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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

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Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry (Boundary Increase and

Additional Documentation \_\_\_\_\_

Other names/site number: Basswood Island Quarry; 047 AS-0129; ASI 9158

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: Basswood Island (SE 1/4, SW 1/4, Section 4, T50N, R3W)

City or town: LaPointe State: WI County: Ashland

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,


I hereby certify that this    nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property   x   meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

   national    statewide   x   local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

  x   A    B    C   x   D

	3/21/2016
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

**United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

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

**1. Name of Property**

**historic name** Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry (Boundary Expansion and Additional Documentation)  
**other names/site number** Basswood Island Quarry; 047 AS-0129; ASI 9185

**2. Location**

<b>street &amp; number</b>	Basswood Island (SE1/4, SW1/4, Section 4, T50N, R3W)	N/A	<b>not for publication</b>
<b>city or town</b>	Town of La Pointe	N/A	<b>vicinity</b>
<b>state</b> Wisconsin	<b>code</b> WI	<b>county</b> Ashland	<b>code</b> 003
			<b>zip code</b> 54850

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

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

  
Signature of certifying official/Title  
State Historic Preservation Office - Wisconsin

Date 2/15/16

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry (Boundary Expansion and Additional Documentation)

Ashland County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

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

*by Barbara W. Gatt 5-10-16*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
		contributing	noncontributing
private	building(s)		
public-local	district		buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-State	structure		sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	2	structures
	object	2	objects
			0 total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

1

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/  
extractive facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE/park

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

other N/A

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry (Boundary Expansion and Additional Documentation)

Ashland County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

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### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

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

#### Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHAEOLOGY/ Historic-non aboriginal  
INDUSTRY

#### Period of Significance

1868-1893

#### Significant Dates

1868

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

Euro-American

#### Architect/Builder

Sweet, Alanson

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry (Boundary Expansion and Additional Documentation)

Ashland County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

### 9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous Documentation on File** (National Park Service):

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 10 Acres

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

2 15T 0671314E 5188982N  
 Zone Easting Northing

6 15T 0671135E 5188747N  
 Zone Easting Northing

5 15T 0671376E 5188844N  
 Zone Easting Northing

3 15T 0671065E 5188872N  
 Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

### 11. Form Prepared By

**name/title** Caitlin Zant and Tamara Thomsen  
**organization** Wisconsin Historical Society  
**street & number** 816 State Street  
**city or town** Madison

**state** WI

**Date** 2/19/2015  
**Telephone** 608.221.5909  
**zip code** 53706

Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry (Boundary Expansion and Additional Documentation)	Ashland County	Wisconsin
Name of Property	County and State	

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**                    A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**        Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

<b>name/title</b>	Bob Krumenaker, Superintendent		
<b>organization</b>	National Park Service, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore**	<b>Date</b> 2/19/2015	
<b>street &amp; number</b>	2 Washington Ave.	<b>Telephone</b> 715.779.3398	
<b>city or town</b>	Bayfield	<b>state</b> WI	<b>zip code</b> 54814

\*\* submerged lands and historic dock ruins are property of the State of Wisconsin, under joint management of Board of Commissioners of Public Lands and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

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

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 2050

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Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry  
(Boundary Expansion and Additional Documentation)  
Ashland County, Wisconsin

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**Introduction:**

The Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry property includes the land-based quarry and the associated dock remnants which are underwater. In 1978, the property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the area of Industry, for its association with the brownstone quarrying industry but the nomination only included the land-based resources (NRIS # 78000075). An archaeological survey of land-based resources associated with the Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry was conducted in 1981. At the time of this survey, water-based resources were not evaluated. Underwater resources were noted and sketched during a two-day survey of submerged resources throughout the Apostle Islands National Park; this work was conducted in 1982. In September 2014, Wisconsin Historical Society staff conducted a comprehensive Phase II archaeological survey of the site's submerged dock ruins. This nomination expands the nomination to include the new acreage of the underwater resources associated with this property and provides additional documentation, expanding significance to include Criterion D, in the area of Archaeology.

The original nomination included 9.7 acres; the current boundary expansion to include the submerged resources adds 10 acres; the new total acreage for the site is 19.7 acres.

The Bass Island Brownstone Company's quarry opened in 1868. The property was originally developed by Milwaukee industrialist, Alanson Sweet and partners, before changing hands and names many times over, and closing in 1893 following a downturn in the U.S. economy and a move by architects away from using brownstone in the construction of buildings. The site provides a unique opportunity to study quarrying operations and examine the industry's link with maritime transportation. Piers and dock structures like those located adjacent to the Bass Island Brownstone Company's quarry were a vital component of the brownstone industry. The docks were used to load large blocks of brownstone and to off-load supplies for the quarry's operations.

**Site Description:**

The site is composed of the land-based quarry and the off-shore pier and dock structures. The quarry site remains largely the same as it was described in the original nomination – irregularly shaped with high walls, overgrown, and partially water filled. The National Park Service has added interpretive signage along the hiking trail past this resource.

The off-shore resources have not previously been described. The dock extends nearly 186.5 feet to the southeast into Lake Superior from the southeast shore of Basswood Island on a heading of 250 degrees. Overall, the site is located in 1 to 20 feet of water and consists of three crib structures and one stone pier. Measuring 102.5 feet in overall length and 26.0 feet in width, the main crib is made of a combination of full "round timbers" and "round and round" timbers with a non-tapered dovetail corner system. A total station was set up on shore and a datum created at the coordinates, 15T 0671154

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Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry  
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easting 5188923 northing to be able to gather point data for the edges of the cribs and accurately map in the shoreline. Three baselines were installed during the course of this survey from which all measurements were taken. One baseline was installed on each, the main crib and the near shore North crib along their lengths, while the third baseline extended from the main crib to the near shore crib along the stone pier.

At the time of the survey, the main crib rose 15.0 feet from the sand, and was made up of ten stacked timbers. The timbers themselves are various widths while all measure 1.0 foot in thickness. The timbers making up the west end and the inshore side of the crib measure 1.75 feet in width, while the lakeside timbers measure 1.5 feet in width. The timbers making up the east end of the crib, as well as the cross-timbers, measure 1.0 foot in width. Additional timbers lie on the sand to the southwest of the crib near the remains of a rail track and numerous iron rods used for fastening the timbers of the crib together. The rail track would have been a part of the narrow gauge railway used throughout the quarry to move large blocks of stone. Two interlocked timbers lie on the sand, 5.0 feet north of the northeast corner of the crib. The interior of the crib is filled with medium to large sized rocks. Evidence of the upper structure of the crib can be seen at the lakes edge, with rock fall extending up to 7.0 feet away from the crib.

