

Copper Falls State Park
Name of Property

Ashland County
County and State

Wisconsin

4. National Park Service Certification

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

Edson Beall

12.16.05

for

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as
as apply)

private
public-local
X public-State
public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

building(s)
district
structure
X site
object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources
in the count)

| contributing | noncontributing |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 5 | 9 buildings |
| 1 | sites |
| 4 | 2 structures |
| | objects |
| 10 | 11 total |

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources
is previously listed in the National Register**

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

LANDSCAPE: park

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

LANDSCAPE: park

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Rustic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation log

Granite

walls

log

Granite

roof

shake

asphalt

other

wood

Narrative Description

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

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8. Statement of Significance

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

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

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Conservation
Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1929-1953

Significant Dates

1929
1936

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Knobla, Bernard Herbert
Steiro, J.C.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Mellen Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1160 acres

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

| | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| 1 | <u>15</u> | <u>681242</u> | <u>5140583</u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |

| | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| 3 | <u>15</u> | <u>682084</u> | <u>5137787</u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |

| | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| 2 | <u>15</u> | <u>682001</u> | <u>5140577</u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |

| | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| 4 | <u>15</u> | <u>681251</u> | <u>5136943</u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |

X See Continuation Sheet

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Kerkes Schueller
 organization
 street & number 1900 Woodfield Drive
 city or town Richfield

state WI

date July 2005
 telephone 262-628-9396
 zip code 53076

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

Property Owner

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

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---|----|------------------|
| name/title | State of Wisconsin, Department of Natural Resources | | date |
| organization | | | telephone |
| street&number | | | zip code |
| city or town | state | WI | |

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Start

Park Location

Copper Falls State Park lies within the Penokee-Gogebic Mineral Range in the northeastern portion of Ashland County of northern Wisconsin. Parkland lies approximately 24 miles southeast of the county seat of Ashland, located on the shore of Lake Superior. Copper Falls State Park is also 24 miles west of Ironwood, Michigan. The park is in the township of Morse and is located 1.8 miles northeast of Mellen. The entrance can be found by driving north on State Highway 13/77 and turning northeast on State Highway 169.

Unique Features of Ashland County

The Penokee-Gogebic Mineral Range is an 80-mile stretch of glaciated rock formations that surround numerous rivers, creeks, and lakes within thickly forested hardwood and conifer timberland. The mineral range begins at Lake Gogebic in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and extends into northern Wisconsin in Ashland County. (Carmody7) This mountainous ridge separates the southern third of Ashland County from the northern section, and forms the Northern Continental Divide that separates the flow of Wisconsin waterways. All rivers west of the ridge flow south in the Chippewa River and eventually empty into the Mississippi River. All rivers east of the ridge flow north emptying into Lake Superior. (www.explorewisconsin.com) A highway marker for the Northern Continental Divide can be found between Mellen and Glidden on State Highways 13/77. Mellen is situated at the base of the mineral range where northerly winds from Lake Superior sometimes deposit up to two feet of snow in one storm and record low temperatures exceeding 40 below zero.

The Penokee-Gogebic Mineral Range is known for its abundant deposits of iron ore that are sent to the Ashland Ore Docks on Lake Superior for shipment to ports on Lake Michigan. Black granite of exceptional quality is also found in abundance and is used in the manufacture of monuments. During the Civil War, modest copper deposits mined from this area helped supply material used in the Union war effort. (WI DNR, Publ. Pr-108-00REV, 3) In the 1880s, two copper mines existed within the park near the site of the present log footbridge north of the combination building.

Mt. Whittlesey, 10 miles south of Copper Falls Park in eastern Ashland County, has an elevation of 1,872 feet and is the sixth highest elevation in Wisconsin. Eagles Peak, southeast of Copper Falls Park and southwest of Mt. Whittlesey, has an elevation of 1,682 feet and is the 17th highest elevation in the state. (www.americasroof.com) The elevation of Copper Falls Park ranges from 1,250 feet above sea level at the current park entrance to 900 feet above sea level at the northern end of the park. (1983 USGS Topical Survey Map)

Due to its elevation, Copper Falls Park contains three waterfalls. The Bad River cascades over rocks at

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Red Granite Falls in the southwestern edge of Copper Falls Park. It continues north through canyon walls that range from 60 to 100 feet and spills 29 feet over Copper Falls. The Tyler Forks River plunges 34 feet at Brownstone Falls, merges with the swift currents of the Bad River and continues north until it flows into Lake Superior. (www.dnr.state.wi.us)

Two quarries south of Loon Lake produced large deposits of black granite. In addition, sand and gravel pits east of the Bad River near Highway 77 provided material for resurfacing miles of road surrounding the park. Thick clay, red sandstone, granite, brownstone river rock and sand form the shoreline of the iron-rich water of the Bad River.

Much of Ashland County is federally or tribally owned property. The Bad River Indian Reservation for the Lake Superior Chippewa (Ojibwe) Indians is adjacent land north of Copper Falls State Park. (1983 USGS Topical Survey map) The reservation land contains conifer and hardwood forest, crop and dairy farms. In addition, there are 180,630 acres in Ashland County currently reserved for the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. (<http://www.fs.fed.us>)

Land Acquisition

There is conflicting research regarding the initial park acreage recorded from the DNR Land Records Office, the Master Park Plan, and a CCC Survey performed in 1936. According to the Department of Natural Resources Land Records Office in Madison, Wisconsin, two land purchases officially created Copper Falls State Park. The state of Wisconsin purchased 200 acres of land on May 3, 1929 from the Border Land Company for \$5,000. The state purchased another 320 acres on May 6, 1929 from the Lake Superior Power Company for \$10,000. In all, the state purchased 520 acres to establish Copper Falls Park in 1929. The land encompassed the confluence of the Bad and Tyler Forks rivers containing Copper Falls and Brownstone Falls.

Six years later, the DNR Land Records Office reports the state purchased additional acreage prior to the assignment of a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) work camp, as evidenced in the following meeting minutes of July 22, 1935 from the Wisconsin Conservation Commission: "Mr. Cornelius L. Harrington, Superintendent of Parks & Forests, explained to the commission an opportunity for an addition of approximately 600 acres to the Copper Falls State Park, pointing out that with the establishment of a state park Emergency Conservation Work Camp (ECW or CCC Camp) at Copper Falls this additional acreage, which is suited only for park purposes, could be improved and would add materially to the recreational facilities furnished in that area. It was moved and seconded that the department be authorized to use available funds, not to exceed four dollars an acre, under Section 23.09, (7), (d) for the purchase of 600 additional acres of parkland." (Wisconsin Conservation Commission, Division Of Forest and Parks, Conservation Commission Minutes, 1935 - 1937, Series

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812, Box 2) According to the DNR Land Records Office, the purchased land at the time of CCC park development totaled approximately 1,120 acres.

The Master Park Plan drafted in 1935 notes an area of 1,560 acres for Copper Falls Park. However, the acreage calculation given is incorrect for the parcel shown. The master plan clearly corresponds to section delineations equaling 29 quarter sections or 1160 acres. These same sections, as well as additional park land, are indicated in a 1963 mapping of the park based on the 1936 land survey by Charles E. Baker. The same 29 quarter sections also are shown in a mapping of the park prepared by the State and US Department of Agriculture in 1949. The acreage of the 29 original quarter sections is the nominated parcel.

