

# LONG-RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN

## GRAND PORTAGE NATIONAL MONUMENT



**“Adventure, economics, and geography came to focus on one small place; and the explosion opened half a continent”**

*-- Erwin Thompson, Grand Portage Historian, 1969*

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**



**LONG-RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN**

**GRAND PORTAGE NATIONAL MONUMENT**

**2005**

**Prepared by**

**Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**Grand Portage  
National Monument**

**Harpers Ferry Center  
Interpretive Planning**



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# INTRODUCTION

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In 1995 the National Park Service issued a completely revised and updated interpretive planning chapter of the Service's Interpretation and Visitor Services Guideline (DO-6). This revised guideline outlined the components of the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan—a park's strategic planning document for interpretation and visitor services. Every park has been encouraged to update their interpretive planning documents using this guideline. A key component of the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan process is the Long-Range Interpretive Plan.

The Long-Range Interpretive Plan examines a park's purposes and significant resources in order to establish the park's primary interpretive themes and visitor experience goals. The plan analyzes the park's current interpretive facilities and outlines any changes necessary to facilitate appropriate visitor experiences. The Long-Range Interpretive Plan is a concept plan that lays the groundwork for subsequent media planning and design and personal services program development. The actions recommended in the plan are those that the park can reasonably be expected to accomplish in 7-10 years, the projected life span of the Long-Range Interpretive Plan.

Grand Portage National Monument has completed its General Management Plan. The Long-Range Interpretive Plan provides the next level of strategic and tactical planning necessary to begin implementing the interpretive and visitor experience actions prescribed in the General Management Plan.

### Background

The Grand Portage, in the north woods of Minnesota, was an important setting for the activities of the northern fur trade, a dynamic enterprise that forged diverse relationships between American Indian and non-Indian peoples as early as the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The Grand Portage or *Gitchi Onigaming* (Great Carrying Place) is an 8.4-mile trail on the northwestern periphery of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River drainage in the middle of North America. It connected the lakeshore with Pigeon River, an embarkation point for Native peoples, explorers, and voyageurs heading west and a gathering point for furs going east. The portage was the most direct route from the Great Lakes into the Canadian interior. Several falls and cataracts blocked human travelers' use of the Pigeon River so that a portage was needed, hence the name "Grand Portage."

French and later British traders entered the Great Lakes-Northwest trade by traveling west from Montreal. Having learned to use birch bark canoes, they moved into the mid-continent along an established inland network of Indian canoe routes. Building on entrenched Indian exchange practices and catering to Indian preferences, traders bartered imported European goods and commodities for Indian furs, provisions, and services. This ultimately led to an intercultural exchange of languages, ideas, technologies, diseases, and genes. It also promoted commercial, political, and marital alliances.

When business grew more complex and the frontiers of exchange expanded westward, certain places gained distinction as corridors of commerce that played strategic roles in the flow of workers, provisions, merchandise, and information. Grand Portage became such a place in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, emerging in mid-century as a headquarters for local trade and a trans-shipment center linking markets and transportation lanes in the east with branching trade routes and scattered trade districts to the northwest. Between 1731 and 1804, thousands of men shuttled tons of supplies and furs over the portage and in and out of warehouses at either end of the woodland trail.

During the British regime after 1760, the portage became a general rendezvous and a beehive of activity during summers, but in winters the comparatively quiet outposts were staffed by skeleton crews that engaged in local trading. At the height of the trade, around 1800, Grand Portage was the western headquarters of the North West Company and the rival XY Company, two of the largest commercial establishments in North America.

When the North West Company and the XY Company moved their operations north to *Kaministiquia* (later Fort William, Ontario) at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Grand Portage became remote to the main channels of trade and communication and less important to the outside world. The boundary between Canada and the United States between Lake Superior and Lake of the Woods was not firmly established until the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842. Under the terms of that treaty, the Grand Portage clearly became United States property; however, the use of the trail was to remain free and open to citizens of both the United States and Great Britain.

The historic portage represents the essential resources of Grand Portage National Monument, which is bordered on the north and south by the Grand Portage Indian Reservation, on the east by Lake Superior, and on the west by the Pigeon River and Canada. It lies within both the Grand Portage Indian Reservation and the unincorporated community of Grand Portage. The community is the homeplace and tribal government center of the Grand Portage Band of Minnesota Chippewa (Ojibwe).





-- *Historical Encampment on the lakeshore at Rendezvous Days* (Grand Portage National Monument)



# FOUNDATION FOR PLANNING

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Park purpose and significance statements, mission goals, primary interpretive themes, and visitor experience goals form the foundation for subsequent planning and operations. Purpose and significance statements and primary interpretive themes were developed by the 2003 *General Management Plan* (GMP) for Grand Portage National Monument. Mission goals were documented in the 1997 *Government Performance and Results Act Strategic Plan* for the Monument.

## Purpose

Park purpose statements describe the reasons for which a park area was established. These statements are based on the area's enabling legislation and legislative history.

*Grand Portage National Monument was established to commemorate and preserve a premier site and route of the 18<sup>th</sup> century fur trade that led to pioneering international commerce and exploration in North America as well as cultural contact between Ojibwe and other Native societies and the North West Company partners, clerks, and canoe-men. The Monument was also established to work with the Grand Portage Band in preserving and interpreting the heritage and lifeways of the Ojibwe people.*

## Significance

The significance of a park area is summarized in statements that describe area's importance to our natural and cultural heritage. Knowing the park's significance helps set resource protection priorities, develop primary park interpretive themes, and identify desirable visitor experiences.

*Grand Portage National Monument is of international and regional significance because it was the central hub of a once flourishing fur trade and here the bold economic strategy and exploration by the North West Company voyageurs and traders opened up a transcontinental trade route. Grand Portage was and remains a meeting ground of diverse cultures. The site is home ground for contemporary Grand Portage Ojibwe.*

- *Grand Portage National Monument is a homeplace of tribal and family history and cultural persistence.*
- *Grand Portage National Monument contains reconstructed buildings and well-preserved archeological remains of several fur trading posts instrumental in the exploration of the West and in the economic history of the United States and Canada.*
- *The national monument contains the entire length of the portage that marked the entrance into the interior of western Canada.*
- *The national monument is significant because of the fundamental interrelationship of Ojibwe heritage and fur trade history.*

## **Park Mission and Mission Goals**

The September 1997 "Government Performance and Results Act Strategic Plan" for Grand Portage National Monument describes the park mission as follows:

*Grand Portage National Monument protects, commemorates, and interprets a reconstructed fur depot of the North West Company, a rendezvous site for international commerce and canoe route for transcontinental exploration, Native heritage, natural scene, and history of cross cultural contact and accommodation between traders, Ojibwe, and other participants in the fur trade.*

Mission goals articulate the broad ideals and vision the National Park Service is striving to achieve at Grand Portage National Monument. The goals for the national monument are directly linked to the servicewide mission goals contained in the National Park Service Strategic Plan (National Park Service, 1998). They are written as desired outcomes in keeping with the Government Performance and Results Act. Mission goals for Grand Portage National Monument are as follows:

*Natural and cultural resources and associated values are protected, restored and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystem and cultural context (Service Mission Goal Ia).*

*Grand Portage National Monument contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and associated values; management decisions about resources and visitors are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information (Service Mission Goal Ib).*

*Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities (Service Mission Goal IIa).*

*Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of parks and their resources for this and future generations (Service Mission Goal IIb).*

*Grand Portage National Monument uses current management practices, systems, and technologies to better preserve park resources and to better provide for public enjoyment (Service Mission Goal IVa).*



*-- Ojibwe Village, Native American Three Sister's Garden, and Canoe Warehouse (Grand Portage National Monument)*

## Primary Interpretive Themes

Primary interpretive themes are the most important ideas, stories, or concepts that visitors should understand about the park. They are based on purpose, significance, and primary resources. Themes provide the foundation for interpretation and education facilities, programs, and media developed for the park. They do not include everything the park may interpret -- just the most important things.

Primary interpretive themes were developed by the 2003 GMP team. Important details are provided for each theme with critical story elements, interpretive objectives, and related resources and sites.

**A) The Grand Portage was a vital part of both American Indian and fur trade transportation routes because of the area's geology, topographic relief, natural resources, and strategic location between the upper Great Lakes and the interior of western Canada.**

### Critical story elements:

- Active aboriginal trade in the area, both before and after contact with Euro-Americans.
- The global participation in the fur trade, and Grand Portage's international renown as part of that global trade.
- The importance of waterways as transportation routes across and beyond the continent in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the importance of canoes to the transportation system.
- How geologic processes formed the "natural footprint" of what became the portage and eventually fur trade routes following the Canadian Shield.
- The ranges and availability of living resources critical to the fur trade such as birch trees, beaver, and other furbearing animals.

### Interpretive objectives:

- Visitors can compare where they live and how they make a living with how people lived and live here.
- Visitors can see how different economic systems impact both the resources of a place and the human cultures that live there and the importance of select resources "givens" in a place.
- Visitors understand how the landscape affects human culture and how human culture affects the landscape.
- Visitors can see how transportation and trade impacts cultures and economies.

- Visitors have an understanding of 18<sup>th</sup> century transportation systems.

Resources and sites related to this theme:

- Winter Transportation (cariole, toboggans, snowshoes, dogs, etc)
- Mt. Rose Overlook
- The portage through the seasons
- Falls of the Pigeon River
- Canoes
- The viewshed at the lake shore
- On-site maps & archival maps
- Boundary Waters Canoe Area
- Fort Charlotte
- Boat trip to Isle Royale
- The canoe construction area

**B) The fur trade was a driving force for the exploration, mapping, and early settlement of much of North America by Euro-Americans, and it also played an important role in setting the boundary between the United States and Canada. It was part of an effort of several European countries to expand their colonial holdings worldwide.**

Critical story elements:

- The stories of individual explorer/fur traders such as David Thompson, Alexander Mackenzie, and others
- The context of trade routes worldwide during the fur trade period as to how they relate to expanding colonialism
- The North West Company's interest in exploration and new regions to harvest furs.
- The geo-political impacts of international agreements and treaties (Webster Ashburton, Treaty of Paris, Peace of Paris, Treaty of Ghent, 1825 Treaty, 1842 Treaty, 1854 Treaty, 1844 Isle Royale Compact, 1851 Robinson Treaty) on the fur trade and the Ojibwe (e.g., the International Boundary Commission survey)
- The critical geographic knowledge of native inhabitants used by the traders, e.g., the story of Auchagah, a native guide.

Interpretive objectives:

- Visitors understand that treaties from the period are still being validated, contested, or upheld
- Visitors recognize the inter-related histories of the native nations, the United States, and Canada

- Visitors are aware that countries around the world continue to be engaged in boundary disputes
- Visitors understand the close relationship between exploration, economics, and national interests
- Visitors are introduced to the Lewis and Clark story and the idea of manifest destiny vs. British colonial desires.

### Resources and sites related to this theme:

- Customs/Immigration
- Highway 61 overlooks
- Mt. Rose
- The portage
- The international boundary
- Old Fort William
- The Tourist Information Center
- Lake Superior and the Pigeon River
- The NWCo Fur post at Pine City
- Fort Charlotte
- The Grand Portage Community
- The Ojibwe Reservation
- Library resources—maps, journals, etc.
- The dock
- Pigeon River Provincial Park
- Voyagers National Park
- Boundary survey markers
- Archeological resources
- Isle Royale National Park

**C) The Grand Portage Ojibwe, a people with a distinct culture and proud heritage, have lived for centuries on or near Grand Portage where their culture thrives today.**

### Critical story elements:

- The Grand Portage Ojibwe remain on this site, face many changes and influences, and seek to retain their cultural traditions.
- The Ojibwe played a central role in the fur trade which impacted their culture and history.
- The major forces of change: federal government (BIA/Indian Agents), organized religion, boarding school. Policy changes through time, had a major impact on Ojibwe culture and greatly affected Grand Portage Ojibwe.
- Economic changes on the tribe after the fur trade period—agriculture, fishing e.g. moving from subsistence to commercial fishing and to a cash economy.

- The artistry, humor, and educational nature of Ojibwe oral traditions—their storytelling, art and material culture.
- Names changed through time [Anishinaabeg, Ojibwe, Chippewa] and the cultural importance of names and naming traditions (family names, former clans, and cross-cultural aspect of Ojibwe family names)

Interpretive objectives:

- Visitors gain an appreciation of native American cultures and are aware of the barriers to understanding that are created by the stereotypes presented in popular media and culture
- Visitors appreciate some of the things native cultures have contributed to “American” culture
- Visitors have the opportunity to see Ojibwe face-to-face and understand and value both our collective similarities and differences
- Visitors are aware of the government-to-government relationship between the Federal Government and native nations
- Visitors understand that Ojibwe culture is dynamic, ever changing (a see-saw battle between change/innovation and tradition) much like their own culture.

Resources and sites related to this theme:

- The Ojibwe people
- The Casino and Lodge
- Ojibwe crafts
- The entire Grand Portage National Monument
- The 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century villages
- The Reservation
- The lake and lake shoreline
- The portage
- The Annual Pow Wow, Elders Pow Wow
- Rendezvous Special Event
- “The Witch Tree” —In Ojibwe: *Manito Geezhigance/ Spirit Little Cedar Tree*
- The natural resources of the reservation and their management by the Ojibwe
- Museum collections
- Oral histories
- The Grand Portage Passage Sled Dog Race and other activities and celebrations
- Historic buildings on the reservation
- The treaties and court cases
- Ojibwe artists, leaders, and spiritual leaders
- The Ojibwe language



**D) The fur trade industry was an important part of the international economy, involved a complex transportation system, involved both American Indian and Euro-American technologies and practices, and had extensive impacts on the natural resources and native cultures of North America.**

Critical story elements:

- International scope of the trade goods traded through the fur trade system and international markets as well as the integration and interdependence of old and new world economies.
- The logistics of the fur trade including the North West Company's building of canals, portages, remote posts, "outfitting" employees and improving the transportation system in general.
- The integration of American Indian and Euro-American technologies and practices in the fur trade industry
- The development of the fur trade companies, especially the North West Company and their competition for resources and profits, and how the American Indians used that competition to their advantage or alternately how it adversely impacted them.
- Understanding daily life: fur trade diets, living conditions, health, working conditions
- Understand differences in how traders and natives valued material goods.

Interpretive objectives:

- Visitors appreciate the impact of the loss of self-sufficient lifestyles and traditional skills in today's world
- Visitors understand that the fur trade represents the early steps toward an inter-connected world economy
- Visitors "see" how cultures can interact and impact each other
- Visitors are motivated to assess their own conservation values and behaviors
- Visitors understand the affects of unbridled competition on peoples and natural resources

Resources and sites related to this theme:

- The Monument staff and their knowledge/ability to help visitors understand and appreciate park themes/stories
- The reconstructions (to help visitors understand the limited availability, historically, of precious construction materials such as glass.)
- The physical transportation setting—Lake Superior, the portage, and Pigeon River

- Beavers and their dams
- Fur trade artifacts
- The voyager encampment
- The fur presses
- The Ojibwe village
- The natural resources, both existing and missing, and the impacts that resulted
- Other fur trade sites in the region
- The historic gardens
- Canoes—canoe building area
- Traditional dress—Ojibwe and voyager
- The Portage

**E) The extensive archaeological resources of Grand Portage National Monument represent not only the fur trade, but also hundreds of years of American Indian life. The national monument is committed to the preservation and interpretation of its archaeological resources.**

Critical story elements:

- Surviving national monument archaeological resources have integrity, are unique, and are non-renewable. The site is “archaeologically rich” and Fort Charlotte even more so.
- The role the Grand Portage played in prehistory, including aboriginal trade
- Explain the importance of preserving archeological resources and sites. The number and diversity of artifacts found here and the value of having them in place – what they tell us about the site.
- Archaeology tells stories that aren’t evident in other ways and provides a different stream of evidence. Archaeology can uncover the stories of periods/cultures that have no modern expression. As a science it can: show the range and intensity of human use of a place; provide data on cultures that didn’t leave written records; address social class, diet, and other related issues
- Archaeology provides opportunities to connect tangible things with the stories they support

Interpretive objectives:

- Visitors understand that archaeological sites preserve fragile, physical records that they can easily disturb and alter.
- Visitors understand that archaeology provides tangible connections with the past and connects story with place

- Visitors are aware that archaeology provides information that is not obvious
- Visitors understand that archaeology can validate/invalidate current thinking on stories, places, cultures and may be the only way to answer questions about the past for cultures without written records
- Visitors know that they are creating future archaeological resources everyday

### Resources and sites related to this theme:

- Collections at the park, Minnesota Historical Society, Midwest Archeology Center
- Archaeology sites—both inside and outside the park (regional, including Canada)
- Publications and photographs
- Archaeologists that have worked the site
- Local people who have worked on digs

**F) The fur trade flourished during a time of unrest with native nations and colonial powers, each struggling for power and occupancy of the land and its resources.**

### Critical story elements:

- Because of their political and trade alliances with Native Americans, European nation conflicts impacted tribal movements and settlements of Native Americans
- Fur trade companies competed for sites, dominance, opportunities, and profits.
- Alliances—Iroquois/British, Ojibwe/French, Ojibwe/Cree, Dakota/Ojibwe, Ojibwe/British were important in different wars/conflicts in the region
- Local Grand Portage military history including the American Revolution and the War of 1812 and the economic impacts both had on the fur trade and Grand Portage.
- Unsanctioned trading and its financial temptations: Pierre Esprit Raddison, Medard Chouart Groselliers, Coureurs de bois—unlicensed traders

### Interpretive objectives:

- Visitors appreciate how some of today's conflicts have their foundations in the treaties and alliances of the fur trade period.
- Visitors understand why the fur trade story needs the context of other events to be fully understood and appreciated

- Visitors have a more complete picture of Native American groups and their interactions with each other—delineates their differences and similarities, their alliances, wars and politics
- Visitors understand the interactions between native groups and Euro-Americans.
- Visitors understand the differences between Native American governments and Euro-American governments. Different methods of governing.

