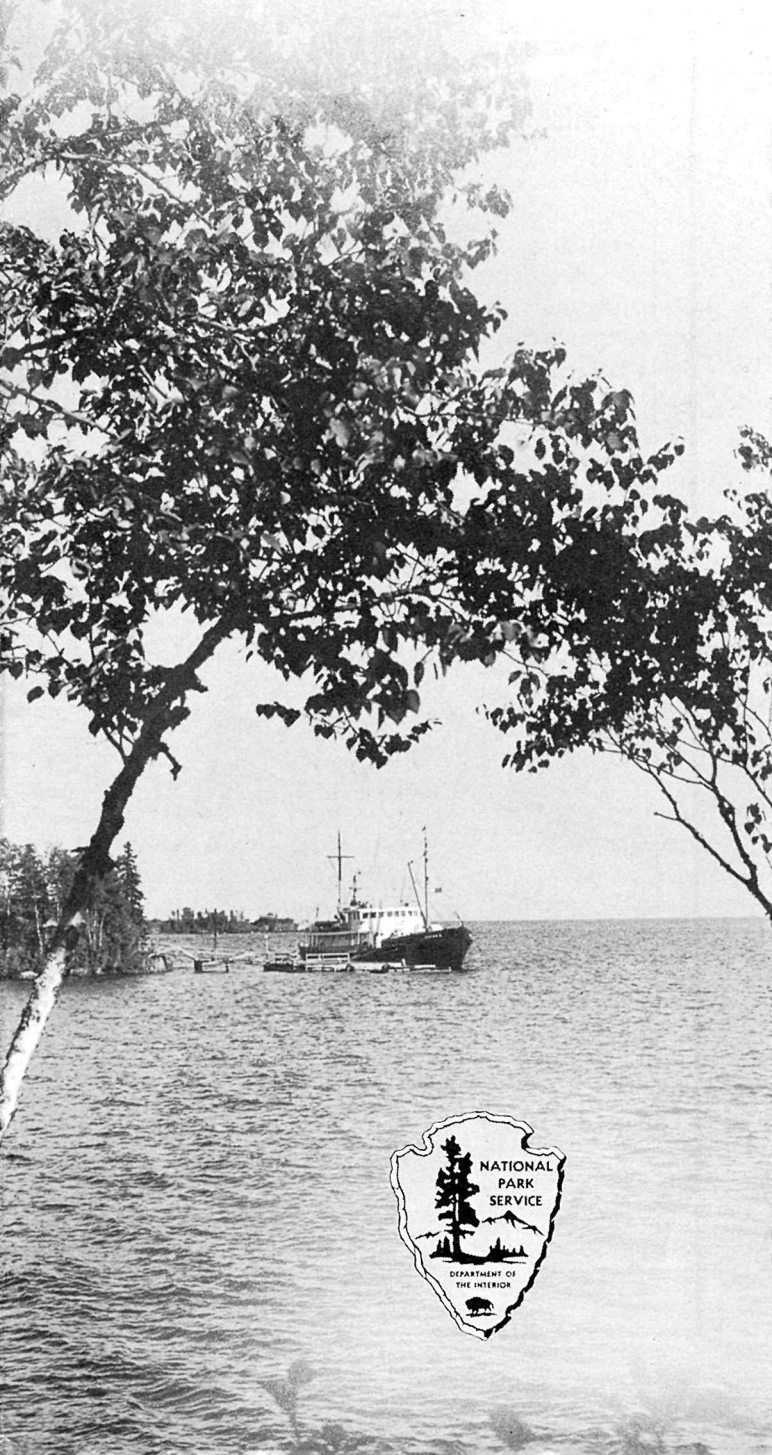


Isle Royale

National Park MICHIGAN



Isle Royale

NATIONAL PARK

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fred A. Seaton, *Secretary*

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Conrad L. Wirth, *Director*



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ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK is unique among the National Parks in its wilderness setting, isolated as it is from the mainland by many miles of Lake Superior waters. It is reached only by commercial, National Park Service, or private boats and seaplanes, and upon arrival in the park you will find no roads or wheeled vehicles. The pervading influence of water on travel to and within the park and on its landscape, the remains of prehistoric mining, and the great variety of plant and animal life distinguish this park.