The original land purchases of 1929 and 1936 for Copper Falls Park were in sections 8, 17, and 20. They are three vertically stacked U.S. Geological Survey township sections in Ashland County at T45N-R2W in the Township of Morse. The original southern boundary of the park ended at Murphy Lake with entrance access by a dirt road off of Highway K.

The NW 1/8 and NE 1/8 of the NW 1/4 of section 29 contains the present entrance to park from State Highway 169 at Loon Lake. A 1946 Ashland County Plat Map shows there is a fork in the road of Highway K at Loon Lake. The left fork became the entrance to Copper Falls Park and the right fork continued as Highway K. A 1958 Ashland Plat Map shows that the County Road K was renamed State Highway 169. At Loon Lake the entrance to Copper Falls Park became County Road J and the right fork continued as State Highway 169. The owners of the land at the location of the present park entrance were the Joint School District #1 of the Mellen Board of Education and Loon Lake Park owned by the town of Mellen. Up until 1954, the park entrance remained a county road until the land could be purchased by the Wisconsin Conservation Commission and added to the acreage for Copper Falls Park.

Copper Falls Master Park Plan

Mr. C. L. Harrington, State Superintendent of Parks and Forest Service for the State of Wisconsin Conservation Department, Department of Interior, National Park Service approved the Master Park Plan for development for Copper Falls State Park in 1935.

A team of surveyors, landscape architects, architects, engineers, and foresters from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service and the State of Wisconsin Conservation Department, Division of Forests and Parks, Branch of Planning, State Park Division drafted the Master Park Plan for Copper Falls State Park in a collaborative effort. Eugene Odbert, Jr. completed the final draft on September

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25, 1935. (Wisconsin Historical Soc., RLIN#:WIHV90-A823, Archives Main Stacks, Call #: Series 2424, Shelf: MAD-1N/Oversize/3-4, Parks-Designs & Plans-Wisconsin) Blueprints for the same date drafted by Mr. Odbert, Jr. show the Master Plan of the water supply system, which became the first construction project on the park land. A Master Plan for the power lines soon followed.

Landscape architects identified the natural features of the land around which they created functional areas for buildings, parking, camping, playground, trails, and roads. The Master Park Plan for Copper Falls Park contained a particularly challenging landscape due to the meandering nature of the Bad River that included two hairpin loops and 100-foot banks of sand, clay, loose gravel, and rock where severe erosion occurred from rapid rain run-off. Deep ravines made trail development difficult to construct without incurring great expense. The terrain required two bridges over the Bad River, one over the Tyler Forks River, plus one more bridge over a ravine west of the Bad River. Fourteen-year old swing bridges had to be removed or repaired. Paths and trails required retaining walls to prevent severe erosion. Miles of guardrail fencing needed to be constructed to guide visitors safely through the park and away from stone ledges and steep drop-offs. Some park trails required smooth surfaces to walk or stand at viewing vistas rather than sliding on loose sand or gravel. Flat areas for camping, picnicking, parking, or building sites tended to be soft and prone to flooding.

Stump removal occupied a large part of CCC time in preparing trails and building sites. Areas southwest and south of the Bad River had been heavily logged and considered part of the cutover. A large area west of the Bad River, near the site of the observation tower, required ground preparation for tree and shrubbery reforestation due to highly compacted clay with poor drainage. This area also required forest fire suppression work to remove forest fuels. Only stumps and small trees remained west of the Bad River that required timber stand improvement to aid in forest growth. Areas east of the Bad River and south of the Tyler Forks remained thickly wooded through the canyons and deep ravines. Erosion of the banks often slid large trees into the canyon. Truck trails and roads on both sides of the Bad River needed to be constructed around natural obstacles, tree stumps, and sometimes soft, flood-prone ground.

The original Master Park Plan prepared for construction of a custodian's residence, a garage & storage building, a contact station, and an L-shaped combination building. When driving from south to north inside the park, one would view these buildings in the middle of the park grounds and in this order. The pump house is located on the south side of the Tyler Forks River at the confluence of the Bad and Tyler Forks rivers. The observation tower is in line with the combination building, but located approximately 800 feet west of the Bad River. All of these are contributing elements within the park. The original Master Plan included the location of the Civilian Conservation Corps campsite east of the Bad River, approximately 400 feet east of the custodian's residence.

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One shelter building with a fireplace, designed by Bernard Knobla and drafted into the Master Park Plan, was never built. It is believed that the addition made to the combination building in 1937 put the construction costs over budget so that there insufficient funds to build the second shelter building. Architectural drawings for this building still remain on file with the Wisconsin Historical Society in the Manuscripts Collection (Series 2424, Box-1: Architectural Drawings: Copper Falls State Park: WHI-6112, 6113, 6114, 6115). The Master Park Plan shows three areas labeled "shelter." Two of these refer to the position of the sheltered benches and not the fireplace shelter previously mentioned. One of the sheltered benches is located southeast of Devils Gate Footbridge and the other is northeast of the Bad River between Devils Gate and Brownstone Falls. Both of these shelters are in the designated spot on the Master Park Plan. However, the other area labeled "shelter" is on the west side of the Bad River opposite the contact station. Perhaps this was the place designated for the fireplace shelter building designed by Bernard H. Knobla. (It is interesting to note that this was an area that once contained a flight of stairs on a hill of sand that was completely destroyed in a severe flood in 1946. Had this shelter been placed in this location, it could have also been destroyed in the flood of 1946.)

All park areas follow the turns and bends along the course of the Bad River. The only structure west of the Bad River is the observation tower. All buildings, rest rooms, and camping areas are located east of the Bad River. Copper Falls State Park contains landscaped areas for: campsites, camper parking, trailer and car parking lots, a winter parking lot, a picnic area with grills, a playground area, a baseball diamond, designated public roads, and private maintenance roads for delivery, emergency and maintenance vehicles. There are designated dirt foot trails that are part of the North Country National Scenic Trail system, with sections used for mountain biking and groomed cross country ski trails. Copper Falls contains five footbridges. Meticulous stonework is found in mortared flagstone paths, rest areas and viewing vistas along with mortared granite retaining walls.

The Civilian Conservation Corps and the WPA

The cutover encompassed the portion of Wisconsin, north of a line from Green Bay to Eau Claire where barren stump fields prone to fires and abandoned farms prone to severe erosion covered the majority of the land. In the Mellen area in particular, everyone's economic needs were very closely connected to the Great Depression of natural resources. Everyone in northern Wisconsin who had been employed in the logging industry suffered great financial hardship before the Depression hit the rest of the nation.

To relieve the intense suffering caused by massive unemployment during the Great Depression, newly elected president Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the United States Congress quickly authorized several programs for humanitarian aid in March 1933. The programs combined the two-fold purpose of

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restoring our nations depleted natural resources and restoring our nation's economy by hiring men for conservation and civic work projects. Two of President Roosevelt's emergency relief programs that proved to be most successful and productive were the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration.

