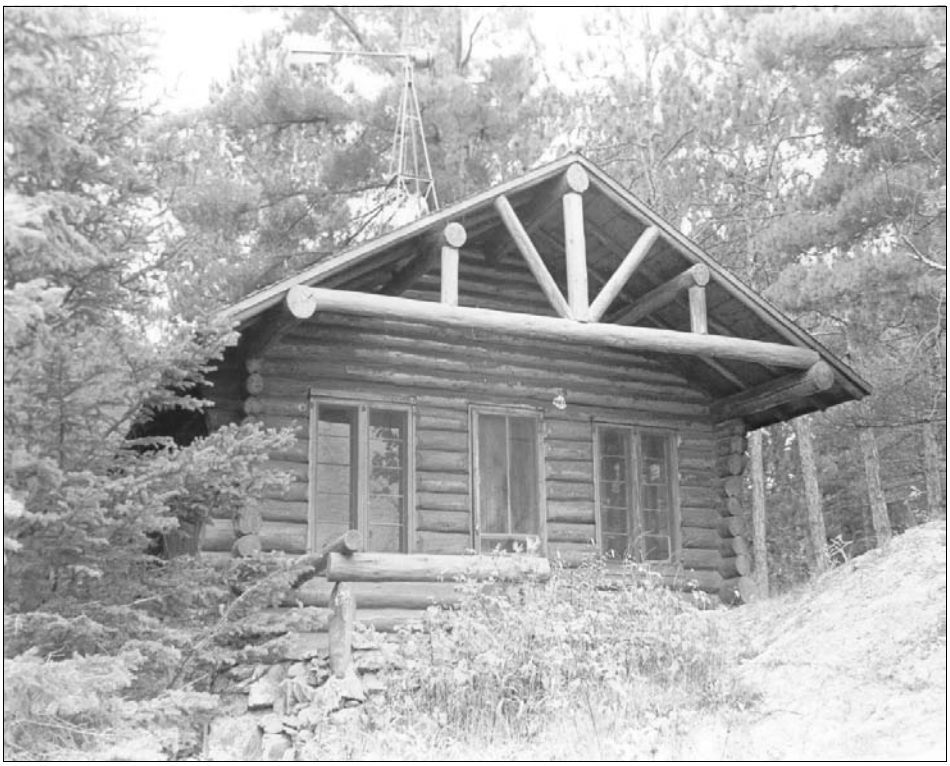
HISTORIC CONTEXT FOR TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINNESOTA NORTHERN BORDER LAKES FROM THE 1880s THROUGH THE 1950s



Levin Cabin 1989

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Cover Photo: Levin Cabin, Kabetogama Lake, 1989
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INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to present the major cultural theme of tourism and recreation in Voyageurs National Park, and to apply this theme to the identification and evaluation of extant historic structures in the park that may be eligible for the National Register. Ten historic contexts have been identified in the park's "Cultural Resources Management Plan, Voyageurs National Park." Some historic contexts have been previously addressed in individual National Register nominations or through Determinations of Eligibility evaluations with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office. This document does not address all contexts that are represented in the park, particularly those related to the fur trade, Ojibwe culture, and hunting/trapping, which will need to be articulated in future documentation.

1. The Ojibwe Occupation of Voyageurs National Park, 1736-1940
2. Historic Waterway of the Fur Trade, 1732-1870
3. Northern Minnesota Homesteading/Early Settlement, 1880s-1925
4. Gold Mining in the Minnesota Border Lakes Region, 1864-1897
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6. Commercial Fishing in the Rainy River Region, 1890s-1940s
7. Hunting and Trapping (context undeveloped)
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10. Tourism and Recreational Development in the Minnesota Northern Border Lakes, 1880s-1950s.

Following the context development is a discussion on property types associated with the recreation context. It includes descriptions of major structures, secondary structures and landscape features that contribute to the interpretation of properties. This is integrated with discussions on retention of integrity (design, materials, workmanship, location, setting, feeling, and association), with justification for weighing the significance of particular resources according to their relative surviving number within the context. A matrix identifying all known resources potentially eligible for the National Register has been included at the end of the document. Evaluating the significance of structures will be based on their ability to represent the context, as well as their ability to meet integrity standards. Additional sites within the Voyageurs boundary that are associated with this historic context may be identified in future surveys.

This document has been prepared to aid in the completion of the update of the List of Classified Structures for Voyageurs National Park, and addresses extant structures only. It is not intended as an official National Register nomination, but as a National Park Service tool in the preliminary evaluation of its historical cultural resources, in compliance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

GEOPHYSICAL SETTING AND BACKGROUND

Voyageurs National Park is located in the forested lake country along Minnesota's northeastern border with Ontario, Canada. It encompasses a large portion of St. Louis County and a small portion of Koochiching County. This stretch of lake country typifies the Canadian shield region, with a land surface shaped by glaciation into a seemingly endless system of internal waterways dotted with islands, and blanketed by a continuous forest mantle. Voyageurs National Park encompasses 218,055 acres, of which about 83,789 are water. Four major lakes dominate the park: Rainy, Kabetogama, Namakan, and Sand Point. The Rainy Lake area drains a watershed of nearly 15,000 square miles.[1] The Rainy Lake watershed, which straddles the international boundary, is part of the Hudson Bay drainage system.

The park's main landmass is the heavily forested Kabetogama Peninsula, some 75,000 acres in extent. Intermittently located between land and small, interior lakes are low, marshy areas. The region's thin layer of rocky soils in the higher terrain elevations supports the shallow roots of a mixed coniferous forest. At a latitude of 48 degrees north, the summer season is short, the warmest months usually reaching the 80s between June to August. During the long winter season, temperatures drop below zero, occasionally as low as –40 degrees. Winter snowfall begins to accumulate in November, and can last until March or April.

Rainy River flows out of Rainy Lake and west and north into Lake of the Woods, a distance of roughly 45 miles. Southeast of the park, the openness of the large lakes gives way to Superior National Forest and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, with their thousands of small lakes, rivers and streams. Quetico Provincial Park in Ontario lies along the international boundary to the north and east. South of the park the water system ends, replaced with miles of swamps, feeder rivers, forests and occasional open fields.

The interconnected lakes of Voyageurs and their associated islands, small bays, secluded coves, and rocky shorelines have been the scene of an epic chapter in North American history. Long before the appearance of the first Europeans, native peoples resided in this vast expanse of land, living a lifestyle dependent on the resources offered by the country. Beginning in the 1700s, French-Canadian voyageurs plied this maze of lakes and streams in birchbark canoes. They traded goods for furs with Native peoples, establishing a market network between Montreal and the Northwest. The French built forts in the Rainy River country in the mid-18th century, intending the area to serve as a fur trade and exploration base. Control of the fur trade in the Great Lakes area passed to the British during the late 18th century, then to Americans following the War of 1812.

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[1] The Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, *The WPA Guide to Minnesota* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985), 349.

Map of Voyageurs National Park and Area

Three competing companies, Hudson's Bay, the North West Co. and the American Fur Co. had trading posts along the border lakes after the Revolutionary War. The Hudson's Bay Company absorbed the North West Co. in 1821 and had a presence in Ft. Frances until 1903, although the fur trade started to decline by 1830.

Increased population in the border lakes area occurred on both sides of the border in the mid-19th century. Established as a territory in 1849, then as a state in 1858, Euro-American immigrants quickly pushed into Minnesota. Although large amounts of unceded Ojibwe land would be legally unavailable to settlers and lumbermen until 1889, numbers of people from both the United States and Canada moved into the area to profit from the land and timber.[2]

On the Canadian side, population numbers grew following completion of the Dawson Trail to Fort Garry on the Red River in 1873. This all-Canada overland connection between Lake Superior and the Red River Country followed the old canoe route used by fur traders. It was intended to both compete with westward-progressing American rail facilities and stimulate settlement along the route by linking the west with the east. The Dawson Trail skirted the eastern and northern edges of the park boundary, crossing Lac La Croix, Namakan Lake, Kettle Falls, and Rainy Lake.

While no section of the route entered any part of the park, the Dawson Trail served as stimulus to settlement of this region, particularly on the Canadian side of Rainy River. By 1873, for example, regular steamboat services were available on the larger lakes, from Kettle Falls to Lake of the Woods. Thousands of people had crossed the Dawson Trail by 1875, the peak year of use. Rough traveling conditions, breakdowns in equipment, long delays because of bad weather, and shortages of food and accommodations along the way contributed to the decline in the use of the trail. After two decades of sporadic use, work on the Dawson Trail was abandoned when the Canadian Pacific Railway was constructed to Rat Portage (now Kenora) in 1879. South of the border, the closest rail line to the border lakes was the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad, which had completed a line across Minnesota to the Red River in 1869. Steamboat travel would remain an important mode of travel, however, around Rat Portage, Fort Frances, and International Falls through the 1890s.[3]

The border lakes area would remain largely inaccessible and undeveloped until the 20th century, when the natural resources of the area attracted the attention of miners, loggers, commercial fishermen, homesteaders and recreationalists.

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[2] Grace Lee Nute, *Rainy River Country, A Brief History of the Region Bordering Minnesota and Ontario* (St. Paul: The Minnesota Historical Society, 1950), 53-58.
[3] David L. Fritz, *Special History Study: The Dawson Trail and Other Transportation Routes* (Denver: National Park Service/Denver Service Center Central Team, August 1986), 14; Nute, 46-50.

Some of these developments occurred simultaneously, while others were established following the activities of earlier groups.

TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTHWOODS, 1880s-1950s

Introduction

In response to the failure of mining and farming, and the changing nature of the lumber industry, the promotion of tourism has become the primary feature of northern Minnesota's interaction with the rest of the nation.[4] Since the turn of the century, tourism has played an important economic role in the development of the Voyageurs area. At the time of the establishment of Voyageurs National Park in 1975, 650 summer homes, weekend cabins, hunting shacks, resorts and state lease cabins occupied sites within the park boundaries. Although many have since been removed, the surviving structures represent the evolution of the tourism and recreation that began at the turn of the century and which continues to the present. Some of these buildings were designed specifically as recreational structures, while others followed a common practice of recycling structures and sites previously built by miners, lumber companies, fishermen and homesteaders.

The development of tourism and recreation can be divided into two periods that reflect the general evolution of tourism in the state. The early development period, dating from the 1880s and peaking in the 1920s, is distinguished by the presence of summer homes and cabins for wealthy tourists and outdoor adventurers who were able to finance a prolonged vacation in northern Minnesota's remote areas. In the following decades, the types and numbers of vacationers shifted to include those of lesser incomes and a wider variety of recreational interests. These recreationalists were able to access the formerly remote areas of the state due to road improvements, auto ownership and increased leisure time. They were attracted by the promotional efforts of dozens of community booster organizations, commercial clubs and regional groups, particularly the Ten Thousand Lakes Association, the Minnesota Arrowhead Association, and the Minnesota Scenic Highway Association. In addition, a 56-year state policy of homesite leasing enabled many to enjoy summer weekend cabins on land they could otherwise not afford to buy. The success of the tourist industry prompted the state to establish its own tourist bureau by the 1930s.

[4] Eileen Walsh, "Building a Tourist Industry in Northern Minnesota: The Use of Popular Imagery" (paper presented at the Northern Great Plains History Conference, St. Paul, Minn., September 1994), 2.

Early Tourism 1880s-1920s

Recreationalists and health-seekers had been drawn to Minnesota even prior to its statehood. In the mid-nineteenth century, excursionists on the "Fashionable Tour" rode steamboats up the Missouri to the St. Paul area to tour locations at White Bear Lake, Lake Minnetonka, Lake Elmo, Prior Lake, Frontenac, and the Dalles in the St. Croix Valley. These pleasure seekers were interested primarily in hunting and fishing. Resort areas developed in the Twin Cities region, and railroad companies extended tracks to nearby lakes, where urbanites established weekend cottages. Duluth would also evolve as a jump-off point for recreationalists, and by 1871, the Nebraska and Lake Superior Railroad connected Duluth with St. Paul. From Duluth, steamboats carried visitors up and down the north shore of Lake Superior. Accommodations for tourists varied from hotels in urban areas like Duluth, to remote cabins built by commercial fishermen.[5] Road construction along or to the north shore would not occur until the early 20th century, and some businesses were accessible only by water.[6]

In the 1830s progressive ideals developed regarding the value of nature as a salvation and cure for urban ills. By the turn of the century, this coincided with the promotion of health, physical fitness, out-of-doors exercise, and a nostalgic appeal of rural life.[7] Developments in medical and nutritional research, and the findings of the importance of physical fitness and exercise further strengthened this perception. Elaborate health resorts developed nationwide at such spas as White Sulphur Springs, Saratoga, and in the Adirondacks. These spas were built in the high style architecture of their eras and coincided with a new era of wealth, ambition and higher standards of luxury. Thousands of travelers also flooded to the state because of its reputation for a restorative climate. By the mid-nineteenth century, Minnesota and Florida vied for the title of preeminent location for relief of malaria and consumption.[8]

Wealthy vacationers enjoyed the initial recreational and tourist industry in Minnesota. Resorts of this period in the southern portion of the state were elaborate developments, offering genteel relaxation in a highly designed and manipulated setting. These resorts represented the continuation of developments in recreational activities, which had begun in the East earlier in the century.