Resources and sites related to this theme:

- Treaties
- The border of the US and Canada
- The reservation
- Language and cultural groups
- Maps, flags, peace medals
- The portage and east side
- Battle of Quebec
- Lake of the Woods Battle
- Michilimackinac
- Fort Charlotte and artifacts
- Place names

**G) The fur trade was a catalyst for cross-cultural encounters between native peoples and Euro-Americans that variably affected both populations.**

Critical story elements:

- Understanding others: the respect and/or lack of respect for the other culture's customs, values, language, etc. The different approaches to native cultures and peoples by the French, British, Euro-Americans, United States, and Canada
- The positive and negative economic and social impacts of the fur trade on all the cultures involved. For example, the effects of increasingly sedentary lifestyles of native peoples living near the forts/posts. Or, the change in Native peoples' views of living resources brought about by the fur trade—killing fur-bearers strictly for their pelts, accumulating surpluses
- The long-term effects of the fur trade that are visible today—names, settlement, trapping, the village of Grand Portage. How cultural changes were forced on native peoples through the fur trade culture
- The role native peoples played as “middle men” in the fur trade system. Service providers—guides, interpreters, hunters, farmers, canoe builders
- The dynamic continuum of cross-cultural exchange. It continues to happen today.

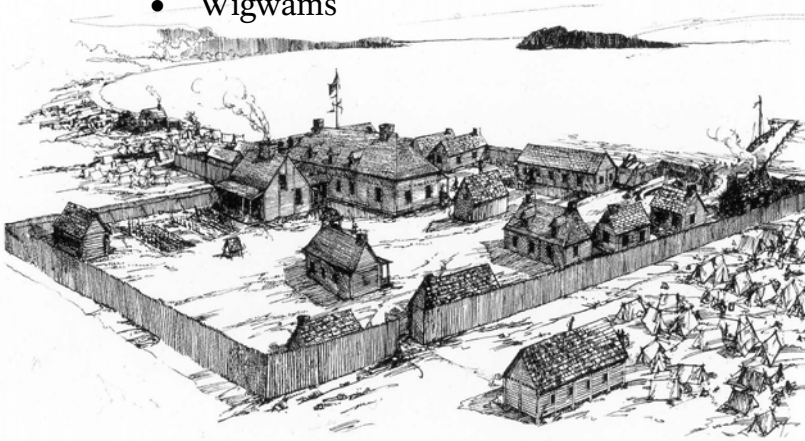
- Forces of cultural change: disease, diet, power, and alcohol

### Interpretive objectives:

- Visitors understand that the effects of the fur trade are evident today in the cultures (foods, traditions, names, religion, etc.)
- Visitors appreciate and respect different peoples (native or not), their cultures, their heritage.
- Visitors recognize that the kind of cross-cultural exchange that occurred during the fur trade is occurring today in many parts of the world, and this exchange is having many of the same positive and negative impacts.
- Visitors understand the important contributions native peoples have made to our American cultural heritage.
- Visitors understand that the native peoples were an integral part of the fur trade industry, and that the fur trade would not have had the success it did without them.

### Resources and sites related to this theme:

- The people of the community and park staff
- The reservation
- The collections
- The Ojibwe village and canoe area
- The portage
- Canoes/canoe warehouse
- All the reconstructions
- Contemporary native art, especially beadwork, crafts, clothing, and tools
- Names and place names
- Anishinaabe language *Ojibwemowin*
- Costumes
- The garden and its plants
- Wigwams



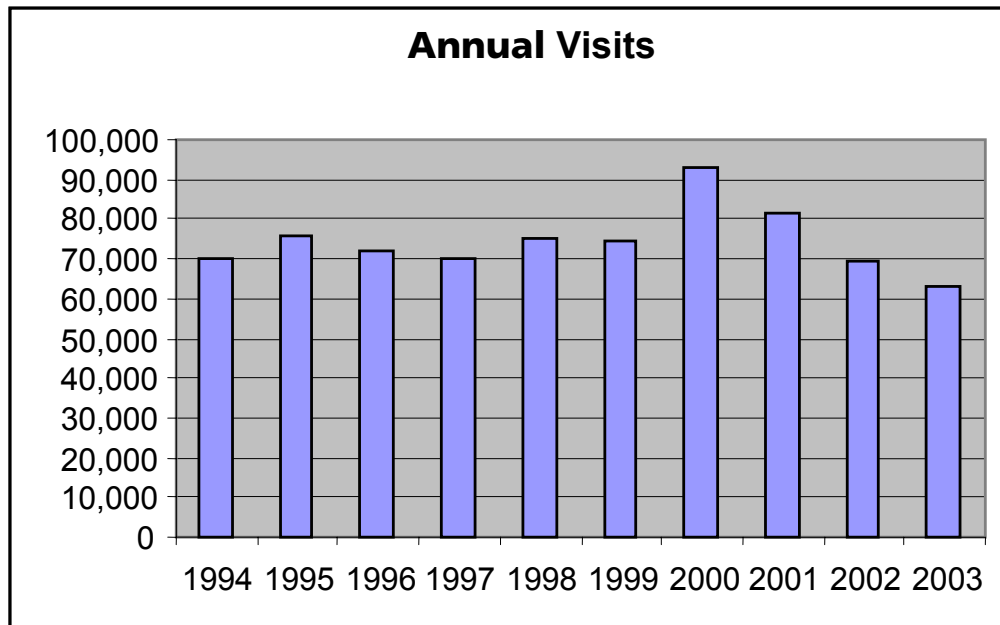
- Artist's conception of North West Company Depot at Grand Portage (Grand Portage National Monument)

## Visitors

Over the last ten years, Grand Portage National Monument has averaged almost 73,000 visitors a year. The vast majority of those visitors come to the park during the months of May-October.

## Monthly Recreational Visits

|           |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| January   | 546    | 545    | 340    | 459    | 433    | 475    | 478    | 1,272  | 561    | 496    |
| February  | 247    | 251    | 236    | 393    | 565    | 347    | 312    | 617    | 743    | 664    |
| March     | 636    | 842    | 627    | 414    | 921    | 350    | 518    | 630    | 2,085  | 878    |
| April     | 891    | 1,256  | 694    | 737    | 1,347  | 846    | 1,023  | 1,659  | 1,225  | 1,071  |
| May       | 4,298  | 3,717  | 3,635  | 3,131  | 2,133  | 3,323  | 2,942  | 3,030  | 4,476  | 3,692  |
| June      | 8,777  | 8,389  | 9,463  | 8,464  | 10,412 | 9,539  | 11,359 | 11,770 | 9,349  | 8,512  |
| July      | 19,243 | 19,143 | 18,405 | 19,514 | 21,981 | 21,008 | 18,027 | 20,265 | 18,222 | 16,559 |
| August    | 20,909 | 24,226 | 23,342 | 21,788 | 22,704 | 21,528 | 39,305 | 26,384 | 18,117 | 19,532 |
| September | 8,798  | 11,400 | 9,377  | 9,549  | 8,929  | 11,514 | 11,661 | 10,079 | 9,581  | 7,273  |
| October   | 4,541  | 4,466  | 4,320  | 4,073  | 4,360  | 4,255  | 4,833  | 3,930  | 4,179  | 3,556  |
| November  | 802    | 1,136  | 637    | 699    | 712    | 1,075  | 1,903  | 1,115  | 616    | 715    |
| December  | 328    | 439    | 670    | 531    | 730    | 484    | 553    | 677    | 332    | 341    |
|           | 1994   | 1995   | 1996   | 1997   | 1998   | 1999   | 2000   | 2001   | 2002   | 2003   |





*-- Park Rangers conduct a special program for Grand Portage Elementary students as part of park's Winter Frolic in 2002 (Grand Portage National Monument)*

There has been one scientific study of visitor demographics (e.g., who they are, where they come from) in 1990/91. There have been no scientific studies of visitor psychographics (e.g., what are their expectations, knowledge, misconceptions, or attitudes). The following information was assembled by veteran park staff who have worked with visitors to the national monument and the immediate area. These observations may provide useful insights about park visitors and potential visitors.

Where visitors come from

- Most visitors travel at least an hour to reach the park, and many travel two or more hours
- Most visitors come from Minnesota
- A majority of visitors come from urban areas, mainly Minneapolis-St. Paul
- Visitors that are not from Minnesota are generally from the Mid-west region

- There are relatively few local visitors

#### Types of groups

- About 80% of visitors come in family groups
- A small number of school groups (elementary through college) visit the park
- A few elder hostel groups visit in the fall
- 70% of visitors are coming to the park for their first time
- Returning visitors often bring first-time visitors with them

#### Prior knowledge, expectations

- Most Minnesota visitors know at least basic fur trade information
- Most visitors have heard of the Hudson Bay Company but not the North West Company
- A number of visitors seem to come with few or no expectations
- Visitors often come expecting an entertainment experience and not an educational experience
- A good number are looking for a physical monument object
- Visitors are often surprised by the amount of personal services available
- Some visitors are looking for tourist information of the type you might get at a highway information stop or chamber of commerce
- A few visitors expect research and museum facilities
- 95%-98% of visitors surveyed (through the Government Results and Performance Act Survey over the last three years) report enjoyable visits
- A small number of visitors come to the park through the NPS Park Passport program
- Some visitors come just to shop in the bookstore
- Some visitors come to the national monument because they have an interest in canoes or the garden
- Some visitors expect campgrounds and full food concessions
- Some visitors expect to see “Indians” and the stereotypical Indian
- Some visitors are expecting to see “Mountain Men”
- Some visitors are expecting convenient and detailed information on Isle Royale NP
- Many visitors expect more sophisticated technology in the park’s exhibit areas
- Some people are expecting a town



- Some visitors are looking for “The Witch Tree” —*Spirit Little Cedar Tree*
- Returning visitors are often surprised at how little has changed over time
- Many people expect a more scenic trail when they hike the portage
- There are a few visitors that are hostile to the idea of interpreting/glorifying the fur trade. Some object to the taking of furs while others object for cultural reasons (negative impacts to Native cultures).

### Characteristics of visits

- Most visitors arrive between 10:00 AM and 3:30 PM
- The average length of stay is 1-1 ½ hours
- For most visitors the park is not their primary destination
- Some of the primary destinations for park visitors are: Grand Portage Casino, the North Shore of Lake Superior, Grand Marais, Thunder Bay, Canada, Grand Portage State Park, Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and Lake Superior

### Characteristics of visitors

- Many visitors have college degrees
- 5%-10% are international visitors from countries other than Canada
- 5% are perceived to have disabilities
- Other than the residents of the reservation, there are few American Indian visitors
- Users of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area often come through the monument. Their visit can come at the beginning or end of their trip.
- A few visitors come by boat to the stockade to clear customs
- Visitors can be confused about what period the interpretation represents and whether the living history is first- or third-person
- Visitors do come for purely recreational reasons—hiking, canoeing, sightseeing
- Some visitors come to purchase native crafts
- Some visitors are killing time while others in their party are at the casino
- A few people come looking for the trail head to Mt Josephine and other trails
- Local children often hang out in the park.

## Visitor Experience Goals

Visitor experience goals describe those fundamental visitor experience opportunities that should be available to park visitors. In planning facilities, interpretive media, and personal services, Grand Portage National Monument will work to create and enhance the opportunities for these experiences.

Visitors will have opportunities to:

- participate in a variety of educational opportunities that are suited to their backgrounds and interests
- easily find their way to and within the park
- experience historic settings and cultural landscapes that have substantial visual and auditory integrity
- participate in traditional cultural activities that are associated with park themes and heritage
- encounter knowledgeable, personable, and helpful staff
- find appropriate selections of accurate reproductions (Native pieces preferably Native made), reconstructions, and artifacts
- visit a site that is staffed year-round (ideal)
- participate in water-based activities (canoe programs) at lakeshore unit
- have access to a uniformed ranger
- use clean, safe, and well-supplied facilities
- know that Grand Portage National Monument is a National Park Service site
- find a variety of interpretive media that address diverse learning styles and meet contemporary standards of quality
- feel relaxed and not rushed
- experience and learn about the natural environment
- opportunities to interact with *Ojibwe* people
- know that they are on the reservation
- enjoy programming designed for specifically for children (families and groups)
- feel welcomed
- enjoy a semi-wilderness experience on the portage trail

## Issues and Influences

The following is a list of items which have impacts (both positive and negative) on the Grand Portage National Monument's abilities to reach its interpretive and visitor experience goals:

- Interpretive/park funding is currently inadequate to reach all of the goals and not likely to improve.
- The limitations of the historical and archaeological records make it difficult to thoroughly interpret/exhibit some of the park's stories as park staff would like.
- Visitors come with pre-conceived notions/stereotypes about Native peoples and the fur trade. Often these notions and stereotypes perpetuate negative or untrue generalizations about Native culture and the fur trade in general.
- The physical size and configuration of the monument limits what can be done here. Fort Charlotte, at the north end of the Grand Portage, in particular is not easily accessible to most visitors.
- There is existing noise and visual pollution from contemporary activities that make it difficult to maintain the historic scene.
- The monument is located on an active Indian reservation and in the Grand Portage Community allowing for unique opportunities for interpreting Native cultures from traditional times through today.
- The profound interrelationship of Grand Portage people and the site in both past and present allow for a story in continuum.
- A cooperative working environment between the national monument and Band's museum committee is mutually beneficial and allows both entities to better fulfill their interpretive goals.
- Northern Minnesota's harsh winter climate affects the national monument's ability to keep historic structures open all year.
- Grand Portage National Monument is an embarkation point for visitors traveling to Isle Royale National Park. Often Isle Royale visitors need information and assistance. National Monument staff and resources are taxed to accommodate this visitor service function.
- There are modern intrusions on the historic scene such as roadways, parking lots, and Isle Royale ferry boat. Additionally, there are modern services in historic structures such as a bookstore, audio-visual presentations, and a contemporary *Ojibwe* craft room.
- The park is relatively remote from major population centers making it impractical for many visitors and or school groups to make a day trip to the national monument.
- The national monument's enabling legislation makes certain requirements such as providing for the making and sale of handicrafts, maintaining a dock, traversing rights and hunting and fishing rights.

- The national monument is a National Park Service site and must comply with all appropriate NPS regulations.” National Park Service policies affect interpretation.
- The fur trade does not play a prominent role in Minnesota school curricula.
- The national monument is sometimes overlooked by visitors who are attracted to larger, better known fur trade sites and destinations in the region.
- The history of past relations between the United States Government and Ojibwe people of Grand Portage has led to an overall mistrust of government agencies.



-- *Saginaw Canoe Brigade paddles a Montreal canoe past the NWCo Depot (Grand Portage National Monument)*

## EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

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Located on the northwestern shore of Lake Superior, Grand Portage National Monument is seven miles south of the United States-Canada border and thirty-six miles north of Grand Marais, Minnesota. The Monument (Stockade, Great Hall, Kitchen, Ojibwe Village, Canoe Warehouse, Trails, and Fort Charlotte) is located on the Grand Portage Indian Reservation, with the park headquarters building found in Grand Marais.



-- Grand Portage National Monument

## **Pre-visit Information**

### **Wayfinding and Orientation**

#### **Highway/Community Signs**

Signs can be limited and confusing for visitors approaching the Monument from Highway 61. The park entrance is one mile from Minnesota Hwy. 61. Interspersed with park signs are directional signs for local lodging.

While only one road is signed as a park entrance, there are four entry roads to Grand Portage. If visitors miss the signed entrance it is not clear that they can take the next turn to the park.

Visitors see lots of signs, both NPS and local/state as they approach the site, especially coming from the south.

National Park Service signs do not meet NPS visual identity standards. Signs are missing appropriate arrowhead markings with the exception of those marking the Grand Portage Trail, and one small arrowhead placed on the sign at the entrance road as visitors approach from the south.

In summary, current wayfinding signs have inadequate identity, some are more confusing than helpful, they are not well coordinated with local/state signs, are not always located where needed, and some signs still note services no longer available.

#### **Park Website**

The park maintains its website on NPS/Park Net. Visitors first connect to the basic information page and can learn additional information by exploring the “in depth” link. While there is a staff member assigned to maintain the site, it is only a component of his job duties as Interpretive Specialist. During the busy summer season, it is very difficult to spend the needed time to maintain the website.

The website provides basic park information including: travel directions, weather information, program and special event information, press releases, critical management documents, and links to other NPS and fur trade sites. It also offers photographs and graphics of the park.

Currently, there is not much interpretive text posted, though that is the park's goal. Subsequently, virtual visitors are not receiving adequate information, although links do exist which offer some effective interpretive opportunities. There is also not much information geared for children.

### **Visitor Inquiries**

The national monument has two main areas where visitors can call for information or to talk to park staff. Most of the calls are taken at park headquarters in Grand Marais. There are also two lines on site in Grand Portage - one in the ranger station and one in the Eastern National sales area. The phone in the ranger station is hooked up to an answering machine to accept calls during the winter months and in the summer months when the building is not staffed. The lead ranger checks the messages on a regular basis. When visitors have to leave a message, it can be frustrating to them.

Headquarters phone lines are staffed year round. So, when a visitor calls they actually talk with a real person, not an answering system. After hours they can leave a message if they wish. This is the responsibility of the staff assistant and administrative clerk. During busy time, such as the end of the year budget close-out, the calls are likely to cause some additional stress.

Callers have the opportunity to get general information from our staff assistant, or to speak with other park staff in regards to more specific or in-depth information.

Callers often remark on how rare it is now to call a park and actually talk to a person and not a machine. Callers can ask their questions and be directed immediately to the proper person, rather than have to listen to a menu and hope they pick the right option.

Answering visitor questions is an excellent use of staff and resources. A visitor's park experience starts with that phone call, so it is very important.