The federal government made funds available to each state that allowed the hiring of unemployed men, ages 18-25 for emergency conservation work (ECW). Several years later, the federal government changed the name of the ECW program to the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Each CCC camp contained approximately 200 men who received room and board in exchange for working an eight-hour day, five days a week. They performed physical labor for \$30 per month, with \$25 of the money going directly to their families to help eliminate their need for state relief. (U.S. Government, Your CCC, 52) Each camp was under the authority of the military, but the work they performed was under the supervision of the Department of the Interior.

At the request of the President, every state needed to complete a land-use assessment of conservation needs and determine if land was being properly utilized for the soil type and weather conditions. For example, a farmer could not settle on land not suited for farming and then collect relief if his crops failed. Ashland County also required every citizen to plant a garden in order to receive any relief payments.

The earliest Wisconsin CCC assignments in 1933 were for forestry and state nurseries but the earliest state park CCC camps were around the Milwaukee area where the greatest number of unemployed men resided. The numbering system went from SP-1 to SP-16 for Wisconsin state parks although the CCC campsites numbered up to SP-23. This means there were seven CCC camps doing work in the same park. Multiple CCC state park assignments were for the large parks such as Whitnall, Estabrook, West Allis, Sheridan, and the Honey Creek Parkway in the Milwaukee area. In the beginning of the CCC program, the Department of Labor established CCC registration offices in cities before setting up regional rural offices. The CCC program also originally intended to have camps within 50 miles of where the men lived. This resulted in park development near large cities. However, as federal funds for CCC camp projects became available, Wisconsin placed a priority on its critical conservation needs in the cutover. In 1933, there were 23 CCC camps assigned to state and federal reforestation projects. In addition, the Conservation Commission developed a master plan for county, state and federal nurseries, and planting of shelter breaks. In 1933, there were also eight camps devoted just to erosion control along the Mississippi and Wisconsin rivers.

CCC state park development outside of the Milwaukee area did not start until 1935. CCC camps took occupancy as follows: Wyalusing, 7-18-35; Devils Lake, 8-5-35; Rib Mountain, 8-5-35; Peninsula, 8-

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12-35; Copper Falls, 11-4-35; Interstate, 11-4-35; Perrot, 11-4-35; and Pattison 11-19-35. (www.cccalumni.org/states) Every one of these parks required surveys, master park plans and architectural drawings before a CCC company could obtain their park assignment. This put massive pressure on the Wisconsin Division of Forests and Parks. In many instances, the assignments to CCC camps in these parks were delayed due to the architectural and survey work overload.

In 1933, Mellen's Mayor Maxeiner made numerous trips to Madison to influence the Conservation Commission to assign a CCC camp at Copper Falls. Congressmen B. J. Gehrman, a resident of Mellen, highly recommended development of Copper Falls Park land as a tremendous investment in tourism for northern Wisconsin, and a great source of revenue for Ashland County and the surrounding communities. Wisconsin Governor Albert G. Schmedeman (Democrat 1933-1935) approved placement of a permanent Civilian Conservation Corps camp on the site of Copper Falls Park and granted approval for park development funds in March 1935 when the State Park Commission began drafting the Master Park Plan.

Company D-692 of the Civilian Conservation Corps consisted of 164 men, primarily from Illinois, who took occupancy of Camp Copper Falls on November 4, 1935. (Mellen Weekly-Record, 11-7-35) This company came from Makanda, Illinois near Carbondale, where they had completed reforestation, park development, construction of a masonry and brick recreational building and numerous park shelters for Giant City State Park. Within their ranks were experienced masons, hewers, carpenters, furniture-makers, and blacksmiths with several who had two years of supervisory leadership experience in the CCC. This company specialized in drainage and erosion control designated by the "D" in the company number, D-692.

All blueprints for Copper Falls State Park were given the number SP-7 by the Wisconsin State Architect's Office to coordinate every blueprint involved with the development of the park. Under the direction of Mr. W. J. Breen, camp project superintendent, (Mellen Weekly-Record, 1-23-36) and Mr. Patrick A. Twomey, assistant camp superintendent for the National Park Service. (1937 CCC Annual, Sparta District, 91) Camp D-692 of the Civilian Conservation Corps completed the following projects within Copper Falls Park: the combination recreational lodge with two granite fireplaces, benches, concession tables, picnic tables, and patio areas. Company D-692 began construction on the contact station, constructed the original pump house, laid pipelines, constructed water reservoirs and well pits, constructed the observation tower, and installed telephone cables and electrical lines. In addition, they reforested areas within the park, cleared areas for parking, camping and picnicking, created dirt trails with stairways, cleared park roads, fire lanes, maintenance roads, and resurfaced County Highway K. They also completed the construction of the first log footbridge and the ravine footbridge and constructed miles of guardrail fencing.

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During the drought of 1936, Camp Copper Falls primarily did fire suppression work, aided in forest fire fighting, and did tower-watch duty in the surrounding communities as needed. During the severe drought of 1936, CCC men stopped every car that entered Copper Falls Park, gave everyone instructions regarding the ban on smoking and campfires during the fire emergency, and notified tourists of the extreme fire danger within the park. Out of necessity, much of the construction work within the park became a second priority to the fire emergency. As a result, most of the work accomplished by CCC Company D-692 occurred between October 1936 and September 1937.

Numerous classes taught in the recreation hall of Camp Copper Falls prepared the men with instructions on each work project prior to construction. A job training class detailed the exact procedure to follow, along with each man's involvement in it. All totaled, 61 men received job training on various projects. For example, 19 men attended 16 instructional hours on how the combination building would be constructed. Seven men attended 16 hours of instructions on how to build the log footbridge. Ten men attended 16 hours of instruction on how to build the guardrails. Eight men received six hours of instruction on how to build the sewage and waste system in the park. Similar classes were also held in landscaping, carpentry, sign painting, motor vehicle maintenance and repair, cooking and baking. (National Archives, Company D-692, Monthly Camp Educational Report, July 1937)

Camp Copper Falls harvested most of the trees used in construction from government-owned land near Cozy Valley where trees were reserved for fuel purposes. Carpenters stripped bark and hand-hewed each log to supply the building materials for foundations, beam construction, and whole-log siding of the combination building, as well as the pine furniture inside of the combination building. Timber was used in the formation of stairs as they were needed along dirt paths. Most of the granite used in bridge pilings, fireplaces, and retaining walls was brought into the park from one of Mellen's granite quarries.

After 23 months of service, the CCC Administrative Office ordered Camp Copper Falls closed on September 30, 1937. At that time, it contained 124 men with 100 of them assigned to park work. One CCC foreman named Joseph G. Calbrecht, continued working under WPA funding to supervise the unfinished CCC projects. This method of supervision was very common among CCC companies to insure continuity of the Master Park Plan.

Works Progress Administration

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was another federally funded program of the Roosevelt Administration that hired millions of unemployed men for useful work during the Great Depression. The WPA operated nationally from 1935 until 1943. The majority of WPA park construction work at

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Copper Falls Park occurred between October 28, 1937 and August 21, 1941. There were times that work became sporadic due to unavailable funds.