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[5] Timothy B. Knopp and Uel Blank, "The North Shore Experience, Research Report No. 8," Minnesota SEA Grant Program (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1983), 14.
[6] George B. Hall, *Hall's Illustrated Tourist: An Illustrated Descriptive and Statistical Account of Minnesota* (Minneapolis: G.B. Hall, 1880), 9.
[7] Clifford E. Clark, Jr., *Minnesota in a Century of Change, The State and Its People Since 1900* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1989), 5.
[8] Helen Clapsattle, "When Minnesota was Florida's Rival," *Minnesota History* (March 1957), 214-221; "The Tourist Trade," *Gopher Historian* (Winter 1960-61), 18.

While most of the early travelers chose well-heeled destinations in the greater Twin Cities area and along the North Shore, a few hardy devotees of outdoor recreation were drawn to extreme northern Minnesota as early as the 1890s. Travel to Superior National Forest and points north was particularly difficult. Although the Iron Range Railroad from Duluth connected with Ely, and a rail line connected Ely and Tower in 1888, rail lines offering passenger service would not reach the International Falls area until 1907.[9] That year the Duluth, Rainy Lake and Winnipeg Railroad offered passenger service to Ranier, a few miles east of International Falls on Rainy Lake and the Minnesota and International, a subsidiary of Northern Pacific, reached International Falls. Prior to the turn of the century, only short stretches of road connected local points, and there were no improved roads into the Superior National Forest region at all.[10] The Nett Lake-Kabetogama Road had been laid out by the U.S. Indian Service about 1887 for delivery of annuity payments to Nett Lake band members living on Kabetogama Lake. Despite the difficulties in reaching the border, early outdoor adventurers explored the lakes with packsack and tent, following the traditional canoe routes of the voyageurs. They came for the wilderness scenery, the wildlife and to participate in water-related activities, particularly fishing and boating.

By 1894, residents of the now defunct gold rush town of Rainy Lake City and the new village of Koochiching (renamed International Falls in 1907) recognized the new source of income possibilities in tourism and promoted the natural beauty and recreational advantages of the area. One early enthusiast wrote glowingly in 1894, "one may go where he wills, but once the scene here is fixed in mind there will be a desire to return to drink the beauties of nature...pleasure seekers come here from all quarters to enjoy life to its fullest extent and breathe the very breath of life by inhaling our pure air, laden as it is with the balsamic qualities of the conifers..."[11] By 1908, the community published illustrated booklets to invite visitors north, and Rainy Lake City saw new life as a popular picnic spot for travelers arriving via tourist launches. That same year, a group of Minnesota businessmen planned the construction of a "mammoth resort" at Rainy Lake, envisioning the location "to be the hayfever cure for the whole country."[12]

The Rainy Lake area was not the only northern Minnesota lakes location to experience early tourism and the attention of recreation-seekers. Ottertail (in west central Minnesota), Hubbard (near the headwaters of the Mississippi) and Grant (western Minnesota) counties attracted recreational fishermen long before 1900, and the towns of Bemidji in north central Minnesota and Walker on Leech Lake, were frequented by hunters and fishermen in the 1890s. Lake Vermilion had at least one sporting club in the 1890s.[13] The Ely newspaper reported in

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[9] Frank A. King, *Minnesota Logging Railroads* (San Marino, CA: Golden West Books, 1981), 121.
[10] J. Wesley White, "Historical Sketches of the Quetico-Superior," vol. 4 (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Superior National Forest, May 1967, photocopy), 1.
[11] "Manifold Panorama," *Rainy Lake Journal* (12 July 1894).
[12] *International Falls Border Budget* (10 October 1908).
[13] "The Tourist Trade," *Gopher Historian*, (Winter 1960-1961): 18; O.C. Carlson, "History and Growth of the Tourist Business on Lake Vermilion," (1926), Minnesota Historical Society

1897 that large numbers of tourists were enjoying their local lakes. On the Canadian side of the Rainy Lake area, Rat Portage (Kenora) and Keewatin on Lake of the Woods became known as a summer resort areas for wealthy Winnipeg citizens in the 1880s. Recreationalists to this "Newport of Canada," as it was billed, traveled to the area via the Canadian Pacific Railroad. Local entrepreneurs were promoting the lake by 1899, and soliciting the aid of the Canadian Pacific Railway. After the turn of the century, launches carried visitors for tours of Lake of the Woods, and local residents built their own cabins on the lake.

Despite the early promotional opportunity for International Falls and northern Minnesota, the volume of recreationalists in the area would remain low until all-weather roads were constructed. Road development was slow in coming to northern Minnesota because of the cost and difficulty in constructing over rock outcrops and muskeg or bog. Short roads connected farms along rivers and lakes, usually following the river drainages.[14] Some locations, such as Ely and the south end of Lake of the Woods, were accessible by the rail lines that had been laid earlier to facilitate lumber company activities. In the 1910s, the old portage trail road to Crane Lake from Lake Vermilion, was upgraded to a timbered or corduroy road. The first county road built to Orr from Cook, Virginia and Hibbing was completed in 1914.[15] Construction of remote post roads in the state and the county was given a boost in 1916 when the passage of the Federal Highway Act provided that state construction costs for post roads and other highway projects would be matched with federal government funding.

Tourism on the Canadian side of the Rainy River district was similarly hampered by inaccessibility. Although tourism and the vacation industry would become the second most important income source for local communities in the mid-20th century, highway construction would not make available to Canadians the greater boundary lakes area until the highway between Atikokan and Thunder Bay was completed in 1955. Prior to that time, 500 times as many Americans vacationed in the Rainy River district than Canadians.[16]

Short connector roads existed between International Falls and Ray (and from there to Littlefork, Orr, Baudette, and Gemmel) prior to the 1920s, although

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Archives, St. Paul. Lake Vermilion, near Tower, Minnesota, was a more accessible location than lakes further north. Previous to the development of tourism, it had been a launching area for miners and homesteaders. By 1912, the lake had its first resort. By 1926 the community boasted 19 resorts and 412 private homes.

[14] "Excellent Roads Lead to Border Vacationland*," The International Falls Daily Journal, 1939 Tourist Edition* (International Falls, Minn., Border Publishing Company, 1939), 16; J. William Trygg, "Composite Map of United States Land Surveyor's Original Plats and Field Notes," Minnesota Series 6 (Ely, Minnesota), Sheet 23. The survey was conducted between 1881-1907.

[15] Leslie R. Beatty, "A Forest Ranger's Diary," *Conservation Volunteer*, part 10, vol. 27, no. 155 (St. Paul: Department of Natural Resources, March-April 1964): 58.

[16] "Quetico Park," *Fort Frances Times* (18 August 1954), in "Tourism in the Rainy River District: From Outpost Camp to Cottage on Wheels," Project P.E.O.P.L.E. (Fort Frances, Ontario,1973, school project, photocopy): 3.8.

anyone wanting to use their automobile in International Falls had to first have it shipped in by rail. An improved road connected International Falls and Ray in 1912 and in 1922, the route from Ray to Orr was graded and graveled.[17] The first automobile to travel by road from Duluth to International Falls arrived in 1923 with the opening of State Highway 11 (now U.S. Highway 53). The highway was open only to fair weather traffic, and the section between Ray and International Falls was listed as "maintenance only." State Highway 11 was one of the only three major highways, graded and graveled, which led to the border lakes region.[18]

Figure 2. U.S. Highway 53, 1920s, Koochiching Co. Historical Museum

[17] By 1911, other connector roads in the northern Minnesota area included a stretch between Baudette and Pelland, the western boundary of Koochiching County to Pelland, and Pelland south to Gemmel (a corduroy road). In 1912, Koochiching County had 108 miles of road, the longest stretch extending 31 miles from Northome to Big Falls. They were primarily corduroy roads. By 1913, there existed 47 miles of township roads in the county, all corduroyed. In 1917, a gravel road extended between International Falls and Warroad to the west. Leslie R. Beatty, "A Forest Ranger's Diary," *Conservation Volunteer,* part 18, vol. 28, no. 163 (September-October 1965), 60-62; Minnesota State Highway Department, "Minnesota Trunk Highways, Improvement Progress Map," 1 January 1922, reprinted in the "Good Roads Section," Minneapolis Journal (5 February 1922), Minneapolis Historical Society Archives, St. Paul; Ray P. Chase, State Auditor to the 1923 Minnesota Legislature, "State of Minnesota Map," (photocopy at Voyageurs National Park): "The Playground of the Nation," (Duluth: The Arrowhead Specialty Printing Company, 1926), Northeast Minnesota Historical Center, Duluth; Hiram M. Drache, T*aming the Wilderness: The Northern Border Country 1910-1939* (Danville, Illinois: Interstate Publishers, Inc., 1992), Voyageurs National Park library.

[18] Both State Highways 11 and 4 (now U.S. Highways 53 and 71 respectively) generally followed the same route as the earlier rail lines. Highway 11 from International Falls to Tower, paralleled the Duluth, Winnipeg and Pacific line. Highway 4, from Gemmel/Bemidji to Pelland and International Falls, followed the Minnesota International Railway. State Highways 8, 22 and 35 likewise followed rail routes.

To the east, the Ely-Finland road (State Highway 115) was the only road across Superior National Forest in 1922, with three points at Ely, Buyck and Grand Marais auto accessible. State trunk highways were kept open year-round for the first time in 1926, although the main roads leading to International Falls were impassable from mid-March to mid-June until the 1930s. The worst stretch was between Ray and International Falls and east to Ranier. Roads would not be hard-surfaced until the 1940s.[19] Even following the establishment of all-weather roads, auto-accessible options continued to be limited.

Increased automobile use and improved roads across the country and a nationwide trend to visit national parks and national forests drew travelers further north. In addition, workers nationwide enjoyed a general increase in vacation time and disposable incomes. During World War I, many who would have vacationed in Europe turned to alternative recreational locations in the United States.

Minnesota's benefit from this development included a statewide increase in tourist traffic in the late teens and early 1920s. This activity was heavily promoted by a number of booster and tourism groups. In 1916, 13,000 tourists visited Minnesota. The next year, the Ten Thousand Lakes Association was formed to promote tourism in the state. It brought together communities and recreational property owners throughout the state to cooperate in "exploiting" the recreational resources through advertising and publicity. The association's "Come to Minnesota" campaign attracted 40,000 tourists in 1918, increasing to over 300,000 by 1921.[20] The Ten Thousand Lakes Association operated on funding appropriated by the state legislature through the 1920s. So successful was the promotion of recreational resources that in the early 1930s, the state took over functions of the association, and established a tourist bureau within the Department of Conservation.[21]

The Minnesota Arrowhead Association (MAA), established in 1924 as the Civic and Commerce Association of Northeastern Minnesota, solicited funding from participating organizations to promote the northeast portion of the state. It was funded by participating communities within the boundaries that extended from Grand Marais to International Falls and south to Aitkin. Like other booster organizations, it intended to promote the area as a recreational center, encouraged summer hotel construction, resorts, and later, winter sports. Notably, early in its existence the MAA chose not to emphasize fishing or hunting in its literature. They believed instead that, "the scenery and outdoor life alone

[19] Drache, 159.
[20] Clark, 4; J. Wesley White, ed., "Historical Sketches of the Quetico-Superior," vol. 4, (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Superior National Forest, May 1967): 2.4-5.
[21] Clark, 4.