The main crib is connected to the island by a stone pier that is now completely submerged. The rocks making up the stone pier have fallen outward in the years since the quarry's abandonment and the top of the pier now lies in 4 to 7 feet of water. The rock fall from the stone pier measures 50.0 feet wide at 95.0 feet from shore, its widest point; and 41.5 feet wide at 130.0 feet from shore, its narrowest point. The pier extends 158.0 feet from shore to the southeast side of the main crib on a heading of 355 degrees. At the main crib, the pier widens to 60.1 feet in width. The majority of the pier is made up of medium to large rocks, and features numerous cut stones ranging from 2.0 feet by 4.0 feet, to 4.5 feet by 4.5 feet in size. The stone pier widens and flattens along the shoreline, and consists of small rocks and pebbles. No evidence of timbers or cribbing structure were observed along this section of the pier, but various tools and other implements were found, including stone splitting wedges, and rods, along with a section of narrow gauge rail track measuring 16.7 feet in length on the southwest edge of the rock fall of the stone pier. Near shore, additional wedges and an iron turnbuckle were located, as well as two porcelain sherds found near the near-shore cribbing.

The near-shore crib is one to two timbers in height. The length of the crib runs 62.0 feet parallel to shore. Four extant cross-timbers measure 2.0 to 8.0 feet in length before extending beneath an overburden made up of small rocks. The crib is built around a small point of land located at the northern end of the crib. The point is made up of large rocks, boulders and tree roots and faces the northern end of the crib into the island. An additional timber runs perpendicular to shore around this point, and measures 28.2 feet in length. All of the timbers measure 1.0 foot in width. It is possible that



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this crib shored up the natural point located at this part of the island. The small size of the rocks covering much of this crib indicates that they are remains of the point that has collapsed into the lake. The corner system of the near shore crib is the same construction as the main crib, though a 1.0-foot diameter upright timber is located in the southeast corner of the crib, near the edge of the point. It is unclear how this vertical timber functioned. It is possible it served as the corner of the crib and added strength.

Located 95.5 feet to the northeast of the main crib on a heading on 305 degrees, are the remains of the near-shore North crib, lying in 2 to 9 feet of water. This crib rises one to three feet above the sand and rock overburden. One timber is present on the near-shore side and three are visible on the lake facing side. The crib measures 113.5 feet in length and is 18.5 feet in width. The timbers creating the near shore side of the crib measure 1.25 feet in width while the timbers of the lake facing side of the crib measure 1.75 feet in width. The cross-timbers measure 1.0 to 1.5 feet in width. Small to medium rocks act as overburden and fill inside the crib on the southwestern end of the crib while sand fills the northeastern edge of the crib. A large rock fall is located at 33.5 feet along the baseline, extending 12.7 feet out into deeper water, which includes numerous cut stones measuring 2.0 by 3.5 feet, to 6.0 by 6.5 feet. Additional rock fall on the lake-side of the crib measures an average of 8.0 feet in width.

Additional timbers were located extending 24.25 feet from shore to the edge of the near-shore North crib. At 8.0 feet from shore, overburden of small rocks covers the timbers, extending to 18.0 feet from shore. This crib measures 20.0 feet in width and consists of two stacked timbers measuring 1.0 foot wide by 1.0 foot thick. The corner system of the near-shore North crib is the same construction as the other two cribs on the site. A 1.0-foot diameter upright timber is visible at the southwest corner of the crib (near shore) beneath a tree.

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**History of the Brownstone Quarries on the Apostle Islands**

Spanning the era marked by the end of the Civil War until the beginning of the twentieth century, brownstone quarrying around Chequamegon Bay and on the Apostle Islands became one of the most important industries in the region. Brownstone was used to build massive stone buildings in Chicago, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Detroit, and Milwaukee. The stone quarries of Chequamegon Bay became an important source of this popular construction material in the late nineteenth century, transforming Ashland and Bayfield into thriving hinterland communities that supported the quarrying industry. Although many brownstone quarries developed on the Bayfield Peninsula, brownstone from the Apostle Island quarries was consistently rated among the most beautiful and pure of the brownstones in the country. The quarries' close proximity to the waters of Lake Superior made transportation of the massive blocks relatively easy and inexpensive (Eckert 2000).

Although brownstone quarrying on the Apostle Islands was a booming industry, production varied as boom and bust economic cycles occurred. By 1893, the popularity of brownstone began a steady decline. The great economic downturn in that year made the construction of brownstone buildings too expensive for many builders, stylistic tastes changed and the use of structural iron and steel expanded. Despite this, quarrying operations on the islands were maintained until 1897 when the last island quarry, on Presque Isle - today's Stockton Island - halted operations (Apostle Islands National Lakeshore 2004).

**Brownstone**

The stone found throughout the region is known as Northern Potsdam Sandstone, or more commonly, as Lake Superior Brownstone. The stone is found beneath several feet of topsoil under the Apostle Islands and extends six to eight miles inland from the Lake. Known for its durability and imperviousness to fracture and decay when exposed to the elements, brownstone was a highly sought after building material. In addition to its strength and durability its deep rich brown color and its texture made it an attractive building stone. The extent of the stone stretches between the western edges of Lake Superior to the Montreal River. Throughout this region, brownstone cliffs rise abruptly along the water's edge, which allowed many opportunities for quarry development (Buckley 1896).

One of the factors that made it so desirable was the ease of quarrying the stone into ready-to-ship blocks. The stone split parallel to the bed at any depth, allowing blocks of any size to be chiseled easily (Buckley 1896). Although the stone was known for its durability, when first quarried, the stone remained ductile until it hardened, making it easier to work down into smaller blocks by the builders. Once exposed to the air, the stone would harden, making it able to withstand even the harshest of weather conditions (*Bayfield Press* 1871g). The stone's unique brown color was a sought after characteristic for many buildings of the era. Stone quarried from this region was known for being of uniform color, containing few of the white streaks or imperfections found in other types of Potsdam

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sandstone (Buckley 1896; Eckert 2000). As quarrying operations began to extend further away from the water's edge, the brownstone was said to be of a deeper brown color and contained almost no imperfections, adding to the stone's popularity (*Bayfield Press* 1872).

**The Beginnings of the Brownstone Industry**

The period after the Civil War was marked by an era of rapid expansion throughout the Midwest. The cities in this rapidly expanding region created a strong market for durable building materials. As major Midwestern cities developed into industrial centers, architectural tastes began to develop to reflect the city's prosperity (Apostle Islands National Lakeshore 2004). Larger, more substantially strong buildings with rich architectural embellishments became popular for many state and city buildings. This type of construction was meant to invoke the Medieval Romanesque style, thus beginning the "Romanesque Revival" architectural movement. Brownstone buildings built in this style became immensely popular in the Midwest for durability under harsh conditions, and were thought to harmonize with the region's natural surroundings (*Bayfield County Press* 1885; Eckert 2000).