The establishment of Isle Royale and the surrounding islands as a National Park was authorized by act of Congress, approved March 3, 1931. The State of Michigan acquired all privately owned lands and donated them to the Federal Government. The park was established on April 3, 1940. It now comprises more than 800 square miles of land and water.

The National Park System, of which this park is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of its people.

With more than 200 small islands and countless minor rocks surrounding it, Isle Royale is an archipelago. The northeastern end of the main island consists of 5 chains of islands and peninsulas forming 4 fjordlike harbors, the longest of which is Rock Harbor. An island chain on the southwestern end of Isle Royale separates Grace Harbor from Washington Harbor. Most of the harbors are navigable, for the water close to shore is deep.

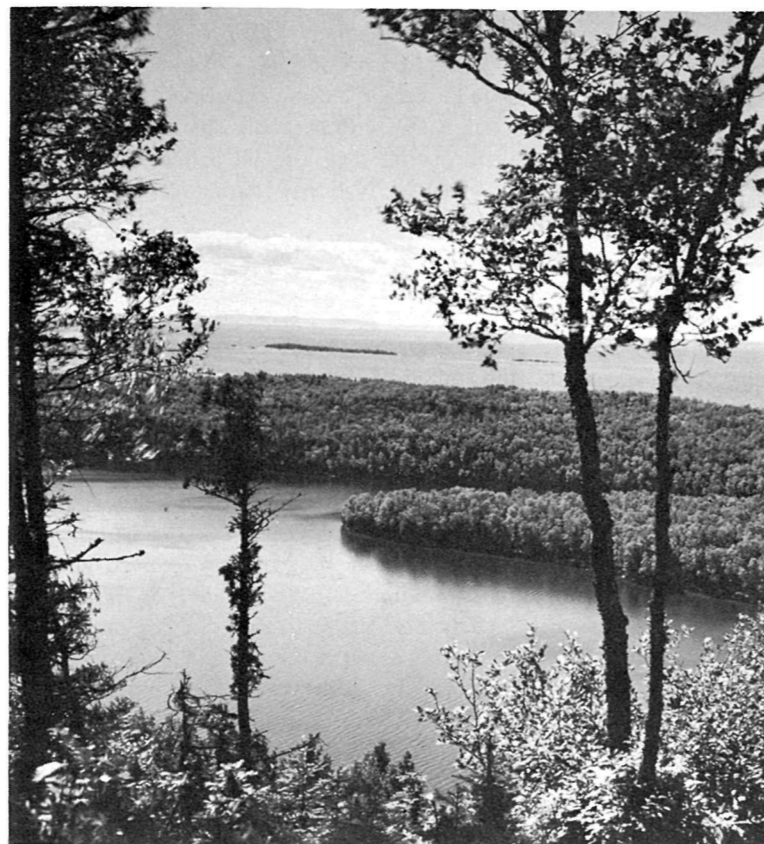
Isle Royale, the main island, is the largest in Lake Superior. About 45 miles long and 9 miles across at its widest point, it has an area of about 210 square miles. The highest measured elevation on the island is Mount Desor, 794 feet above the level of the lake and 1,396 feet above sea level. The other islands range in size from mere rock protrusions to islands 2 or more miles long.

Mott Island, where park headquarters are located, is part of the outer chain that forms the southeast boundary of Rock Harbor, which is 13 miles long.

Geology

The rocks of Isle Royale were formed about 900 million years ago. They are principally old lava flows interbedded with some river-deposited sandstone and conglomerate. These rock beds, originally horizontal, have been bent downward to form the great basin now occupied by Lake

Overlooking Duncan Bay toward Canada. (*W. Ray Scott photo.*)



Superior. Isle Royale is on the northwest rim of this basin.

Within the last million years, the continental glaciers of the Ice Age have reshaped the basin. In doing so, they overrode Isle Royale, grinding smooth the surfaces of its rocks but leaving the numerous closed depressions now occupied by its lakes. During the melting and retreat of the glaciers, the waters of Lake Superior stood for long periods at higher levels. This was because, during these periods, the Great Lakes flowed to the sea through outlets of different heights.