### **Information from Other Sources**

Visitors can obtain information about the park from a variety of sources: Grand Marais Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Forest Service, Gunflint Trail Visitor Center, Grand Portage State Park and other state parks, several local resorts, Grand Portage Lodge and Casino, Old Fort William in Canada, Isle Royale National Park, and the Tourist Information Center in Grand Portage. The site is also listed in several travel books such as those distributed by the American Automobile

Association and Minnesota Visitors' Guides. In addition, the national monument is listed as a link on state tourism websites.

Visitors have numerous locations to pick up information on the national monument in the immediate Grand Portage/Grand Marais area. However, there is little information available between Duluth and Lutsen. Information gained at these sites is most often basic and visitors then call or write the park to request more detailed material.

Staff at these sites generally do not have a strong knowledge of the park. Very little site-specific or theme-specific information is available through these outlets.

However, the Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center in Grand Marais is accessible to visitors with disabilities where the park headquarters building is not. So a valuable service is provided to visitors with physical disabilities.

## **On-Site Visitor Services and Information**

### **Headquarters at Grand Marais**

Park headquarters is 36 miles south of the historic site. All administrative functions take place here. All permanent staff, with the exception of the Chief of Maintenance, have office space there as well. The park's library and collections storage are located at headquarters. The building is shared with the US Coast Guard who has separate office space on the second floor.

The office is open regular business hours and closed on weekends. An information bulletin board is available outside to accommodate after hours visitors.

The lobby has an information desk that is staffed as needed by administrative staff. They provide park and area information. There is a small exhibit area with some interpretive props and two original paintings by a local artist depicting historic views of the site. The lobby includes a small Eastern National sales area. Use of the library is available by appointment.

Visitors can stop in and get basic information and talk with a park staff member before driving to the historic site. Often people who do not know about the site stop in and as a result make the trip to Grand Portage. Staff introduce park themes and highlight the interpretive opportunities available on site. They spend at least 50% of their time



providing local information not necessarily related to the national monument.

### **Ranger Station**

The “ranger station” is a small building on the northwest side of the parking lot at the historic stockade. It was moved on site 30 years ago and has one level with one large room. There is a small wall rack just inside the door where brochures are displayed along with a small board upon which weather information is posted. There are 4 desks for law enforcement and interpretive ranger staff, a phone, staff mailboxes, a storage area for the fee safe, black powder weapons, and first aid supplies. Also located here are file cabinets containing interpretive/site information for staff use since the park library is 36 miles away and not easily accessible during the busy summer season.

The ranger station is open to the public for a limited time each day. Visitors can obtain information about Grand Portage National Monument, Isle Royale National Park, and local sites, as well as backcountry permits and national park passes.

The building is accessible, though unattractive and unwelcoming. Some visitors do not realize that it is a building they can enter. Even while open to visitors, no substantive site information or interpretation is available. The building is inadequate to meet the needs of both staff and the visiting public. It is also not open during many times of the day (mid-morning through early afternoon) due to staff being scheduled for other duty stations.

### **Great Hall**

This is the centerpiece of the park’s reconstructed buildings. It is the building 70% of visitors go to first after entering the stockade. It is the reconstructed meeting/mess hall for the partners of the North West Company, but also houses park orientation films, the cooperating association sales area, and cultural demonstrator’s area. It has historic furnishings/props. If the ranger station is closed, a sign on the door directs visitors to this building.

The Great Hall is always staffed when the park is open, with at least one interpreter who is usually dressed in period clothing. It is an obvious and logical gathering place. Unfortunately, there is no site information or orientation with the exception of park newspapers that are kept in a wall rack by the main entrance. Films are available for viewing on request, along with sales items and crafts of cultural demonstrators.

Visitors are not always sure that they are speaking to a ranger when they do not see the NPS uniform, so they are not sure if they can ask basic

informational questions. This can be intimidating and confusing for them.

Visitors seeking basic information often have to wait for the interpreter to finish his/her current interpretive conversation with other visitors before they can ask, “Where’s the bathroom?”

It is a challenge to provide both orientation/information and interpretation as long as the park does not have a heritage center, and the ranger station is not staffed full-time during operating hours. Until that time, the Great Hall serves dual functions. The staff must interpret the national monument themes and stories appropriate in the Great Hall, as well as dispense basic park and area information. Subsequently, staff often have to ask visitors several questions to ascertain whether they are seeking orientation or interpretation.

### **Bulletin Boards**

There are four information-type bulletin boards in the park. One located at the park headquarters building, one at the front gate of the stockade, one attached to the outside of the ranger station (used for Isle Royale NP information), and one at the Isle Royale NP boat parking lot. The bulletin boards are standard size, free-standing wood frames with glass doors. The boards themselves are actually painted metal to which information is attached.

The bulletin boards provide information to visitors when facilities are closed, but they are not lit. They provide mostly seasonally appropriate information with some interpretive descriptions. The bulletin boards are colorful and appealing. Seasonal staff and volunteers generally maintain the bulletin boards and it is an appropriate use of their time. The information boards are a staple and park visitors look for them.

### **Park Orientation Films/Videos**

The films/videos are available on request and offered to visitors when they enter the Great Hall. They are shown in a corner room of the Great Hall with limited seating and only day lighting available. Chairs are small, unpadded and uncomfortable. The videos are shown on a large monitor and are close-captioned.

#### **Film: “Northwest Passage”**

This is a ten-minute video produced in the 1970’s by the Minnesota Historical Society. It uses actors dressed in period clothing to discuss the North West Company and its business at Grand Portage. It falls short as an orientation film by NPS standards but is currently the best the park has to offer. Visitors often choose this video when given a choice between this and others the park has to offer.

This production provides a glimpse of the ‘Witch Tree’ currently unavailable to visitors except by water. (It is considered sacred by Ojibwe people and was being vandalized, so the trail was closed to the public.)

This video provides a brief overview of the North West Company, but is limited in relating park themes. It only partially fills visitors’ expectations for an orientation film.

### **Film: “The Voyageur”**

This is a twenty-minute film also produced in the 1970’s by the Canadian Film Board. It is a re-creation of a voyageur’s journey from Montreal to Grand Portage. The film highlights the trials and tribulations of a voyageur’s life. It uses actors in period clothing.

Also available on request, this film is offered to visitors as they enter the Great Hall. Children often choose this production. It provides a good overview of the life of a voyageur, addresses some park themes, and is entertaining. It is a good “spring board” to the park’s interpretive programming offered in the canoe warehouse. The film provides a good sense of how the giant canoes of the fur trade were actually used. It also touches on the themes relating to the class system of the fur trade and 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Film: “The Canoe Builder”**

This is a 30-minute video about by Bill Hafeman, builder of the park’s 40ft and 24ft canoes in the canoe warehouse. The film describes the process of canoe building and is narrated by Mr. Hafeman. It is dated and is not of the best quality or sound.

### **Film: “On the Road”**

This is a 5-minute clip of a segment for Charles Kuralt’s popular “On the Road” series in the 1970’s. This video is popular with “On The Road” fans, but it presents an outdated representation of Native culture.

### **Video Loans**

The park has a small video and film loan library. Most of the films have been transferred to video. The films are very rarely requested and most of the loans are videos. A variety of topics are available including: fur trade, exploration, American Indian culture/crafts, and a variety of NPS training/informational videos.

Loan requests are most active in the spring and summer, for they are a good resource for educators. They are readily accessible and there are

plenty of relevant topics from which to choose. Park themes can be addressed with such programming, and this media type meets diverse learning needs.

### **Interpretive Programs**

#### **Formal (Advertised) Programs**

The national monument offers a wide variety of formal programs. Programs appeal to all age and interest levels. Park staff offer guided walks, talks, living history programs, and historic demonstrations. More than one park theme can easily be integrated into each program offered. The diverse topics include, but are not limited to: business of the fur trade, the North West Company, voyageur life, women in the fur trade, Native American culture, Ojibwe culture, exploration, 18<sup>th</sup> century domestic life, historic gardening, 18<sup>th</sup> century trades, Native technologies, 18<sup>th</sup> century transportation, people of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, 18<sup>th</sup> century shipping on the Great Lakes. There are a number of programs possible pertaining to each of these topics.

The park's formal programs are advertised and offered 4 times daily during the summer season (mid-June through September). Programs are scheduled to be 30-45 minutes in length. If a program is an hour long, it is noted on signs. Advertised program times give visitors the opportunity to plan their visit accordingly.

The national monument has a unique canoe-building program and at least one birch bark canoe is built using traditional methods in the Ojibwe Village each season. Excellent use is made of the historic setting, furnishings, and props. A fair amount of money (about 20% of the interpretive budget) is spent on historic clothing and props but the reward in visitor satisfaction and understanding is commensurate with the expenditures.

#### **Informal Programs**

Informal interpretation and personal service is a "hallmark" of the national monument's interpretive program. Visitors have the opportunity to personally talk with, listen to, and share ideas with up to eight rangers during their visit. The topics available to visitors through informal programs range from what is listed above to detailed conversations on collecting bark, growing flax, tanning hides, 18<sup>th</sup> century cookware and eating utensils, blankets, finger weaving, beading, guns, . . . . The possibilities are almost endless, and are connected to park themes and used to help visitors make connections to meanings of resources.

Informal interpretation is easily geared to an interest or curiosity expressed by visitors. Park staff has a greater ability to reach people on a personal level and truly help them make a connection to the resource and dispel stereotypes, etc. This level of interpretation is also very comfortable for visitors. They enjoy talking with the staff one-on-one and often will interact in a way they might not feel comfortable doing in a more formal setting. Informal interpretation is, however, a challenge with large numbers of people, unless they are divided into smaller groups.



- A demonstration of 18<sup>th</sup> Century woodworking at Rendezvous Days (Grand Portage National Monument)

### Historical Demonstrations

At any given time during their visit, visitors will likely see at least two historical demonstrations including but not limited to: wood working, 18<sup>th</sup> century baking/cooking, canoe building, musket firing, fur press operation, gardening, fire starting, basket making, beading, finger weaving, hide tanning, and American Indian technologies such as

snowshoe building, and wild rice harvesting. The park also has a reconstructed mackinaw boat that is used to interpret 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial fishing.

Demonstrations are seen daily from mid-June through September, with seasonally appropriate activities taking place. Demonstrations are often interactive, giving the visitor the chance to participate or even learn a new skill. This style of interpretation gives visitors a chance to share their knowledge and interests, and park staff learn a lot from them. This type of programming also offers great opportunities to bridge cultural gaps.

### **Off-Site Programs**

The national monument offers a restricted number of off-site programs due to the limited size of the interpretive staff. The relatively low contiguous population and remote location also limit the efficiency of traveling off site for programs. The superintendent and resources division chief present some off-site programming during the year. Off-site programs are presented to groups such as: the local YMCA camp, local schools, state park, Cook County Historical Society, North House Folk School, Grand Portage Lodge, Grand Portage Community Fairs.

Such programming allows staff to take the park story “on the road” and have opportunities to interact with audiences they might not otherwise. Outreach programs also build stewardship for parks in general, and encourage future site visits in particular.

## **Interpretive Programs and Special Events**

### **Rendezvous**

This is an annual special event commemorating the North West Company’s historic annual Rendezvous of company partners, voyageurs and American Indians. It is the park’s biggest event of the year, during which some 300 re-enactors are encamped on site. This historic encampment is open to visitors. The national monument offers workshops, demonstrations, historic games of skill for both re-enactors and visitors, and a historic evening regale complete with 18<sup>th</sup> century food, drink, and music. This event is presented in concert with the Grand Portage Pow Wow and both attract over 3,000 visitors during a three-day period in early August.

This event allows the park to offer expanded programming, such as workshops offered to both the public and historic re-enactors. Fur trade enthusiasts can encamp on site. It is also a great opportunity for cultural exchange through programming (i.e. Fast Horse program,

Grand Portage Traditional Drum) and the Pow Wow. During this event, visitors see the stockade area crowded and busy, closer to the way it would have been historically, thus providing them with a more realistic historic scene.

Issues do arise concerning this event, such as the potential for negative impacts on cultural and natural resources in the Pines area due to the large numbers of people. Visitation also always exceeds parking capacity. This event is time and staff intensive and can be very stressful for some staff members who may be asked to work long hours. Some 300 re-enactors are involved in this event. There is added wear and tear to park structures and historic props, and even occasional theft.

### **Interpretive Media**

#### **Exhibit at Grand Portage Lodge & Casino**

The park maintains a small exhibit at the Grand Portage Lodge and Casino. A small waist-high glass case is located in the lobby of the lodge. It contains a “teaser” exhibit and acts as an advertisement for the Monument. Because the case is not museum quality, nor is it in a controlled environment, artifacts are exposed to various harmful elements such as light, cigarette smoke, and humidity.

#### **Exhibits at Park Headquarters**

A small exhibit area is located in the lobby of the park headquarters building. There is a free standing section of 4 wood panels in a semi-circle with a large painting (a beautiful montage of historic scenes) along with photos of the site. There are props placed in this area including a model canoe, trade barrel, canoe paddles, capote (wool blanket coat), Tump line (leather strap system for carrying trade bales), furs, and a top hat. There is also a small sales table with select items from the Eastern National sales outlet, along with an information desk. There is limited space but it is used well, though there is a lack of light and humidity controls where original artwork and canoe models are being displayed.

This area is open to the public during regular business hours, but not on the weekends when visitation is higher. The exhibit and props serve as a “tease” to get visitors excited about making the trip to the site. The historic site is introduced and basic information and orientation needs are well met here.

However, the park headquarters building is not accessible to visitors with disabilities, thus limiting the number of visitors who can see the exhibit and interact with staff. Also, at certain times of the year (end of

the fiscal year) it can be added stress for administrative staff to meet and greet visitors.

### **Gate House**

This is a small “guard house” that frames the entrance to the stockade area. It has windows that look out over the parking lot and the stockade area looking south. It offers a nice view for visitors and is aesthetically pleasing.

It is not accessible, not staffed, and there are currently no interpretive media or props. It is a curiosity, especially for children, and prompts questions from visitors.

The Gate House provides a good “jumping off” point for talking with visitors about the purpose of the stockade and to dispel myths and stereotypes such as “keeping the Indians out.” Beyond that purpose, it does not enhance interpretation.

### **Great Hall**

This building is the centerpiece of the site. It is a reconstruction of the North West Company’s meeting/mess house in its original location at Grand Portage. It is historically furnished to the period of 1797. The building has a main hall with four “bedrooms” located in the corners. One bedroom houses the video presentations, the second the cooperating association sales outlet, and the third an exhibit showing what a Company partner’s bedroom might have looked like. It is historically furnished with all appropriate props. The fourth bedroom once housed cultural demonstrations, and now features temporary exhibits. Trade goods and furs are also on display in the main hall.

Since 70% of the visitors come to the Great Hall first upon arrival, park staff “set the stage” and introduce park themes. This building is continually staffed during open hours with at least one costumed interpreter. Personal services interpretation is necessary to help visitors understand and make any connections to this exhibit area since there are few exhibit labels.

There are hands-on display items of both the fur trade era and Ojibwe heritage. A small display of archaeological artifacts is located in a special case in the sales area. Modern intrusions make this exhibit area less effective.

The second floor is not usable as exhibit space. The audiovisual room and Eastern National sales area are not appropriate uses in this building.



### **Kitchen**

The kitchen is a reconstructed building in its original location within the stockade. It is connected to the Great Hall via a covered breezeway and is historically furnished based on inventories of the North West Company from 1797. There is a large fireplace in the kitchen, and a Quebec style bake oven outside behind the kitchen. Both are used by staff. There is also a pantry area, and back/front porch areas as well. Most of the furnishings/props are reproductions and many are used in daily operations including cookware and glassware.

Many visitors enter this building first (perhaps because it is on their right as they enter the stockade). Therefore, it is often necessary to provide basic information and orientation at this location. This is an area where most of the interpretation is informal. The kitchen appeals to almost everyone who visits, for they are universal places.

There are fewer modern intrusions in this building than in the Great Hall, but there are still a few.

Almost all props are functional and used to demonstrate 18<sup>th</sup> century cooking and baking. There are hands-on displays, and visitors like “being in the kitchen” as opposed to just looking in over a stantioned doorway. Almost every visitor can find some personal connection in this area whether they are interested in the fur trade or not. Displays include the historic kitchen garden and bake oven.

A fair amount of money is spent on wet and dry goods for the purpose of demonstrating 18<sup>th</sup> century cooking. Most of the food is thrown away after a few days on display. This is a challenging “exhibit” to manage given the amount of use and number of staff involved. There is a fair amount of “wear and tear” given the nature of its use, and props tend to be expensive and sometimes hard to find. In addition, the upstairs area of the kitchen is unusable.

### **Canoe Warehouse**

This is the third of the park’s reconstructed buildings and is located outside the west stockade wall. It also sits in an original location, but it is not known exactly what this building was used for historically or even if it actually belonged to the North West Company. However, its size and shape lend it for use as a canoe shed or warehouse and that is how it is utilized today. The park’s birch bark canoe collection is on display, as well as an exhibit on canoe loads during the fur trade.

A workbench and several period woodworking tools are used by the staff for various demonstrations and projects. This is currently the best

location for this activity, however it was not a likely use of the building historically.

Multiple stories can be told at this location, including: voyageurs, business of the fur trade, exploitation of cultures and resources, daily life, and cross-cultural technologies. This is a popular program area as it is indoors with benches for visitors. The canoe load exhibit helps visitors understand just what “up to 4 tons of men and supplies can be carried in a Montreal canoe” means. Cross-cultural interpretation is effectively done here with various examples of shared technologies available. There are few modern intrusions within the building but Mile Creek road is close and traffic noise is a problem. The canoe warehouse has no source of heat, which creates a harsh climate for work in the shoulder seasons. The canoe collection is subject to uncontrolled climatic changes.