[were] quite sufficient to pull the people into this territory."[22] It also forwarded requests on resorts and property purchases to participating commercial and development organizations. Other tourist promotional organizations in the state included the Minnesota Land and Lakes Attractions Board, the Minnesota Scenic Highway Association, the Northern Minnesota Development Association, and the Automobile Association of America. The MAA also worked with Canadian tourism organizations in the area.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Minnesota leaders took advantage of the national interest in outdoor sports and recreation by creating more state parks, and made them accessible to both tourists and local inhabitants. Itasca State Park, the first and largest in Minnesota, was established in 1891. While the state's earliest parks commemorated historic events, the purpose of parks established after 1920 was to enhance recreation opportunities.[23]

With the majority of vacationers traveling by car or bus, improved roads were critical to attracting tourists. Minnesota established a good road improvement program to upgrade the state's highways through the 1921 Babcock plan. Expenditures were partially justified based on the predicted revenues that would follow from the increase in the center and southern areas of the state, around the Twin Cities to St. Cloud, from St. Paul to Faribault to Winona. Another area of development occurred in the mining area between Duluth to Virginia and Virginia to Grand Rapids.[24] In 1926, the Ten Thousand Lakes Association reported that concrete paved roads in the state amounted to 823 miles, with over 5600 miles graveled and 7,000 miles of "maintained earth." New paved sections advanced every summer at a rate of between five to twenty-seven miles. A banner year occurred in 1929, when an all-paved road was completed between Chicago and the Twin Cities. By 1932, another 504 miles had been paved within the state, and nearly 800 miles finished with bituminous covering.[25]

In addition to personal automobile, many vacationers traveled by railroad or bus. Railroad companies including Northern Pacific, the Great Northern and the Northwestern & Wisconsin included vacation information on the northern lakes areas in addition to other locations along their lines. This activity generated business for the railroads' passenger service in addition to providing

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[22] M.E. Stewart to Mathias N. Koll, 26 April 1926, Mathias N. Koll Papers 1880-1971, Box 7, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.
[23] Clark, 6.
[24] Prior to establishment of the program, 112 miles of the 7000-mile trunk highway system were paved. In 8 months, 109 miles were paved, and 1262 miles graded or graveled. "Minnesota Trunk Highways, Improvement Progress Map" 1922.
[25] H.C. Hotaling, "Annual Report of H.C. Hotaling, Executive Secretary, Ten Thousand Lakes – Greater Minnesota Association," (Minnesota Land and Lakes Attractions Board, 15 December 1926): 20; Hotaling, "Annual Report of H.C. Hotaling, Executive Secretary, Ten Thousand Lakes – Greater Minnesota Association," (Minnesota Land and Lakes Attractions Board, 12 December 1929): 23; Hotaling, "Annual Report of H.C. Hotaling, Executive Secretary, Ten Thousand Lakes – Greater Minnesota Association," (Minnesota Land and Lakes Attractions Board, 12 December 1932): 15.

advertisements for northern communities. Bus lines, such as Greyhound Lines, provided similar services and bus tours. Bus service, which reached International Falls in the mid-1920s, was initially sporadic and dependent on the condition of roads.[26] By the late 1930s, buses regularly traveled State Highways 11 (53) and 4 (71) with feeder service to smaller communities along the way.[27]

Increasing numbers of tourists, sportsmen, and seasonal residents traveled to the lakes once the border became accessible by road. The majority came from the Twin Cities, Chicago, southern Minnesota, northern Iowa, and Sioux Falls. Northern Minnesota became known for its rugged settings and appeal to the canoeist, camper, and fisherman, "who delights in leaving the beaten paths." [28]

Superior National Forest was one of the first regions in Minnesota to be developed for tourism and became a popular canoeing destination by the late teens. In 1922, the forest received 12,000 visitors. The nearby community of Harding (renamed Crane Lake), was accessible by an improved highway by 1925 and gained a reputation as the access point to some of the greatest inland canoeing waters in the continent. A report to the International Joint Commission on the use of the international waters stated, "these lakes already possess quite a reputation as summer resorts and are visited annually by thousands of tourists."[29] By 1926, the appeal of the boundary waters area had become so great that the decision was made to ban future road construction in some areas of the forest in order to maintain its wilderness appearance.[30]

In comparison to the wilderness experience available in the north, recreational development in areas in central and southern Minnesota catered to a clientele interested in less rugged pursuits. The areas were even advertised as "Playground Districts" with distinct characteristics. Promotional literature of the 1920s described the outdoor experience in quite different terms: The center, St. Croix-White Bear, and the Lake Park Region offered a diversity of options for all family members. Vacationists there could travel well-maintained roads and enjoy sightseeing, beaches, fishing, hundreds of resorts, dancing parties, golf, horseback riding, movies, picnic and camp sites. Minnetonka, one of the best-known summer resort areas in the state, boasted palatial summer residences only ten miles from Minneapolis. Excellent road systems awaited travelers to the

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[26] "Hub O' the North Bulletin," vol. 1, no. 2 (International Falls, Minn.: International Falls Commercial Club, February 1927): 2; Drache, 167-168.
[27] "Motor Bus Time Table, Northland Greyhound Lines," (n.p., July-August 1930, photocopy on file at Voyageurs National Park)
[28] "Vacation Trips and Playgrounds, The Call of the Summer Lands," *The Literary Digest* (n.p., 3 June 1922): 66.
[29] Adolph F. Meyer and Arthur V. White, *Report to the International Joint Commission Relating to Official Reference Re: Lake of the Woods Levels, Text* (Government Printing Office: Washington D.C., 1917), 5.
[30] Leslie R. Beatty, "A Forest Ranger's Diary," *Conservation Volunteer,* part 20, vol. 29, no. 165 (January-February 1966), 61-62; "A Needs Assessment of Tourism Firms Serving the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Vicinity," (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service, May 1980), 11.

"Mississippi Headwaters" and the "Mille Lacs District" which were more rugged than the Lake Park area, but also offered the comforts of sand beaches suitable for bathing, easily accessible hotels, cottages, and hunting and fishing resorts. Only Lake Vermilion seemed to offer competition at a scale with the southern areas. In addition to fishing and hunting recreation, promotional literature offered billiards, dancing, barbershops, golf and electricity.

Concentrated areas of recreational activity are suggested in promotional literature and statistics regarding general numbers of vacationists and resort/summer cabin developments during this time. Promotional brochures for resorts give indications of general recreational development by area, but as they advertised only those businesses that paid for the advertisements, accurate representation of total numbers is dubious. Also, information on the distribution of private cabins within the state is difficult to obtain. But it may be conjectured that private cabin development occurred concurrently in areas of resort and commercial recreational development.

The state's first resorts were established in the 1920s in the central lakes district between Brainerd and Bemidji.[31] The largest numbers of recreational businesses by area in the 1920s were around the Twin Cities and Duluth. A 1920 map listed twelve resorts at Annandale, thirteen at Lake Minnetonka, and ten at Park Rapids.[32] This concentration of resorts in the south continued through the following decades. In 1926 for example, the Ten Thousand Lakes Association reported that while there were about 600 resorts in the state, "only Minnetonka, White Bear, Bald Eagle and Chisago Lakes have so far been much utilized as summer resorts."[33] These locations had long been connected by railway service and were among the first to benefit from improved roads. Conversely, the largest sales in lakeshore property were being made in the northern part of the state the same year.[34]

In a Ten Thousand Lakes Association map of 1920, Lake Vermilion led the northern communities in resort development, with eight resorts. The community clearly benefited from its easy accessibility to the highway. Bemidji listed three resorts and four hotels, Ely had three resorts and two hotels, while Baudette listed one resort and two hotels. International Falls listed five hotels.[35]

In the "untamed" northern region, there was also a frontier mystique about the border lakes and forest area that included a romantic (and anachronistic) image associated with Native Americans and their legends. Native Americans were

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[31] Thomas J. Baerwald, *Minnesota in a Century of Change, The State and Its People Since 1900*, ed. Clifford E. Clark, Jr. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1989), 46.
[32] Ten Thousand Lakes of Minnesota Association, "Minnesota – Land of Ten Thousand Lakes," map, (n.p., 1919-1920), Mathias N. Koll Papers, Box 10, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.
[33] Hotaling 1926, 2.
[34] Ibid., 35.
[35] Ten Thousand Lakes of Minnesota Association 1919-1920 map.

hired to entertain in "traditional dress" for the tourist crowd, supplementing their incomes by displaying their culture and heritage through dances and pageants, and creating craft items for sale as souvenirs.[36] Both businesspeople and private property owners appropriated this mystique. The Minnesota Arrowhead Association had directly connected its name to the historic wilderness area it promoted. Property owners frequently personalized their property with phonetic spellings of Native American words, or invented whimsical titles in imitation of the native languages, such as "Kwitchergrowlin," Bide-A-Wee," and "Tepeetonga." Others recreated their own versions of local legend. Bror Dahlberg's "Redcrest" estate on Rainy Lake in the Voyageurs area included an elaborate cedar and birchbark "Indian Lodge" in the style of a wigwam, while the exuberant property owner of Ellsworth Rock Gardens on Kabetogama Lake embellished his private rock garden with wigwam sculptures.[37]

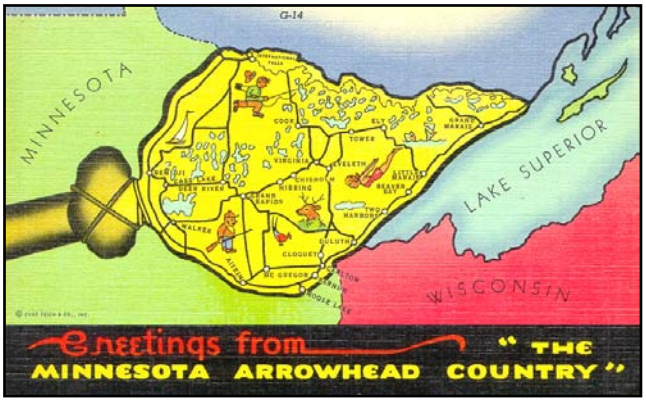

Figure 3. Curt Teich & Co. undated postcard
Voyageurs National Park collection

In the Kabetogama area, tourism increased markedly following the establishment of E.W. Backus's Minnesota and International Railroad and passenger service to International Falls in 1907. Hopeful local residents predicted that the Rainy Lake area would become a tourist "Mecca." When Kabetogama State Forest was established in 1917, it was described as "one of the jewels of the state forest system," by forest inspector Arthur Oppel, with beauty and recreational potential beyond any others in the district.[38]

Travelers to the area during the early tourism development period were typically wealthy Midwesterners, primarily sportsmen interested in adventure, small game and bird hunting, canoeing and fishing. The scenery, natural features, and the healthful, temperate summer climate also drew people to the area. Some visitors to the International Falls and Rainy River District stayed in newly constructed

[36] Walsh, 7.
[37] *International Falls Press* (7 July 1921); Drache, 265.
[38] Arthur F. Oppel. "Report on Proposed Kabetogama Forest," 1912, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.

resorts, camped out, or purchased lots for their summer homes. Timber baron Backus and his partner Brooks usually escorted prominent Twin Citian and Chicago visitors. H.I. Bedell, a homesteader on Rainy Lake, was one of the first to exploit the area for development of resorts and summer homes. In 1905, Bedell operated two resort cottages on Rainy and would over the next ten years develop Crystal Beach, Jackfish Bay, Lake Park and Forest Point along Rainy's lakefront for summer vacation homes. R.H. Bennett constructed the hunting lodge called Island View Hotel (now called Island View Lodge) on Rainy Lake in 1908. The lodge was the first of its type on the lake, and featured a log, two-story main building measuring 24' x 40.' That same year, a group of thirty Minneapolis "elitists" traveled north, beyond the more developed lake areas near the Twin Cities, in search of summer vacation sites in the International Falls area. This endorsement of the recreational benefits of the border lakes was not lost on local boosters. In 1909 the Koochiching Development Company and Falls Commercial Club published a guide promoting the commercial future and scenic beauty of the International Falls area. Organizers claimed that "400 men of wealth" purchased islands for summer homes as a result of the promotion.[39]

One of the first areas to be developed in the Voyageurs National Park region was Rainy Lake, noted for its showplace summer homes built by prominent businessmen. Owners built their property primarily on islands, accessible only by boat. E.W. Backus constructed his summer estate on Red Sucker (later called Curtice) Island in 1910. Other members of the so-called "Rainy Lake Aristocracy" joined the Backuses. The "Aristocracy (a name attributed later) included a small group of wealthy families who built grand summer homes on Rainy to entertain friends and business associates. These personalities transferred the social cliques established in their home states to their recreational properties in the north. Horace Roberts, owner of a Davenport, Iowa sash and door factory, built "Atsokan" in 1913. He acquired the Rainy Lake property through his friendship with Ernest Oberholtzer, writer and conservationist and Davenport native. Bror Dahlberg, former Backus employee and later founder of the Celotex business, constructed "Redcrest" in the 1920s. Dr. Frederick Dunsmoor constructed "Dunsmoor" on Home Island in 1922. Henry French, millionaire industrialist from Davenport, constructed "Green Mansion" in 1935. Other properties were established as private clubs, such as the Minneapolis and Rainy Lake Outing Club, comprised of twenty-five wealthy members who purchased land on Rainy Lake in 1914.[40]

The lower lakes also had their wealthy summer residents. W.P. Ingersoll, Illinois philanthropist and associate of the International Harvester Company, built a summer estate on Sand Point Lake in 1928. Ted Zollner, developer of the aluminum piston, built a summer home on Kabetogama and a hunting outpost near Kettle Falls in the 1940s. C. Francis Coleman, of the camping equipment company, constructed a private retreat on Cruiser Lake during the 1920s. Jeno

[39] Drache, 263-268.
[40] Ibid.

Paulucci, president of the Chun King Corporation, purchased his summer home on Kabetogama Lake from the owner of Gensko Steel. Lakeside cabin development increased along the mainland of the major lakes although more and more islands were being acquired for construction of summer cottages. Improvements in outboard motors allowed for quicker and safer access to more remote areas. A handful of people including Omaha banker Henry Neely, Hibbing dentist, Dr. William Monroe, Chicago photojournalist Jun Fujita, and wealthy Iowa rancher Carl Lenander built summer cabins by the 1920s in what is now the park.

Figure 4. Ingersoll Estate, ca1928
Voyageurs National Park collection

By the mid-1920s, there was also at least one business serving tourists at each of the major access areas surrounding the park: Watson's Lake View Resort constructed in 1918 on Kabetogama; Borderland Lodge started on Crane Lake in 1920 by Bill and Kate Randolph: Clark's Resort on Sand Point Lake: Island View Hotel on Rainy Lake; and Palmer's Frontier Lodge on Ash River. Although advertised as "resorts" some were described as overcrowded and lacking in amenities desired by many visitors. Most of the earlier cabins had no plumbing.[41]

The remoteness of the future Voyageurs area presented an accessibility problem as publicity director for the MAA noted in a letter to the secretary of the Cass Lake Commercial Club. "Your region for many years has been from the beaten line of path from the Twin Cities and Duluthians and other residents of the Eastern Arrowhead have had so much to see and do around home that

[41] Beatty, part 19, vol. 28, no. 164 (November-December 1965): 58.

lamentably few have gone into your section."[42] In addition, their modest appearance and accommodations could not compete with the established eastern resorts, a fact that was noted by a Chicago traveler in 1927. "In my opinion," he said, "The greatest mistake that has been made by all the people who hoped for a greater resort business in your territory is that they have failed to divide the summer tourist into the proper classes." He further noted that the area did not offer the higher-class resorts such as Mackinac Island, Michigan, which drew a different clientele.[43] Tourism boosters repeatedly bemoaned this perceived weakness in the northern Minnesota tourism industry.