Likewise, the outbreak of the Chicago Fire in 1871 spurred this development even further. The lightly constructed wood structures of Chicago were quick to light aflame, and in the aftermath of the disaster stronger, more substantial stone buildings were in high demand. It was discovered that buildings made of Lake Superior brownstone could withstand the heat of the fire without buckling, cracking, or crumbling (*Bayfield Press* 1971i; Apostle Islands National Lakeshore 2004). Because of its durability, the demand for brownstone construction, in Chicago and in cities throughout the Midwest, exploded.

Despite the general boom in demand for brownstone, its durability was still contested during the early years of production. To dispel any doubts, early quarry owners allowed their stone to be analyzed and tested for durability and strength. Each test conducted found the stone to be of the strongest, most durable quality and by the fall of 1871, the desire for additional brownstone quarries on the Apostle Islands was apparent (*Bayfield Press* 1871i; Buckley 1896).

**Apostle Islands Quarry Operations**

Five quarries operated on the Apostle Islands. They were operated by seven different companies between 1868 and 1897. The quarries were located on Basswood, Hermit, and Stockton Islands, with Basswood Island containing two different quarry sites. While brownstone on the mainland was in high demand, the stone from the Apostle Islands was reported to be of superior quality that could not be matched on the mainland, or anywhere in the United States (Eckert 2000). The development of the brownstone industry in the region began with Alanson Sweet of Milwaukee and the Bass Island Brownstone Company when the Milwaukee Board of Supervisors chose Bass Island brownstone for the construction of the Milwaukee County Courthouse (Buckley 1896).

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The proximity of the islands' brownstone cliffs to the water made the transport of the stone quick, relatively easy, and inexpensive. Once railways reached Bayfield and Ashland, the stone could be transported by boat to docks on the mainland and loaded into waiting railcars (Eckert 1985).

To quarry the stone successfully, channelers would cut the stone in two directions along the bed's plane, eight to ten feet deep. At that point, sawing machines could cut the stone to desired dimensions. The stones were then transferred to the quarry docks by steam derrick or narrow gauge rail carts, where they awaited loading onto a schooner (*Bayfield Press* 1871g; Buckley 1896). Despite early attempts to blast the brownstone from its beds, it was found that that method of removal only produced small bits of rubble, which were not suitable for the building stones desired for construction (Buckley 1896).

While quarry operations on the mainland extended into the 1920s, quarry operations on the Apostle Islands ceased by 1897. Even though the amount of brownstone on the islands remained plentiful, a combination of the nationwide economic downturn and a change in architectural tastes had all but obliterated the industry by 1893. Although one quarry, located on Presque Isle, today's Stockton Island, stayed in operation for a few additional years, all quarry operations on the Apostle Islands had ceased by 1897 (Apostle Islands National Lakeshore 2004).

**Bass Island Brownstone Quarry Operation History**

The Bass Island Brownstone Quarry, otherwise known as the Basswood Island Quarry, is located at the southwest end of Basswood Island. In 1854, a group of investors; George Becker of St. Paul, Minnesota, and Beriah Magioffin, Paul Rankin, and John C. Breckenridge from Kentucky purchased the land on which the quarry was eventually located. Each of the four original investors owned one-fourth of the land. In 1868, Rankin sold his holding to Breckinridge, and Becker and Magioffin sold their interests to Alanson Sweet, a stonemason from Milwaukee. Sweet established the Bass Island Brownstone Company and quarrying operations began in 1868 in response to a request for a reliable building material to construct the Milwaukee County Courthouse (Eckert 1985). In that first year, Sweet, and the Bass Island Brownstone Company, built docks and installed machinery at the site in preparation for extraction of the stone. Because brownstone was not a common building material prior to 1868, Sweet sent samples of stone to the Smithsonian Institution for analysis and strength testing. Finding the stone to be of superior quality, the Milwaukee Board of Supervisors chose Bass Island brownstone as the building material for the courthouse (Buckley 1896).

Sweet and the Bass Island Brownstone Company maintained ownership of the quarry and its operations until 1870. It was in this year that Alanson Sweet sold his share of the land to a group of investors from Chicago and Milwaukee: Robert H. Strong, Edwin C. French, Daniel L. Wells, and George P. Lee. From 1870 until 1873, the quarry was operated as Strong, French & Company. Over the course of 1870, fifteen to forty workers cleared top soil, felled trees, built additional quarry docks,

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installed machinery, including steam drills with the capacity to drill holes 3-inches in diameter and six feet deep in five minutes, and removed nearly 2,000 tons of stone for the Milwaukee County Courthouse (Eckert 1895).

During the spring of 1871, several houses were constructed on the island to accommodate the nearly 100 workers, and their families, that were expected to work the quarry that season (*Bayfield Press* 1871a). Over the winter months of 1870 – 1871, two horse-powered derricks were installed on the island, adding to the two hand-powered derricks already present. Rails were laid to the main derrick from all sections of the quarry and it was expected that the output of the coming summer would far exceed that of the past year to successfully complete the contract for the Milwaukee County Courthouse (*Bayfield Press* 1871b). In April, the quarry operations began for the year and by May; the steam drill was in working condition after being damaged in the months prior. The quarry was operating at a rapid pace; 50 tons of stone were being quarried each day (*Bayfield Press* 1871c, 1871d, 1871e).

Throughout the summer, crews quarried a large amount of stone. The schooner *Starlight* carried between 500 to 600 tons of stone with each trip from the island (*Bayfield Press* 1871f, 1871g). This pace continued throughout the rest of 1871. Following the outbreak of the Chicago Fire that fall, Strong, French & Company called for keeping the quarry open throughout the winter months to quarry stone to be shipped to Chicago as the city was rebuilt. The brownstone from the Bass Island Quarry withstood the fire ‘splendidly’. While the intense heat from the fire had caused fractures and melting of many other types of stone, brownstone was found to have maintained its integrity, increasing the popularity of the stone. By November of 1871, the popularity of the region’s brownstone was apparent. Investors began to look at other islands in the Apostle Islands chain as potential brownstone quarrying sites (*Bayfield Press* 1871h, 1871i).

Strong, French & Company operated the Basswood Island Quarry for another two seasons. During that time, the company shipped brownstone to Chicago exclusively for the rebuilding of the city. Some of the rubble from the quarry was shipped to Bayfield to aid in the building of numerous foundations throughout the city, including foundation of the Bayfield School. By 1873, however, the demand for brownstone had significantly dropped due to a nationwide economic downturn. With lightened demand for brownstone, the Basswood Island Quarry shut down its major operations in October of 1873 (Eckert 1985). For the next decade, the quarry operated with a limited crew of workers, with scant reports of the bark *D. A. Van Valkenburg*, which the company had purchased in 1873, carrying full loads of stone from the quarry only one trip each during the 1874 and 1875 seasons (*Bayfield Press* 1873, 1874, 1875). Quarrying operations on Basswood Island would not occur en mass again for another decade.