### **Ojibwe Village**

This is an outdoor exhibit also located on the west side of the stockade. It is in a small open grove surrounded by trees. Mile Creek road passes by on the north side and an access road to the park dock passes on the south side. The village includes a few re-constructions of framed Ojibwe shelters (teepee, wigwam, work shelters), as well as examples of a few other types of uncovered shelters. Each type was used at different times of the year by Ojibwe people. When staffed, visitors can see pre-contact props as well as trade goods; there are fire pits, and an American Indian Three Sisters Garden. There are several examples of Native technologies including snowshoes, toboggans, gardening, fish nets, hide tanning, and beef jerking. A great opportunity exists to learn about Native Cultures and lifeways.

Visitors have an opportunity to see a birch bark canoe being built on site using traditional tools, materials, and methods. It is one of the park’s most popular offerings.

These structures are unique and visitors are very interested in them. However, some of the structures are uncovered (consisting of poles without bark covering), compromising the accuracy of visitors’ perspectives.

Park staff think they do a fairly good job in interpreting themes, but the village area is underdeveloped and there is certainly room for improvement. Also, many visitors do not explore the village beyond perhaps stopping at the wayside at the “entrance.” Some staff think that a portion of the wayside text may intimidate visitors (there is a statement that reads “please walk respectfully in this village and surrounding area”). Some visitors appear to be unsure if they should

enter the village, and some may get all they care to know from the wayside and want to move on.

Some issues associated with this area include poor prop and tool storage, and the fact that not enough staff is available to truly reflect the daily liveliness of the village. Staff talents in this area are appropriately used, and there is an active mentor program.

### **Historic Gardens**

Two gardens are on site; a European kitchen garden on the north side of the kitchen and an American Indian Three Sisters garden in the Ojibwe Village. The gardens are in raised beds. Heirloom varieties are grown in both garden beds and appropriate tools used in both areas.

The gardens are an excellent opportunity for visitors to learn about pre-fur trade routes and what was being traded, in addition to historic gardening techniques. Visitors are introduced to varieties of vegetables they have never heard of, and learn the stories of subsistence, cultural exchanges of food and technologies. It is an opportunity to see a American Indian Three Sisters garden. Visitors are exposed to the benefits of heirloom variety seed saving, and sustainable food sources. The gardens offer opportunities to dispel stereotypes and myths. They support the stories told at the kitchen and Ojibwe Village and are a very attractive, living exhibit. A garden brochure and map are available for self-guided visits when the gardener/interpreter is not on duty.

### **Voyageur Encampment**

This is a small encampment area set up daily outside the southwest corner of the stockade. There are three wedge tents, a canvas fly, and fire pits. The encampment is set up with appropriate historic props and tools. The area was originally set up as a back drop for our black powder program but is also staffed as a “Northman’s” camp (voyageurs that carried trade goods into the interior).

Here visitors can see open fire cooking demonstrations and learn of the harsh living conditions of the voyageurs. Woodworking and carving is often demonstrated here, along with voyageur games.

The park’s black powder demonstrations take place exclusively at this site, though it is an area that visitors often just pass by on their way to the warehouse or dock area, unless there is a musket firing demonstration.

This area is a bit of a challenge for park staff. It is an excellent spot for black powder demonstrations, but when staffed with a “voyageur” it can fall flat with visitors unless there is something really unique being

demonstrated. This lack of interest can be attributed to the fact that most visitors have already heard the story of the voyageur before they make it to the encampment.

The paths and walkways around this area tend to “diffuse” the traffic around this exhibit area, not necessarily to it.

### **Fur Presses**

The park has two historically correct fur presses within the stockade yard, and both types were likely used here. The presses were used to prepare fur pelts to be shipped back to Montreal and then on to Europe; they are made of wood and metal. These objects are used to interpret a crucial aspect of the fur trade for the North West Company.

Fur press programs are very interactive and allow large numbers of visitors to participate at one time. A wide variety of park themes can be addressed and these programs appeal to all age levels. The fur presses are great interpretive exhibits/props. Examples of intangibles: fashion, trade, travel/exploration, hard work, transportation, resource use/exploitation. Examples of universal concepts: risk, greed, wealth, death, market economics.

## **Wayside Exhibits**

### **Inside Stockade Area**

Wayside exhibit locations are:

- Two at the Fur Press Area
- One at the Montreal Canoe
- One at the Guide’s Quarters ghosted structure
- One at the Winter Clerk’s ghosted structure
- One for the Great Hall (front and rear)
- One for the Kitchen (front and rear)

Wayside exhibits are available in areas that are usually un-staffed. They contain visuals of what the objects and/or areas might have looked like historically. They also provide interpretive information for visitors who like to discover things on their own and learn independently. The waysides work very well overall, but are only available during the hours that the park is open.

### **Outside Stockade Area**

Wayside exhibit locations are:

- One at the Canoe Warehouse
- One at the Ojibwe Village

## Existing Conditions Assessment

- Three at the historic flag poles on the north side of the stockade near the parking lot

These wayside exhibits serve as an introduction to staffed areas. They give visitors an idea of what the historic scene may have looked like and are available during and after regular operating hours.

### **Dock/Front Gate/Picnic Area**

Wayside exhibit locations are:

- Two on the dock
- One in the picnic area east of the stockade
- One tri-paneled exhibit at the front gate
- One just to the left of the stockade by the front gate (wooden)
- One large map at the front gate

These wayside exhibits help set the historic stage, introduce visitors to the park story, and are always available, even when the park is closed.

### **Mt. Rose/Portage Trail Area**

Wayside exhibit locations are:

- Two at the overlooks on Mt. Rose along with a small sign at the base.
- One on the lower portage trail by the parking lot
- One at the beaver pond (wooden)
- One at Ft. Charlotte

In addition to the wayside exhibits, there is a brochure specific to Mt. Rose and the portage trail.

Some formal programming and roving interpretation takes place on the lower portage trail and Mt. Rose Trail, and both trails require a high degree of maintenance.

The Grand Portage is not used by a majority of park visitors, and the trail is not accessible. The trails are used and enjoyed by more serious hikers.

Park staff think that they do not give this area enough attention given its historical significance.

## **Publications**

### **Park Brochure**

The park brochure provides good general information, colorful graphics and maps. Functions include both orientation and interpretation; it touches upon all primary themes. It is popular with

visitors; they look for it when they arrive at the park. The brochure is in the process of being digitized by Harpers Ferry Center and revisions are being made for 2004, including updating the photographs.

### **Newspaper**

Each summer the park produces a new edition of “The Grand Portage Guide.” It is very popular with visitors and includes articles of interest, general information, photographs, and graphics. It is generally 12-16 pages long and is printed on parchment colored paper. The newspaper provides broader and more in-depth information and interpretation than the brochure; and the articles are appropriate to that season.

The newspaper is readily available in three locations in the park (ranger station, front gate and Great Hall) and contains a good mix of park/local information and interpretive text. Most visitors take their newspapers home with them.

The paper continues to be improved each year; some staff have suggested the inclusion of more natural resources articles and information.

### **Site-Specific Brochures**

Several park produced brochures are available:

- Bird Check List
- Historic Garden Brochure
- Historic Garden Map
- Jr. Ranger Booklet
- Mt. Rose Brochure
- Grand Portage Trail Brochure
- Rendezvous Program

These publications are available during open hours with the exception of the Mt. Rose brochure which is available at the trail heads. The park brochure and summer newspaper can also be found in outdoor boxes at the front gate.

These brochures provide site-specific information for subjects not readily interpreted. The information contained in these brochures provides visitors the opportunity to connect with the site’s cultural and natural resources. The publications program encourages independent learning on site and post-visit.

Publications can be expensive to print and there is an initial investment of staff time for research, design, and production. However, once printed, staff time is minimal.

### **Foreign Language**

The park has two brochures also available in French:

- Grand Portage Trail Guide
- Voyageur Route

The park feels that it is weak in this area and as a result, not all visitors have the same access to the most basic information. Some seasonal staff do have limited foreign language capabilities (French). Brochures are available at the ranger station during regular park hours.

### **General Information and Orientation**

Several publications are available that are not NPS or park produced:

- Grand Portage Community Map
- Grand Portage State Park Map
- Lake Superior Circle Tour Map
- Old Fort William Brochure
- Voyageur Route Brochure
- Isle Royale NP Ferry Brochure
- Minnesota Historical Society Sites Guide
- Vendor List (people often ask where to get historical items they see on site like lanterns, and wool trade blankets)

These items are usually in stock and are only available when the site is open. By providing these materials, the park helps visitors to continue making connections to its story by encouraging visits to related sites.

### **Miscellaneous**

The park makes available brochures for other sites, including: Isle Royale NP, Voyageurs NP, Apostle Islands NP, St. Croix Scenic River Way, Midwest Parks, Parks Canada

These are available at the ranger station during regular park hours.

### **Site-Specific Publications Sold in the Eastern National Sales Outlet**

A few items are park specific (i.e. written or commissioned by the park):

- “Grand Portage Story” (soft cover book, good general history)
- “Moccasins & Red Sashes” (soft cover booklet, thumbnail sketch of Grand Portage story)
- Historic impression of Stockade area as it may have appeared in 1790’s (watercolor print)

All items are available at both park headquarters and the Great Hall sales outlets. These items are geared for general audiences, tell the Grand Portage story well, and contain appropriate graphics.

### **Partnerships**

#### **Grand Portage Band**

The Band is the park's biggest and most critical partner. The park is within the Grand Portage Reservation and mutual success is vital. Band members are invited to, and do participate in, all of the park's major planning efforts including the park's General Management Plan, Long-Range Interpretive Plan, and various resource related plans. The park also participates, when asked, in Band planning efforts. The park is currently leasing seasonal housing from the Band.

There exists a very positive working relationship between the two entities, with a unique cooperative agreement with the Band providing all of the park's maintenance. Two Band members are on the park's permanent staff, and community members are employed by the park. Elders are employed in the cultural demonstration program, and the park participates in the Band's summer mentorship program for community youth.

The park has worked hard in the past five years to become a place community members want to come and visit. Staff encourage them to visit and use the park (picnic area for gatherings or weddings) They have been fairly successful in that more and more community members are coming to the site, especially children.

#### **Eastern National**

Eastern National is the park's cooperating association. The main store is open seven days a week from June to mid-October. The park headquarters sales area is open year-round during regular business hours with a much smaller selection of merchandise. There is an excellent selection of appropriate books, period reproductions (e.g., jewelry, lanterns, compasses, postcards).

Significant NPS staff time is invested in the operation each year. Eastern National provides a full-time manager and part-time clerk (24 hours/week) from June through mid October. Attracting and keeping store clerks and managers is often difficult due to the remote location and low pay scale offered by Eastern National. The park also has problems providing affordable housing for cooperating association employees.



There is a need for more training of both NPS and Eastern National in staff in bookstore operations and customer service, but that is difficult due to the remote location.

### **Friends of Grand Portage**

The Friends group has been very supportive of the park's efforts to build a heritage center. It is a small group, but those involved are truly positive about the park and want to see it grow. Membership is open, and at least two meetings a year are held with featured speakers. Members attend the annual Rendezvous and in recent years have assisted with programming.

### **State Agencies**

The national monument has partnerships of varying degrees with the following state agencies:

- Minnesota Historical Society
- Department of Natural Resources
- Grand Portage State Park
- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Institute for Minnesota Archaeology (private, non-profit organization)

Information is shared between groups, and information is provided to visitors about these agencies and organizations. Staff exchanges take place with Grand Portage State Park. The Minnesota Historical Society curates the park's archeological collection.

### **Volunteer In Parks (VIP)**

The national monument has a large and active VIP program. In 2003 324 VIPs donated 11,461 hours.

The park's remote location is a challenge for recruiting. Volunteers assist in meeting interpretive division and park goals, plus bring a wealth of experience to the park. Staff depend on them to help provide services they might not otherwise be able to offer.

### **Local Agencies**

- Grand Portage Band of Minnesota Chippewa
- Cook County Schools
- Cook County Historical Society
- North House Folk School
- USDA Forest Service
- Grand Marais Chamber of Commerce

- Cook County Government
- Camp Menogyn
- Isle Royale National Park

Interpretive programs are presented to local schools. Information is shared with the county historical society and the park participates in a local passport program.

Information is exchanged with all of these agencies.

## **Outreach/Community Events**

### **Interpretive Programs**

Several outreach programs are conducted each year with the following groups.

- Cook County Schools
- Camp Menogyn
- North House Folk School
- Cook County Historical Society

Outreach programs enable park staff to get out in the community and share the park story with those who might not have a chance to visit. The above mentioned groups often request programming.

Unfortunately, park staff have not been able to travel too far outside the local area to present programs.

### **Community Fairs**

There are a few community fair-type events each year in which the park participates, though the dates sometimes conflict with park events:

- Grand Portage Career Fair
- Grand Portage Community Fair
- Cook County High School Culture Day

These events are held on weekends as well as during the week, as in the case with the high school culture day. They are a good place to meet and network with other area groups and agencies. Well attended by community members, such fairs are good opportunities for the park to take its place in community life.

### **Accessibility**

The national monument has a need to make its facilities accessible to our visitors. Currently there are several accessible areas at the site;

however, park headquarters is not one of them. The accessible buildings are the Great Hall, Kitchen, Ranger Station, Canoe Warehouse, and restrooms.

Pathways are uneven in places and too few in number; plans are underway to improve them. Restrooms are quite a distance from the main visitor areas and that creates a problem for seniors. Wheelchairs are available and chairs can be found in every area for those who may need them.

The park does offer assisted listening devices, has some information in Braille, a signing card for visitors with vision problems, and many hands-on items for visitors to experience. Park videos are closed captioned, and a TDD is available at the headquarters building. In addition, accessibility information is published on the park's website and in the park newspaper.

An accessibility coordinator (collateral duty of lead ranger) is on staff and spends an appropriate amount of time making sure all issues are addressed. The park also sponsors a special session with an accessibility expert each year as part of seasonal training. Advice is provided to make the site more accessible utilizing available resources.

### **Curatorial Services and Library**

Grand Portage National Monument has fairly extensive collections of artifacts, research materials, as well as visual and audio resources. While the collections continue to grow, available staff and space to organize and manage them has not. Much of its artifact collection is located off-site at the Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul, and the Midwest Archeological Center (MWAC) in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Having the Heritage Center with a larger library and a museum storage area will provide the park with appropriate areas in which to organize and store its growing collections. These collections can then be more accessible to both visitors and the Grand Portage community.

As of 2002, over 16,580 catalog records were completed for the Grand Portage National Monument collection, which numbers 117,690 objects. Most catalogued objects in the park collection are in good condition and closely monitored. Collections are currently stored and/or exhibited in five separate locations. Much of the park's archeological collection is stored at Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) facilities in Saint Paul, MN, by means of a formal agreement. Conservation treatment has been performed by MHS staff as necessary.

A NPS conservation needs assessment performed in 1998 by NPS conservators sampled high-risk elements of the collection, and determined that the collection was stable and well curated, while cautioning that the collection, as stored, could be damaged if subjected to frequent research use (Riss 1998).

Approximately 38,900 items are housed at park headquarters in Grand Marais, Minnesota. These include important portions of the park's archeological collection (historical, ethnographic, and photographic artifacts), archival records, and related accession records. Storage is in a custom-designed, climate-controlled structure within the resource lab building at the Grand Marais Coast Guard Station/NPS headquarters. Approximately 4,600 archeological items are being held at the Midwest Archeological Center (MWAC) in Lincoln, Nebraska. These items have been accessioned and catalogued into the national monument collection by MWAC staff.

### **Library Collection**

Grand Portage National Monument has a small but quality research library. There are more than 2,000 volumes including over 270 rare books. These rare books hold some of the most compelling first person accounts and histories of fur trade and Ojibwe cultural history.

The park also has a fairly large collection of periodicals and vertical files. While the library collection is largely focused on the Great Lakes Fur Trade and Ojibwe Culture, it also contains ample information on related topics including park administrative history, park cultural/natural resources, other related historic areas, and the National Park Service.

### **Slide, Photograph, and Video Collection**

Grand Portage National Monument has a fairly extensive slide and photograph collection currently numbering approximately 3,000 and 2,000 images respectively. Nearly all of the images are originals. The slide collection is housed in a special cabinet in the resource lab located at the park headquarters in Grand Marais. The photograph collection is housed in the basement of the headquarters building. There has traditionally been a catalogue system for the park's slide and photograph/negative collections. However, over the past decade, both collections have continued to expand, and as a result, has outgrown its current system. In 2003, the park, after consulting with other parks with similar sized collections, purchased a new software program for the purposes of re-cataloguing and organizing the collections to a new cabinet system as well as to create a user friendly data base to properly label, track and use the collections.