The effect of the tourist traffic on the lakes prompted the state to aid the vacationers' boating and fishing interests beyond promotional efforts through the Ten Thousand Lakes Association. For example, lake traffic in the mid-1910s had been reported as entirely industrial, with a few venturesome tourists traveling by canoe. Gasoline powered motors were not yet on the lake. But a decade later, with recreational fishermen dominating lake traffic, they far outnumbered commercial boats. The state initiated a program to make the lakes safer by charting reefs on Kabetogama, Namakan, Sand Point and Crane Lakes and by 1939, navigational aids and channel lights would be installed on Rainy Lake.[44] The Kabetogama Boosters Club not only promoted resorts on the lake but also worked to make the lake safer, cleaner, and more attractive. State regulations increasingly limited commercial fishing operations, and by the early 1920s, the lakes were being stocked with fish raised in hatcheries. In 1948, Minnesota allowed fishermen to troll with motors, a luxury not permitted in Michigan, Wisconsin or California.[45]

Tourism in the 1930s-1950s

The early 20th century tourist trade in the U.S. reached a peak in 1929, although northern Minnesota did not see a significant rise in tourism until the mid to late-1930s.[46] Before 1930, in addition to the lack of good roads, the focus along the Canadian border was on timber. Tourists were almost seen as a detriment to logging efforts. After the demise of big timber operations, logging companies abandoned the cut-over, burned-over lands and the state acquired a large amount of tax-forfeited land. With the increased interest nationwide in forest vacations, the State began to reconsider the best uses for northern Minnesota lands and the most effective ways to "make the beauties of the lake country open

[42] M.E. Stewart, "President's Report to the Members of the Minnesota Arrowhead Association," 11 July 1927, Mathias N. Koll Papers 1880-1971, Box 7, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.
[43] Stewart.
[44] Beatty 1965, 56.
[45] Mid-Continent Surveys, "1948 Tourist Survey," Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.
[46] "Arrowhead County Abounds With Vacation Opportunities," *The International Falls Daily Journal, 1939 Tourist Edition* (International Falls, Minn.: Border Publishing Company, 1939): 20; Paul Clifford Larson, *A Place at the Lake* (Afton Historical Society Press, 1998): 142.

to the largest number of people without thereby spoiling the charm of the lakes."[47]

Some vacationers were reluctant to travel to northern Minnesota because of the "wild and wooly" reputation many border towns had earned during the logging era and through prohibition. After the Virginia & Rainy Lake lumber company (V&RL) closed, illegal liquor, drugs, and prostitution became more of a problem without the steady supply of lumberjacks. Resorts felt compelled to advertise that their accommodations were safe for women and children.

The Depression affected the numbers of tourists traveling within and to the state. Traffic counts slumped and lesser numbers of travelers were seen on the more remote roads. Vacation opportunities in the neighboring states of Wisconsin and Michigan were a further challenge to the Minnesota tourism industry. Informal surveys by booster organizations hopefully suggested that the resort industry continued to grow during the early 1930s. By 1930, the demand for recreational facilities supported about 1,040 resorts and 392 tourist camps; in 1932, resort numbers had increased to 1,312, although tourist camps were reduced to 317.[48]

A 1935 report on suitable land uses for northern Minnesota noted that the numbers of private cabin and cottage owners greatly exceeded the number who stopped at commercial resorts. Private, non-profit and church camps, and tourist courts likewise increased. Other businesses developed to profit from the increase in vacationer traffic, including souvenir shops, service stations, eateries and taverns.

State and local organizations continued to promote tourism, aimed specifically at the auto owner. In 1936, with the effects of the Depression beginning to slacken, the MAA established "auto circle" tours, with booklets describing five tour options for motorists. The extreme northern counties continued to cater to fishermen, canoeists and hunters.[49] The border lakes were famous for their prize-winning fish, record-breaking catches and the chance to battle the "Mighty Muskie." There were however, indications that the promotion of recreational opportunities in the northern counties, had begun to address families. For example, a 1933 resort directory put out by the MAA was careful to note "modern conveniences" for the resorts listed, including electricity, heat, baths, showers, telephones, inner coil mattresses, and ice. Golfing opportunities, which had been a frequent inquiry by potential visitors to the area in the 1920s, became more commonly advertised. The resorts in the southern portion of the state continued to offer a diverse selection of activities, emphasized family elements, and options beyond

[47] E.G. Cheyney, "The Kabetogama Project," (Minnesota Department of Conservation, ca1930), Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.
[48] Hotaling 1930, 4; Hotaling 1932, 6.
[49] Minnesota Arrowhead Association, *Minnesota Arrowhead Association: 1924-1974, 50 Years of Service to the Vacation Travel Industry* (Duluth: The Association, 1974), unnumbered page.

fishing. The appeal to the entire family extended to notification of special children's discount rates.[50]

During the 1930s, northern Minnesota was still considered virgin wilderness even though much of the area had been recently logged. The 1935 land use report concluded that the lake areas in the northeast portion of the state (Crow Wing, Cass, Hubbard, and Beltrami counties) were easily accessible, all desirable lake shore property had come under private ownership, and even the most remote beach properties developed with good roads. Northern St. Louis, Lake and Cook counties, however, largely remained a wilderness area, "accessible only by canoe. Cottages [were] built only on the outer fringe of lakes. The charm of the region is enhanced by its remoteness, and there are many who oppose the building of roads to make the area accessible to motor cars."[51] Northern Minnesota's reputation as a restful destination "among the sighing pines" included the opportunity to see and hear uncommon wildlife such as moose, bear and loon. The environment reputedly offered relief to tourists: relief from city pressures by way of lazy days and quiet evenings in front of the fire. This portion of the state continued its appeal in pre-air conditioner days as providing relief from the sun-scorched heat of the Midwest and relief from the polluted and pollen-laden air of industrial cities. One pamphlet described to prospective visitors a place with a healthful, invigorating climate where "sneezes are unknown."[52]

Despite the lack of access, indications of the influence of the vacation industry were evident by 1931 in the Kabetogama State Forest. In the Kabetogama Lake area, eleven of twenty-six private property owners owned resorts, or worked as fishing guides. The two property owners on Rainy Lake were both resort owners, as were three of four property owners in the Namakan Lake area and the two at Sand Point Lake.

In the early 1930s the International Falls area experienced a constant number of out-of-town visitors, although the volume was never as great as at locations near the Twin Cities or Duluth. Traffic counts noted ninety-six out-of-state cars on the highway south of International Falls in 1930—the third lowest number of twenty communities reporting to the MAA that year.[53] For International Falls, however, this marked a great increase. The importance of tourism to the local economy in the 1930s warranted publication of an annual tourist edition of the local newspaper. The special editions advertised the region from Rainy Lake west to Lake of the Woods; and from Kenora, Ontario, to Orr, 100 miles south of

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[50] Minnesota Arrowhead Association, *Minnesota Arrowhead Country, The Arrowhead Resort Directory* (Duluth: The Minnesota Arrowhead Association, 1933), Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.
[51] Jesness, 35.
[52] Advertisements and promotional brochures throughout the 1930s for the Kettle Falls Hotel emphasized the healthful, hayfever-free qualities of the border lakes.
[53] "1930 Annual Tourist Report, Minnesota Arrowhead Association," 12 November 1930, Mathias N. Koll Papers 1880-1971, Box 7, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.

International Falls, as the "Gateway to the Greater Outdoors."[54] The special editions advertised the numerous opportunities for water recreation: sunning on the numerous sand beaches, aquaplaning, swimming, fishing, canoeing, sailing and boating.

With the bridge between International Falls and Fort Frances offering the only vehicular and pedestrian access to Canada between Baudette and the Pigeon River near Superior, the nearness to Canada also generated an international appeal. Indeed, the volume of traffic over the river had required the construction of a bridge in 1909. Visitors were attracted to the historic fur trade city of Fort Frances, where they could purchase English china, Hudson Bay blankets, Irish linens, English tea and toffees and pure fruit jams. The Native American mystique continued its appeal and Indian guides were frequently hired for their knowledge of the lake as well as their "exotic" appeal to tourists.

Although some tourists recognized the area's recreational potential early on, it received very little statewide advertising before 1940 because it was still considered too inaccessible and remote. The WPA tourist guide described the area from Ash River to International Falls in very unflattering terms, "…a terrain rendered stark by deforestation and consequent erosion... Villages are infrequent; small, fragile buildings seem to lean upon each other for support; tarpaper shacks are common... Bleached piles of sawdust and rusted hulks of old steam engines add to a general appearance of desolation and abandonment."[55]

The 1930s work of Civilian Conservation Corps crews ameliorated some of this reputation. They constructed roads in the Kabetogama area, cleaned up beaches and shorelines and constructed many campgrounds in the state forest including Woodenfrog. [56] The Minnesota Forest Service responded to the demand for recreational facilities but also built campsites as a method of fire control by preventing indiscriminate camping. The CCC constructed thirty-six campgrounds in Kabetogama State Forest during the 1930s, although the lack of funding for continued maintenance forced the state to abandon twenty of them by 1948.

Only with the advent of improved roads in the late 1930s did the border lakes attain nationwide prominence as a summer vacation spot. The Black Bay road (State Highway 11 East) was completed to the Island View Hotel in 1936, opening a large section of choice Rainy Lake shoreline property to development.

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[54] Falls Chamber of Commerce, *This Year, Come Up to International Falls, Minnesota, Gateway to the Greater Outdoors* (International Falls: Border Publishing Company, 1938), 1; "Holland's' Jewelry Firm, Fort Frances, Established in 1904*," The International Falls Daily Journal, 1939 Tourist Edition* (International Falls, Minn.: Border Publishing Company, 1939): 31.
[55] Federal Writer's Project of the Works Progress Administration, *Minnesota: A State Guide* (1938; reprint, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985), 344.
[56] L.R. Beatty to Grover M. Conzet, Commisioner of Forestry, 30 June 1931, associated Kabetogama State Forest map: "Kabetogama State Forest, State Forest Land Acquisitions 1931-1934," Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.

That year there were 26 resorts on Kabetogama.[57] By the time U.S. Highway 53 was paved from Virginia to the border in 1939, the International Falls area promoted itself as the "Playground of Two Nations." The unsurpassed scenery and ideal climate were said to provide endless opportunities for "roughing it." In particular, Kabetogama was known as the source of the largest freshwater fish in North America and was also a popular destination for big game hunters.[58] State Highway 11 East was extended to Sha Sha Point in 1949 with plans to push the road all the way to Kettle Falls. That year, there were forty-two camps, hotels and resorts on Kabetogama.[59] Despite these developments, many still considered the area more wilderness than resort area. A survey in 1948 sampled nine counties regarded as resort areas. Definitions provided by those surveyed ranged widely, from a place for recreation, fishing and other activities, with six or more cabins, a main lodge and dining hall to, "any place that rents out one or more cabins at a lake." Resort areas in St. Louis County were determined to be located primarily in the north and northeastern section of the county. Koochiching County was not included.[60]

Figure 5. Highway 11 East at Dove Bay, 1940s
Voyageurs National Park collection

The type of vacationers who populated the northern lakes of Minnesota in large numbers beginning in the 1930s were people of more modest means, who were interested in simple weekend retreats for their families and accessible by car.

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[57] Map of Kabetogama Lake (Virginia, Minn.: Fisher Co., 1936).
[58] Falls Chamber of Commerce 1938; "Border Wilds Echo Vacation Call," *The International Falls Daily Journal, 1939 Tourist Edition* (International Falls, Minn.: Border Publishing Company, 1939): 1, 16.
[59] *International Falls Daily Journal*, 13 August 1949.
[60] The study used sample locations in Douglas, Becker, Hubbard, Cass, Beltrami, Itasca, Aitkin and Crow Wing Counties. No reasons were given for the choice of counties, but the survey was tied to numbers of non-resident fishing licenses. Economic Development Business and Community Development Bureau and Research Division, "Vacation Industry – Research Study," (n.p., 1947- 1966), Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.