At one time Isle Royale was almost completely submerged; its shoreline at that time is indicated by the wave-cut rocks, now high up on the ridges. As each lower outlet for the Great Lakes was opened, the waters of Lake Superior dropped to a new level. Shoreline gravels, deposited along the cliffs of Isle Royale, record the various levels at which the lake waters halted for a time.

The rock beds on the island slope southeast into the lake basin. All of these beds pass under the lake and appear again on the Michigan shore, where they carry the rich copper deposits of Keweenaw Point. They are known as Keweenawan rocks.

On the island, the edges of the softer rocks have eroded into valleys that extend its full length. Between these valleys, the harder rock beds form ridges, like Greenstone Ridge. The upper surface of the gentle southeast slope of this ridge is a bed of basalt (a hard rock), and its steep northwest face is the eroded edge of this same bed. The other parallel ridges are similar in form.

Plantlife

The location and topography of Isle Royale make possible an interesting and varied plantlife. The summer growing season is short—typical of the northern clime. Among the flowers of Isle Royale, bunchberry (Canada dogwood) carpets wide areas; while in the dense woods are pipsissewa (prince's pine), twinflower, trillium, and pyrola. The spectacular devil's club grows on Isle Royale, hundreds of miles east of its familiar range in the Pacific Northwest. Plants living on decayed vegetation are common, including the Indianpipe, or ghostflower. For those who love flowers and like to study and identify wild species, one of the pleasures of Isle Royale is the discovery of the 36 kinds of orchids growing wild and undisturbed. However, please do not pick the flowers—leave them for others to enjoy. Present everywhere are a wide variety of ferns, lichens, mosses, and fungi. In season the fruits of many plants, such as blueberry, raspberry, strawberry, thimbleberry, and pin cherry are abundant, affording tasty pickings for the hiker and camper.

Coniferous (cone-bearing) and deciduous (leaf-drop-



Isle Royale Moose Are Most Readily Seen Near Water. (*Copy-right, Frank M. Warren.*)

ping) forests meet on Isle Royale and form an outstanding example of forest transition.

The hardwood (deciduous) forest type located in the interior upland section of Isle Royale consists mainly of sugar maple and yellow birch; and associated with this forest type are red maple, big-tooth poplar, northern red oak, and white pine.

The evergreen (coniferous) forest type is especially well developed along the shores of the island where the proximity of Lake Superior produces the cool, moist climate favorable to spruce and fir. The most common trees of the conifer forest are white spruce and balsam fir; and in association are paper birch, quaking aspen, mountain ash, jack pine, red (Norway) pine, and white pine.

Wildlife

Forty-five miles of water separate Isle Royale from the nearest Michigan shore; and 15 miles, from the nearest point in Canada. Therefore, the island now has only those species of wildlife that have been able to swim or drift across this water barrier. Beaver, muskrat, mink, and weasel are common, as are also the red squirrel, snowshoe hare, red fox, and coyote. Wolves have been reported since 1948.

Moose are commonly seen near water—along the streams and on the shores of inland lakes and harbors. They were absent from the island prior to 1900, but when the lake froze across to Canada in 1912, a number of moose may have ventured over the ice. Since then they have flourished on Isle Royale under favorable living conditions.

Some common animals not found on Isle Royale are deer, bear, porcupine, and skunk.

The park is a rewarding area for bird observation and study. Over 200 species have been listed, including the

bald eagle, osprey, pileated woodpecker, about 25 kinds of warblers, and most common of all—the herring gull.

Archeology

Long before white men arrived in this country, the island was visited by prehistoric Indians who sought the native copper found in pieces along the shores and in the bedrock. The method of mining used is revealed by the great number of hammerstones (oval-shaped beach stones about 6 inches through) and pieces of partially burned wood found in pits scattered about the island. Fire was used to heat the copper-containing rock which was then cracked by dashing cold water upon it. The hammerstones were used finally to separate the copper from the rock.