Currently, the slide and photograph collections are organized into the following categories:

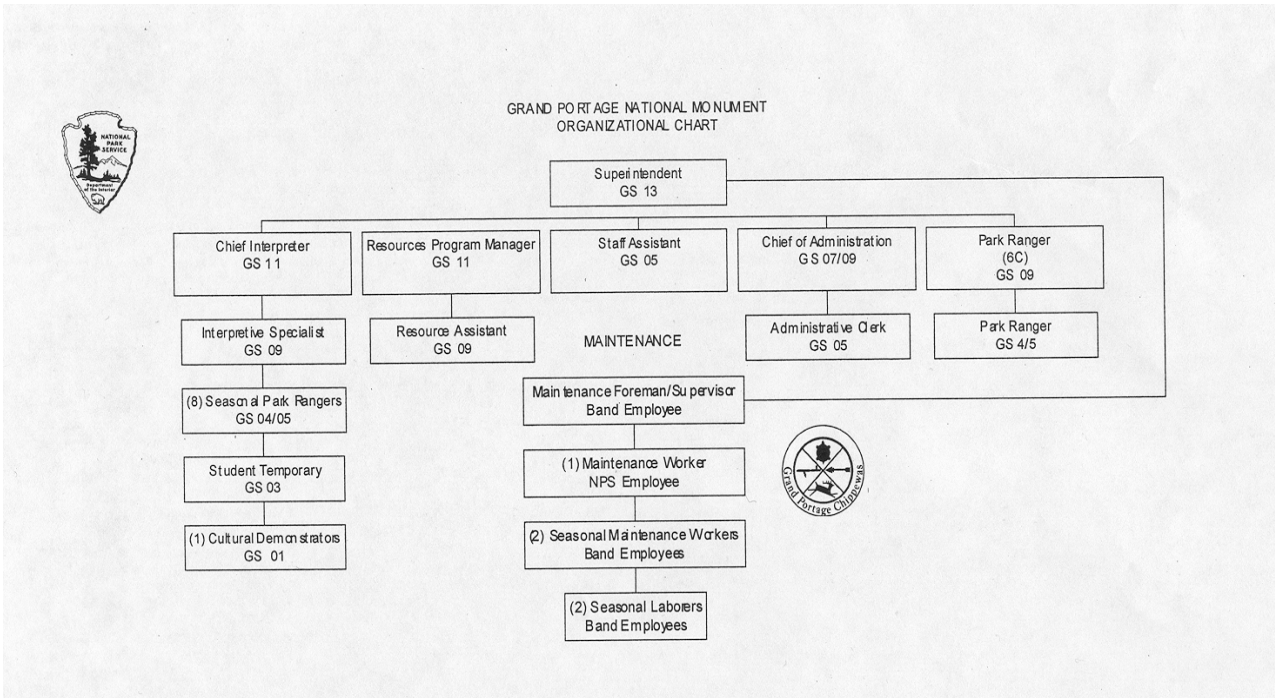
- Rendezvous - Rendezvous events divided by year
- Archaeology – Artifacts and archaeology sites
- Interpretive Props and Displays – Items displayed in interpretive exhibits
- Interpretive Programs/Conducted – Ranger staff conducting programs
- Cultural Demonstration – Community Elders making Native American crafts
- Great Hall – Interior and exterior images
- Eastern National Bookstore – Interior images
- Kitchen – Interior and exterior images
- Warehouse – Interior and exterior images
- Sites Outside the national monument – Thunder Bay and related areas
- Other sites within the national monument – Voyageur encampment, shoreline, dock and miscellaneous
- Monument Headquarters – Mainly exterior images
- Employees of the national monument – Individual and group images
- Visitors – Images of visitors at various areas at the monument
- Maps, Signs, Flags – On site and other relevant images
- Fort Charlotte, Pigeon River – Scenery images
- Resource Damage, Vandalism, Fire Pictures
- Wildlife-Natural History
- Flora – Natural History
- Ojibwe Village and Gardens – Images of historic gardens and Ojibwe Village
- Historical Photos and Illustrations – Includes all the black and white slides, Sivertson and Hopkins illustrations
- Northern Lights, Fall Colors, Winter
- Special Events and Anniversaries – Winter Frolic, special trainings, etc.
- Grand Portage Trail
- Mt. Rose Trail
- Mt. Sophie, Mt. Maud, Mt. Josephine
- Spirit Little Cedar Tree
- Park Grounds, Maintenance – Images of grounds and maintenance projects
- Grand Portage Community – Images of buildings, landmarks and people of the community
- Grand Marais – Local images
- Isle Royale NP – Includes images of the ferries
- Old Fort William – Images of buildings

The national monument's video collection contains approximately 120 volumes. It is currently housed in the basement of park headquarters in Grand Marais. The collection is available to the public for use free of charge. Recently, park staff catalogued the collection and developed a database for use by staff in locating titles.

Currently, the video collection is organized into the following categories:

- Exploration
- Fur Trade
- Grand Portage National Monument
- Miscellaneous
- National Parks
- Native American Culture and Crafts
- NPS Policy and Recruitment
- Product Information
- Science

Current Park Staffing



# RECOMMENDATIONS

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Through interpretation comes understanding; through understanding comes appreciation; through appreciation comes protection.

-- Freeman Tilden

The following is a description of interpretive media and program recommendations designed to provide direction and focus for the future interpretive program for Grand Portage National Monument. Management's commitment to quality interpretation is evident in the fact that one-fourth (approximately \$240,000 annually in 2004) of this small park's budget is allocated for this function.

Media and program recommendations include – where useful -- purpose, themes, objectives, and/or special considerations. It is important to remember that these recommendations should not limit the creativity that is essential during subsequent media and program design processes, where more effective ways of meeting goals may be devised.

Recommendations will correspond to the interpretation and visitor experience opportunities prescribed in the park's new General Management Plan. Recommendations where appropriate will be designated with a priority rating of High (H), Medium (M), or Low (L).

## **Pre-visit Information**

Information regarding Grand Portage National Monument will continue to be provided through traditional means by answering written and phone requests. Pre-visit packages contain a park brochure, summer newsletter, area and resource information, and any specific information requested by the requestor. Visitors' phone calls will continue to be answered by park staff.

Proper training for new staff is important so that they understand park resources and the principles of providing excellent visitor services.

## **Recommendations**

- Update training for new employees on park information, wayfinding, informal visitor contacts, and communication. (H)



## Recommendations

- 
- Publicize the phone number for the Great Hall/Eastern National sales outlet so callers can speak with staff directly in the summer months. (H)
- Automatically forward calls to park headquarters from the ranger station in the winter months so that visitors can speak directly with a park employee. (H)
- Staff will ensure that other sites have up-to-date information and are familiar with the park. (H)
- Expand seasonal training to include not only employees of the Tourist Information Center in Grand Portage, but other sites which may be interested. (H)
- Provide regular activity updates to local information centers. (H)
- Publish interpretive program schedules in the community calendar and community education fliers. (H)

## Arrival and Wayfinding

One of the more complex media problems the park faces involves directional signs. At present, there are problems with message clarity, location, consistency of design, and park identity.

Problems are found at distant approaches to the park (Grand Marais and the Canada border), on the approach to park headquarters in Grand Marais, and at the park entrance road on and off Highway 61. Wayfinding within the park boundary should also be addressed.

An important wayfinding goal is to provide enough clear information at some distance from the park so that potential visitors can discover where the park is located and make a decision as to whether or not to drive there.

## Recommendations

- Develop a comprehensive sign plan that would address wayfinding issues and describe sign locations, appearances, materials, and content. (H)
- Develop park design standards that provide a consistent, flexible, attractive, and useful set of design templates for signs, facilities, publications, media, and other communication applications. Design standards and the sign plan will be developed within NPS Visual Identity Guidelines. (H)
- Coordinate with local agencies to ensure optimum placement of signs. (H)
- Work with the town of Grand Marais to provide tourist information at a structure such as an information kiosk (unattended or seasonally attended) or partnership information

center; it would be located on a well-traveled thoroughfare leading to the park. Such a center could also clarify Isle Royale NP's connection to the site for parking and ferry service, and differentiate the national monument from Grand Portage State Park. (H)

- Improve landscaping and signing of park headquarters to provide a better contact and arrival experience for visitors approaching from the south. (M)
- Improve signs at the park entrance to improve visibility, identity, and differentiation between business and cultural interests, and to eliminate redundancy and clutter. (H)
- The GMP Preferred Alternative (Alternative E) calls for an effort to integrate the park into the community by having the NPS and the Grand Portage Band develop a “gateway” to the community of Grand Portage at the intersection of Highway 61 and County Road 17. There is also a Reservation Transportation Plan outlining this “gateway experience.” This intersection should be landscaped and redesigned to welcome visitors and signs should effectively direct travelers to destination sites. (H)
- Once visitors find their way to the site, there is still the potential for confusion. Signs should be streamlined to avoid the sense of cluttering the landscape. Certain safety issues can be addressed with signs, such as pedestrian safety signs before the portage crossing on Highway 61. The portage itself should be described. Drivers need to be aware of visitors crossing busy roads within the park, and this will be especially important once the heritage center is open and an increasing number of visitors will be on site throughout the year. (H)
- Install two Traveler Information System (TIS) at the north and south approaches to the national monument. A PMIS project statement has been submitted for a TIS system to relay safety and orientation information to visitors via an AM radio frequency. Additional information is required as to the type and amount of information that can be in the system, such as whether or not a sequence of messages, possibly in various languages, can be programmed. (H)

## Orientation

### Park Headquarters

Visitors arriving at park headquarters may or may not have stopped at the new orientation kiosk or wayside exhibit in Grand Marais, or the chamber of commerce. They may not be aware of the diversity and extent of park resources. A standard orientation exhibit that is

## Recommendations

replicated outside park headquarters and the heritage center can help visitors gain a better understanding of the park's resources.

### **Recommendations**

- Combine a standard orientation exhibit panel (upright wayside panel) with a bulletin board to accommodate updated park information. Attach a brochure rack to the orientation panel to provide further information to park visitors, especially when the headquarters building is closed. (M)
- Employ the NPS Visual Identity guidelines in all orientation media.
- Assign additional staff or volunteers to assist with greeting visitors during busy times (such as the end of the fiscal year). (M)
- Consider weekend coverage during peak visitation periods, which would enable the library to be open as well. However, with an adequate orientation kiosk in Grand Marais, and one outside park headquarters available at all times, the need for weekend staffing would diminish. (L)

### **Ranger Station**

Currently there is no transition or preparation upon arrival before entering the stockade. This problem will be alleviated with the construction of the heritage center, but until that time, remedial changes can be made to provide for improved visitor experience. Orientation is experiential, as well as geographic, at all sites. As mentioned earlier, much can be accomplished through the landscape to provide better orientation, from signs, to waysides, to how visitors first enter the site. The intermittent park practice of setting up a tent in the parking lot and assigning staff to provide orientation and information is a valuable use of resources. Visitors to national park sites look for someone in uniform, and if their first contact is with an individual in period clothing, they may be leery of approaching that person to ask "Where's the bathroom?" or "What time is the next ranger talk?"

Personal contact with staff, as well as the distribution of materials, will prepare visitors before they enter the stockade and eliminate the need of interpreters in the kitchen and Great Hall to provide basic orientation. Given the current condition of the ranger station and the cost involved with rehabilitation work, an information "station" near the stockade entrance, along with orientation exhibit panels and/or kiosk would be the best temporary solution. Once the heritage center is completed, the ranger station should be removed and the cultural landscape rehabilitated as best as possible.

In addition, as mentioned in the staffing section, staffing and fiscal support is needed from Isle Royale NP to meet the needs of their visitors embarking from the national monument.

### **Personal Services Interpretation**

Personal interpretive services are those in which staff interact with visitors. Examples of personal services programs include the staffing of visitor centers, talks, illustrated programs, conducted activities, special events, and educational programs. Personal services are often most effective for interpreting complex or conceptual themes and topics.

Living history or costumed interpretation -- the type of program offered most widely at Grand Portage National Monument -- is becoming increasingly rare in the National Park Service due to cost and other considerations. It is extremely effective at Grand Portage National Monument. Staff are dressed in period clothing, the Great Hall is stocked with trade goods, the kitchen bustles with smells and activity, gardens bloom with heirloom varieties, canoe are built and furs pressed, and the Ojibwe Village is active with cultural demonstrations. Good interpretation connects people to resources, and provides opportunities for visitors to find personal meaning and relevance, and a visit to the park certainly does that.

Personal services at the park encourage visitors to be active participants when learning about the park's stories. Personal services will continue to be the focus of interpretation at the national monument, with a number of staffed sites. A variety of guided walks, talks, living history programs, and historic demonstrations pertaining to diverse themes will continue to be offered. The importance of informal interpretation should continue to be recognized as well.

- Re-structure personal services interpretation to address the new park themes, including “untold stories” such as:
  - What happened at the site in 1803?
  - Trade relationships between the North West Company and Tribes
  - Craft story
  - Voyageurs, tradesmen, voyageur guides
  - History of the gatehouse/stockade structure
  - Archaeological story
  - The stories and objects of everyday living and hygiene

## Recommendations

- Seek additional staff and VIP's to enable the park to offer more programs during the daily peak visitation hours (10am-4pm). (H)
- Improve advertisement of formal programs through publications, bulletin boards, and the wider distribution of program materials. (H)
- Offer historical skills workshops for community members and tourists; obtain additional supplies such as historical tools and materials. (M)

## Non-personal services interpretation

Non-personal interpretive media are those that do not require the presence of staff and can reach large audiences in a consistent way. Media such as exhibits, wayside (outdoor) exhibits, publications, and audiovisual presentations are some examples.

**Front-end, formative, and/or summative evaluation** should be an integral component of the non-personal media planning and design process. **Front-end evaluation** concentrates on getting input from potential visitors by means of interviews and/or focus groups to find out prior knowledge, interests, attitudes, and misconceptions. **Formative evaluation** is conducted during media design, and tests inexpensive mockups of key media to test effectiveness and identify possible improvements. **Summative or remedial evaluation** occurs after the completion and installation of interpretive media, and can test media effectiveness in their actual context. Findings can direct changes and improvements (where possible) in the media, and/or applied to improving other similar projects. Effective and efficient evaluation will lead to more effective and compelling media and services, and reduce the chance that they will be misunderstood, ignored, or otherwise ineffective.

## Heritage Center

A new heritage center with exhibits and a theater is being planned for Grand Portage National Monument; it is due to open in 2007. This facility will remain open year-round, and will be an essential introduction to visitors' experience of the Monument.

The primary functions of the Heritage Center will be to:

- orient visitors to the site and area resources, services, and attractions
- interpret the park story, as described by interpretive themes
- host curriculum- and theme-based educational programs

- provide visitor services such as restrooms and security and emergency services
- provide a focus, point of contact, and spatial and visual identity for a site
- Encourage visitors to engage in a personal consideration of meaning and significance

The Heritage Center will contain:

- an information/visitor contact area (visible and within greeting distance of the front entrance)
- museum exhibits/sensory interactive area (for interpretation and orientation)
- multi-purpose room (for theater, education programs, special events, temporary exhibitions, meetings)
- cooperating association sales outlet
- cultural demonstration area and gallery
- library and research area
- interpretive work areas
- storage areas
- separate office space and storage for the cooperating association
- temporary/changing exhibit area
- offices for NPS staff and volunteers

The Heritage Center will host programs including interpretive talks, thus allowing for a more in-depth exploration of park themes and exhibit elements. Illustrated programs can be presented in the theater. Special activities and presentations will be another component of the interpretive program at the heritage center. The theater space can be utilized for public lectures and seminars, programs targeted for children and families (such as storytelling), and illustrated talks.

### **Orientation Exhibits (H)**

This park and area orientation exhibit will help visitors plan their visit and motivate them to enjoy various park and area attractions. Orientation exhibits should be changeable, to accommodate updated information, such as the current program schedule.

A large map could identify park resources and associated areas. The map would be similar to the park unigrid brochure and wayside orientation maps. The orientation exhibit map can display details and have accompanying photographs and text regarding specific sites -- especially fur trade sites such as Fort William and Voyageurs NP.

### **Experience Organizer (M)**

This exhibit would be designed to help visitors make informed choices about what sites to visit and programs to participate in, depending on their length of stay and interests. This exhibit could use time estimates and visitor experience categories (e.g., If you have 2-3 hours and are interested in Ojibwe history and the fur trade . . .) as its primary organizing principles. It is a logical companion to the standard orientation exhibit (described above) which shows where all visitor experiences are located. This exhibit will inform visitors about any time-sensitive decisions they may need to make, such as the times of any guided tours.

### **Interpretation Exhibits**

#### **Interpret themes A – G**

Exhibits may include topics such as:

- Introducing the reservation, Ojibwe culture, and fostering respect for both traditional and contemporary Ojibwe culture
- Dawes Act, Nelson Act, assimilation, Relocation, Indian Self Governance
- History of the area, pre-contact and post fur trade
- Introduce prehistoric story
- Geographic setting - global, regional, local
- Colonialism, dominance, acquisition of commodities, convenience
- World economy
- Relationship of Grand Portage to the rest of the Voyageurs Highway
- Chronology of Grand Portage history
- Introduce the different cultures involved in the fur trade – cultural exchange
- Transportation system of both cultures
- Discuss the extensive impacts from fur trade on natural resources and native cultures
- Give a general concept of the post
- Fur trade, winter life, and technology
- Political climate, European and Native, context of the fur trade era
- Role of archaeology in the reconstructions
- Role of technology in the fur trade
- Logistics of canoe travel and portaging (Great Lakes, ocean)
- History of the fur trade that brings you to 1797
- The different fur companies, their competition and rivalry
- Fort Charlotte

- The natural environment – flora, fauna, geology
- Seasonal rhythms of the fur trade
- Exploration, mapping theme
- Beaver ecology
- Cultural uses of birch bark
- Place names
- Stewardship
- International boundary stories
- Typical wintering post
- Disease and health story
- Notable people in the fur trade
- Resources that allow us to understand the fur trade
- Grand Portage National Monument in the National Park System, related NPS sites and areas
- Alliances with Ojibwe and other Native Tribes (Cree {*Auchagah*})
- Ojibwe seasonal rounds
- Rules of engagement for the post

### **Exhibit Possibilities**

The following discussion describes possible exhibit treatments and characteristics.

Exhibits can help visitors gain a sense of place. Exhibits could address questions such as, why does Grand Portage exist? Why did fur trading occur at the site? Why is the site significant? How did the people at this place influence the local, national, and international communities? How is Grand Portage related to other portages, both nationally and internationally? An exhibit could look at the larger trade network, the significance of the international border, the impact of treaties, and follow the route of various traded goods.

For example, an exhibit could trace the journey of an ax, demonstrating the cross cultural and international trading connections. An exhibit could also explore the trading network as a contributing factor to the varied dialects in the region. The placement of the Heritage Center next to Lake Superior enhances opportunities for exhibits to interpret the importance of a maritime location.