Rather than the season-long residents, these vacationers often stayed for a shorter amount of time, an average of ten days.[61] These people did not have the financial resources of their predecessors, and stayed in tourist camps, modern resorts, or they constructed their own modest, vernacular cabins. Their property usually consisted of a small frame, log or log-sided cabin, a privy and a dock. Some occupied property that had been built by miners, fishermen, lumber companies or homesteaders. Coincidentally, their arrival corresponded with the break-up of the Rainy Lake Aristocracy in 1931, when E.W. Backus went bankrupt, although other members of the aristocracy continued to vacation in the future Voyageurs National Park area until the 1940s.[62]

Private and non-profit camps were also established in greater numbers in the future Voyageurs area at this time. The Northwestern Minnesota Development Association claimed in 1926 that Cass Lake was, "the most favored place in the state of Minnesota for Boys and Girls' Camps." The association further asserted that the Cass Lake Commercial Club, which had been in existence for twenty-two years at that time, owned more property per capita than any other town of its size in the state. Several churches had established camps for their young members, while a number of other camps were privately run.[63] In the Voyageurs area, Iowa State University at Ames established a summer engineering school at Brown's Bay on Rainy Lake. Later, St. Thomas College in St. Paul established Bassett's Boys Camp on Kabetogama, the Boy Scouts had a camp on Sand Point Lake and the YMCA built a camp on Kabetogama.

Not only was there an increase in tourism business during the 1930s, but the Minnesota Forest Service in 1934 reported an increasing demand for leasing of summer homesites. The concept of leasing state (and federal) property for the construction of summer recreational cabins was considered a useful tool in the conservation and use of public land, as well as an important source of revenue, subject to personal property taxes. The leasing program remained under the control of the State Auditor until 1931, when the newly created Department of Conservation was given responsibility for state leases. As soon as the first state forests were established, the state began developing state lakeshore for recreational use. This included picnic and overnight campgrounds, private summer homes, portage trails and a few commercial enterprises such as lunch counters, boat concessions and rental cabins. In the 1920s, the state leased property on three lakes within St. Louis and Itasca counties. By 1927, 3,000 tracts were available for lease.[64]

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[61] Hotaling 1932, 7.
[62] Drache, 267.
[63] Mathias N. Koll to Milo Westbrooke, 27 March 1926, Mathias N. Koll Papers 1880-1971, Box 9, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.
[64] Anne Slakey, "Minnesota's Lakeshore Leasing Program, or Forestry Re-defined," (17 August 1993) manuscript, National Park Service, Voyageurs National Park, 20-21, 36.

Many of the summer vacationers traveling to the future Voyageurs area were summer lease cabin owners. The leasing of lakeshore cabin sites on state-owned land in the area began at Vermilion Lake in 1917. The Gappa's Landing area on Kabetogama was platted shortly after the program was established and nine lots had been platted on Sand Point Lake by 1922. The Namakan Lake and Ash River areas were platted in the 1940s. Leasing slowed during the Depression and continued to lag through the late1940s. But by 1956, there was a great demand for lease property. To meet this need, the state platted and leased an additional 500 lots between 1958 and 1961.[65]

Despite the number of available sites, Kabetogama was the most popular lake in the homesite program, totaling 116 plats between 1922 and 1973.[66] The most sought-after location, the cabins at Kabetogama, were larger, more elaborate and more expensive than other summer lease cabins at other locations. And as the most popular summer cabin lease area, Kabetogama was also important for its emphasis on zoning recreation areas. This led to more areas being set aside and developed for public use, and therefore was responsible for the CCC-era developments at Gappa's Landing and Woodenfrog.[67] The lake had a high number of both local and out-of-state leases. Lease holders from northeast Minnesota were the most numerous participants in the summer homesite lease program, amounting to about 51%. Thirty-four percent (34%) from the Twin Cities area and another 65% followed them from the south and central areas of the state. Most of the other lakes had less than sixty homesites platted, and not all were built upon.

A survey of land use on state-owned land in 1931 in the Kabetogama State Forest listed seventy-two summer home sites and campgrounds in the Kabetogama Lake area, fifty-two at Sand Point. Further south, in the Lake Vermilion area, which was identified as an area of "highly developed resorts with ample roads," the use was mixed between farming and homesites. There were sixty-six summer home sites listed in the Vermilion area. Leased sites in Superior National Forest also climbed, with at least thirty private resorts constructed in the roadless area by 1935.[68]

Despite its popularity the state leasing program had its detractors, including state personnel. In a 1930s report, a state employee decried the popularity of the Kabetogama Forest/Cass Lake area and described the Kabetogama, Namakan,

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[65] H. Ostergaard, "Recreational Development, Building Construction and Maintenance, and Conservation Area Work," (1956), Minnesota Department of Conservation records, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.

[66] Kabetogama had 120 state leases in 1934, 40 of those were resort leases within the present Voyageurs boundary. In 1973, the state passed a law prohibiting the issuance of leases on any new state lakeshore. J. H. Hubbard, "Memorandum of the Establishment of the Kabetogama State Forest, (n.p., 7 January 1935), Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul; Slakey 36, Appendix B.

[67] Slakey 56, Appendix D.

[68] Beatty 1931 map.

Sand Point and Rainy Lakes as the most beautiful in the state, still largely inaccessible by road. "The leasing of beauty spots on these lake shores for summer homes will destroy, for many, the beauty of the lakes, for the benefit of a very few."[69] Contrarily, as the state endeavored to maintain the wilderness appearance, and regulate available lease sites to areas with extant road accessibility, critics agitated for the construction of new roads into the state forest.[70]

Minnesota continued to rely heavily on the tourist industry in the 1940s and 1950s. With nationwide gas and tire rationing in effect during World War II, the state's tourism industry sagged in the early 1940s. The Minnesota Resort Association, created in 1942, was comprised of resort owners concerned about the reduction in numbers of tourists. Local attempts to bolster tourism included directing 1941 airline service promotion to fishermen, and improved bus service. Airline passenger service was discontinued a year after it was offered, but by 1946 Republic Airlines provided daily roundtrip service between the new International Airport and Virginia.[71] Several seaplane bases in the area provided another avenue for travelers seeking access to the wilderness.

After the war, the number of travelers and vacation industry-related structures climbed. Travel to Europe was limited immediately following the war, so citizens "traveled America." In 1946, International Falls was experiencing the heaviest tourist traffic they had seen since gas rationing in 1942.[72] By 1949, 62 percent of all Americans were taking vacations. Many were enabled for the first time to take vacation time due to new clauses in employment contracts—before the war, only 25% of all workers were allowed vacations, after the war, this increased to 85%.[73] In the 1950s, the MAA broadened its appeal in advertising to include families, and year-round recreational and sports opportunities. It was the first time the MAA expanded promotion beyond the interests of fishermen and sportsmen.[74]

Recreationist numbers in northern Minnesota are reflected in the boom of resort development. In Superior National Forest in 1946, for example, thirty private resorts existed in its roadless area, and fourteen private developments. In a thirteen-lake area comprised of the roadless area, the La Croix and Kawishiwa District, there were seventy-one developments. Access to many newly

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[69] E.G. Cheyney, "The Kabetogama Project," 1930, Minnesota Department of Conservation records, Minnesota Historical Society Archives (photocopy on file at Voyageurs National Park.), 4.
[70] Hubbard, 3.
[71] Minnesota Arrowhead Association Annual Report 1942. Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul and *History of Koochiching County*, Taylor Publishing, Dallas (1983).
[72] *International Falls Daily Journal*, 1 July 1946.
[73] Minnesota Arrowhead Association Annual Report 1946, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.
[74] "Fifty Years of Service to the Vacation Travel Industry: Minnesota Arrowhead Association 1924-1974," (Duluth, The Association, 1974). Other businesses had begun appealing to wider audiences in the 1930s and 1940s; see the International Falls Chamber of Commerce 1938.

developed and remote sites was by floatplane. On Kabetogama Lake, there were forty-two camps, hotels and lodges by 1949. While there had been a settlement at Crane Lake since the late 19th century, it did not become a popular recreational center until after World War II.[75]

The post-war resort boom underway in the north country included many small resorts established by returning servicemen and women.[76] Resorts established by returning servicemen were generally modest, and developed as finances allowed. The amenities varied widely between resorts, so in an effort to try and improve the accommodations, the Governor's Tourist Advisory Council offered the "Veteran's Resort Training School," a training program on the "proper" methods of operating a recreational business, including development of modern facilities.[77]

In mid-century, the vacation and tourist industry had become so important to Minnesota's economy that it prompted the first recreation study of its kind in the state. A comprehensive survey of nineteen northern counties in 1958 by Richard O. Sielaff found that based on the amount of money spent by tourists in the state, Cass, Crow Wing, St. Louis, Itasca and Hubbard counties drew the greatest number of resort vacationers versus other vacation forms. Counties with the most hotels and motels were in the northeastern part of the state. The average resort had 7.2 cabins, although the average size varied by county: Clearwater had about seventeen cabins per resort; Koochiching averaged 6.2, and St. Louis 10.7. Only three other counties in the survey had the same or fewer developments per 10,000 acres than did Koochiching. Interestingly, the study also determined that for the first time, the construction of motels, hotels and courts/camps following World War II outnumbered resort development. Koochiching County, however, experienced more resort development between 1945 to 1950 than had been previously. No other county in the survey experienced the same amount of resort growth in the post-war period. Northern Minnesota drew tourists from the Midwest, primarily from Illinois, Iowa, and

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[75] The construction of remote resorts serviced by airplanes began in the early years after World War II. In early 1949, Ely, Minnesota, became the largest fresh water seaplane base on the continent. The Quetico-Superior Foundation, "Recent Events That Have Shaped the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness," *Wilderness News* (Winter 1994): 1; Valentine and J.W. Trygg, "Developments Within the Superior Roadless Area in the La Croix and Kawishiwi Districts," (29 April 1946), associated with letter of Galen W. Pike, Forest Supervisor, to Chester S. Wilson, 3 May 1946, Kabetogama Boosters Club, Lake Kabetogama Collection, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul; Chester S. Wilson to J. H. Price, 9 July 1945, Kabetogama Boosters Club, Lake Kabetogama Collection, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.

[76] Report from Galen Pike to H.W. Crosbie, Ontario Department of Lands and Forests, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.

[77] Similarly, the Governor's Tourist Advisory Board suggested a continuous training program for resort owners and managers in 1947. *Tourist Industry*, (1946) Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul; "Second Biennial Report 1949-1951," (Minnesota Department of Business Research and Development) Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul, 25.

Indiana.[78] Yet for all the development, the northern tourist and vacation industry seemed little changed from the patterns that had been established in the first decades of the twentieth century. As late as 1958, the "roughing it" tradition of the northern border lakes area continued: roughly half of resort cabins in the northern counties had indoor toilets and less than that offered both hot and cold running water.[79]

Sielaff's study also included a random survey of summer cabin owners. He found that the principle reasons for vacationing in the northern border lakes area had changed little over fifty years. The principle reasons for owning summer cabins were listed as aspects of physical well being: rest and recreation, followed closely by relief, health, fishing and hunting. A secondary reason included escaping the heat.[80]

In the future Voyageurs area, the greatest influx of seasonal residences came during the 1960s when over 200 cabins were built for summer use. After the 1920s, Minnesotans had begun to view lakes as places for recreation during the summer months. As a result both resorts and lakeside vacation home numbers grew, facilitated by the availability of the automobile and improved roads. Increased discretionary income and expansion of interstate highways during the 1960s made it more feasible to have a second home. Retirees in the 1970s and 1980s made northern cabins their permanent homes, which is reflected in the population increases in some counties.[81] A follow up study of Minnesota recreation by Sielaff in 1964 found that within the proposed Voyageurs area, but excluding east Namakan and Sand Point, there were 138 summer cabins (49 of which were leased from the state), five resorts, seven commercial properties and five homesteads.[82] Ironically, during the same period of late 1950s through the mid-1970s, there was a general decline in the Minnesota resort industry, due to competition and changing recreation patterns. An average of 100 resorts per year closed.[83]

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[78] A similar study in 1968 again focused on resorts, as resorts constituted the majority of accommodations. Motels/tourist courts, camping courts and hotels followed this. Fishing, swimming and boating continued to be the most popular activities in the northern counties, as was driving and sightseeing. The more family-oriented camping and picnic activities were more popular in the south and central portions of the state. Richard O. Sielaff, *Economics of the Vacation and Travel Industry in Nineteen Northern Minnesota Counties*, (Duluth: Minnesota Arrowhead Association, 1958), 5-32; Midwest Research Institute, "The Who, How Much, What and Where of Tourism in Minnesota," Project No. 3084-D Final Report, vol. 2, appendices (November 1968). See also Minnesota Arrowhead Association, Richard O. Sielaff, director, "Minnesota Arrowhead Association Vacation Travel Survey 1958-1959," cooperative project with the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Department, 1959.
[79] Sielaff 1958, 18-19.
[80] Sielaff 1958, 95-100.
[81] Baerwald in Clifford E. Clark, ed., *Minnesota in a Century of Change, The State and Its People Since 1900*, 9-10.
[82] Richard O. Sielaff, Cecil H. Meyers, and Philip L. Friest, "The Economics of the Proposed Voyageurs National Park," (Duluth: University of Minnesota, 1964). 3.
[83] Quetico-Superior Foundation, "Recent Events That Have Shaped the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness," *Wilderness News* (Winter 1994), 1.

Concurrent with the decline in tourism was the movement to protect areas designated as wilderness. Private and state government activities in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA) resulted in the removal of dozens of structures. The Superior National Forest and the BWCA had been one of the first parts of Minnesota to be extensively served by resorts. The 1920s and 1930s had seen rapid growth. Private cabin use in this area—because of its remoteness and policy forbidding development of permanent roads—was spotty and generally light, except at Crane and Sand Point Lakes. There were almost no private cabins in Canada's Quetico Provincial Park. Remote resorts (both in the Superior National Forest and Quetico) were accessible by seaplane after the war, and by 1949, Ely had become the largest freshwater seaplane base in the continent.