The age of the mining pits is not known, but by the time white men first observed them they were filled with debris. When this area was first visited by white men, local Indians had no knowledge of the pits or who made them. A few artifacts—arrowheads, knives, cedar shovels, and fragments of pottery—have been found, suggesting that these miners were the ancestors of present Algonquian and Siouan tribes. Artifacts of Isle Royale copper have been found from the Southeast of our country to the Great Plains, giving evidence of the extent of trade carried on by these early people.

History

Isolated as Isle Royale appears even today, it has been known and visited since early in American history. The French were exploring Lake Superior's shores by the time the Pilgrims landed on New England's rocky coast. A book and maps printed in the 17th century referred to the island, then called Minong, on which there was a mine of copper. The French took first possession of the island in 1669 as part of the Canadian territory, naming it Isle Royale in honor of King Louis XIV.

Fur trading drew the earliest white men to this area. The French, seeking access to the interior country, found the Grand Portage route, which, leaving Lake Superior, follows the present border lakes country of northern Minnesota to the broad Northwest. The beginning of this great carrying place, present-day Grand Portage, Minn., located 20 miles west of Isle Royale, has been set aside as one of America's National Historic Sites and is administered by the National Park Service in cooperation with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe and the Grand Portage Band of Indians.

The American Fur Company, which operated at Grand Portage after American occupancy, traded in fish as well as furs. In the early 1800's this company established fisheries on Isle Royale at Washington Harbor, Siskiwit Bay, and Belle Isle. The first American ship built on Lake Superior,

the *John Jacob Astor*, named for the founder of the company, was launched in 1835 at Sault Sainte Marie to serve the fisheries and fur trade.

Isle Royale was Indian territory until 1843 when, by treaty with the Chippewas, it was ceded to the United States. Prospectors for mineral wealth stampeded there, resulting in numerous mining explorations and ventures. Some notable pieces of copper were found. Among them was a mass weighing 5,720 pounds, which was exhibited in the Centennial Exhibition of 1876 at Philadelphia. The explorations continued until 1899, when the last of the mines was abandoned.

The ruins of these mining ventures are in evidence at several places on Isle Royale. It is of interest to note that wherever white men found copper, prehistoric Indians had preceded them. While the copper available had been adequate to suit the needs of a primitive people, it was not found in concentrations sufficient for modern needs and economy.

Fishing and Boating

Park waters are open to fishing under National Park Service regulations, copies of which are available at headquarters. No fishing license is required in the inland lakes and streams.

Over 30 of the inland lakes contain game fish species. Pike and perch are common in most of them, with walleyes included in Chickenbone, Dustin, and Whittlesey. In Siskiwit, brook and lake trout are taken in addition. No boats are available on the inland lakes. Fish may be caught from shore, but inflatable raft, canoe, or wading boots are recommended.

Isle Royale has about 25 miles of trout fishing streams. The main ones are Tobin, Washington, and Grace Creeks, and Little and Big Siskiwit Rivers. Brook trout is the main species taken, with some rainbow.

Forty-six kinds of fish are native to Isle Royale waters. A few kinds, uncommon elsewhere in the world, are found in the inland lakes—Lake Desor, whitefish and cisco; and Sargent Lake, cisco.

Lake trout are taken in Lake Superior by trolling over reefs and along the shore. In addition to lake trout, the harbors offer brook and rainbow trout and northern pike. In these waters, a Michigan State fishing license is required.

Boats and guides are usually available at Rock Harbor Lodge or Windigo Inn for fishing in Lake Superior. Rowboats may be rented, but you must provide your own outboard motor. Fishing tackle is furnished by the guides on guided trips or it may be bought at Rock Harbor Lodge or Windigo Inn from the concessioner.

Motor launch trips may be arranged at Windigo Inn or Rock Harbor Lodge in connection with trail trips, picnic parties, or sightseeing cruises.

Please be careful when boating. Innumerable dangerous rocks and reefs exist around Isle Royale shores, and icy rough waters of Lake Superior are not to be trifled with.

How to Get to the Park

Boat service is available to the park from Houghton and Copper Harbor, Mich., and Grand Portage, Minn. Motorists may leave their cars at these points on the mainland. Since transportation schedules vary from year to year, you should request current information in advance of your trip to the park. This information may be obtained each year about May 1 by contacting the Superintendent, Isle Royale National Park, Houghton, Mich.