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Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry  
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Ashland County, Wisconsin

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In the summer of 1882, architect Edward Townsend Mix and Edwin Hyde, a cut-stone merchant and contractor, finished plans for St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Milwaukee, and plans were finalized to ship Basswood Island Quarry brownstone to Milwaukee for the church's construction. This marked the beginning of a new era in brownstone construction that would last until the mid-1890s. The early 1880s was marked by an economic upturn that created a high demand for stately brownstone structures. The Cook & Hyde Company operated the Bass Island Brownstone Company quarry from 1883 until 1888. As two of the largest contractors and builders using Lake Superior sandstone in the region, Cook & Hyde used their quarrying operation on Basswood Island to supply their stone yards in Milwaukee and Minneapolis (Eckert 1985).

The season of 1883 was highly successful for the Cook & Hyde Company, with shipments of stone transported by schooner to the ports of Washburn and Milwaukee (*Bayfield County Press* 1883b, 1883c). By May of 1883, the Basswood Island Quarry opened operations for the season, and it was reported that the quarry would be operated with a full force of workers in the summer months, run by F.C. Bailey of Milwaukee (*Ashland Press* 1883). In June, Cook & Hyde began looking for property on the mainland to expand their quarrying operations. With land acquired on the mainland, the company planned to build a dock to easily unload cargos of stone from Basswood Island. That same year, the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha Railroad made connections to Bayfield, making it possible for shipments of stone to be made by rail as well as water, greatly increasing the company's reach and profits (*Bayfield Press* 1883; Eckert 1985). It was also reported that the stone quarried out during the 1883 season was far superior to the stone quarried the previous year, and that it would be used for the construction of the Bayfield County Courthouse (*Bayfield County Press* 1883a). In November, blocks of Basswood Island stone were sent to St. Paul to be placed on exhibition (*Bayfield County Press* 1883d).

Throughout the 1884 season, in addition to shipping its largest tonnage of brownstone to Milwaukee, and St. Paul for the Germania National Bank, several improvements were made to the quarry to increase efficiency. These improvements included extending the quarry dock to accommodate vessels with 12-foot drafts when taking on full loads of cargo, as well as the installation of two new steam derricks. This was in addition to a new log boarding house and steam drill that were built and installed at the quarry at the close of the 1883 season (*Bayfield County Press* 1884a, 1884b).

In addition to furnishing stone for the Bayfield County Courthouse, St. Paul's Episcopal Church and the Germania National Bank, stone from the Cook & Hyde Company's quarry was used to construct two well-known Milwaukee landmarks: T.A. Chapman's Dry Goods Store in 1885, and the Plankinton Building in 1887 (Eckert 1985). The only vessel known to have been built in the Apostle Islands, the *Annie R*, was built on Basswood Island in 1896. The two-masted scow schooner, built by C.L. Rudd, was used specifically to haul brownstone from the Cook & Hyde Company quarry to Washburn

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(Eckert 1985).

In 1889, Cook & Hyde sold the quarry, equipment, and machinery to Frederick Prentice of the Prentice Brownstone Company. Prentice operated the quarry from 1889 to 1891. When Prentice purchased the quarry, he did not maintain large quarrying operations on the island. The quarry's productivity decreased to only about 5,000 cubic feet of stone each season. He instead, moved much of the machinery from Basswood Island, to his mainland quarry, and to furnish his newly opened quarry on Hermit Island (*Bayfield County Press* 1889; Eckert 1985).

In 1881, the Superior Brownstone Company was incorporated by James H. Rogers, Freeborn C. Bailey, and George K. Barr with the intention to purchase tracts of land for logging or quarrying purposes. The Company leased the land on Basswood Island beginning in 1891, and started quarrying operations later that year, shipping stone to their docks in Ashland, West Superior, and Duluth (Eckert 1985). Once in possession of the quarry, the Superior Brownstone Company made major improvements to the operations on the island, including the installation of a self-revolving steam derrick on the company's dock (*Bayfield County Press* 1891). This machinery allowed the company to load a vessel in half the time as with traditional, hand and steam-powered derricks. With their own tug, the *Maribel*, the Superior Brownstone Company was poised to export more tons of stone than the quarry had produced in recent years, exporting 100,000 cubic feet of stone in 1891 and 310,000 cubic feet in 1892 (*Bayfield County Press* 1891; *Ashland Daily Press* 1891, 1892).

The Superior Brownstone Company maintained quarry operations on Basswood Island until the financial crisis of 1893 led to a decline in the demand for brownstone. Prior to the economic decline, quarry production was up, and in the fall of 1892, the quarry's dock received repairs from George Wilkinson (*Bayfield County Press* 1892). In June of 1893 though, the stock market crashed, beginning the largest economic downturn of the century. Although a few quarries around Chequamegon Bay were able to remain in operation through the crisis, the Superior Brownstone Company reduced its working crew to 15 men at the beginning of August, but by the end of the 1893 season, had shut down operations for good (*Bayfield County Press* 1893; Eckert 1985).

**End of the Brownstone Era**

Periods of economic downturns slowed production demands throughout the nearly fifty years of quarrying operations in the Apostle Islands, but the Crisis of 1893 marked the end of the brownstone industry. Once the economy picked up again, architectural tastes had changed. The dark, heavily constructed brownstone architecture of the late nineteenth century was no longer popular or economical. Following the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition (also known as the 1893 World's Fair) and the popularity of the "White City", lighter limestone became the preferred stone building material. At the same time, builders and architects began using steel and concrete in buildings as a

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Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry  
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lighter and less expensive alternative to stone.

During the 1893 World's Fair, the Wisconsin Minerals Pavilion was slated to highlight Bayfield, Ashland, and Apostle Islands brownstone. The building's façade and four, 25-foot tall obelisks, were made out of Lake Superior brownstone. Though the building was successfully completed, most of the buildings featured at the World's Fair displayed much lighter and brighter facades. The 'White City' was primarily built of lightly constructed frames, wiring, and plaster called staff and painted white mimicking stone; the prevailing architectural style at the Fair was Neoclassical. An entire "city" featuring visual uniformity, Beaux Arts design principals and the preponderance of neoclassical style buildings of gleaming white (imitation) stone was seen by millions of Americans from across the country. The effect was transformative nation-wide, ushering in the City Beautiful movement, the popularity of Beaux Arts and Neoclassical styles of architecture and the use of light-colored stone. By the time the economic crisis had ended, this shift was in place, effectively ending the demand for brownstone (Apostle Islands National Lakeshore 2004). It was at this time innovations in building materials allowed much lighter construction for buildings; the development of steel frames and concrete allowed buildings to be constructed larger and taller, and at a much lower cost (Eckert 2000).