To control this development, and preserve the wilderness aspect of the BWCA, the Thye-Blatnik Act of 1948 allowed for the acquisition and removal of private structures in the BWCA. Oberholtzer's Izaak Walton League of America, which established a fund to purchase private tracts, which they then resold to the United States Forest Service, supported this. By the 1970s, the government had acquired and removed forty-five resorts and ninety-one cabins in the BWCA. The largest concentration of structures—from commercial and large resort type developments to personal, year-round, recreational or outpost facilities—had existed at Basswood, Big Saganaga, and Trout Lakes. These three had secondary road access. Most often, one to three properties were acquired and removed from each of twenty-nine lakes. Most of the owners had been from Minnesota, living in Minneapolis, Duluth, Tower, Ely and Virginia.[84] Only three resorts remain in the BWCA.[85]

Interest in preserving the area along the international boundary and creating a National Park in Minnesota first occurred in proposed legislation in 1891. Serious interest resurfaced in the late 1950s when the State of Minnesota requested that the Federal Government evaluate the Kabetogama area for National Park status. The first detailed field investigations were conducted in 1962 and after many lengthy debates, Voyageurs was authorized in 1971 and established in 1975.

Prior to the 1960s there was little promotion of winter recreational activity. Although various over-the-snow vehicles were invented as early as the 1890s,

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[84] "Some History Relative to the Acquisition of Land in the Superior National Forest, With Particular Emphasis on the Acquisition of Developed Properties in the BWCA," undated. Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul; Robert C. Lucas, "Recreational Use of the Quetico-Superior Area, " United States Forest Service Research Paper LS-8 ((U.S. Department of Agriculture, United States Forest Service, Lake States Forest Experiment Station, April 1964), 15, 35.

[85] Quetico-Superior Foundation 1994, 1-4.

the first mass-produced one-man snowmobiles were available in 1959.[86] By the late 1960s, snowmobiling in Minnesota became an added recreational attraction for an economy dependent on tourism. Resorts also began to provide a greater variety of services such as camping, houseboat rental, outfitter services, and fly-in fishing opportunities.

The resort industry in Minnesota peaked again about 1960 with more than 3,500 resorts but has declined since, a trend which exacerbated the economic troubles northern Minnesota was already experiencing. High land prices, high interest rates, low profitability, market changes and an increased interest in RV camping contributed to the decline. New technology brought down the cost for travel to more distant locations. The appeal of the north's natural cooling air dwindled with the development of air conditioning.[87] Minnesota lost about half of its resorts during the 1960s, a trend that continued through the 1970s. In 1968 there were forty resorts on Kabetogama, thirteen on Rainy, and ten on Ash River. There were additional three year-round residences, 120 seasonal cabins in use, and thirty-two cottages in use. Today there are twenty-eight resorts on Kabetogama, nine on Rainy and four on Ash River. There are currently 123 recreational properties in the park that are under lease or other agreement and an additional fifty privately owned properties with recreational cabins.

In Minnesota, the resort industry is in a period of transition, and the character of resorts in northern Minnesota has changed. At one time, most resorts were family-owned operations. Today, when the owner dies, characteristically the resort is divided up for lake homes. Those that survive typically change from the traditional, small "ma and pa" operations and quiet fishing hideaways to larger recreation centers. Large year-round resorts offering more luxurious accommodations are slowly replacing traditional, small, seasonal, rustic housekeeping resorts for fishermen. Bed and breakfast inns and new full facility motels have made a recent appearance in the region and reflect an increasing change in clientele and vacation interests.

As visitation to Voyageurs increases and the type of visitation changes from a strictly fishing focus to one that is family-oriented, the resorts surrounding the park will enter the transition period making the preservation of information about resorts/vacation cabins in the park more significant. Recently, tourism promotion in the park area received a boost through the coordinated efforts of several groups including the Voyageurs Country Tourism Coalition, the Voyageurs Marketing Group, and the International Falls Visitor and Convention Bureau. A greater number of resorts are open during the winter to accommodate snowmobilers, new services and amenities are being offered for non-fishermen and owners feel a renewed confidence in the tourism industry.

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[86] Morten Lund and Bea Williams, *The Snowmobiler's Bible*, (NewYork: Doubleday & Co., 1974) 19.

[87] "Recreational Concepts for Northeastern Minnesota," (University of Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service and Design Consortium, Inc. April 1981) 12.

Voyageurs is dependent on resort communities adjacent to the park for providing services and accommodations to park visitors and resort communities are dependent on park visitors for the success of their businesses. But the influence of the park is also evident in more subtle ways, as the word “voyageurs” in all its variant spellings can be found in many forms of advertisement and incorporated in the names of a host of businesses and services throughout northern Minnesota.

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Prior to the establishment of the park, many islands and the shore of the Kabetogama Peninsula were acquired for construction of lakeside resorts, private vacation cabins, state lease cabins, private sporting clubs, seasonal estates, and youth camps. All development located in what is now the park was accessible only by water with the exception of Kabetogama Narrows, which became auto accessible in the late 1950s. When Voyageurs was established, there were 275 private cabin owners located on the four major lakes in the park. Landowners were given a choice of selling their property and retaining no lease, or retaining a use and occupancy lease for ten or twenty-five years, or acquiring a lifetime lease. There are currently 123 use and occupancy leases and fifty privately owned developed properties in the park. This represents a greater concentration of surviving recreational cabins than can be found in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, which had similar recreational development patterns to the Voyageurs area. Recreational cabin development appears to have been less in areas to the north in Canada, and in the south, the development was more intensive and of a different nature.

The buildings extant today represent a fraction of all the recreational cabins built during the different periods of recreational development. The majority of private summer cabins were built during the 1960s. One property survives from the period between the 1890s to 1919 and eight from the 1920s. A greater representation of properties survives from the rapid development period of the 1930s (20 of 27). Another fifteen of at least twenty properties survive from the 1940s.

One of the differences between northern Minnesota recreation compared to other areas in the state is that vacationers traveled the distances to the northern part of the state in order to “renew” themselves, either through rest and recreation, or adventure. This was different from the entertainment value offered in the southern two-thirds of the state. The difference, therefore, was in the activities offered, and this is reflected in the recreational structures. The buildings are not the opulent resorts or summer homes found in the south. As a rule, the cabins occupy isolated locations, either accessible only by boat, or via a few roads. Associated outbuildings continue the self-reliance and isolation of the cabins: several properties have a generator shed, while the lack of twentieth century modernizations are seen in the presence of privies and hand pumps.

Seasonal Estates

Seasonal estates were the first recreational cabins built in the Voyageurs area. They contain substantial structures built as summer homes for wealthy owners. Compared to the elaborate "compounds" found in recreational areas in the East, the Voyageurs area seasonal estates are more modest in size and design. They are more likely architect-designed, and built by an experienced crew. The resultant estates were typified by a unified cluster of recreational buildings. Materials are generally of a higher grade, often shipped in rather than purchased locally. The estates are situated on highly visible sites on the lake, and accompanied by a complex of outbuildings, including a caretaker's house, an ice house, a power plant, guest houses, a boathouse/boat lift and dock. Summer estates were typically used infrequently, occupied to entertain business guests a few weeks out of the summer, but intended to be largely self-sufficient.

Although located outside the park, Dahlberg's "Redcrest" as an example, was equipped with telephone service, and included a multi-room main house equipped with six bedrooms, a sun porch, kitchen, butler's pantry, verandah and two baths. The guest house had four bedrooms and baths and quarters for servants. The teepee seated twenty, and was built of birch bark. It featured a white quartz fireplace and a piano.

Few seasonal estates survive at Voyageurs. Two of the four known examples of this building type are the 1927 Ingersoll Summer Home and the 1909 Lenander Summer Home. The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office determined the Ingersoll Summer Home to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1993. The property includes a prefabricated 27'x 68' Hodgson company house, a caretaker's houses, an ice house, generator house, boathouse and formal landscaping. The buildings are set on a high rock ridge on Ingersoll Island overlooking Sand Point Lake and easily seen from the lake. Also on the property is another prefabricated cabin (known as the Alcorn cabin), which was reportedly salvaged from an abandoned CCC or lumber camp.

Also surviving, but as a ruin, is the Lenander Summer Home, built on Emerald Island in the early 1900s. The Lenanders, cattle ranchers from Iowa, homesteaded on the island in 1909. There are now three buildings in a state of decay on the site, but the collection still conveys feelings of long-term occupation. The 26' x 34' log home included at least four rooms and had a screen porch on two sides. The cabin, which has collapsed, is unusual in that it had a stone fireplace with a more formal brick chimney. Decorative detailing on the windows showed a desire for aesthetic appearance, which would be appreciated by more than a weekend visitor. The property also includes a 12'x14' guest cabin with drop siding, a small privy, and a 15'x20' storage shed.

Few seasonal estates survive within Voyageurs. These building types appear to have been fewer in number than the later types of recreational cabins; representative of the "exclusiveness" of summer recreation in this area of northern Minnesota in the early 20th century. The few estates that survive are a reflection of the tastes of the aristocratic class who adapted their city lifestyle to the wilderness setting. These architectural expressions are in contrast to lower and middle class responses to the urge to vacation in northern Minnesota. Because of this, all surviving estates should be considered significant to the interpretation of this aspect of recreational cabin development.

Seasonal Cabins

Seasonal cabin owners generally included residents of local communities who spent weekends "up the lake" and Midwesterners from major cities who spent their vacation or the entire summer at the lake. Cabin sites typically consist of a few acres with a cabin located on a breezy point facing the lake, and tucked in among the trees. Access to the cabins could be via water or road; the second option indicative of increased accessibility by automobile. Within the park boundaries, properties that could be reached by road were limited to the state lease cabins on Sullivan Bay, accessible from the road into Meadwood Resort beginning in the 1950s.

The main buildings are generally small and one-story, of frame or log construction, and often built with a screened porch. Cabins are often built of second-hand materials salvaged from old buildings or leftovers from home (especially doors and windows). Buildings might have several small additions tacked on as the family grew.

Weekend retreats tend to be constructed of inexpensive Boise Cascade building materials with the interiors left unfinished. Those used for longer periods during the summer were more likely to be constructed of better materials: log siding, rough-cut cedar, or Masonite siding. The interiors are more likely finished with pine paneling or painted wallboard. Foundations of most cabins are concrete block or stone piers; a few have concrete slab or continuous stone foundations. Most cabins have roll roofing, although a few are covered with asphalt shingles. The majority of the cabins have gabled roofs; some have shed roof porches. The outbuildings have a larger variety of roof types, and include gabled, pyramidal and shed.

Cabins are typically heated with wood stoves, heatilator-type fireplaces or native stone fireplaces. Stone fireplaces and chimneys are common and it is not unusual to see a small, simple frame cabin nearly overwhelmed by a stone fireplace. The interior eclectic furnishings of the seasonal cabins continue the "salvaged" theme, brought to the cabins when they were no longer in use at home.

Other structures on seasonal properties include a privy located nearby in the woods, a floating or fixed crib dock, a small dockhouse for storage of boat motor, fishing gear, etc.; small sheds for the storage of tools or firewood, a small building enclosing a generator or light plant, a pumphouse and/or water tank, and fuel tank. Some sites include a guest cabin and sauna.

Frequently occupied cabins tend to have landscaping features such as flower beds or yard ornaments (totem poles, outdoor fireplaces, birdfeeders/baths/ birdhouses, or flagpoles). A few sites have extensive flower gardens and/or stone work such as terracing, paths, trails and low walls. A very small number of seasonal cabins are also used during the winter, and a small number of year-round residents continue to live in the park.

Early Seasonal Cabins (1900-1929)

Cabins from the turn of the century to the 1920s were generally larger and more elaborate than those built in the following decade, reflecting the more limited funds of later property owners. Their size varies between about 600 to 1200 square feet, and utilize a variety of materials and designs. There are generally more outbuildings associated with the early seasonal cabins, and occasionally include guest cabins. This reflects the need for self-reliance and longer-term use of cabins at a time when boat-only accessibility was a large concern.

A high number of early seasonal cabins (seven of eight cabins with known construction dates) survive at Voyageurs National Park.[88] The best examples of cabins built during this period are the Fujita Cabin (1920-1929), the Filben Cabin (1920s), the Monroe Cabin (1924-1928), the Junior Island Cabin (1929) and the Gruner Cabin (1924). With the exception of the Filben Cabin and the Monroe Cabin, all are in good condition. All appear to retain a high degree of integrity. They have their original materials, design, workmanship and setting, and all retain original outbuildings or other associated structures. The physical appearance of these properties easily allows for continued feelings and associations with the history of early seasonal cabin development in what became Voyageurs National Park. Because of these factors, the Fujita cabin was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996. The Minnesota SHPO determined the Filben Cabin eligible for listing on the National Register in 1992, and the Monroe Cabin in 1993.