One purpose of the Heritage Center is help visitors learn more about Ojibwe culture. The Grand Portage Band will play an important role in the exhibit planning process. The European story will be combined with the Ojibwe story, showing how each influenced the other. This interconnectedness may be explored in the interpretation exhibits, multipurpose room, temporary exhibit space, and a cultural demonstration room. Exhibits could include touchable artifacts,



## Recommendations

artwork, oral histories, and bilingual labels that interpret the Ojibwe culture and show how the culture continues to thrive today. Grand Portage Band members could incorporate into the exhibits storytelling and craft activities that would take place in the heritage center.

Exhibits could explore the everyday lives of the voyageurs and the Ojibwe. How did they interact and influence each other? Visitors could immerse themselves in historical settings that provide opportunities to hear sounds of a bustling community, try on replica clothing, touch replica tools used by voyageurs and the Ojibwe, hear the songs of the voyageurs, or sit in a birch bark canoe. Other interactive exhibits could demonstrate how historical influences of the voyageurs and the Ojibwe are still with us today, featuring contemporary foods, artwork, clothing, and language.

Exhibits can show features of the park that visitors normally do not see during their visit. Because many visitors do not complete the 8-mile portage, an exhibit could include a virtual reality tour of the trail, ending with Fort Charlotte. Visitors could get a better sense of what exists at the end of the Portage and its purpose during the 1790s. Another exhibit could create an immersive experience that demonstrates how Lake Superior might have looked to voyageurs and the Ojibwe traveling Lake Superior. It could address questions such as, how did the people know where to go?

Audiovisual elements can be integrated into the fabric of graphic panels, historically furnished vignettes, and interactive exhibit areas. A hierarchy of information can be presented so those wishing to learn more -- such as repeat visitors -- can explore more in-depth layers of the story.

Exhibits should be accessible to children as well as adults; for example, with objects that can be touched and interactive elements that can be manipulated. It is important that all stories be made relevant and accessible for today's diverse visitors.

- Relocate the “try it on” activity area (now in the Great Hall) to the Heritage Center. Here visitors will learn more about the clothing and the importance of various clothing during the time period via a graphic/model that displays the clothes, along with labels or a flipbook. Visitors will access clothes in pull-out drawers and try them on after matching each piece to the graphic/model.

## **Video Presentation (H)**

### **Interpret themes A, B, C, and D**

- Produce a video presentation that will provide an overview of the history of Grand Portage and immerse visitors in essential scenes of the fur trade, life at the fort, and Ojibwe lifeways. This video will “set the stage” for visitors and allow them to place this story in historical context.

The video can recreate space and time, thus making accessible the lives and experiences of fur traders, voyageurs, and Indians; the video would also provide a glimpse of the fort and other site resources during winter when the site is closed. The video and exhibits will complement each other. Normally, interpretive content duplication would be avoided except for extremely important concepts that are repeated in different formats.

The video may be from 10 to 20 minutes long.

Additional and modified media recommendations will result from the planning and design of the new heritage center.

### **Cultural Demonstration Area (H)**

#### **Interpret themes C, F, and G**

- Devote the cultural demonstration area in the Heritage Center to interpreting and presenting the traditions and continuum of the Ojibwe culture. Activities here will honor and celebrate Ojibwe culture, and while the making of contemporary crafts is likely, this area will also provide a much-needed venue for traditional/contemporary activities such as workshops, demonstrations, and ceremonies.

The Grand Portage Band should play a major role in the development of this new cultural demonstration program to succeed the handicraft sales program currently in place.

### **Stockade**

Sixteen wooden buildings stood inside the cedar-picket palisade, including a business office, a warehouse for trade goods and furs, food storage buildings, and living quarters for the partners and clerks. Grand Portage was the largest fur trade depot in the heart of the continent, and a hub of activity

#### **Interpret themes B, E, F, and G**

- Continue the “ghosting” of structures within the stockade to help visitors imagine the original appearance. The current method of corner posts and overgrown vegetation is quite effective in enabling visitors to imagine what the trade depot would have looked like from 1784 to 1803. (H)
- Develop a self-guided walking tour brochure of the stockade. Describe its personalities, where goods go, where two worlds meet, and winter life ways. (M)
- Convert wayside exhibits in the stockade to portable, sled-style bases that allow relocation when the integrity of the historic scene is paramount. This has already been done with several wayside exhibits within the stockade. To further reduce the visual profile of additional waysides, consider using the smaller “plant identification” formats as described in the HFC wayside exhibit website. Specific locations, topics, and appearances of additional wayside exhibits would be identified in a wayside exhibit plan. (H)
- Opportunities exist to tell the story of the “poverty of information,” the periods of waiting and isolation. First person quotations can be effectively employed to tell the story of the

sporadic movement of goods and information, through a wayside exhibit and personal (roving) interpretation.

### **Fur Presses**

The fur presses stand alone with wayside exhibits to explain them or they can come to life when staffed. A fur press converted the bulky furs into easily handled cargo.

Presses are initially expensive to build and require a fair amount of maintenance as they are exposed to the elements. They are a positive landscape element inside the stockade, though underutilized when staffing does not allow their operation. Interpretive connections can be made between this area and the voyageurs camp (as it would look enroute from Montreal) outside the stockade, as well as telling the story of local trading.

### **Interpret theme D**

- Purchase additional hides for use in programming. (M)
- Provide additional staff training in use of the presses, including safety training. (M)

### **Great Hall**

Historically, the Great Hall came to life in late June for Rendezvous, after being inactive most of the year. Business was conducted by day and dining and conversation by night.

The Great Hall is one of the park's four reconstructed buildings furnished in the period of the late 1700s. It is mostly furnished and interpreted as a mess hall for the partners of the North West Company. In addition to historic furnishings and props, the building currently includes an orientation film, a refurnished bedroom, and a cooperating association sales outlet. However, after the park's new heritage center opens, this building will cease to serve these diverse functions. The orientation film, sales outlet, and craft room will be relocated to the heritage center.

This will offer the public a unique interpretive experience by placing them within historic spaces. Surrounded by historic artifacts, visitors can feel the spaces “come alive” and relate more directly to the events, personalities, and stories of this time period.

### Interpret themes C, D, F, and G

- Refurnish the large room in the Great Hall to reflect period of North West Company partners. Some items currently hanging on walls (such as furs) and placed on tables would be replaced by items that would have been there historically. Consider identifying a few of the items with small labels. Interpreters would be dressed in period clothing, and interpretation would focus primarily on the role of the North West Company partners and how they interacted with various people. (H)
- Move some interpretive functions of other structures to the small rooms in the Great Hall. (H) Three small rooms would be historically furnished as:
  - store – furnished with trade goods
  - interpreters/guides quarters
  - accounting room
- Improve lighting for dark/rainy days and evening use. (M)
- Provide security for reproduction furnishings by securing small items while still providing visitors with tactile experiences where feasible. When period pieces are on display, such as the dining service, place stanchions around the area to provide security of artifacts. Clearly delineate exhibit areas containing reproduction items that can be handled from those with period artifacts that cannot be. (M)
- Re-examine visitor flow and access to newly furnished rooms and different interpretive functions. (M)

### **Kitchen**

Interpretation will continue to provide opportunities for visitors to relate to park themes and resource meanings. Who would be found in the kitchen? What were their stories? What role did they play in the greater life of the depot and the larger fur trade story? Connections can also be made to the historic gardens, exploring what food was grown in that climate, what goods needed to be brought in, how were the diets of the Europeans and the Ojibwe different, and what does this say about the respective cultures? How have the cultures merged? The kitchen can provide the springboard for the stories and objects of everyday living and hygiene.

### Interpret themes D, E, G

- Replace worn interpretive props and demonstration items. (M)
- Provide additional safety training for staff. (H)
- Improve lighting for dark/rainy days and evening use. (M)

### **Ojibwe Village**

This site has significant interpretive potential with added substance and texture, and a better thematic foundation. Activity at this site will naturally increase once the Heritage Center is open. Visitors will be directed through this area to enter the stockade, so it can be one of the first areas they experience.

Visitors should have a sense of what life was like for the Ojibwe, their homeland – before, during, and after the fur trade, impacts upon their way of life, their traditional transportation and trade routes, seasonal lifeways, different roles that each member of the community played, and their contributions. Interpretation at this site should stress the fact that this land is still called home for many; it is not just a historic site that locks its doors at dusk. Stories told in the village should complement those presented in the Heritage Center and be specific to Grand Portage.

### **Interpret themes C, D, F, and G**

- Replace the existing wayside exhibit panel with a series of smaller panels addressing topics related to Ojibwe culture. Specific topics will be identified in a wayside exhibit plan. (H)
- Establish a guided trail which welcomes and guides visitors through this area. Wayside text can be in both Ojibwe and English. Fonts should be visually distinct from each other, so the text doesn't appear from a distance to be too formidable. The trail can take visitors through the village, possibly centered around different times of the year, highlighting seasonal lifeways and uses of structures. The Three Sisters garden will be an integral part of this experience. (M)
- Develop a site bulletin to interpret Native use of wild plants native plants. (L)
- Develop one or more site bulletins to provide additional information on theme-related topics that have been of interest to visitors. (H)
- Provide reproduction theme-related items including traditional Ojibwe implements that visitors can observe and interact with. Props can be secured in structures and around the village, with a combination of interactive elements and text, so that this site does not have to be staffed to provide a quality experience. (H)
- Present cultural demonstrations, preferably presented by Band members. Strengthen partnerships to encourage Band members to lead interpretive efforts in this area. (H)
- Employ an Ojibwe Cultural Specialist to manage the village. This would enhance the visitor experience and facilitate meaningful connections. (H)

### **Warehouse**

Interpretation at the warehouse is very successful and should continue to focus on stories such as: the competition between the North West Company and XY Company; crafts associated with the fur trade; Grand Portage as the “midpoint” along the trade route; geography; integration of Ojibwe knowledge.

### **Interpret themes B, D, and G**

- Install exhibits to connect furnishings to primary themes. (L)
- Install wayside exhibit that identifies the building and discusses what is known about it and that it is a reconstruction. (M)
- Install additional reproduction furnishings such as more trade bales and other props. (H)
- Study ways to better preserve the canoe collection, including climate control. (H)
- Install historically accurate seating. (M)

### **Encampment Area**

A change in visitor flow and access patterns once the Heritage Center is completed will impact this area. Like the Ojibwe Village, the encampment area can potentially be one of the first sites visitors see after leaving the Heritage Center, rather than one of the last sites after leaving the stockade. Visitors will be able to experience tangible elements – landscapes, structures, and furnishings – associated with the stories that have been interpreted in the Heritage Center. Visitors are introduced to all of the park themes in the Heritage Center, then they visit the Ojibwe Village to experience the lifeways of those who were here first, and then proceed to the voyageur encampment. After the encampment, visitors can move into the stockade and learn about the business of the fur trade, the life of the factor, and the nature of this international business.

The stories told here are important. Voyageurs were the skilled adventurers who made the fur trade possible.

### **Interpret themes A, D, and G**

- Given the fact that this site has been problematic for staff and that it is the first site to be closed if adequate staffing is not available, it may be a better use of resources to move the encampment to the warehouse site where the stories of canoe construction, transportation, and shared technologies can be

integrated with voyageurs culture. Such a location could provide greater visibility and maximize staffing efficiency. (M)

- The encampment could possibly also be moved to a site east of the creek, thus making a stronger connection with the portage and waterfront, though once again, given staffing limitations that may not be possible. (L)
- Make the exhibits more interactive and less staff dependent. Secure props at the site, with a combination of reproduction items (including interactive elements) and labels. (H)
- Develop a site bulletin for self-guiding visits and for those who would like additional information. (M)
- Use this area as a historical “backdrop” or setting for interpretive programs, black powder demonstrations, and special events. (H)

### **Fort Charlotte**

The fort was built to maintain control of the portage and provide another depot. A stone monument today marks its location. The site has a camping area with primitive campsites. It is a point of embarkation/debarkation for modern canoe travelers using the Boundary Waters Canoe Area to the west, and a destination for hikers following in the footsteps of the voyageurs from the lakeshore.

Due to accessibility issues and the limited number of visitors who will actually go to the site, the story of Fort Charlotte will be told for most visitors at the Heritage Center with exhibits, audiovisual programs, and/or publications.

### **Interpret themes A, B, D, and E**

- Initiate a partnership with the Boundary Waters Canoe Area to enhance interpretation and visitor experience. (M)
- Install an orientation panel to the national monument. Inform visitors just entering the national monument that it is administered by the NPS; provide information such as the portage ahead, its significance, length, and safety issues). (H)
- Enhance the camping experience by improving campsites. (M)
- Install wayside exhibit panels; the number, locations, and topics will be identified in a wayside exhibit plan.

## **Trails**

### **Grand Portage Trail**

The General Management Plan calls for the restoration of the Grand Portage Trail to a semblance of its historic appearance.



## Recommendations

### Interpret themes A, B, C, D, E, and G

- Direct visitors to this site with signs located in appropriate places on the site. (H)
- Provide accessibility to the first part of the trail. (H)
- Update the existing site bulletin with new information learned in the past several years. Stories include: geologic/archaeological features; natural history; pre-European story; its relationship to all other portages. (M)
- Provide effective trailhead signs: wood signs with signs that meet NPS identity standards. (H)

### **Mount Rose Trail**

The 0.5 mile trail is a relatively steep, paved walkway with switchbacks, handrails, and overlooks. This trail provides a view of the whole park. Stories can include geography, archaeology, and Ojibwe history. A trail guide is currently available.

### Interpret theme A, C, and E

- Extend this trail to make it a loop trail connecting to the new Heritage Center (this is called for in the GMP). (H)
- Update trailhead and low-profile wayside exhibit panels. (H)

### **Old (1790's) Portage/East Side of Creek**

### Interpret themes C, E, and G

- Create a new trail to follow the path of the 1790's portage trail, as called for in the GMP. The 1790's portage should be interpreted apart from the 19<sup>th</sup> century village. The lower portion of the portage should be handicapped accessible.
- Interpret the 19<sup>th</sup> century village site (including a church and school) with wayside exhibits and a site bulletin for a self-guided experience.

### **Historic Garden**

Programs presented at the garden would continue to address stories such as the pre-fur trade routes and what was being traded, subsistence, and cultural exchanges of food and technologies.

### **Interpret themes D, E, and G**

- Redesign the historic garden brochure and map to meet NPS graphic identity standards, (L)
- Produce a site bulletin that interprets ethnobotany (Native use of wild plants). (L)
- Enlarge the Three Sisters Garden to make the seeds produced there more viable. Encourage more community members to become actively involved in its planning, interpretation, and production. (H)
- Provide more tools so that community members and volunteers can participate in tending both gardens. (M)
- Provide a separate garden work area apart from interpretive prop/clothing storage. (M)

### **Dock/Front Gate**

Current activity centers around the Isle Royale NP ferry which leaves the national monument daily at 9:30am and returns at 6:00pm. The park concessionaire operates the ferry service, the Band operates the parking concession. Park staff assist with getting visitors on and off the boat, securing the vessel, and keeping restrooms open. The GMP recommends moving the ferry operation offsite; at the time of writing this LRIP the move appears likely to happen.

This area provides visitors the historical perspective of arriving from Montreal. This area provides opportunities to interpret the importance of Lake Superior in the voyageur highway and to the Ojibwe.

### **Interpret themes A, B, C, D, and G**

- Present costumed interpretive programs that interpret maritime history, transportation (such as goods arriving from North West Company vessels), and other aspects of themes A – D as best supported by the tangible resources and setting of the Dock and Lake. (M)
- Replace the wayside panels by the gate (they are faded and some of the information regarding the park's relationship with the Band is outdated). (H)
- Install a wayside exhibit panel at the end of the dock with a general view of Grand Portage (Mt. Rose, Mt. Josephine, and the portage gap); interpret theme(s) supported by the view. (L)

## Recommendations

### **Park Headquarters**

Headquarters will move to Grand Portage when the Heritage Center is built.

### **Grand Portage Lodge and Casino**

When the Heritage Center is built, an orientation function will continue at the Lodge.

- Install a panel at the Loge that orients visitors to the national monument. (H)

## **Recommendations by Media**

### **Wayside Exhibits**

- Produce a new wayside exhibit proposal. Review existing waysides for content effectiveness. New waysides will reflect NPS graphic identity and messaging standards. Ojibwe history and culture will be better connected to the site.

Optimal timing for a new parkwide wayside exhibit proposal would follow final site design and road and trail realignment associated with the new Heritage Center. Wayside exhibits might then be planned according to new visitor use and access patterns.

In new wayside exhibit text, a more liberal use of other languages would highlight the park's multi-cultural influences. Ojibwe names for places, people, and objects, and French language, where appropriate, would enhance the park story.

### **Orientation Exhibits**

- Grand Marais - provide park information, an introduction to the park story and significance, and orientation to the park site. (H)
- Heritage Center – provide orientation to the national monument (especially after-hours visitors). Provide brief overview for the site and visitor experience opportunities, including the stockade, period dress, and the Ojibwe Village area. (H)
- Stockade Entrance – revise existing exhibits to provide consistent structural and panel design and to better prepare visitors for the site experience. Use three-panel offset

configuration instead of triangle. Eliminate audio program; it intrudes on the historic setting and mood. (M)

### **Trailhead Exhibits**

- The Grand Portage – all trailhead exhibits should have a consistent design to help visitors easily find the information they are seeking. Replace wood signs with wayside panels or remove. (M)
- The Grand Portage (Fort Charlotte) – orientation panel to Fort Charlotte and the national monument: let visitors know that they have entered a NPS site and interpret the upcoming experience of the Portage. Orientation information can also be provided to those who will be entering the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. (H)
- Mount Rose Trail – expansion of this trail is called for in the GMP. (H)
- East Side Trail – potential trailhead for historic church, old village, school, etc. Trail called for in GMP. (H)

### **Bulletin Boards**

- Larger bulletin boards are needed with night lighting capability. (M)
- Add UV filtering panels to better preserve color photographs and text. (M)
- Replace wood frames with standard NPS frames. (M)

### **Interpretive (Low Profile) Exhibits**

- To maintain the historic atmosphere in and around the stockade, convert wayside exhibits to portable sled-style bases for easy relocation at times when the visual integrity of the historic scene is paramount. This has already been done for waysides that address the Chief Clerk's Quarters, Kitchen, and Guides' Quarters and should be applied to other exhibits as well. (M)
- To further reduce the intrusiveness of wayside exhibits, use the smaller "plant identification" format for several new exhibits (see HFC's wayside exhibit website for examples) such as exhibits interpreting the depot's ghosted foundations. (M)

## **Audiovisual Programs**

Audiovisual media are well suited to the presentation of chronological and sequential material. They can capture realism, provide emotional impact, and create a mood or atmosphere. Also, they can reach many visitors at one time and be portable for off-site use. Audiovisual elements may also be included in exhibits, in addition to being shown in dedicated theater spaces.