Daily rail service is available to Houghton via Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad connecting with the Duluth, South Shore, and Atlantic Railway.

Daily bus service to Houghton is maintained by the Northland Greyhound Lines. Connections are made with related lines providing service to all principal cities. But service is also available from Duluth to Grand Portage, Minn.

Air service is available from Chicago, Milwaukee, Detroit, Duluth-Superior, and Green Bay via North Central Airlines to Houghton-Hancock.

What to Bring and Wear

Since nights are cool in the park, and day temperatures rarely rise above 80°, you should bring warm clothing. Those who go out on the lake usually take a heavy sweater or coat. Hiking clothes and comfortable walking shoes are appropriate for camping, boating, and fishing. Lodge accommodations are informal, and you will feel at home in hiking and sports clothes.

Opportunities for photography are excellent, so bring your camera. Binoculars are handy for close observation of wild-life and distant views. Dark glasses are advisable when on the water or along the lake shore.

Park Rangers

Park rangers are on duty to help and advise you as well as to enforce park regulations. If help or information is wanted, see a park ranger. Ranger stations are located at Mott Island, Windigo, Amygdaloid Island, Malone Bay, and Rock Harbor Lodge.

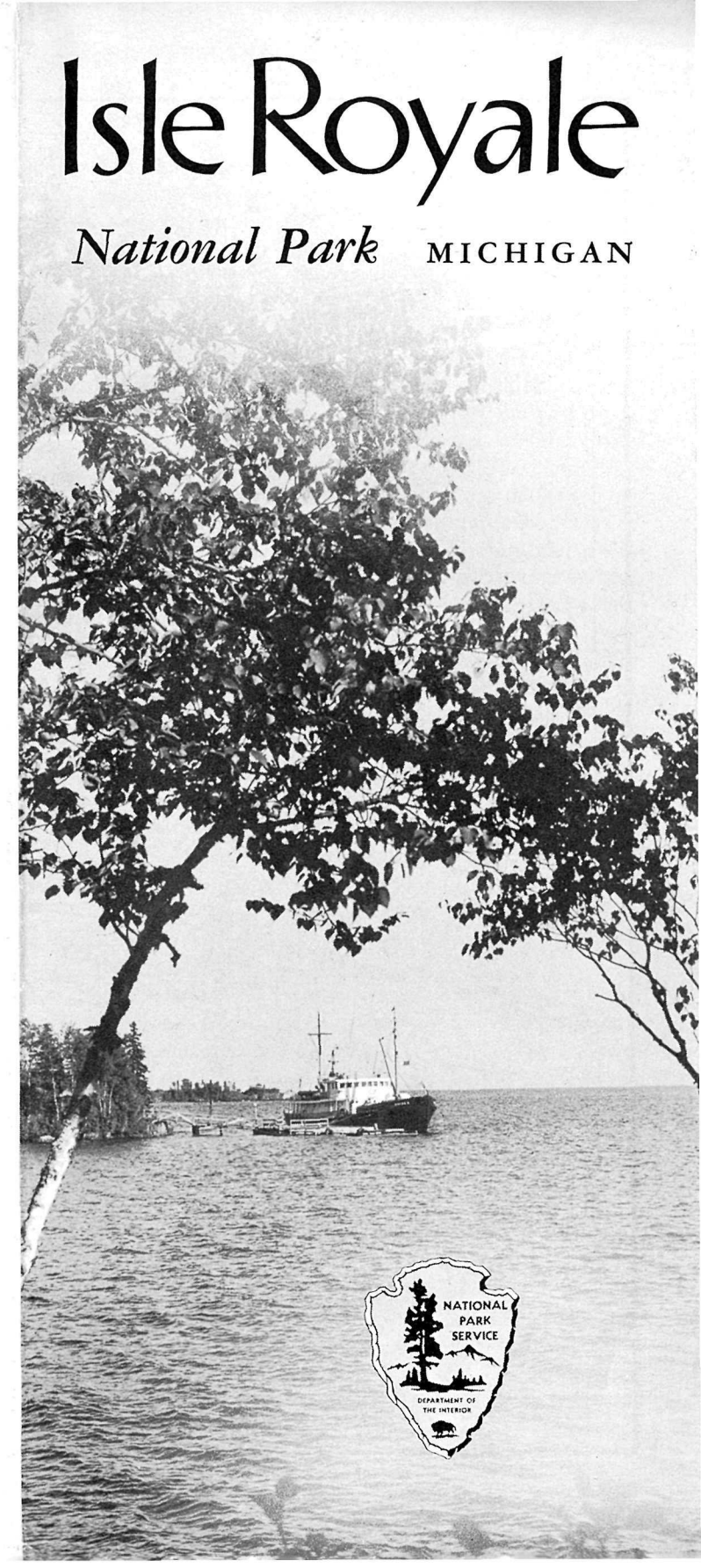
Two fire lookouts are operated during the summer—Feldtman Tower on the southwest end of the island and Ojibway Tower on the northeast end. You are welcome to visit these towers.