Jun Fujita, a photojournalist and poet from Chicago, sensitively designed and sited his three-room log cabin on Wendt Island in Rainy Lake. The cabin is simply constructed and presents an impression of deliberate rusticity, deference to the natural landscape, and qualities influenced by Japanese tradition. Fujita, who was one of the earliest Japanese-Americans to achieve prominence in the

[88] It should be noted that are an additional 41 seasonal cabins with unknown construction dates, and 31 seasonal cabins with unknown construction dates that have been demolished in the Voyageurs area.

Midwest, found inspiration at the cabin for his artistic and commercial work. The cabin is in good condition and retains a high degree of integrity.

The St. Paul Club/Filben cabin (1925-1935) on Mukooda Lake is a two-story structure designed with horizontal log siding and large windows and a wrap-around porch. The 28' x 49' building was used summers by underworld figure Tom Filben, who ran a statewide slot machine network for John Dillinger in the 1930s. Filben acquired the cabin from the "notorious outlaw" "Dutch" Canner. A water tank is located to the rear of the building. The Filben cabin is a ruin, with windows, doors and a large portion of the siding removed. A Memorandum of Agreement (1994) between the NPS and the SHPO outlines mitigating actions for the planned removal of this National Register property.

The Monroe cabin was constructed about 1924. It is a horizontal log cabin with several additions and has the appearance of being a pattern book cabin. The cabin is very picturesque, sits on a highly visible point on the lake and was frequently displayed in early tourism promotional brochures. The property also includes an ice house, tool shed, boathouse with rail system, water tower, rock breakwater and rock retaining walls. The remnants of the Monroe's extensive terraced flower and vegetable gardens and sprinkler system also exist.

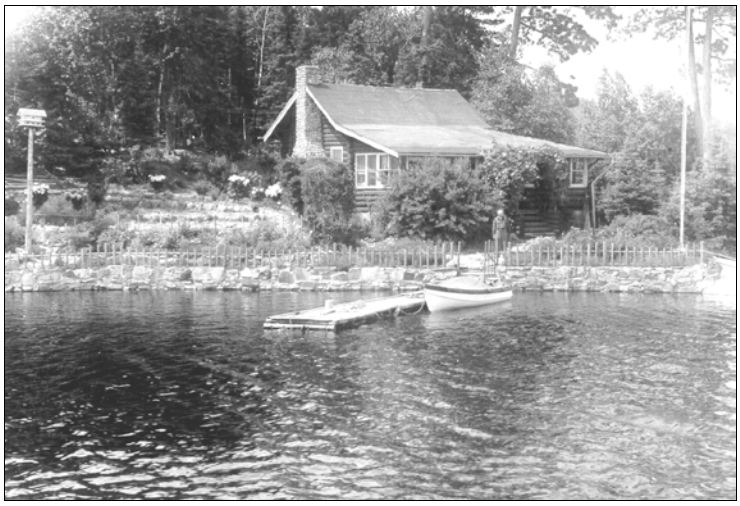

Figure 6. William Monroe Cabin, 1930s
Minnesota DNR collection, Orr

Carl Lenander built the Junior Island Cabin for his son. Lenander enthusiastically, although not very practically employed saddle-notched logs to create the rustic appearance for his cabin: the saddle notches are upside down. Lenander may have been influenced by the designs of the great camps of the Adirondacks, or National Park Service designs of public facilities at Yellowstone or Glacier. With its oversized crowns, large exterior fieldstone chimney and innovative detailing, the 1929 cabin design integrates the organic appearance

and rustic style that would exemplify National Park Service architecture in the 1930s. The rustic appearance of the 18' x 16' one story cabin is continued through to the tree branch door handles and door canopy brackets. The property also includes a privy and fishcleaning house.

J.W. Gruner, who had come to Rainy Lake in the 1930s to conduct a U.S. Geologic Survey, acquired his two-story, log-sided cabin from Albert "Colonel" Rice, who had come to Rainy Lake during the gold rush. The 18'x16' cabin has a full-width front porch, large living room, and four bedrooms. Rice, a wealthy early resident, also had a well and a generator on the property and a bathhouse, which covered a mineshaft, called the "Hope-Still." The Gruners constructed their own cabin in the early 1960s but continue to maintain the Rice cabin and use the bathhouse for storage. The property also includes a privy, a boat tram and cradle and walkway.

1930-1939 Seasonal Cabins

Despite the effects of the Depression, significantly more cabins were built in the future Voyagers area in the 1930s than in previous years. Twenty of twenty-seven cabins known to have been constructed at this time survive. The cabins of this period are modest in size, ranging from about 350 to 1000 square feet. They are also built of a variety of materials, including log, log veneer, clapboard or lap siding, wide cedar boards, and asphalt shingle. The cabins were built according to the finances of the owners, and added onto when additional needs or money were available. The best examples of cabins in Voyageurs from the 1930s include Casareto (1934), Levin (1937), Palmer/Luce (1930), Eastman/McMullin (1939), Garrett (1929-1931), Linsten (1930), Pavek (1930s), Sugarbush and Finstad. Other examples dating to the 1930s are the Strand, Drew/Hart, Vartdol, Couture, Simon, Budris, Kirvan, and Ong cabins.

All of the cabins listed are in good condition. All appear to retain their original materials, design, workmanship and setting, and all retain original outbuildings or other associated structures. The first seven buildings listed are distinguished by their architectural details, yet as a group, the variety of materials, construction, design and siting work well to feelings and associations with the history of seasonal cabin development in the 1930s. The Minnesota SHPO determined the Casareto and Levin cabins eligible for listing on the National Register in 1992.

Figure 7. Casareto Cabin, Crane Lake, 1989
Photo by Bill Harlow, Voyageurs National Park collection

The extensive Casareto property on Crane Lake was begun about 1934, and remains largely intact with twelve outbuildings extant. Casareto, a Minnesotan, had carpenters travel to the island to build his cabin. He continued to develop his property through the 1940s. The property is set in a secluded cove, with the focus on a 28'x40' log cabin designed with cross gables and dormers. The boathouse/airplane hangar, several sheds, a shower building, privy, water tower and barbeque pit also survive.

Ted Mead constructed the Levin cabin for his friend Dr. Adolph Levin about 1938. This 1029 square foot log cabin is more in style with the great Adirondack rustic lodges than regional vernacular log cabins. The decorative treatment of the logs, the casement windows, the natural interior finishes and the extensive stonework in the foundation and the chimneys are contemporary with the aesthetics and philosophies of early National Park Service designers from the 1930s. The site also contains stone steps nestled into the landscape, a water tank on a stone foundation, flowerbeds, and a pond.

The Palmer/Luce Cabin was constructed by resort entrepreneur C.W. Palmer in 1930 and likewise reflects the rustic style popular with park architecture. The core of the cabin is post-on-sill construction with frame additions covered in vertical log siding. The furnishings complement the warm, cozy atmosphere of the Palmer Cabin.

Figure 8. Interior of the Palmer/Luce Cabin, Sullivan Bay, 1989
Photo by Mary Graves, Voyageurs National Park collection

The Eastman/McMullin Cabin on Kabetogama Lake is a good example of the tradition of recycling buildings for a new use and development as needed. This curious, asphalt shingle-sided building truly "evolved" over the sloped site, with a number of rooms added by successive owners, seemingly attached at random points. A similar development took place with the six-room Garrett Cabin, which was started in 1929. Located on Rainy Lake, subsequent development resulted in a multi-level cabin, sided in both board and batten and vertical log.

The Sugarbush cabin is a simple, horizontal log cabin with casement windows and a screened porch. The Finstad cabin is an appealing horizontal log building with a gable roof and casement windows. The Finstad cabin, which is still privately owned, was reportedly constructed by an owner of *Time* magazine during the late 1930s. The Couture cabin is a mix of post-on-sill log and frame construction with a cobblestone fireplace and many windows looking out over Rainy Lake.

The Strand, Drew/Hart, Vartdol, Ong and Simon cabins are not architecturally distinct but retain their materials, design, and workmanship and assist in interpreting this period of cabin development. The Budris and Kirvan cabins were moved to their current locations at Rainy Lake City and do not retain their integrity.

Comparatively, other cabins developed during this period, such as the Linsten Cabin and the Pavek Cabin present a more urban appearance. The 22'x16' frame Linsten Cabin on Kabetogama Lake has a symmetrical facade, gabled front porch and drop siding. The urban influence is seen to a much greater degree in the Pavek cabin in Dove Bay on Rainy Lake. Like Craftsman style bungalows prevalent in housing development across the country at that time, the 22'x35' cabin features a nested gable front porch, exposed rafter tails, and three-over-one windows.

<u>1940-1959 Seasonal Cabins:</u>

Cabins from the 1940s and 1950s continued the diversity of building types. Of the nineteen known seasonal cabins dating to the 1940s, fourteen are extant. Twenty-seven of forty-four seasonal cabins from the 1950s survive. The best examples of cabins built during the 1940s are the Zieski, Koski, Darst and Zollner cabins. Another example, the 1944 Ellsworth Rock Gardens, lacks some of its buildings, but is primarily important for its extensive landscape. The Minnesota SHPO determined the Ellsworth Rock Gardens eligible for listing on the National Register in 1998.

The Zieski Cabin, which was built about 1940, is a modest, one-room log cabin measuring 21'x19'. It had been heated by a freestanding barrel stove, although the stove is now gone. Another one-room cabin, the 1947 Koski Cabin on Little Trout Lake, was built in two sections, partially of horizontal log and partially of

vertical log. The cabin measures 11'x28' and has a built-in bunk and full-width porch. Also on the property is a vertical log sauna (with a rowboat awning)—representative of a cultural tradition continued into mid-century, and a rudimentary privy. The simple, unadorned appearance of the Zieski and Koski cabins represent the "deevolution" in cabins in mid-century, when most property owners required the simple shelter and low maintenance weekend cabins. In contrast, the Darst Cabin, which was built about 1947, is very urban in appearance, with lap siding, brackets at the door, rafter tails. Other structures at the site include a privy and pump, a log guest cabin that has been attributed to a former use as a horse barn, and a sidewalk system.

Figure 9. Koski Cabin, Little Trout Lake, 1989
Photo by Bill Harlow, Voyageurs National Park collection

Ted Zollner constructed the Zollner cabin in 1945. Zollner had his main cabin on Kabetogama Lake and then brought groups to his Namakan Lake property to hunt. The cabin, which is still privately owned, is a 1 and ½-story frame building with two bedrooms downstairs and a large loft upstairs. Several outbuildings also exist on the property, including a greenhouse, but very little is known about these structures. The property is in good condition and may be eligible for its association with Zollner, especially since his Kabetogama Lake property no longer exists.

The Ellsworth Rock Gardens represent the extent to which private owners could express their creativity. The primary structure, a post-war cabin, has been removed. A log-sided workshop and a privy remain on site and were constructed by Ellsworth in the style of the house. A guest cabin also remains on the property; it had been originally built for the lumber camp that previously occupied the site. However, the most outstanding aspect of the property survives in the extensive rock garden and trail system that is still easily in view from the lake. Jack Ellsworth, a Chicago contractor, devoted years to developing his 46-bed flower and rock garden for both his own and summer visitors' enjoyment. Free-

form sculptures and tableaus were created out of found rock and cemented together. The local popularity of the property engendered its title as “the showplace of Lake Kabetogama,” and inspired the printing of postcards of the garden.

Jack & Elsie Ellsworth’s summer home on Kabetogama Lake, ca1965. Photo by Jean Reichow, Voyageurs National Park collection.

Figure 10. Ellsworth Rock Garden, Kabetogama Lake, 1964
Photo by Maurice Wigton
Voyageurs National Park collection

Cabins from the 1950s and later reflect their urban counterparts, with lower-pitched roofs, ranch styling, wide siding, asphalt shingles, aluminum windows, large picture windows, more substantial foundations, and less recycling of materials. The Halper and Sprague cabins are two examples from the 1950s. The Halper cabin on Sand Point Lake is a 24’ x 32’ ranch style house with wood shake siding, asphalt shingles and a large picture window facing the lake. The Sprague cabin, also on Sand Point, is a large sprawling, 1½-story cabin with very large windows on three sides. A-frames appear in the 1960s; at least ten being built in the park during the 1960s-1970s. Features such as sliding glass doors, bow windows and large decks distinguish later structures.

Figure 11. Halper cabin, Sand Point Lake, ca1975
Voyageurs National Park collection

Of the number of early recreational cabins that have been removed from the park, several “indicator sites” have been intentionally left to suggest the extent of recreational activity from earlier in the century. In some cases, the cabins are left as ruins. On other cabin sites, evidence, such as chimneys or foundations is left in place. While most of the fabric is gone, these indicator sites contribute to the interpretation of the recreational development of the border lakes area.

Because of their small number, all cabins built during the first period of recreational cabin development (prior to 1930) were found eligible by the Minnesota SHPO in 1992. Although there are more extant cabins dating to the 1930s and 1940s in Voyageurs National Park, they still represent a fraction of the numbers that once existed. In order to accurately interpret the increased development of recreational cabins in the area, structures that would not necessarily be found significant on their own merit for construction technique or associations with significant persons, should be found contributing for their associations with the historic context. Therefore, the recreational structures dating to the 1930s and 1940s, which are described in this text are considered significant if they are in good condition, retain their original design and materials and associated outbuildings.