### **Website**

- Update the park website to
  - Provide an introduction to all interpretive themes. (H)
  - Enhance the experiences and understanding of those who cannot visit the site. (H)
  - Provide information on new developments such as the heritage center and new interpretive programs. (H)
  - Post relevant publications such as site bulletins, park newspaper, curriculum-based educational materials, and a fur trade bibliography. (H)
- Design the website with a hierarchy of information so users can become progressively more involved in the site depending upon their interests. (M)
- Enhance in-depth pages to address park themes. (H)
- Explore making the site more multi-sensory and interactive, with elements such as audio components, a virtual site tour, natural sounds, songs of the voyageurs, or Ojibwe stories. (M)
- Collect the monument's extensive collection of archival photographs and historical artifacts could be collected into a database. The 360-degree views of artifacts can be digitally captured and enhanced by detailed descriptions of their significance and history. (M)
- Provide information and links to assist users with trip planning; work with associated and nearby sites to create more mutual links. (M)
- Consult with other parks and the regional office to determine the best staffing solution for website maintenance and improvements. (H)

### **Interactive Computer Program**

- Develop an interactive computer program for the Heritage Center to introduce visitors to the Ojibwe heritage, fur trade history, the role of archaeology in the development of the site, and North American exploration accomplished by fur traders. Maps, interviews with elders, and graphics would be digitized and indexed for easy access. Computerized graphics would provide visitors with a "virtual" view of the stockade area complete with all 17 structures. The 8-1/2 mile Grand Portage Trail can be made virtually accessible. Funding for this program has been requested (PMIS 40564). (H)

### **CD-ROM**

- Develop an interactive CD-ROM as an educational outreach teaching aid. Lessons would be related to park themes and school curricula. Materials from the interactive computer

program could be used on this program as well. Distribute the CD to educational institutions to enhance schools' core curricula and disseminate thematic and stewardship messages. (H)

### **Virtual Tour of the Great Hall**

- Develop a virtual tour of the Great Hall. This could be placed in an exhibit, on the website, and/or included in an outreach CD-ROM. The program could include an interpreter presenting a talk while a "QuickTime" (or equivalent) movie shows the areas being discussed. Then the user could be "placed" in the room with a mouse-controlled 360-degree view of the space. Each item of significance in the space could be "clicked on" as a hot spot and additional information would be provided about that item. One could "enter" a room by clicking on the door and the corresponding QuickTime movie would play. By clicking on the next door the visitor could move through the structure. (M)

### **Video Presentation**

- Produce a 10 – 20 minute video presentation that will provide an overview of the history of Grand Portage and immerse visitors in essential scenes of the fur trade, life at the fort, and Ojibwe lifeways. This video will be shown in the Heritage Center. It will "set the stage" for visitors and allow them to place this story in historical context. (H)

Funding has been requested (PMIS 75957).

### **Video Loans**

- Transfer videos still in use to DVD; make multiple copies. (L)
- Complete conservation work on original 16mm films. (M)
- Purchase a video storage unit. (L)
- Develop an efficient and effective check-out and tracking system. (M)

### **Equipment**

- Purchase updated audiovisual equipment to meet the needs of the future interpretive program (e.g., slide projectors, high-definition video and Powerpoint projectors, and CD and DVD players). (H)

### **Publications**

- All publications will follow NPS graphic identity standards, ensuring high quality and creating a sense of identity for the national monument as a unit of the National Park System. (M)

## Recommendations

- Develop and distribute a standard information packet with a cover letter. (H)
- Develop and distribute site bulletins that explore primary theme elements not currently addressed (e.g., the international fur trade system, the geography of the area which created the voyageur highway and portage, winter lifeways of the Ojibwe and winter life at Grand Portage, and the impact of the fur trade industry on the environment). (H)
- Update the Junior Ranger booklet; explore the possibility of producing age-specific editions. (H)
- Reprint Grand Portage Trail brochure with updated information. (M)
- Develop a site bulletin on the monument's Mackinaw boat. (L)
- When appropriate, Ojibwe should be included with English in publications. (H)
- Print less expensive versions of the park brochure in French, Spanish, and German. (M)
- Research the potential demand for and costs of large-print and/or Braille versions of frequently requested brochures. (M)
- Produce a site bulletin for Ojibwe Village to help visitors picture typical activities and understand complexities of European/Ojibwe relationships. (H)

### **Newspaper**

The park newspaper serves several functions. It is a useful on-site trip planning tool, provides interpretation, and contains articles on park resources and values that many visitors might not directly experience.

- Redesign the park newspaper to meet NPS graphic identity standards. (M)
- Add a section to highlight affiliated sites. (M)

### **Other publications**

- Partner with the Band to produce "Witch Tree" and Mt. Josephine site bulletins in response to numerous visitor requests. (M)

### **Cooperating Association Sales Items**

- Work with the cooperating association to produce a site-specific 18<sup>th</sup> century cookbook as sales item to respond to visitor requests for recipes of items they see prepared on site. (L)
- Commission a painting of Ft. Charlotte to match the painting of the Stockade. (H)

## Special Events

Special events are an important interpretive tool for reaching diverse audiences, fostering resource-related enjoyment, and focusing upon specific park stories.

### Rendezvous

Through the Rendezvous, visitors can experience the hub of activity that could be found at the depot in the summer months. Current programming should continue to reflect historic gatherings and focus on park themes.

- Develop more activities to reconnect this event with the Band's Pow Wow. (H)
- As the event continues to grow, consider limits on encampment size. (H)
- Develop standards for the use and protection of historic props (such as the bake oven). (H)
- Emphasize to re-enactors the need to focus on visitor needs for interpretive opportunities. (H)

## Education

The educational opportunities at the national monument are numerous and exciting. Developing theme-based and curriculum-based programs for specific audiences will provide the opportunity for history to come alive for teachers and students. The possibilities for off-site and long distance learning are especially relevant, given the fact that the site has averaged 73,000 visitors a year over the last ten years and is currently closed from November to April. The addition of the Heritage Center open year-round will further enhance educational opportunities, and once established will be an integral part of the park's personal services.

Park experiences enhance learning through connections with real places, things, and authentic stories.

- Provide both on- and off-site educational programming. (H)
- Consult with local teachers and curriculum coordinators to determine what themes to target for what grade levels in conjunction with state curriculum requirements (4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grades study fur trade and Ojibwe culture). (H)
- Work with local and state departments of education and local teachers to create curriculum-based programs and materials and to develop standards of excellence. (H)



## Recommendations

- Create an education network to build partnerships and advise park staff of changing educational standards, philosophy, skills, and techniques. (H)
- Provide teachers and other educators with the interpretive information necessary to use the park as a “classroom without walls”. (H)
- Develop pre-and post-visit materials. (H)
- Use new technologies and media to reach new audiences (the website can be enhanced to meet the needs of teachers and students, and other technology such as a CD-ROM can be developed). This is especially important for people who may never visit the national monument. (H)
- Use front-end, formative, and summative evaluation in the development of educational materials. (H)
- Link NPS and non-NPS sites thematically and develop agreements with institutions that share an interest in broadening the influence of education to make resources more accessible and useful to the public. (H)
- Train teachers to use resource information in classrooms and present programs on-site (i.e. teacher workshops). (H)
- Develop cooperative programs to foster opportunities for research, internships, materials development, evaluation, and mentoring. (H)
- Revise the Junior Ranger program to reflect new park themes and target specific age groups. (H)
- Complete the traveling trunk program to support new park themes; implement on a national level. (H)
- Design programs and media to connect with a variety of learning styles and abilities. (H)

The park’s partnership with the Grand Portage Band is critical to successful educational programming, and other partnerships can be enhanced, such as that with Wolf Ridge.

Given the national monument’s limited staff and funding, realistic priorities must be set for the education program, so that goals set are reasonable and feasible and in concert with other interpretive priorities. Once established, the education program will be focused and park staff will not be able to respond to varied requests from all grade levels concerning different topics.

- The park and its partners will develop an education plan. Consult with local teachers and school districts to determine what grade levels to target, how best to address state curriculum requirements, and how park staff can work most effectively with school systems. Teacher involvement throughout the plan will

be critical. Consider other NPS educational strategies and efforts. (H)

Another area to be explored in the educational arena is that of sustained learning. The notion of progressive involvement and life-long learning can be explored in a variety of ways.

- Offer the experience of staying overnight at the stockade to learn more about voyageurs' experiences, or in the Ojibwe Village to learn about cultural lifeways. (H)
- Offer more in-depth theme-related programs and seminars for interested adults. (H)
- Design activities and curricula to increase in complexity as students advance in the educational system. (H)
- Include adults in programming, especially with growing numbers of Elderhostel groups. (H)

Community-based programs are also important sustained learning opportunities.

- Offer theme-related programs such as candlelight tours, a harvest event, and winter storytelling that would attract mostly local and regional audiences. (H)

A successful education program requires resources – staffing, time, equipment, and funding. Additional staffing will be required for the new Heritage Center. One of the new GS-5/7/9 positions could have time devoted to education and outreach. The park's Interpretive Specialist position could also have the development of education programs as a major emphasis.

Several national programs can aid in the development of an education program at the national monument:

- Parks as Classrooms is a nationally recognized program established in conjunction with the National Park Foundation.
- Teaching with Historic Places is administered by the National Park Service through the National Register of Historic Places. The purpose is to promote the use of significant sites, districts, buildings, structures, and objects in teaching history, social studies, geography, and other subjects.

### **Outreach**

Outreach services are a vital part of a balanced visitor services program. An outreach program can be used to disseminate information, convey basic NPS values, contact non-traditional audiences, and present

## Recommendations

interpretive and educational programs beyond park boundaries. Such off-site programs enable relationships to be strengthened with current stakeholders and fostered with future stewards. Many issues transcend park boundaries and require the support of local, regional, and national communities.

- Park staff will further develop its outreach program to increase the monument's profile as a unit of the National Park System with local residents, travel and tourism entities, and educational groups.
- Develop publications and displays to enhance participation in community events and functions. Develop a traveling exhibit to accompany staff to programs and events, and loan to various sites for display.

Existing partnerships and opportunities for outreach should continue, such as the Mackinaw boat ("Ambassador for the Monument"). This partnership with the North House Folk School is used to advertise the park and its programs. The park should continue its partnerships with the Cook County Schools, Cook County Historical Society, North House Folk School, and Camp Menogyn. The park participates in the Grand Portage Career Fair, Grand Portage Community Fair, and the Cook County High School Culture Day.

## Partnerships

Implementing this Long-Range Interpretive Plan depends on the continuation and expansion of existing partnerships and the development of new ones.

Partnerships are successful when all parties contribute and gain from the alliance, are involved in defining the goals and responsibilities of each participant, and when there is a continuous dialogue.

For interpretation, these partnerships can include coordinated efforts in providing information, orientation, education, training, research, special event and outreach programs, personal services activities, and media planning, design, and development.

Interpretive partnerships can play a key role in the delivery of essential programs and can also provide opportunities for enhanced interpretive products and services. Listed below are current and potential partners for interpretation at the national monument:

## 1) Grand Portage Band

### Goal:

- Interact as full partners in the successful operation of Grand Portage National Monument

### Benefits:

- Government to Government Relationship
- Park located within the Reservation
- Partnership in Visitor Center with some level of exhibit display
- Continued maintenance function
- Take active role in community
- Resource Management Programs – Various levels of cooperation, such as the sharing of information and career day participation
- Park staff direct visitors to greater Grand Portage sites
- Band members to make objects for display in Heritage Center
- Mentorship program

### Issues:

- Increase communication about various issues (including Witch Tree and Mt. Josephine Trail)
- Expand partnership between Rendezvous and Pow Wow, as well as all special events such as Winter Frolic
- Expand partnership with community and gardens
- Encourage more community involvement with the Ojibwe Village
- Work with the Lodge's naturalist to coordinate/assist with programming, have staff exchanges, and provide expanded programming related to the national monument
- Refresh cultural demonstration program to meet the changing needs of the community– possibly turn over to community members
- Assist with the development of the Band's cultural center/museum
- Band operates Traveler Information System (TIS) – work with them to develop system for park
- Issue of control over monument decisions and direction
- Band having interest, adequate funding and staffing to participate in partnership
- Concern from Band members that their interests/concerns will not be addressed in Heritage Center development
- Park staff concerned about loss of jobs to Band members (Indian Self-Governance Agreement)

## Recommendations

- Different goals between the two entities – need to accommodate different interests
- Some different viewpoints between Band and monument
- Holding back of information by community members – it’s not personal, but institutional
- Park may be perceived as an “absentee landlord”
- Different bureaucracies

### 2) Lavrendrye Provincial Park – Canada

#### Goal:

- Help preserve historic landscapes on Canadian side of Pigeon River (M)

#### Benefits:

- Land protected across from Fort Charlotte

#### Issues:

- Management plans state that Canada will provide motorized access to Fort Charlotte

### 3) Friends of the Boundary Waters

#### Goal:

- Support preservation, protection, and education for and about the Boundary Waters and its environs including Grand Portage National Monument

#### Benefits:

- Interested in interpretation/education of the two sites and in helping people make connections ( e.g., developing waysides exhibits)

#### Issues:

- Not yet a formal partnership

### 4) Eastern National

#### Goal:

- Support interpretation and education at Grand Portage National Monument and other sites within the NPS
- Help tell the park story by providing funding to assist the park in developing interpretive activities and programs, developing and marketing interpretive sales items, and supporting research initiatives.

- Develop a Scope of Sales Statement, which is a cooperative planning document usually prepared by the association's executive director and the park's cooperating association coordinator. It is a strategic document critical to the development of a sales line that meets the needs of the public, the association, and the park. (See Director's Order #32, Cooperating Associations). (H)

### **Benefits:**

- Provide theme-related and educational materials
- Provide funding which goes directly to interpretive operations (\$2800 In FY03)

### **Issues:**

- Time consuming to maintain partnership – staff, sales, paperwork
- Remote location makes it hard to attract staff
- Administrative streamlining needed
- Larger sales outlet needed (issue will be remedied with addition of Heritage Center)
- Remodeling needed to cover modern fixtures in existing store
- Should sell more traditional craft items

## **5) Friends of Grand Portage**

### **Goal:**

- Support Grand Portage National Monument related activities (cultural focus) (H)

### **Benefits:**

- True advocates in community
- Voice for issues
- Provide an alternative method for accomplishing needed projects
- Sponsor projects and events
- Solicit individual donations
- Be an advocate for Heritage Center and other park initiatives
- Become increasingly active, with ideas for assisting the park in carrying out its mission (e.g., helping with advertising the site, purchasing items the park needs)

### **Issues:**

- Requires considerable staff time and attention
- Risk that as they become more effective staff workload will increase
- Potential conflict of vision as to the future of story/site

## Recommendations

- Park would like the group to develop its own website with a link to the park's website, or add information about the group to its existing site

### 6) Isle Royale National Park

**Goal:** Develop a mutually supportive relationship to better serve visitors and interpret stories that incorporate both areas. (H)

**Benefits:**

- Provide concession income to community
- Provide contracting support for park
- Provide flow of visitors that the national monument would normally not see
- Complementary story

**Issues:**

- Benefits may not be commensurate with cost for the national monument
- The national monument assists with boat operation, information and orientation for Isle Royale NP, yet the park Royale does not provide on-site staffing
- Grand Portage NM would like to see Isle Royale NP become a more active partner and take more of an interest in park visitors traveling from the national monument by providing appropriate visuals, sufficient brochure stocks, and fiscal support for staff.

### 7) Academic/Research Community

**Goal:**

- Collect, analyze, and disseminate information (H)

**Benefits:**

- Research expertise
- Provide story information – source documents for interpretation
- Provide research legitimacy for interpretation

**Issues:**

- Benefits do not always match effort
- “Victim of success” – researchers can overwhelm site (logistics and funding)
- There may be conflicting information

The national monument would like more interaction and to improve communications with the following groups:

### 8) Minnesota Historical Society

#### Goal:

- Collaborate to preserve and interpret Minnesota History; especially the history of the Great Lakes Fur Trade and Ojibwe heritage. (H)

#### Potential Benefits:

- MHS curates a large portion of the national monument's collections free of charge
- Provides research assistance
- Provides research and collections expertise

#### Issues:

- None identified at this time

### 9) Minnesota Department of Natural Resources/Grand Portage State Park

#### Goal:

- Work with the DNR to interpret the geology and geography of the area as it pertains to park stories (M)

#### Potential Benefits:

- Staffs assist each other with special events
- Grand Portage State Park (High Falls) is an important extension of the national monument's story, especially concerning geology and geography.