By 1897, the last brownstone quarry on the Apostle Islands shut down operations. Although quarries on the mainland were able to maintain operations until the early 1920s, the high demand for brownstone seen in the 1880s never returned. Today, the remains of these quarry operations still exist, and serve as tangible bits of local history for visitors, and offers exceptional information for historians and archaeologists alike.

In 1892, on land about 0.25 miles north of the main quarry operations on the island, the Breckenridge Quarry was opened. Instead of using steam drills and saws, the stone was blasted out with charges. Quarry operations were shut down after one season because this method of removing stone merely created rubble, and not the large stone blocks desired by builders. Additionally, a lack of supplies and good machinery forced investors to abandon work at the quarry (Buckley 1896; Eckert 1985).

**Significance:**

The mid to late nineteenth century witnessed increasing exploitation of the natural resources of the Apostle Islands. High-quality architectural brownstone was cut from the islands, loaded aboard ships at the nearby piers, and hauled way to construct historically notable structures in Milwaukee, Chicago, and Minneapolis. The quarry is significant for its association with this important Wisconsin industry, while the quarry docks were also a significant component of the quarrying operations - the essential interface between the terrestrial and maritime components of this historic industry and the Great Lakes trade. Very little historical archaeological documentation has been done to examine nineteenth-century



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piers and wharfs, important structures that were essential to waterborne commerce. These piers and wharfs were part of an integrated system supporting the quarrying operations. With ever-increasing development spreading along the Great Lakes shoreline, few opportunities remain to document these historic structures. In addition to the piers themselves many artifacts remain scattered on the lakebed surrounding the piers associated with the stone industry providing insight into the people who worked on the vessels, on the docks, and in the stone trade. Documentation of these structures and artifacts has provided significant archaeological data on the construction and use of these historic piers and on the cultural and material milieu of the times and will continue to contribute to our knowledge in the future.

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**References:**

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

2004 The Brownstone Quarries of the Apostle Islands. Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, Midwest Region, National Park Service: Bayfield, Wisconsin.

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1892 *The Ashland Daily Press* 19 November. Ashland, Wisconsin.

*Bayfield Press, The*

1871a *The Bayfield Press* 25 February. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1871b *The Bayfield Press* 11 March. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1871c *The Bayfield Press* 1 April. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1871d *The Bayfield Press* 6 May. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1871e *The Bayfield Press* 13 May. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1871f *The Bayfield Press* 24 June. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1871g *The Bayfield Press* 29 July. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1871h *The Bayfield Press* 21 October. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1871i *The Bayfield Press* 11 November. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1872 *The Bayfield Press* 25 May. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1873 *The Bayfield Press* 24 May. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1874 *The Bayfield Press* 11 July. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1875 *The Bayfield Press* 17 July. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1883 *The Bayfield Press* 9 June. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

*Bayfield County Press, The*

1883a *The Bayfield County Press* 30 June. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

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1883d *The Bayfield County Press* 3 November. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1884a *The Bayfield County Press* 19 April. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

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1889 *The Bayfield County Press* 19 January. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1891 *The Bayfield County Press* 8 August. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1892 *The Bayfield County Press* 15 October. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

1893 *The Bayfield County Press* 5 August. Bayfield, Wisconsin.

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1985 *The Sandstone Quarries of the Apostle Islands: A Historical Narrative*. Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, Midwest Region, National Park Service: Bayfield, Wisconsin.  
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Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry  
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**Verbal Boundary Description:**

The new boundary includes the earlier boundaries within the new, larger boundaries. The new boundary both adds to and replaces the earlier boundary.

*Original Acreage*

The acreage in the original nomination (1978) is 9.7 acres. The original acreage is bounded by a rectangular box, drawn to encompass the terrestrial extent of the quarry operation site. The first side extends from Point 1 at Zone 15T 0671242 Easting and 5189118 Northing 500 feet to Point 2 at Zone 15T 0671314 Easting and 5188982 Northing. From Point 2 the boundary extends 850 feet along the shoreline to Point 3 at Zone 15T 0671065 Easting and 5188872 Northing. The third side extends from this point 500 feet to Point 4 at Zone 15T 0671001 Easting and 5189023 Northing. The final side extends 850 feet to Point 1 to close the box.

*Additional Acreage*

The area being added to this nomination is 10 acres.

*New Total Acreage*

The new acreage now encompasses a total of 19.7 acres.

The additional acreage Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry site is bounded by a rectangular box, drawn to encompass the associated dock structures off shore. The first side extends from Point 2 at Zone 15T 0671314 Easting and 5188982 Northing 500 feet to Point 5 at Zone 15T 0671376 Easting 5188844 Northing. From Point 5 the boundary extends 850 feet to Point 6 at Zone 15T 0671135 Easting 5188747 Northing. The third side extends from this point 500 feet to Point 3 at Zone 15T 0671065 Easting and 5188872 Northing. The final side extends 850 feet along the shoreline to Point 2 to close the box.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundary was drawn to encompass the company's quarry works and historic dock structure including associated artifacts.

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Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry  
(Boundary Expansion and Additional Documentation)  
Ashland County, Wisconsin

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Location of Original Digital Files: Wisconsin Historical Society  
Historic Preservation Division  
816 State Street  
Madison, WI 53706

Photo #1 of 7  
Bass Island Brownstone Company  
Ashland County, Wisconsin  
Photographer: Tamara Thomsen  
September 2014  
View of the Bass Island Quarry's main crib corner system

Photo #2 of 7  
Bass Island Brownstone Company  
Ashland County, Wisconsin  
Photographer: Tamara Thomsen  
September 2014  
Corner system of the main crib at the Bass Island Quarry

Photo #3 of 7  
Bass Island Brownstone Company  
Ashland County, Wisconsin  
Photographer: Tamara Thomsen  
September 2014  
View of a stone cutting wedge

Photo #4 of 7  
Bass Island Brownstone Company  
Ashland County, Wisconsin  
Photographer: Tamara Thomsen  
September 2014  
Southwest corner of the near shore crib

Photo #5 of 7  
Bass Island Brownstone Company  
Ashland County, Wisconsin  
Photographer: Tamara Thomsen

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Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry  
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September 2014  
Rail located on the stone walkway leading from the main crib

Photo #6 of 7  
Bass Island Brownstone Company  
Ashland County, Wisconsin  
Photographer: Tamara Thomsen  
September 2014  
Cut stone block featuring saw marks