Generally, WPA laborers were local, unemployed men who did not qualify for the CCC program due to their age or marital status, even though they performed similar kinds of labor. Unskilled laborers earned \$0.50 per hour. Union or licensed workers for plumbing or electrical work earned higher wages around \$0.75 to \$1.25 per hour. Skilled masons and carpenters tended to earn higher wages as well as concrete workers doing road resurfacing.

A WPA Job Progress Schedule for 1938 recorded the following:

| Unit of Work | Quantity | Total Cost |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Trail improvement | 6 miles | \$6,118 |
| Game Bird Refuge Signs | 100 | 722 |
| New campground area | 16 acres | 8,737 |
| Council fire area | 1 | 1,212 |
| Shuffle board court | 1 | 909 |
| Bathing pond | 1 | 8,400 |
| *Custodians Dwelling | 1 | 8,173 |
| Play ground | 1/2 acre | 1,306 |
| *Contact Station | 1 | 4,762 |
| Parking Area | 1/2 acre | 1,376 |
| Park lights | 5 | 819 |
| Signs, tables & benches | 100 (\$34.81 each) | 3,481 |
| Shelter Benches | 2 (\$995 each) | 1,990 |
| Tree thinning | 200 acres | 6,042 |

* Indicates buildings included in the count of resources to the National Register. Some of the landscape features such as the shuffle board court, bathing pond (aka: swimming pool, swimming pond) were washed out during severe floods of 1941 and 1946 and never replaced.

Additional WPA reports for October 5, 1940 show construction of three well pits, 1,250 feet of water main laid, and construction of a water reservoir. Workers took down the original pump house constructed by the CCC and constructed a new one at the present site south of the Tyler Forks river. As of October 5, 1940 the new pump house was 25 percent completed. (Wisconsin Conservation Department, Physical Progress and Completion Report For WPA Project Units, 1940) The second pump house is the one being nominated to the National Register.

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The Master Park Plan included the construction of a swimming area on the Bad River, approximately 400 feet northwest of the custodian's residence. A series of boulders and rocks had been placed in the Bad River to divert the flow of water into a depression dug in the sand to create a swimming pond. The WPA Physical Progress Report dated March 1, 1939 stated: That a work crew of 53 workers completed 40 percent of the landscaping required for a swimming pond, along with construction of a log bathhouse and dressing cabin. (Wisconsin Historical Society: Wisconsin Conservation Department, Series 271, Box 904, Folder 9, March 1939)

The WPA Work Project Supervisor, Mr. A. M. Keister, submitted a plan to the Wisconsin Conservation Commission for installation of a removable concrete and log flood gate or a diversion weir to be installed adjacent and down stream from the intake culvert through which fresh water could be diverted into the swimming pond. According to the Wisconsin Conservation Department minutes for May 1941: "A removable water diversion structure would be placed in the Bad River on June 1 for the purpose of diverting water into a swimming pool area. The proposed water gate would have a concrete apron to which a steel structure and wooden stop logs would be secured. It would be removed after the close of swimming season around September 1 each year." (Wisconsin Historical Society: Wisconsin Conservation Department, Series 271, Box 904, Folder 9, May 1941)

Workers hired under the Works Progress Administration Physical Progress Report of 8-18-41 states workers completed the following: culverts, bridges, water gates, shoreline improvement for lakes, streams and rivers; constructed a diving platform and bathing beach on the Bad River; did road surfacing, roadside cleanup, constructed truck and fire lanes and firebreaks; did tree planting, forest stand improvement; laid telephone lines; installed water lines; constructed park shelters, toilet buildings and guard fences; laid sod and seeded park areas, landscaped trails, and quarried, hauled and mortared flagstone walkways. In addition, work crews constructed the custodian's residence, the garage and repair building, and finished the contact station begun by the CCC. (Wisconsin Conservation Commission, WPA, Series 271, Box 904, Folder 9, August 1941)

Unfortunately, a severe flood occurred on August 30, 1941 damaging the swimming pond area, the water raft, the log bath house and dressing cabin, a concession stand operated by August Froming near the pond, and two bridges over the Bad River. (Barabe, Journey, Vol. I, 318) WPA funds had already run out before the 1941 flood occurred, which halted new construction. Flood clean up continued during 1942 when all park construction ceased due to World War II.

Severe flooding from another all-day rain on June 24, 1946 washed away the hill and a steep flight of wooden steps across from the combination building causing the stairs to crash on top of the west end of

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the log footbridge. (Barabe, Journey Vol. I, 422) The swimming pond and bathhouse were completely destroyed and never replaced.

Construction of a new log footbridge began in 1948 north of the combination building in an area that would not be vulnerable to washout and erosion of the sand banks along the Bad River. This required construction of a new flagstone path from the combination building to the flagstone stairs leading to the decking of the second log footbridge. It is believed the Park Commission tried to salvage and repair the original log footbridge until funds could be raised to built the second bridge at the present location. The log footbridge near the combination building provided the only means of crossing the Bad River at the time.

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| NAME | MAP # | CNC | ARCHITECT | YEAR |
|---|--------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|
| North Camp Toilets – Area A | 1 | NC Building | | 1965 |
| North Camp Toilets – Area B | 2 | NC Building | | 1966 |
| Custodian's Residence | 3 | C Building | J.C. Steiro | 1938 |
| Garage and Repair Shop | 4 | C Building | J.C. Steiro | 1940 |
| Ranger Office – double trailer | 5 | NC Building | | 1975 |
| 2 Door Metal Pole Barn | 6 | NC Building | | 1985 |
| 4 Door Metal Pole Barn | 7 | NC Building | | 1969 |
| River Campground Toilets | 8 | NC Building | | 1977 |
| Contact Station | 9 | C Building | B. Knobla | 1938 |
| Contact Station Toilets | 10 | NC Building | | 1972 |
| Combination Building and Patio | 11 | C Building | B. Knobla | 1935/ 1937 |
| Log Footbridge | 12 | C Structure | Pregund | 1948 |
| Observation Tower | 13 | C Structure | J.C. Steiro | 1937 |
| Ravine Footbridge | 14 | C Structure | J.C. Steiro | 1939 |
| Devil's Gate Footbridge | 15 | NC Structure | | 1986 |
| Backpack Toilets | 16 | NC Building | | 1975 |
| Tyler Forks Footbridge | 17 | C Structure | Pregund | 1948 |
| Pump House | 18 | C Building | J.C. Steiro | 1948 |
| Handicap Toilets | 19 | NC Building | | 1985 |
| Copper Falls Log and Granite Footbridge | 20 | NC Structure | | 2004 |
| Copper Falls State Park / landscaping features | | C Site | | |

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CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS:

Custodian's Residence, Map Figure #3

The custodian's residence and garage is located in the maintenance area of Copper Falls Park, east of the disabled access driveway. It is approximately 1,200 feet from the park entrance on State Highway 169. The building is the current residence of the DNR State Park Superintendent.