#### Issues:

- None identified at this time

### 10) Department of Transportation

#### Goal:

- Improve highway approaches to the park (H)

#### Potential Benefits:

- Improve signs along highway 61 in both directions
- Improve pull-offs and providing additional interpretive information
- Improving visitor access to the national monument



## Recommendations

### Issues:

- Many current signs are old, inaccurate, or misleading
- Safety concerns at point where Grand Portage Trail crosses highway 61

## 11) Cook County Schools

### Goal:

- Establish educational partnerships with local schools to develop curriculum-based educational programs and to be an educational resource for local schools. (H)

### Potential Benefits:

- Create local support and stewardship for the park
- Encourage life-long learning within the community

### Issues:

- Schools have budgetary constraints that threaten educational programs at the national monument.

## 12) Cook County Historical Society

### Goal:

- Share resources related to the interpretation of local history and provide quality research facilities for the public (H)

### Potential Benefits:

- Shared primary resources
- Research opportunities
- Community outreach opportunities
- Encourage life-long learning and stewardship for local resources

### Issues:

- Budget/Staff constraints

### 13) North House Folk School

**Goal:**

- Provide interpretation and opportunities to learn of traditional and 18<sup>th</sup> -Century skills including construction of canoes, boats, snowshoes and toboggans (M)

**Potential Benefits:**

- Shared skills of master craftsmen
- Shared resources

**Issues:**

- Would like to have the mackinaw boat (a shared resource) on site more often.

### 14) US Forest Service

**Goals:**

- Preserve and interpret area's unique natural resources (M)

**Benefits:**

- Share resources and expertise of sister agencies

**Issues:**

- None identified at this time

### 15) Grand Marais Chamber of Commerce

**Goal:**

- Improve visitation to Grand Portage National Monument and Cook County historic sites (H)

**Potential Benefits:**

- Mutually beneficial to advertise national monument through Chamber of Commerce information center and mailings
- Reach more potential visitors
- A NPS site can benefit economies in both Grand Marais and Grand Portage
- Disseminate park information to area business
- Possible small exhibit at the information center to advertise the park

## Recommendations

### Issues:

- None identified

### 16) Camp Menogyn

#### Goal:

- To partner to provide interpretive opportunities to youth (H)

#### Benefits:

- Community outreach opportunities
- Encourage life-long learning and stewardship for local resources
- Youth educational opportunities
- Shared programming

#### Issues:

- None identified

### 17) Voyageurs National Park

#### Goals:

- Cooperate in telling shared stories (Voyageur NP's story is very much connected to the national monument's) (H)
- To assist each other in respective missions (H)

#### Benefits:

- Share staff expertise
- Share related research and resource materials
- Foster visitors' connections to NPS resources
- Encourage stewardship

#### Issues:

- None identified

#### General Partnership Actions:

- Park staff should work with affiliated sites to learn from each other's experiences, stay apprised of current events and activities, and provide assistance as appropriate. Increased communication and partnership with related sites that interpret the voyageurs' story, such as Voyageurs NP and Fort William, will help the national monument tell a complete and comprehensive story to a wide variety of visitors. It will also allow sites to cooperatively develop programming about

common themes. Park staff will work with local businesses, agencies, and organizations to ensure that the park's messages reach diverse audiences.

### **Curatorial Services and Library**

- Provide rebinding and conservation of “at risk” rare books in the collection (there is a PMIS project statement for this need) (H)
- Obtain microfilm/fiche reader & printer (M)
- Set up a computer base station to allow library users to access library data bases (H)
- Have relevant data bases available on the park website for virtual visitors to use in conducting research (M)
- Rebind worn books to keep them accessible for use (H)
- Bind magazines for easier tracking and better care (H)
- Index vertical files and copy on archival quality papers (H)
- Create a section dedicated to historical demonstration materials (M)

### **Slide, Photograph, and Video Collection**

- Make at least 3 copies of each original slide so the slides can be available for use without endangering the originals (there is a PMIS project statement for this project) (L)
- Obtain slide viewers, both hand held and table-top units (L)
- Obtain additional slide images of the Ft. Charlotte and Pigeon River areas of the park (H)
- Identify people in older slides (H)
- Add digital scans of each slide to the data base for easier searching (H)
- Make often-used slides available on park website for publications/newspapers to access easily (H)
- Continue to update the park's photograph and negative collection (H)
- Provide appropriate photo storage albums and cabinets (H)
- Obtain a separate fireproof negative storage unit (H)
- Organize negatives (H)
- Coordinate with local and state historical societies to obtain copies of important/relevant photos in their collections to be available at the park (H)
- Initiate a community project to share photographs. The park has many photographs that the Grand Portage community may like copies of and they, in turn, have many images of which the park would like reproductions. (M)
- Update photographs of related sites (L)
- Provide a proper video storage cabinet (M)
- Make multiple copies of the most-used videos (H)

## Recommendations

- Make DVD copies when technology allows (M)

## Research/Plan/Report Needs

### Plans/Reports/Studies

- Historic Structures Reports/Historic Furnishings Reports/Exhibit Plans for future reconstructed buildings including the Guide/Interpreter's Quarters, Carpenter/Cooper's Shop, and Trading Store (H)
- Cultural Landscape Report for the Old Village landscape east of Grand Portage Creek (H)
- Inventory of Ethnographic Resources (partially begun in summer 2003) (H)
- Historic Maritime Activity Areas Study (vessels, docks, shoreline) (M)
- Monument-wide Archeological Survey (M)
- Archeological Survey of Stockade interior (M)
- Catalogue of archival collections (H)
- Historic Furnishing Plans for Great Hall Bedrooms (L)
- Study of Winter Lifeways at Grand Portage (H)
- Education Plan (H)
- Publicity/Marketing Plan (M)
- Sign Plan (H)
- Wayside Exhibit Proposal (M)

### General Research

Conduct research in areas related to interpretive themes (subject matter), audiences, and service effectiveness. Specific topics include:

#### **Subject Matter**

- Ojibwe culture and lifeways particularly associated with the Grand Portage Ojibwe (H)
- The fur trade and the specific topics associated with it (e.g., technologies, maritime history, and associated individuals) (H)
- Cook County history (M)
- Material culture for all appropriate time periods (M)

#### **Audience, Visitors**

- Demographic and psychographic (e.g., attitudes, expectations, beliefs, and assessments) research on monuments visitors (L)
- Audience assessment: who's visiting and who's not and why not (M)

- Audience segmentation: what are useful segments of actual and potential audiences (e.g., by origin, group type, prior knowledge and interests, ethnicity, socioeconomic status) (M)

### **Media and Program Effectiveness**

- Implement a two-tiered program of monitoring and evaluation of interpretation, education, and visitor services. Monitoring is a preliminary assessment of what seems to be working and what may need more intensive evaluation. Methods include assessing attendance and visitation statistics, observation, informal visitor conversations, suggestion box or feedback forms, and staff experiences and reactions. Evaluation is targeted to those services which, according to monitoring, merit increased attention. Evaluation methods may be qualitative and/or quantitative. They include observation, interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, and impact analysis. (National Park Service, 2001) (M)

## **Staffing**

The following additional staff are required to implement successfully the preferred alternative in the GMP and the more detailed proposals in this plan, (National Park Service, 2003):

- Two permanent GS-5/7/9 Interpreters (staffing Heritage Center, developing and presenting education/outreach programming, further enhancing personal services programming, and media development)
- One permanent GS-9/11 Curator/Archivist
- Three seasonal GS-4/5 park rangers

### **Volunteers In Parks (VIP)**

- Recruit and train additional volunteers to meet program and operational needs. (H)
- Request additional VIP funds to properly reimburse volunteers for their allowable expenses. Additional funding is also required in order to add more period clothing for both the adult and youth volunteers. (H)
- Improve training for the mentor program to successfully implement the future interpretive goals for the national monument. (H)

# Implementation Priorities

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The following actions are listed in approximate priority order within each category.

## **Interpretive Media (e.g., Exhibits, Wayside Exhibits, Audiovisual programs, Information Kiosks)**

- 1) Heritage Center Exhibit Design/Fabrication/Installation
- 2) Remove modern intrusions from Great Hall (bookstore, film room, cultural demonstrators room)
- 3) Ghosting & Wayside Exhibits for additional structures within stockade
- 4) Produce a park film
- 5) Produce wayside exhibits for exterior of heritage center as pathway to stockade area
- 6) New informational kiosks
- 7) Upgrade Front Gate interpretive panels
- 8) Upgrade HQ & site info boards (Make two sided with night lighting and UV block glass)
- 9) Interactive Video Kiosk
- 10) Traveler's Information Radio Station
- 11) Transfer select park videos to DVD. Make multiple copies of most requested videos
- 12) Purchase video storage cabinet
- 13) Move Lodge lobby exhibit to TIC center to reach more visitors
- 14) Create interpretive wayside exhibit for Gatehouse
- 15) Put wayside exhibits in stockade area on portable stands so they can be moved for special events, filming etc.
- 16) Upgrade all waysides to meet current NPS graphic identity standards (this would include updating text to reflect current research)
- 17) Create wayside exhibit for Voyageur Encampment
- 18) Create wayside exhibit for dock area with a general view identifying Mt. Rose, Mt. Josephine, Grand Portage Gap and other historic landscape features
- 19) Create additional traveling exhibits that could stand alone interpretively as a loan to various sites (current example is our 5 panel history of dog sledding exhibit)

## **Planning**

- 1) Produce treatment plans for 2 of 4 Great Hall corner rooms
- 2) Produce Parkwide Sign Plan
- 3) Produce Parkwide Wayside Exhibit Proposal
- 4) Update Furnishings Plan for Great House

### **Publications/Website/Library/Signs**

- 1) Produce site bulletins:
  - a) Ojibwe Village
  - b) Updated Grand Portage Trail
  - c) Witch Tree
  - d) Mackinaw Boat
- 2) Install new highway signs that meet NPS Identity guidelines
- 3) Improve Junior Ranger Program
- 4) Improve placement of park signs on highways and in community (signs in Grand Marais, and points south like Two Harbors)
- 5) Pedestrian Safety signs on highway 61 at Grand Portage Trail crossing
- 6) Enhance park website
- 7) Create more links with associated sites
- 8) Enhance in-depth pages to meet more visitor experience goals
- 9) Add a virtual tour of the Grand Portage
- 10) Create curriculum-based education pages
- 11) Make library/slide/photo inventories available on line
- 12) Add our site to the NPS Web Ranger program
- 13) Add historic demonstration section to library
- 14) Produce photo album for the kitchen with photos of a more representative use of area (cooks during Rendezvous) so visitors get a better sense of this area's historical activities
- 15) Continue to improve park newspaper
- 16) Add foreign language versions of Grand Portage National Monument Map & Guide (French, Spanish & German)

### **Programming**

- 1) Obtain more interpretive training relative to the NPS interpretive competencies and Interpretive Development Program
- 2) Develop curriculum-based educational program that can be used on site and also be taken on the road during the winter months when site is closed
- 3) Complete traveling trunk program (needs teachers workbook)
- 4) Improve formal program advertising
- 5) Purchase updated equipment including Powerpoint projector
- 6) Need to purchase more historic tools, clothing, props Also need the same specifically designed for off-site programming
- 7) Improve special events like Rendezvous by connecting event programming more closely to park themes
- 8) Create winter programming for heritage center



## Implementation Priorities

- 9) Increase off-site programming in summer months (campfire programs at campground in Grand Marais, at Grand Portage Lodge)
- 10) Create a community gardening program
- 11) Improve programming in Voyageur Encampment Area which may include moving encampment to a more viable location
- 12) Increase interactive programming on site (more use of fur presses)
- 13) Improve community outreach programming (participation in local fairs, special events)
- 14) Improve programming on the Grand Portage Trail and at Fort Charlotte

### **Visitor Services**

- 1) Implement Daily Call Sheet to ensure other local information centers are aware of park programming/special events
- 2) Add outdoor brochure box at HQ in Grand Marais
- 3) Publicize park events on community calendars and in community education fliers
- 4) Make lower portion of Grand Portage Trail accessible
- 5) Public telephone
- 6) Better lighting for historic buildings for dark rainy days (free standing lighting that can be put away on bright sunny days)
- 7) Add more and historically correct seating to Canoe Warehouse and other interpretive areas
- 8) Improve accessibility (trails/pathways; provide most requested brochures in larger print)

### **Key Partnerships**

#### **Eastern National**

- 1) Continue working with Eastern National to provide relevant sales items (e.g., add an 18<sup>th</sup> century site-related cooking and gardening book and also a full-sized print of a likeness of Fort Charlotte)

#### **Friends of Grand Portage**

- 1) Expand advertising of activities and resources in the national monument
- 2) Assist with fundraising ideas for the group

#### **Grand Portage Band of Minnesota Chippewa**

- 1) Continue to improve communications on issues important to our visitors (Witch Tree, Mt. Josephine Trail)
- 2) Encourage more community involvement with park programming (gardens, Ojibwe Village)

- 3) Provide assistance wherever appropriate on Band's museum project
- 4) Refresh and change cultural demonstration program with direct input from community
- 5) Assist with TIC if Band continues to operate this area along Highway 61
- 6) Partner with Band's naturalist to provide expanded programming related to our site

### **Grand Portage State Park**

- 1) Offer joint programming with state park to highlight geography and geology relative to park themes
- 2) Continue to assist each other with programming/staffing for special events

### **Staffing**

- 1) Increase number of local VIP's
- 2) Increase training for mentorship program
- 3) Add historic clothing for youth volunteers
- 4) Increase funding for VIP program
- 5) Start Senior Ranger Corps
- 6) Increase permanent positions by 2 and seasonal positions by 4 when heritage center is complete
- 7) Obtain seasonal staff position from Isle Royale NP to assist in Isle Royale operations on site
- 8) Dedicate one staff position to maintain park library/slide/photo collections and park website
- 9) Add a historical demonstration "How To" to our new employee handbook
- 10) Offer more historic skills workshops for community and visitors
- 11) Add an Ojibwe Cultural Specialist

### **Heritage Center**

FY05/06: Planning, design and construction  
FY07: Open Heritage Center (3/31/07)

# Appendix

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## PLANNING TEAM & CONSULTANTS

### Grand Portage National Monument

|                        |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Tim Cochrane           | Superintendent               |
| Pamela Neil            | Chief of Interpretation      |
| Dave Cooper            | Chief of Resource Management |
| Mike Plummer-Steen     | Interpretive Specialist      |
| Rosie Novitsky         | Administrative Officer       |
| Karl Koster            | Seasonal Park Ranger         |
| Jon McGann             | Seasonal Park Ranger         |
| Sarah McGann           | Seasonal Park Ranger         |
| Margaret Plummer-Steen | Seasonal Park Ranger         |
| Erik Simula            | Seasonal Park Ranger         |
| Robert Swanson         | Seasonal Park Ranger         |
| Stephen Veit           | Seasonal Park Ranger         |

### Grand Portage Band

|             |                                     |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| Vicki Raske | Grand Portage Band Museum Committee |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|

### Stakeholders

|              |                                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Douglas Birk | Institute for Minnesota Archeology |
|--------------|------------------------------------|

### Midwest Regional Office

|             |                                       |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| Tom Richter | Chief of Interpretation and Education |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|

### Harpers Ferry Center

|                |                                             |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Dick Hoffman   | Senior Wayside Exhibit Planner              |
| Wendy Janssen  | Interpretive Planner (first draft)          |
| Don Kodak      | Associate Manager for Workflow Management   |
| Paula Beale    | Exhibit Planner                             |
| Justin Radford | Project Manager/AV Producer-Director        |
| Sam Vaughn     | Associate Manager for Interpretive Planning |

## Relevant PMIS project statements

- Establish Grand Portage Heritage Center, #8143
- Produce a New Park Video, #75957
- Develop Interactive Computer Program for Visitors, #40564
- Develop Traveling Archaeological Exhibit, #20195
- Furnish Great Hall Bedrooms, #19686
- Install Interpretive Exhibit in Canoe Warehouse, #8149
- Produce/Upgrade Park Publications in FY03, #86603
- Replace and Update Interpretive Clothing Inventory, #86989
- Repair/Replace Large Outdoor Ojibwe & Fur Trade Interpretive Objects, #63069
- Replace Large Outdoor Fur Trade Interpretive Objects, Phase II, #74550
- Maintain/Repair Indoor Exhibit Area, #80028
- Repair/Rehab Wayside, Interpretive Signs, and Trail Signs in FY03, #24718
- Research and Interpret Winter Lifeways, #50197
- Research Route of the Grand Portage, #16266
- Evaluate and Revitalize Ojibwe Heritage Programming, #71937
- Complete Mt. Rose Loop Trail, #86715
- Rehab and Repair Dock, #23582
- Conservation Treatment of Artifacts, #37857
- Identify Historic Maritime Activity Areas, #37540
- Rehabilitate Access Ways for Accessibility, #122
- Photograph Museum Collection, #44811
- Complete Cultural Landscape Inventory, #36598
- Implement Storage & Exhibit Recommendations for Ethnology Collection, #81119
- Complete Outstanding Curatorial Projects, #36501
- Repair/Rehab Great Hall Infrastructure, #50158
- Conduct Ethnographic Overview & Assessment, #7678
- Restore Historic Grand Portage to Original Condition, #50159
- Phase I: Produce Wayside Exhibit Proposal, Produce New Wayside Exhibits, Meet Messaging Standards #105187
- Phase II: Produce Wayside Exhibit Proposal, Produce New Wayside Exhibits, Meet Messaging Standards #105187
- Phase III: Produce Wayside Exhibit Proposal, Produce New Wayside Exhibits, Meet Messaging Standards #105187
- Install Traveler's Information Station Equipment at GRPO #97536
- Present Traditional Skills Workshop in FY05 #97707
- Preserve Park Slide Collection #19715
- Furnish Corner Rooms in Great Hall-Phase I #19686
- Furnish Corner Rooms in Great Hall-Phase II #19686
- Install Audio-Visual Equipment in heritage center #112976

- Produce Comprehensive Sign Plan #112329

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