Photo #7 of 7  
Bass Island Brownstone Company  
Ashland County, Wisconsin  
Photographer: Tamara Thomsen  
September 2014  
Interior of the main crib at Bass Island Quarry

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

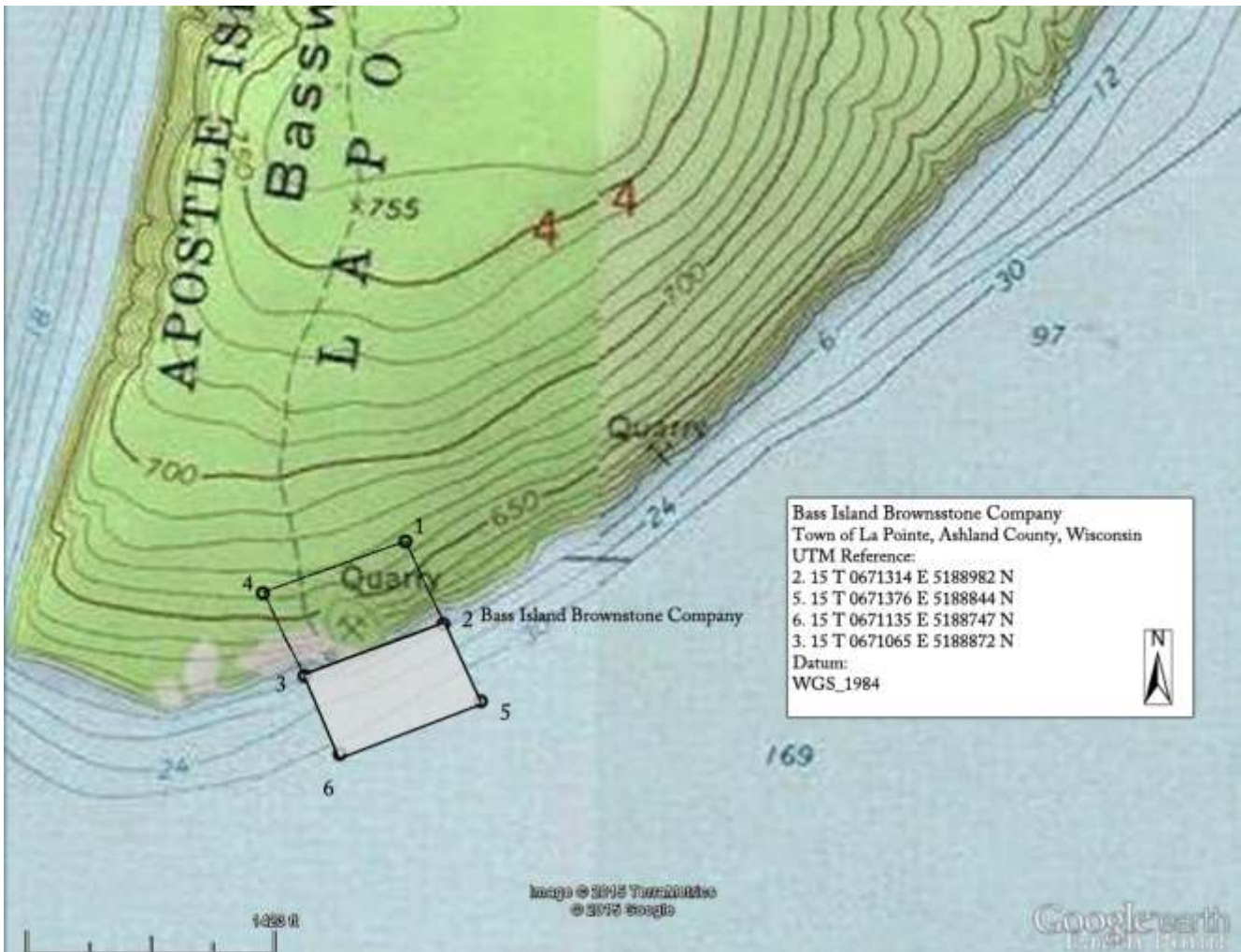
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Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry  
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Ashland County, Wisconsin

List of Figures:

Figure #1 of 2  
USGS Map of Bass Island Brownstone Company  
Ashland County, Wisconsin  
The open box is the existing boundary; the shaded box is the newly nominated area.



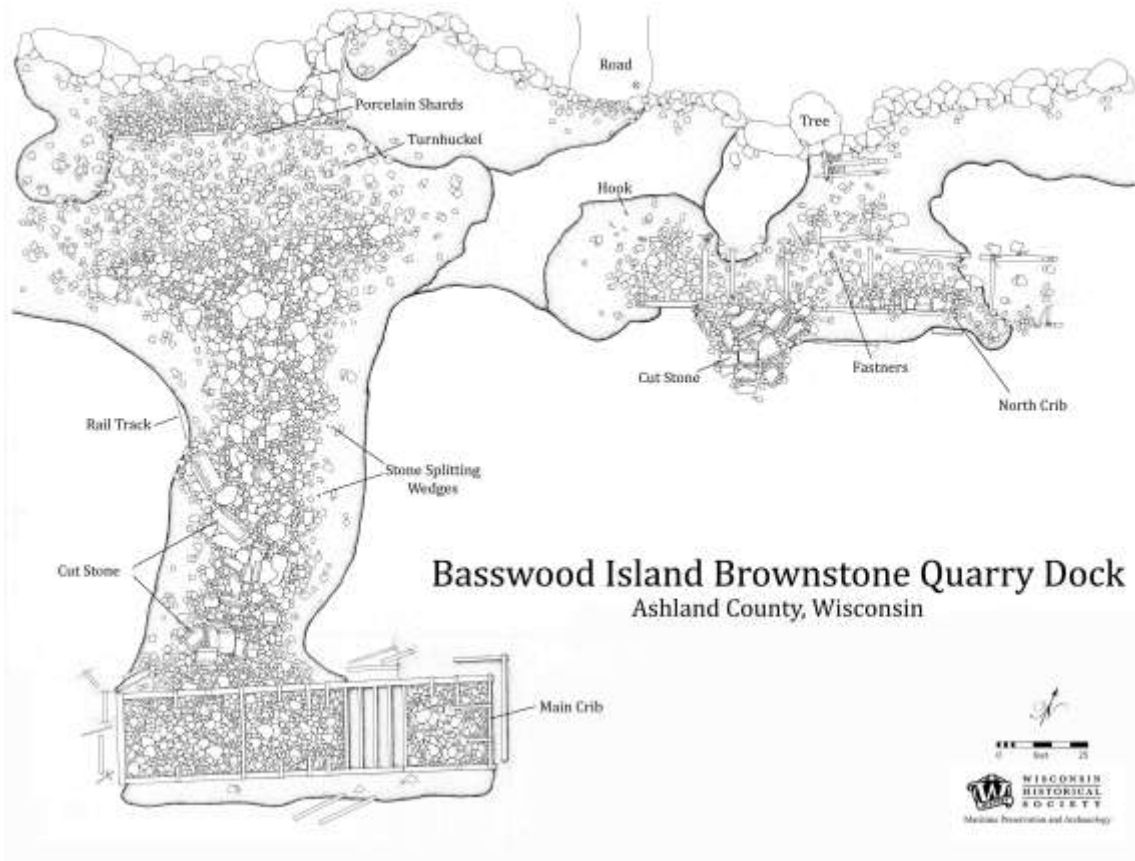
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Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry  
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Figure #2 of 2  
Site plan of Bass Island Brownstone Company dock ruins  
Ashland County, Wisconsin