Mr. J. C. Steiro completed the design for the custodian's residence (aka: ranger residence) on August 27, 1938 for WPA construction within Copper Falls Park. The one-story residence is 42 feet long, 25 feet 6 inches wide, and 17 feet tall. (Architectural Blue Prints) The building's design included a post and beam framework with exposed beams on the interior, and vertically stacked notched pine logs on the exterior. The residence has a side-gabled roof covered in hand-hewed cedar shake.

There is a natural stone porch 15 feet long and 4 feet wide in the front of the building. Wooden beams on each side of the front door support the roof covering the stone porch. The rear exterior of the building has a natural stone porch that is 5 feet long and extends 3 feet from the building. There are 11 sets of double-hung windows surrounding the building.

The living room or great room is 13 feet wide and 18 feet 6 inches long, with a granite fireplace. There are two bedrooms within the residence along with a kitchen, dining room, one bathroom, a basement with furnace room and an area for storage. The two-stall attached wooden garage was added to the building at a later unknown date. It is believed construction of the garage is within the period of significance because the same materials, methods of construction, and architectural design were continued and eyewitnesses state the garage pre-dates the 1950s. This residence is in good condition.

Garage and Repair Shop, Map Figure #4

The garage and repair shop is located in the maintenance area of Copper Falls Park, east of the disabled access driveway, northeast of the north camping area, and north of the custodian's residence. The garage and repair shop is used for the storage of tools and equipment with a workshop area for performing minor repairs. The garage and repair shop is in good condition.

The garage and repair shop was designed by J. C. Steiro on January 9, 1940 and approved for WPA construction by Mr. C. L. Harrington from the Division of Forest and Parks and Roger C. Kirchoff of the State Architect's Office. The three-door garage and repair shop measures 50 feet long and 31 feet 4 inches wide, and is 21 and 1/2 feet tall at its highest point. The exterior walls from ground to roofline are finished in mortared native black granite harvested from quarries in the area. The gabled roof was constructed with green slate covered in asphalt shingles. (Architectural Blue Prints) The left side of the

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garage building has three connecting double-hung windows with concrete sills that are 6 feet and one-half inch apart. Seven feet above the middle window in the back of the garage is a small window, three feet high and 13 inches wide with seven horizontal panes and a concrete sill as its base. The interior of the building has a bathroom, a concrete floor with drain, work benches, and shelving for storage.

Contact Station, Map Figure #9

The contact station is approximately 130 feet southeast of the combination building. This building is currently not in use, although the 1975 Master Park Plan designates this building as a proposed site for a future nature center.

Construction of the contact station (aka: main office, supervisory headquarters, information cabin, information center, nature center) began in 1937 according to the 1991 State Facilities Survey Reconnaissance Report. However, the Physical Progress Report for WPA Project Units states that the contact station was 85% complete by March 1, 1939. (Wisconsin Historical Society: Wisconsin Conservation Department, County Ashland, Series 271, Box 904, Folder 9) Perhaps the CCC started construction and WPA workers completed it. Even though the original blueprints for this building were not found, it is assumed Bernard H. Knobla designed the building because it is identical to the combination building in its construction and rustic-style architecture.

The log contact station is 19 feet 6 inches long and 16 feet wide, with a log and mortared granite foundation. It is of post and beam construction with vertically stacked, hand-hewed, whole-log exposed exterior/interior walls. Each log was mortised and tenoned both ways and pinned together with notched lap joints. The exposed log rafter tails on the corners were finished with V-shaped tapered ends. The building has a side-gabled cedar shake roof with each hand-hewed tapered shake cut to a length of 24 inches. (Architectural Blue Prints)

The mortared granite stone porch at the main entrance is 8 feet long and 6 feet wide. The cedar shake roof covering the porch is supported by two log posts. On both sides of the porch are six-paned, double-hung windows.

The back of the structure has a granite stone fireplace 10 feet high and 6 feet wide. It has a hand-hewed half-log mantle with whole-log support brackets. The one-room interior has pine plank flooring and exposed beams and rafters. It is in good condition.

Combination Building and Patio, Map Figure #11

The combination building and patio is located in the north-central part of the park grounds, north of the camping areas, north of the main parking lot, west of the disabled access road, and south of the log

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footbridge. The combination building is the primary shelter and rest area for all Copper Falls Park visitors. This building contains telephone service for emergencies, food, water, snack refreshments, park souvenirs, heat, directions, and handicap-equipped bathroom facilities.

Bernard H. Knobla designed the combination building in 1935 with an addition constructed in 1937. Excavation for the mortared granite and log foundation began in late-1936 by Company D-692 of the Civilian Conservation Corps. The men hand-hewed beams for the foundation, which they set in place as of the CCC Roster Report for January 31, 1937. They completed the work under the supervision of Acting Project Superintendent for the National Park Service, Mr. Patrick Twomey. According to the CCC Camp Education Report dated July 1937, 19 men received 16 hours of instructions on how to construct the combination building, which was known as Project #108. (National Archives, Office of Civilian Records, CCC Reports, Wisconsin: D-692, January 1937)

The original building was 98 feet long and 54 feet wide with an enclosed concession area extending 10 feet to form an L. While the building was under construction, a revision was made to the blueprint by Bernard H. Knobla and approved by the Wisconsin Conservation Commission Superintendent, C. L. Harrington on March 30, 1937, which expanded the northeast end of the building. The addition continued with the post and beam framework and open-beamed exposed rafter ceiling.

When pouring the concrete patio area surrounding the combination building, construction workers mixed crushed black granite powder with the mortar, which gives the patio a very smooth and highly polished appearance. This feature makes the patio truly unique.

Exterior and interior walls of the combination building consist of vertically stacked, hand-hewed, whole pine timber harvested from the area. The CCC mortised and tenoned each log both ways according to the revised blue prints of March 23, 1937. The log construction contains notched lap joints with exposed rafter tails finished with V-shaped tapered ends at the corners of the building.

Hand-hewed 24 inch cedar shakes cover the building's gabled roof. The entire building and roof remained a natural color for many years but is currently stained a medium shade of brown.

There are hand-forged iron gusset plates bolted into all ceiling joists of the open-beamed ceiling of the combination building. Some plates are six-sided in a star pattern and bolted where crossbeams meet in the middle. Some gusset plates are V-shaped where the beams are attached to the roof. The CCC hand-forged all gusset plates and rafter hangers in the on-site blacksmith shop in 1936. Although all gusset plates are used for roof support, they add a decorative, rustic feature to the building's design.

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There are seven sets of six-paned, double-hung windows detailed with handmade wooden shutters that cover the windows when closed. The rustic shutters were constructed of pine planking and finished with hand-forged S-shaped wrought iron closures forged in the CCC blacksmith shop in 1937. The shutters are closed during the winter months but currently contain numerous nail holes from being nailed shut. The wrought iron S-hook closures are in good condition. They are functional but primarily have an ornamental purpose.

There are two sets of double screen doors to exit the concession area of the combination building. One set is on the northwest side of the building and the other set of doors opens to the picnic/patio area south of the concession. The lower portion of each screen door is detailed with beveled louvers in a diagonal pattern similar to the veins of a leaf. The upper portion of each door has a screen detailed with wood molding to create four panes.