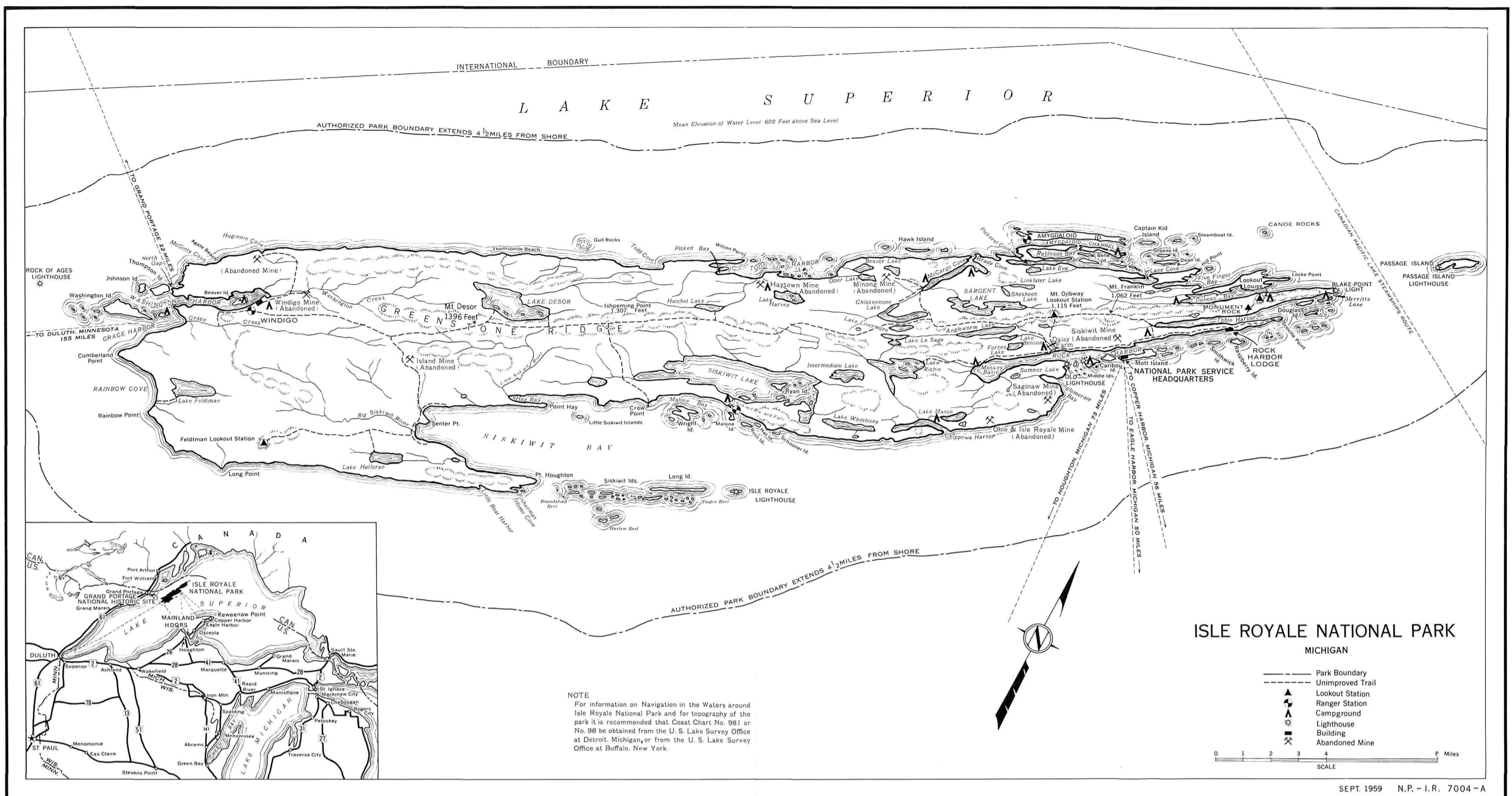
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Administration