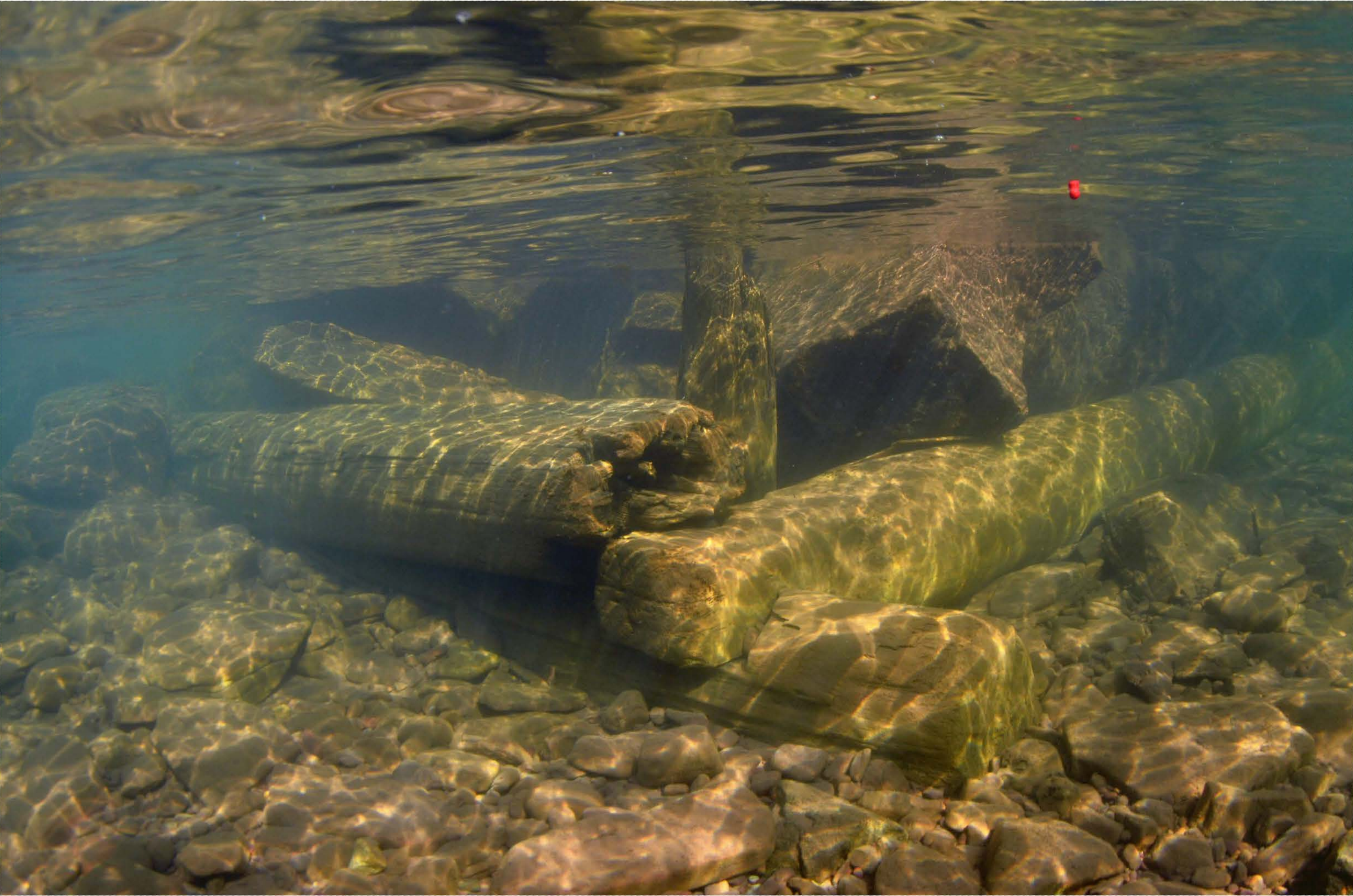












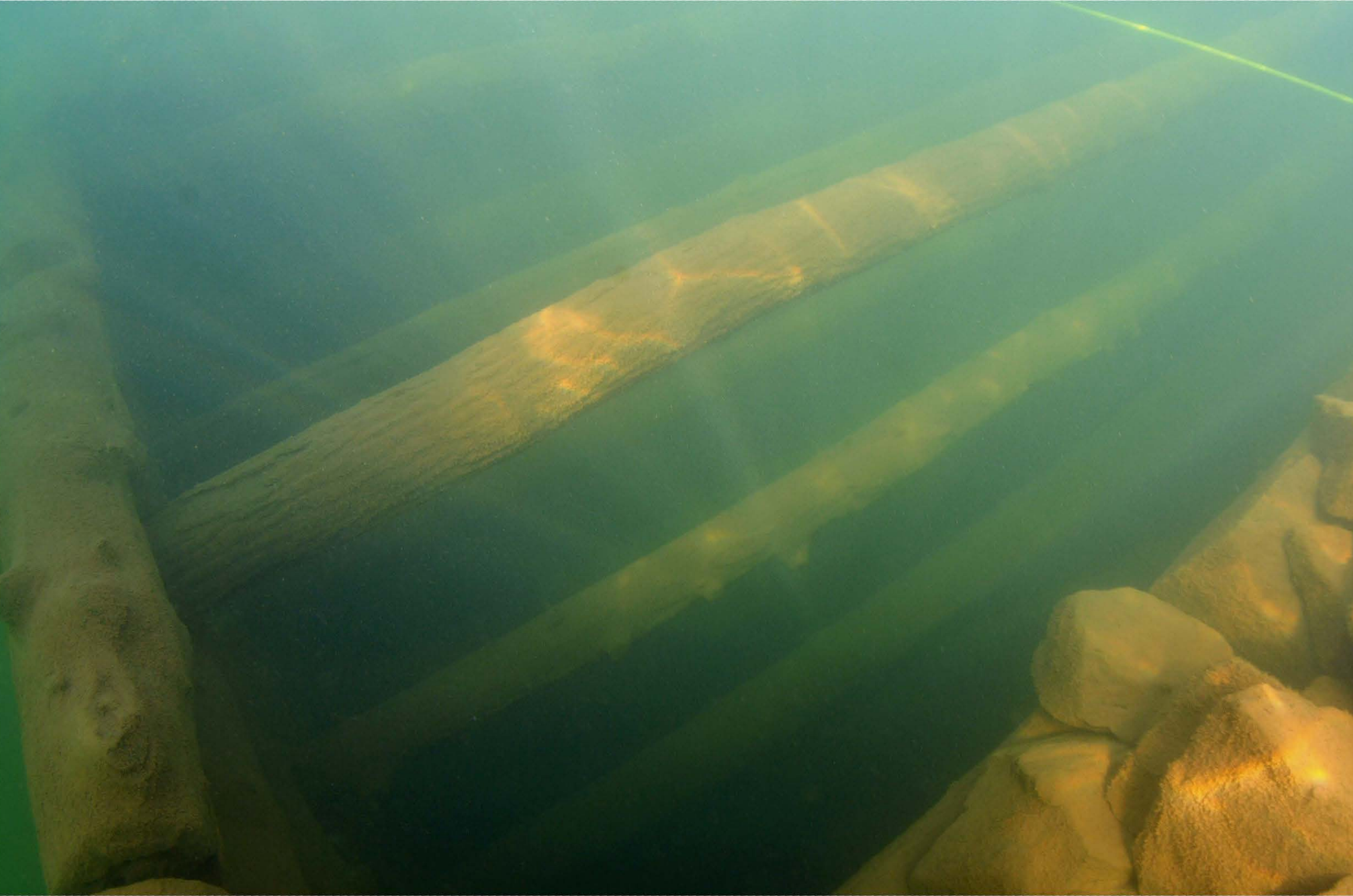












&a20CUNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
&a30CNATIONAL PARK SERVICE

&a22CNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
&a29CEVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry (Boundary Increase)  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WISCONSIN, Ashland

DATE RECEIVED: 3/25/16 &pW DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/15/16  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/30/16 &pW DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/10/16  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000241

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT \_\_\_\_\_ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

&a4L

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER

TELEPHONE

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

A4D  
Barbara Tygal  
Historian  
202-354-2252  
5-10-16





October 27, 2015

Wisconsin Historic Preservation Review Board  
c/o Peggy Veregin  
Wisconsin Historical Society  
816 State St.  
Madison, WI 53706

Dear Ms. Veregin,

I am writing to express my support for the Bass Island Brownstone Quarry, in La Pointe, Ashland County, to be named to the Wisconsin Register of Historic Places.

As the Bass Island Quarry is already listed in the National Register of Historic Places, I believe it is a natural fit in the Wisconsin Register as well. Bass Island's 19<sup>th</sup> Century mining operation was an important marker in our state's history that we should strive to preserve. The brownstone extracted from the quarry was used in the second Milwaukee County Courthouse, along with St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Milwaukee, a National Register property.

Preserving the Bass Island Brownstone Quarry is also about preserving our cultural heritage. Properties like the quarry remind us about how people in the state lived and worked in the early years of the state, and about the challenges they faced.

Bass Island is situated in a visually stunning part of Lake Superior that people from around the world visit yearly. I feel that it is vital to preserve not only the natural beauty of the area, but the stories of the people that made Northern Wisconsin their home. Therefore, I support adding Bass Island Brownstone Quarry to the Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Beth Meyers  
State Representative  
74<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

BM:jh



74<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

STATE CAPITOL P.O. BOX 8953, MADISON, WI 53708

TEL. (608) 266-7690 TOLL-FREE (888) 534-0074 FAX (608) 282-3674

E-MAIL REP.MEYERS@LEGIS.WISCONSIN.GOV WEB [HTTP://LEGIS.WISCONSIN.GOV/ASSEMBLY/74/MEYERS](http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/74/meyers)

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

National Park Service  
Apostle Islands National Lakeshore  
415 Washington Ave.  
Bayfield, Wisconsin 54814

**NO HARD COPY TO FOLLOW**

March 14, 2016