There are two fireplaces at each end of the combination building. The north fireplace is a two-story, tapered fireplace with the chimneystack protruding through the north side of the roofline. Only the interior face of the fireplace is exposed. The fireplace was constructed of mortared black granite quarried from the area. The stone is primarily dark gray with black markings. The pine half-log mantel is supported by smaller, whole-log brackets mortared into the granite. The fireplace is within the concession area of the building and currently not used. It is in good condition.

The south fireplace is a two-story masonry fireplace that forms part of the inter-exterior wall on the south end of the combination building. The fireplace is approximately 10 feet wide at the base and tapers at the roofline. The south fireplace does not have a mantel. Each mortared black granite stone was hand-cut by the CCC with stone identical in color to the north fireplace. The top of the firebox opening contains a piece of iron that aids in the drawing of smoke up the chimney. CCC masons mortared stones in a vertical fan pattern in three semi-circular rows directly above the iron plate. There is a two-foot section of hearth on each side of the fireplace opening that drops approximately one foot at the base of the firebox. Two fireplace grates collect ashes in this opening. The south fireplace is currently used for cooking and heating. The fireplace is in good condition but the granite is badly blackened from smoke.

There are two L-shaped alcove seats on each side of the south fireplace in the open picnic area. They are constructed of pine planking attached to the wall with wrought iron L-shaped brackets. The brackets are fastened beneath the seat, are attached to the wall, and also serve as legs. The wrought iron brackets were forged in the blacksmith shop of CCC Company D-692 in 1937. A matching set of alcove seats are on the opposite end of the patio on each side of the double-door entrance to the concession area that provides another rest area. The benches are scratched and have been carved by

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vandals but are sturdy for seating. The wrought iron legs are in good condition.

There are two pine moveable fireplace benches in the open area of the combination building in front of the south fireplace. The blueprints for the pine fireplace benches were not found. However, Company D-692 had been transferred from Illinois where the men earned a reputation for making beautiful tables, chairs, dressers, and benches. After CCC project supervisors in Illinois saw the craftsmanship in the furniture made for Giant City Park in Makanda, Illinois, this company was commissioned to also make the benches for Pere Marquette Park in Alton, Illinois. The pine fireplace benches Company D-692 made for Copper Falls Park are similar in design to the benches crafted for Giant City Park and Pere Marquette Park in Illinois.

The seven-foot fireplace benches with side-arm rests and back-support spindles were made of hand-hewed pine in 1937. The benches are a natural pine color and finished in a high-gloss varnish. The benches currently provide seating in front of the south fireplace. They are sturdy and in good condition.

There are six hand-hewed pine picnic tables within the open area of the combination building. They are six feet long, two feet nine inches wide, and two feet five inches in height, with two attached picnic benches six feet long. Bernard H. Knobla completed the design for the picnic tables on November 18, 1935. (Architectural Blueprints) They were built by the carpenters of Company D-692. The pine tables are a natural color and finished with a high-gloss varnish. The picnic tables with attached benches provide park visitors with an area to rest, picnic or have refreshments from the concession while being sheltered from the sun or rain. Unfortunately, some of the picnic tables have suffered porcupine damage.

The interior of the concession contains a small vending area with a counter and kitchen facilities on the northeast end of the building. A dining area on the northwest end of the concession contains four-34 inch square tables that were hand-hewed from pine by Company D-692 in 1937. The tables are a natural pine color and were finished with a high-gloss varnish. The original chairs that matched the tables have disappeared over the years. The tables are very sturdy and in good condition.

Handicap-accessible bathrooms are on the north end of the combination building and are approached through exterior doors. In 2003, the park superintendent made the bathroom doorways wider for wheelchair accessibility. At that time, the original V-shaped tapered ends of the building were sawed off on the northwest exterior corner. Pressure-treated railings were nailed over the exposed ends of the logs. Rough-sawn cedar siding was also nailed onto the upper half of the north face of the building covering the original pine logs.

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At the time of the 1991 State Facilities Report, it was documented that the combination building was in excellent condition. For the most part, it remains in good condition in 2005 with need of restoration to retain the building's architectural integrity, especially on the north side of the building.

Pump House, Map Figure #18

The pump house is located on the south side of the Tyler Forks River, east of the confluence of the Bad and Tyler Forks rivers, between Brownstone Falls and the Tyler Forks Cascades. The interior of the pump house was dug into a hill with walls constructed of large stones that were stacked without mortar on three sides. The walls were tightly back-filled with earth and all that is visible is the front door made of pine planking. An eight-foot tall, arched, black granite retaining wall surrounds the pump house door.

According to the 1991 State Facilities Survey, the CCC constructed a pump house in 1937. This pump house was located on the north side of the Tyler Forks River with pipes that ran underneath the river, which served as the original water system to the park. A second pump house was constructed to replace the first one. The second pump house is located on the south side of the Tyler Forks River and is the one being nominated to the National Register. A WPA Physical Progress and Completion Report of October 5, 1940 states: "Construction of three well pits, one pump house, demolition of old pump house and laying of 1,250 of water main. Construction of reservoir and pump house 25 percent completed". This report was signed by Leif Steiro, Conservation Department Field Officer and State Forest Supervisor. (Wisconsin Historical Society: Wisconsin Conservation Department, County Ashland, Series 271, Box 904, Folder 9)

The wooden door frame to the pump house was restored in 2005. The pump house is no longer in use and is currently blocked off from public access. The retaining wall and flagstone stairs to the pump house have suffered weather discoloration.

CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

Log Footbridge, Map Figure #12

The Log Footbridge over the Bad River is north of the combination building. It provides foot travel to trails on the west side of the river and viewing areas of Copper Falls. The log footbridge was built in 1948 and is in good condition.

Observation Tower, Map Figure #13

The observation tower is in the northern section of the park grounds on the west side of the Bad River. If walking from south to north, it can be reached by crossing the log footbridge and continuing west. The tower provides spectacular panoramic views of the Bad River and the combination building. On a

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clear day, one can see Lake Superior approximately 24 miles north and the outline of Mt. Whittlesey approximately 10 miles south.

Anyone climbing the observation tower should be prepared for a strenuous climb of over 100 steps. The base of the tower is 18 feet 8 inches square and set into a concrete foundation reinforced with steel support beams. The tower is constructed of logs and tension wire. From the ground level to the top, the observation tower is 58 feet high. There are 13 steps to reach each landing that are spaced at 9 foot intervals. There are five tiers before coming to an observation platform. A four foot guard rail surrounds the top landing of the structure. There are separate stairs to go up and another set to come down.

The observation tower was designed by W. F. Stevens from the Bureau of Engineering in Madison in 1930. The observation tower was a duplicate design of the tower built at Potawatomi State Park. (Wisconsin Historical Society, Wisconsin Conservation Commission, WPA: Ashland County: 1937-1941, Series 271, Box 904, Shelf: 05/15/H-P) Mr. J. C. Steiro revised the blueprint to meet the needs of Copper Falls Park. The CCC constructed the observation tower in 1937.