Isle Royale National Park is administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Houghton, Mich., is in immediate charge.

Mainland headquarters for the park are at Houghton; from May 1 to November 1, headquarters are at Rock Harbor on Mott Island.

Interpretive Service

Self-guiding nature trails, conducted nature walks, and nature exhibits are provided. Evening interpretive talks are offered at Rock Harbor Lodge and Windigo Inn.

Camping and Hiking

Camping, along with boating and hiking, offers excellent opportunity for the enjoyment of nature at Isle Royale. Quiet solitude of wilderness trails, bracing air, and scenic vistas of wave-swept shores are soul-satisfying and will be long remembered.

Lakeside campgrounds, accessible by boat or trail, are at the Daisy Farm, Moskey Basin, Caribou Island, Merritt's Lane, Duncan Bay, Belle Isle, McCargo Cove, Todd Harbor, Beaver Island, Washington Harbor, Grace Island, Malone Bay, and Chippewa Harbor. All have good docking facilities for small boats and cruisers of shallow draft. Daisy Farm has a community shelter for organizational groups.

Isle Royale has over 80 miles of foot trails routed to inland lakes, historic mine ruins, geological landmarks, campgrounds, and fire lookout towers. The trails are primitive, but well marked.

The Greenstone Ridge Trail, extending the 34 miles from Rock Harbor to Washington Harbor, provides the longest hike through the interior. Side trails give access to many of the harbors. Several days are desirable for this trip, which

Guide Preparing Meal for Successful Fishing Party. (W. Ray Scott photo.)



offers fine fishing in the lakes and opportunities to see varied plant and animal habitats as well as broad vistas. Hikers may camp at Lakes Chickenbone, Hatchet, and Desor along this trail.

A number of screened-in shelters, grills and fireplaces, and pit-toilet facilities have been provided at the campgrounds. However, campers must be self-dependent and resourceful. Campers should come fully prepared with equipment and provisions; but in emergency cases, reasonable amounts of foodstuffs and gasoline (white or red) may be purchased at Windigo Inn or Rock Harbor Lodge. A first-aid kit, mosquito repellent, tent, warm bedding and clothing, a light raincoat, and stout footwear are recommended. If you plan to move your camp, light equipment and dried foods are most convenient. All water, except that from taps, should be treated with water purification tablets or by boiling before drinking.

A number of combination trips, by boat one way and

Trail and Waterway Distances (Miles)

From Rock Harbor Lodge		To	From Windigo	
Water	Trail		Water	Trail
		Rock Harbor Lodge		40.5
15	.....	Belle Isle	42	.....
.....	14	Chickenbone Lake (campsite)	.....	27
13	.....	Chippewa Harbor	44	.....
55	.....	Copper Harbor	81	.....
.....	29.1	Desor, Lake (campsite)	.....	13
201	.....	Duluth	159	.....
49	.....	Eagle Harbor	65	.....
.....	44.5	Feldtman Fire Lookout	.....	16
96	.....	Grand Marais	57	.....
70	.....	Grand Portage	26	.....
.....	21.7	Hatchet Lake (campsite)	.....	19.4
77	.....	Houghton	70	.....
4	.....	Mott Island	52	.....
.....	4	Mount Franklin	.....	35.5
9.3	10	Moskey Basin Campground	54	37.5
.....	8	Moun Ojibway	.....	33
20	14	McCargo Cove	40	30.5
50	.....	Port Arthur and Fort William, Canada	50	.....
.....	13	Richie, Lake	.....	40.5
6	6.5	Rock Harbor Campground	49.5	34
32	37.5	Siskiwit Bay, Head of	37	9
51.5	.....	Washington Island	4.5	.....
22	30.6	Wright Island or Crow Point	36	19.9
56	40.5	Windigo	.....	.....