To: Deputy Associate Director for Park Programs and National Heritage Areas, WASO  
Attention: Acting Chief Historian/Deputy FPO, Park History WASO (2261)

From: Superintendent, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

Subject: Approval of Additional Documentation for Bass Island Brownstone Company

The Wisconsin Historical Society recently conducted an underwater archeological survey to provide additional documentation and a boundary expansion to the Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry national register nomination. This work was conducted in cooperation with Apostle Islands National Lakeshore and the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Officer has signed the documentation.

The National Lakeshore supports the additional documentation for the subject property national register listing.

Should you have any questions, please call Cultural Resource Specialist David Cooper at 715-779-3398 x221.

[sgd] Bob Krumenaker

cc:  
Ron Cockrell, MWRO Senior Historian



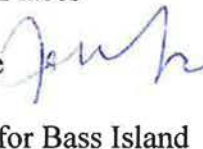
# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

March 14, 2016

## Memorandum

To: Acting Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

From: Federal Preservation Officer, National Park Service 

Subject: Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation for Bass Island  
Brownstone Company Quarry, Apostle Island National Lakeshore,  
Ashland County, Wisconsin

I am forwarding documentation of the boundary increase and additional documentation for the Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry, located in Apostle Island National Lakeshore. The Park History Program has reviewed the nomination and found that the documentation supports local significance under Criteria A and D, with areas of significance of Industry and Archeology: Historic Non-Aboriginal. If you have questions, please contact Kelly Spradley-Kurowski at 202-354-2266 or [kelly\\_spradley-kurowski@nps.gov](mailto:kelly_spradley-kurowski@nps.gov).

TO: Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places

608-264-6508

FROM: Peggy Veregin

SUBJECT: National Register Nomination

The following materials are submitted on this 15th day of February 2016,  
for the nomination of the Bass Island Brownstone Company Quarry (Boundary  
Expansion and Additional Documentation) to the National Register of Historic Places:

1 Original National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form

1 CD with NRHP Nomination Form PDF Document

         Multiple Property Nomination form

7 Photograph(s)

1 CD with electronic images

         USGS map(s)

2 Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

1 Piece(s) of correspondence

         Other: \_\_\_\_\_

NPS LAND  
FPOSIGN  
needed

COMMENTS:

         Please insure that this nomination is reviewed

         This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67

         The enclosed owner objection(s) do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_  
constitute a majority of property owners.

         Other: \_\_\_\_\_