Periodically, the observation tower requires seasonal painting and repairs. As of 2004, the observation tower was closed for repairs to the stairs and the guard railings.

Ravine Footbridge, Map Figure #14

The ravine footbridge is a north-south footbridge over a deep ravine on the west side of the Bad River slightly north of Copper Falls. The footbridge is parallel to the Bad River and connects the North Country National Scenic Trail on each side of the ravine. The ravine footbridge is 76 feet long, with 3 foot 8 inch wide plank decking. This footbridge was designed by Mr. J. C. Steiro on June 21, 1939 and was constructed by WPA workers. The base of the footbridge was constructed of natural stone pilings with hewed log supports (Architectural Blue Prints) It is in good condition requiring only seasonal staining.

Tyler Forks Footbridge, Map Figure #17

The Tyler Forks footbridge crosses the Tyler Forks River, east of where it converges with the Bad River. It provides foot traffic across the Tyler Forks River and a spectacular view of the Tyler Forks Cascades. The Tyler Forks footbridge is 40 feet long with wooden railings. It was constructed of steel beams obtained from the Wausau Iron Works Company. The blue print was drawn by a man named Pregund from the Engineering Office in Madison on 7-2-48. (Architectural Blueprint) This bridge is in good condition.

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SITE ELEMENTS

Flagstone Paths, Stairs And Viewing Vistas

According to a WPA Progress Report from 8-18-41, WPA workers quarried flagstone that had been cut into 15-inch squares. The stone was transported eight miles by truck with a two mile haul by tractor and stone boat to each work site within the park. The stone boat referred to was a handmade wooden trough pulled by a horse that farmers used in the fields to pick rocks from their fields. Most likely several WPA workers either brought a stone boat from their own farms or borrowed one for transporting gravel, granite, and flagstone to designated work sites within Copper Falls Park. It is also very possible that a horse was brought to the worksite to help pull the stone boat since many areas were not wide enough for a tractor.

WPA workers cut sod, graded, filled the walk beds with gravel and concrete where each stone was cut and mortared into level paths and stairs. (Wisconsin Historical Society, Wisconsin Conservation Commission, WPA, Series 271, County Ashland, Authorizations 1935-1941) In addition, many areas required the construction of mortared granite retaining walls next to the stairs to bank the hills and prevent erosion.

There are flagstone paths, stairs and granite retaining walls in the following locations: (Corresponds with Map B of locations)

- Bad River Campground, approximately 200 feet of path and 23 stairs. This is what is visible but there may be more flagstone beneath the sod.
- Parking lot to east side of combination building, approximately 200 feet.
- Path from parking lot to viewing vista south of combination building, 85 feet; path south of combination, 120 feet.
- Path and patio on north side of the combination building parallel to the Bad River, 120 feet.
- Patio on south side of combination building, parallel to picnic area, 45 feet long X 24 feet wide.
- Path and patio on north side of combination building, 35 feet long X 12 feet wide.
- Flagstone path and six stairs 175 feet long on north side of combination building to accommodate change in grade.
- Approaching Log Footbridge northwest flagstone path and six stairs which cover 100 feet. (Same As Above) Southwest flagstone path and two stairs, 175 feet.
- Seven stairs to decking of the Log Footbridge.
- Eighteen flagstone stairs six feet wide, with black granite retaining wall, four feet high by two feet wide and eight feet long.
- Path and 23 stairs approaching the Ravine Footbridge, approximately 66 feet.

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- Flagstone path 12 feet long, west side of Log Footbridge with black granite retaining wall, 23 feet long, three feet high.
- Flagstone path 240 feet long and 93 stairs descending to Devil's Gate Footbridge. Semi-circular granite rest vista with log bench, 3 feet high and 10 feet long.
- Flagstone path north of Devil's Gate Footbridge, 75 feet long.
- Flagstone path and 90 stairs ascending canyon from Devil's Gate Footbridge with granite retaining wall four feet high.
- Ascending-descending stairs north of Devil's Gate Footbridge (Same As Above.)
- Flagstone path, 39 feet long and five stairs to handicap viewing vista.
- Flagstone path 96 feet long with 45 stairs to pump house. Black granite retaining wall, 37 feet long and three and one-half feet tall.
- Flagstone path east of the Bad River heading north to the Log and Granite Ravine Footbridge. Path is 96 feet long with 45 stairs and four foot granite wall gradually reducing to 36 inches. This retaining wall has loose, movable stones.
- Flagstone path with 28 stairs descending north from Log and Granite Ravine Footbridge to combination building. The path with stairs is 66 feet long.
- Flagstone path with 14 stairs totaling 200 feet. Granite wall 50 feet long and four feet high on return path to combination building.

The flagstone material in all of the paths is in excellent condition. However, some paths are in need of mortar. Many areas require leveling due to frost damage and roots that have moved stones. Many of the granite retaining walls were not mortared but stacked and have suffered damage from water run-off, frost, and roots. All retaining walls are discolored from moss.

There was no documentation within CCC Work Progress Reports for the 22 months of service within Copper Falls Park that indicates the CCC spent any man-hours other than doing the rough work in clearing and cutting trails, creating wooden stairs with railings, and dirt viewing vistas for the placement of benches. For this reason, the CCC most likely did the rough work while WPA workers prepared the walk beds and mortared all the flagstone walkways and viewing vistas. It appears as though WPA workers can be credited for mortaring all flagstone within the park.

MISCELLANEOUS ELEMENTS

Benches With Half-Log Seats

Currently not all benches are located at the park site. The benches are eight feet long with a half-log seat. The benches were an original architectural design by Mr. A. Keegan from the State Architect's Office in Madison in 1936. There were constructed by Company D-692 of the Civilian Conservation

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Corps in 1937. (Wisconsin Historical Society, Architectural Drawings, Image WHi-6112). According to the CCC Camp Education Report dated July 1937, four men received 12 hours of instructions for Project #152 for constructing the park seats.

Only three benches with half-log seats exist out of the original six that were constructed for Copper Falls Park. One bench is located east of the combination building. The second is located at a viewing vista south of Devil's Gate footbridge, on the south side of the Bad River. The third is currently at the home of Mellen Area Historical Society Director, Mary Carol Granberg, who retrieved the bench after vandals threw it into the Bad River. Placement of the third bench is undecided at this time with a possible future location in a protected area next to the contact station. The half-log benches have suffered weather and carving damage but are solid for sitting.

Sheltered Benches

There are two covered log benches in the park. Both benches are very heavy and could not be moved without being destroyed. They are in fair condition due to weather and moss damage on the roof and excessive carving on the seats from vandals. Both benches provide rest and modified shelter from sun or rain for hikers along the North Country Scenic Trail. One bench is located north of the Bad River in a viewing vista near between Brownstone Falls and the Devil's Gate Footbridge. The other is located south of the Bad River at Devil's Gate Footbridge.