Cabins post-dating 1950 do not currently meet the fifty-year age requirement for listing on the National Register. They are mentioned here, however, in order to identify building types that may gain significance in time. The history and importance of seasonal cabin development in the Voyageurs area would not be complete unless consideration is given to the influence of developments in the recent past. Several intact examples survive from this period, such as the Halper and Sprague cabins that are very representative of 1950s vacation cabin architecture. The Halper cabin, in particular, is most representative and distinctive of 1950s architecture, in contrast to the majority of other 1950s properties.

A-frames, such as the Gerasimo cabin, are as distinctive architecturally for the 1960s period as the Halper cabin is for the 1950s. Of the thirteen A-frames known to have been constructed in the park, three remain, the Gerasimo, Rohde, and Griffin cabins.

Figure 12. Gerasimo cabin, Kabetogama Lake, 1989 Photo by Bill Harlow, Voyageurs National Park collection

Summer Lease Cabins

The program of summer home lease sites was a hugely successful method of enabling the inexpensive use of recreational cabins in Minnesota. Leaseholders had one of two demands for lakeshore homesites: one for those people spending several months at the property; the other for those sporadically using their cabins on weekends. The first did not mind boat-only accessibility, the other wished easily accessible sites. Both types were built in great numbers, and Voyageurs acquired 97 state leases when the park was established in 1975. Only two examples of summer lease cabins exist within the park today, and both represent the more inaccessible type. These two, the Sessing and Polski cabins, embody the more restrictive regulations on cabin construction that developed in the 1930s.

State regulations on the construction and utilities for lease cabins became more specific between the 1920s and the 1930s. In 1920, rules for construction specified only that “no so-called tarpaper shacks may be erected, although buildings need no be expensive.” Buildings could not be located within 100 feet of the lake, and could not be used for a commercial business. Green timber could not be cut in the construction of the property, and the lessee had to follow all state and local sanitary laws, rules and regulations.

By the 1930s, the rules had evolved to control the appearance of “undesirable buildings” and display as little evidence of occupation as possible. Requirements for the summer lease cabins seem to have been influenced by the PWA-era

rustic designs concurrently constructed across the country: The State required that cabins, “should be inconspicuous and subordinated to their environment, of good proportion, stressing ‘a feeling of naturalness and air of dignity,’ simple, with a building design directly expressing the conventional gable roof or cabin types of architecture. Building material should be suitable to the forest and, as far as practicable, native to the locality. Paints or stains, if used, should be of colors that will blend with the surrounding landscape colors.” Cabins had to be located at least fifty feet from the high water mark, and ten feet or more from the boundaries of the site. Boathouses had to be located on shore above the high water mark and not projecting out into the water and partially or entirely screened by trees and bushes. Each site had 75 or more feet of lakeshore frontage and extended back from the lake 100 to 300 feet. Gardens were not permitted. Building plans had to be submitted to the district forest supervisor for approval. In addition, short-term permits could be issued, and after 1938, summer home leases were granted only when there was “no reasonable possibility of any need for the area...of a less exclusive nature.”

The Polski Cabin on Kabetogama and the Sessing Cabin on Namakan are the only surviving cabins in the park that were constructed under the state leasing program and both are in very poor condition. The Polski five-room cabin was built about 1938 and reflects the specifications required of lessees. The frame cabin measures 31’x34’ and is gabled, with a columned front porch, 6/6 double hung windows and exposed rafter tails. Set back from the lakefront, the cottage design presents a very urban appearance in a wooded setting. Although the property now has a boathouse, it probably did not originally, as cabin lessees were not allowed to construct boathouses.

Figure 13. Polski/Tario Cabin, Kabetogama Lake, 1989
Photo by Bill Harlow, Voyageurs National Park collection

A simple one-room structure, the 16' x 24' Sessing cabin was constructed of recycled materials, including a maple floor from a bowling alley and foundation logs from a nearby logging camp. The cabin was built in sections by stockbroker Arthur Sessing in Minneapolis and hauled by boat to a remote site on Namakan Lake in 1938.

Resorts

Resort development in Minnesota began in the central lakes district in the 1920s, and by the late 1960s (the peak of resort development), more than 3,500 resorts operated in the state. Typically, the earlier resorts included boat docks and ramps for lake access, and six or more buildings ranging from rustic log cabins to clapboard-sided structures. The size and range of activities in many resorts increased after mid-century, as resort owners sought to attract more customers by providing swimming pools, beaches and campgrounds.

Four resort areas are located outside the park: on Kabetogama Lake; at Ash River; on Crane Lake; and on Rainy Lake. In the 1940s, the concentration of resorts was on the south shore of Kabetogama Lake; 38 resorts being easily accessible off Highway 53. By the mid-1960s, 62 resorts were listed in Koochiching County in the proposed park boundaries.

The majority of resorts in the Voyageurs area began as collections of tourist cabins built by local residents. During the 1920s, the typical resort featured a central lodge structure with outlying cabins. Visitors could choose between the American Plan (in which meals were provided in the main lodge) or "Housekeeping Cottages," equipped with beds and kitchen supplies. Structures at resorts included the lodge, rental cabins, caretaker's cabin, privies, storage buildings, workshops, garages, generator sheds, a variety of storage sheds, laundries, water tanks or cisterns, docks, breakwaters, and boathouses.

The lodge was the central gathering place for the resort, where guests could read, relax, play games, visit and dine. Although vacationers talked about "roughing it," they wanted the luxury of eating a good meal at the lodge. Earlier lodges were very large, rustic buildings reminiscent of the Adirondack lodges found in the east. Lodges were the showplace of the resort and were frequently constructed of logs or clad in log siding. A large native stone fireplace and other decorative touches such as handmade furnishings, game displays and bark-covered interior walls added to the rustic feel. Early lodges had rooms to rent. Lodges constructed more recently tended to be smaller and less grand but still served as gathering, recreation and dining areas. Later lodges generally did not have rooms to rent, but served as quarters for the owner.

Figure 14. Chippewa Lodge, Kabetogama Lake, postcard dated 1948
The lodge, which is outside park boundaries, was destroyed by fire in 1982.
Voyageurs National Park collection

Rental cabins were built and furnished to provide a “home away from home” that would contribute to the rest and relaxation guests were seeking, yet give the feeling that they were truly isolated from civilization. Cabins were small (generally 300 to 600 square feet), cozy, individual cottages located in a cluster facing the lake, yet sufficiently apart and screened to give a sense of seclusion and privacy. Generally, three to seven cabins were nestled in the trees, close to the lake. Like the lodge, cabins had a rustic appeal. Because of the expense and time required for log construction, cabins were more likely to be of frame construction and have rustic touches such as log or cedar siding. Interiors tended to have one large cooking, eating and living space with sleeping areas partitioned or curtained to accommodate four to six people. Rustic touches were carried to the interior with pine or cedar paneling.

The self sufficiency demanded of the resorts resulted in a number of outbuildings. These generally included privies, an ice house, boat house, boat dock, ramps for lake access, storage sheds, tool sheds, fishcleaning house, laundry, store, generator building/light plant, pumphouse, water tank, sauna, root cellar and employee quarters.

The existing examples of resort complexes in the Voyageurs area are modest properties. The only complete resort in the park boundaries today is Monson’s Hoist Bay Resort, which was developed in the late 1930s on the site of a V&RL hoist camp. The resort closed during the war, and reopened in 1944. The resort was modernized in the 1950s, which included installation of bathrooms, and interior finishing of knotty pine. The long-lived resort operated until 1972, and eighteen structures survive. The one-story gabled buildings, clad in lap siding and painted bright white, present a uniform appearance, and are easily seen from the water. The camp’s crescent arrangement is created by the dining hall,

kitchen and storage building to the west, and four central cabins, axially arranged parallel to the shore of Namakan Lake. To the east, the boathouse, laundry, motor house and dock complete the crescent. Other buildings in the complex include an icehouse, large, concrete root cellar, several sheds, a generator building, a well, and several privies.

Figure 15. Monson's Hoist Bay Resort, Namakan Lake, ca1950
Voyageurs National Park collection

In comparison to this complex, the other examples of resorts in the park are much simpler. I.W. Stevens' 1925-1945 Pine Cove Resort on Stevens Island on Namakan Lake originally offered vacationists a choice of three cabins, while Stevens' frame house served as the main lodge. Stevens' resort was developed on the site of a V&RL camp, and his house has been attributed as originally being a V&RL camp headquarters building. Stevens' resort was boat-only accessible and for those campers "brave enough to get that far from civilization." The primary activities were fishing, card playing, storytelling and eating. Stevens' house survives in poor condition. The log cabin and log sauna are in good condition. Other buildings that survive but in poor or collapsed condition include a root cellar, woodshed, boathouse, generator building, and privies.

Another good example of the rustic resort development in the area is Rudberg's/Howell's Wilderness Resort, begun in 1931. Like Stevens, C.T. Rudberg acquired this property from the V&RL. Rudberg and subsequent owners offered a central, two-story, 42' x 42' lodge with twelve rooms including a store. The interior of the lodge was finished in cedar bark wall covering and accented with rustic furnishings. One horizontal log cabin, one vertical log cabin, three frame cabins, a generator building and a vertical log icehouse complemented the extreme rustic appearance of the resort near Kabetogama Lake's Blind Ash Bay. One vertical log cabin was destroyed by fire.

A resort that was only accessible by boat when it was constructed, is the 1935 Meadwood Lodge. Many of the associated structures have since been removed, and only the lodge, laundry/sauna and walk system survive. Built by first owner Ted Mead and two Finnish carpenters, the well-designed horizontal log lodge and surviving sauna/laundry are good examples of both the rustic style, and its application to the north European log building tradition. The log crowns of the 48' x 37' lodge are cut to create a profile that angles outward to the base, and the oversized, massive exterior chimney is built of local stone.

Two resorts that were built after the war and during the 1950s survive within the park boundaries but lack integrity. These include Chet's Border Camp (1946) and the Foote's Island/Cabe-Nam Resort (1945-1946). Chet's Border Camp on Namakan Lake includes a small lodge, currently used as the main residence and six partially salvaged cabins in poor condition. Foote's Island Resort retains a one and one-half story cabin measuring 30' x 40', a knotty pine interior, and ten rooms. There is one surviving cabin associated with the property, a privy and a utility building.

The Back of the Moon Resort, built in 1948 and developed in the 1950s, was a typical, family operated resort. The owner, Carlyle Peterson, was a vacationist from Illinois who decided to turn his recreational cabin site into a resort. The resort operated until 1969 and featured a 48' x 28', log-sided four-room lodge finished on the interior with knotty pine. Only one structure survives from this property, the ruins of a 12' x 12' vertical log caretaker's cabin. After the cabin was struck by lightning, the building was converted to a water storage shed.

Resorts on Ash River, Kabetogama, Crane and Rainy Lakes have long been a major destination for travelers seeking refuge from hectic city life. These resort communities continue to be important in providing accommodations and services for people visiting Voyageurs National Park. In Minnesota, the resort industry is in a period of transition. Large year-round resorts offering more luxurious accommodations are slowly replacing traditional, small, seasonal, rustic housekeeping resorts for fishermen. As visitation to Voyageurs increases and the type of visitation changes from a strictly fishing focus to one that is family-oriented, the resorts surrounding the park will enter the transition period making the preservation of information about resorts/vacation cabins in the park area more significant.

Sporting Clubs and Group Camps

Both sporting clubs and group camps were similar to resorts in that they featured at least one "group" or social building for the vacationists, which was supported by a variety of residential and special use buildings. The primary difference between the two groups was in its participants. Sporting clubs were organized for the privilege of hunting and fishing members only. The structures on these

properties include a larger cabin with bunkhouse arrangements, sometimes lesser cabins, docks and privies.

A good example of a private club property is the Indiana Northwoods Club, built 1925-1926 for a group of Indiana friends. Situated on Little Trout lake, and still accessible by small boats bearing the Northwoods Club name, the club property consists of a hipped roof, frame cabin with log siding measuring 30' x 44'. The building served as both clubhouse and dormitory, with two rooms dedicated to sleeping space. It also includes a deep, full-width front porch. Also on the property is a double privy, flagpole and dock.

In comparison to the sporting clubs, group camps were designed to provide summer experiences to a number of people, either for recreational purposes, educational, or a combination of both. Church or school camps (youth or adult) generally included a mess hall, bunkhouse or several cabins, storage sheds, several sheds, several privies, shower house, root cellar, clubhouse, laundry, kitchen, chapel/schoolhouse, dock. In 1967, four boys' group camps were listed in the proposed Voyageurs park boundaries. Today, only the site of Camp Marston survives. Although seven of the eight primary buildings have been removed and only indicator chimneys and foundations remain from the others, Camp Marston (1922-1940) still represents a good example of group camps. Camp Marston was built on the site of a fishing camp, and developed as a summer engineering camp for Ames College. Between forty and fifty students attended each summer under the direction of Professor Dodds and four to five other instructors. The single story, lap-sided cabins were given engineering terms such as "Declination," "Collumnation," "Computation," "Azimuth," and "Benchmark." "Polaris," the faculty cabin, is the only standing building remaining in the camp. Chimneys and foundations from the other cabins and a root cellar also survive. Camp Marston was found eligible by the Minnesota SHPO in 1993.

Figure 16. Camp Marston, Rainy Lake, ca1938
Voyageurs National Park collection