Rock Harbor From the Lodge.

trail the other, can be arranged with the lodges or commercial carriers. In planning hiking or camping trips, you are urged to get careful directions from park headquarters or a park ranger station, where you may also obtain the required campfire permit.

Accommodations and Services

Lodges. Lodge facilities are available at Rock Harbor Lodge and Windigo Inn from about June 20 to Labor Day. Information concerning the type of accommodations, rates, and reservations for Rock Harbor Lodge may be had by addressing National Park Concessions, Inc., Isle Royale National Park, Houghton, Mich. (summer); for Windigo Inn, by writing National Park Concessions, Inc., Windigo Inn, Isle Royale, via Grand Portage, Minn. (summer). The winter address for National Park Concessions, Inc., is Mammoth Cave, Ky. Information may also be had from the Superintendent, Isle Royale National Park, Houghton, Mich.

Lodge Stores. Reasonable quantities of staple foods, films, pictures, post cards, candies, tobacco, and curios are available at the lodges. Those who will need large amounts of provisions or special supplies should bring them to the park. Gasoline and oil may be purchased in limited amounts.

Communications. Mail service is provided three times weekly from Grand Portage, Minn. There is a post office at Rock Harbor Lodge. The address is Rock Harbor Lodge, Isle Royale National Park, Mich., via Grand Portage, Minn.

Western Union telegrams may be sent and received at Rock Harbor Lodge, Windigo Ranger Station, or Mott Island Headquarters, via the National Park Service radio system, if the message is urgent or if there is an emergency. Incoming messages should be addressed to the terminal point desired, Isle Royale National Park, Houghton, Mich.

Help Us Protect This Park

Park regulations are designed not only to protect the natural beauty of the park but also to aid you to enjoy the area. You are requested to assist the park administration by respecting these rules. The following synopsis is for your guidance. Complete rules and regulations may be seen at the superintendent's office. Park rangers are here to help and advise you as well as to enforce the regulations. You are invited to visit any park ranger station for information or assistance at any time.

Fire—the park's greatest peril. Kindle fires only in designated campgrounds and never on roots of trees or near deadwood, moss, dry leaves, mold, etc. Campfires are not to be left unattended. Before leaving they must be extinguished to the last spark. Don't take chances. Make sure your fire is out. During periods of high fire danger the superintendent may prohibit the kindling of fires away from designated campgrounds or in hazardous areas.

Keep park clean. Whenever possible burn garbage in your campfire; place cans and residue in containers where provided. If none are available, bury refuse or place in pit. Keep your camp clean. Lake Superior is the source of the drinking water supply for the park. Do not dump refuse or garbage near the docks, or in the lakes and streams of the park.

Trees, flowers, animals, natural features. Destruction, injury, or disturbance in any way of trees, flowers, birds, or animals is prohibited; however, dead and fallen trees may be used for firewood, unless fuel is available from other sources. Removal of artifacts, geological specimens, beachstones, plants, trees, or flowers is prohibited.

Dogs and cats are prohibited in the park unless on leash, crated, or otherwise under physical restrictive control at all times.

Registration. All parties traveling in their own boats, or camping, are requested, upon their arrival, to register at park headquarters on Mott Island, or at any ranger or guard station.

Firearms. Unless adequately sealed, cased, broken down, or otherwise packed to prevent their use while in the park, firearms are prohibited, except upon written permission from the superintendent.

Boats. Regulations prescribed by the U.S. Coast Guard govern use of boats operating in waters of Lake Superior.

Mission 66

MISSION 66 is a program designed to be completed by 1966 which will assure the maximum protection of the scenic, scientific, wilderness, and historic resources of the National Park System in such ways and by such means as will make them available for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.