Blueprints for the benches were not found although the benches without roofs are credited to the rustic design of Mr. A. Keegan and dated 1-6-37. The covered benches are five feet long with pine logs that support the roof. The roof is covered in hewed cedar shakes coated in creosote. The benches were listed in the WPA Job Progress Schedule for 1938 and each bench cost \$995 for labor. (Wisconsin Historical Society: Wisconsin Conservation Department, Series 271, Box 904, Folder 9)

Guard Railings

It is impossible to determine what sections of guard railings were built during the period of significance. There are two different types of guard rail fencing within Copper Falls Park, each serving a different purpose. Stacked log rail fencing can be found defining walking paths and hiking trails to separate the path from natural areas. In these areas the fencing is approximately two and one-half feet tall for people to view plant and tree species.

Areas of danger are defined by three-rail fencing with the center posts constructed of telephone poles sunk three feet into a concrete footing, where necessary. For example, the fencing surrounding the Copper Falls viewing vista is made of large, notched telephone poles approximately one foot in diameter and four feet tall, to keep park visitors from going over the steep drop-off into the Bad River

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canyon. All footbridges were constructed in this manner, with rails too large for small hands to grasp and climb. Mortared granite end-posts with telephone pole center-posts can be found along the stairways and approaches to footbridges.

Signs

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources signs with the DNR logo are found at the entrance identifying the land as a State Park. Wisconsin DNR signs along the trails designate Copper Falls State Natural Areas which contain samples of native Wisconsin trees, plants and general habitat. There are signs that identify the North Country National Scenic Trail and how far one needs to walk from one point to another along the trail. Park signs also designate which areas are all-terrain mountain bike trails. Campground identification markers tell campers if they are in the group camp, south camp or north camp or backpack camp areas. Bulletin boards are at every shower and flush toilet facility providing a map of the park, emergency information, fire hazard information, and any messages important to campers, hikers, and visitors.

At one time the park contained a Carver's Log that no longer exists. The original park blueprints dated 2-12-48 shows the plan for two granite pillars, three feet 6 inches tall and two feet square upon which was suspended a 16 inch diameter pine log. A sign on the pillar reads, "Carver's Log: If you must carve, then carve here." A sign on the other pillar reads, "Obey the Law." (Original Blueprint, Mellen Area Historical Society).

All non contributing buildings and structures are relatively recent additions and outside the period of significance.

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The period of significance, 1929 – 1953, for Copper Falls State Park begins with the year the state acquired land for the park, officially opening up the area for recreation and protecting the land from future development. In 1936, the State purchased additional land bringing the total to 1,160 acres prior to the assignment of a CCC camp. 1953 is the last year of development on the original 1,160 acre parcel of land being nominated to the National Register.¹ The park is nominated at the local level under criterion C for its fine Rustic style architecture and under criterion A in the areas of Conservation and Entertainment/Recreation. The acreage of the 29 original quarter sections in 1935 is the nominated parcel.

Historical Background

Pioneer Settlement of Mellen and Copper Falls

Pioneers gradually populated the nearby community of Mellen in 1886, after the Wisconsin Central Railroad connected the route between Milwaukee and Ashland. The railroad provided an opportunity to transport equipment and horses to harvest the abundance of pine timber surrounding Mellen.

To reach vast amounts of valuable timber located in difficult terrain, portable saw mills emerged to cut timber at the logging site. Lumbermen in the Mellen area moved logs only short distances to a saw mill by using portions of the Bad and Tyler Forks rivers, and Krause, Scott-Taylor, and Devil's creeks. (Corrigan, 40) The deep ravines and jagged cliffs surrounding Copper Falls hindered removal of timber by a team of horses. It was not until the arrival of the railroad in 1886 that timber could be efficiently removed from the woods and transported to market.

During the late-1800s and early-1900s, the town of Mellen heavily relied upon its timber supply to support its economy. Lumber companies, sawmills, shingle mills, as well as a veneer and flooring company, a woodenware factory, and a tannery became primary sources of employment. In 1897, the Fayette-Saw Tannery ran two shifts of workers and claimed they had a daily capacity of 1,400 hides, making it one of the largest tanneries in the country. (Barabe, Journey, Vol. I, 35) In 1898, the Foster-Latimer Lumber Company employed 485 men, with 350 in the woods cutting timber. (Barabe, Journey, Vol. I, 36) By 1902, the population of Mellen grew to 1,875 people, with a corresponding lack of suitable housing for its population. As a result, 60 percent of Mellen residents lived in rented or company-owned homes, lumber camps, or boarding houses. According to a 1920 census, the town of Mellen sustained a population of 1,986 people. (Barabe, Journey Vol. I, 161)

¹ The acreage listed on the drawn Master Park Plan is incorrectly stated to be 1,560 acres.

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All of Ashland County became known as "the cutover" during the early part of the last century, when every pine and hardwood had been clear-cut during the logging boom. Excessive logging stripped Ashland County of all timber between 1886 and 1920. Advertisements in European newspapers enticed immigrants to purchase inexpensive farmland in the cutover. However, soil that once supported an assortment of conifers had very acidic soil consistency where crops refused to grow without heavy doses of lime. Abandoned farms and cabins became a common sight in the 1920s and 1930s when farmers could not support themselves. Vacant stump prairies quickly became vulnerable to wind and soil erosion, forest fires, or became overgrown with unsightly brush.

Land History Of Copper Falls

A landscape of mountains, lakes, creeks and rivers naturally and distinctly separated Copper Falls from forest and farmland surrounding it. Iron ore and copper miners along with realtors became the first landowners of Copper Falls and Brownstone Falls. By the early 1860s exploratory copper mining was taking place in the Bad River canyon between Copper Falls and Brownstone Falls. At the turn of the twentieth century Wells M. Ruggles ran a mining crew within what is now the boundaries of the park.

Investors and developers of hydro-electric power also became interested in this land. Due to 100-foot canyon walls, deep ravines, and lack of adequate roads, the land where the Bad and Tyler Forks rivers meet remained relatively untouched by the timber barons. During the early 1900s, numerous attempts had been made to reach the waterfalls from every direction where people were forced to walk at least a mile on foot. As a result, both waterfall areas remained thickly wooded with first-growth pines and hardwoods that died of natural causes.

Some of the earliest recorded land history came from the Mellen *Weekly-Record* on February 21, 1907: "When Mellenites learned Copper Falls was sold to a group of St. Louis capitalists by its former owners, the Ashland County Land Company, of which Wells Ruggles was a major stock holder. No one knew for sure what the people from St. Louis planned to do with their newly acquired 130 acres, but the rumors and the hopes were that the new concern planned to develop the falls into a power water system." (Barabe, Journey, Vol. I, 72)

Early Park Development

Early visitors who came to Copper Falls proceeded at their own risk using the land for picnicking, hiking, viewing nature, and fishing. Once visitors arrived, if they wanted to view the waterfalls, they waded across the Bad River, climbed deep ravines and rock formations. Without adequate shelter buildings, visitors ate their food while attracting the attention of wild animals. There were no

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restrooms or changing facilities for swimmers.

Organizations such as the American Legion made a contribution to developing the parkland. Mellen veterans of World War I took charge of building the original swing bridges at Copper Falls. In one week in June 1922, Nick Stilin, a former engineer during the war, with help from Henry Kritz, constructed three swing bridges at Copper Falls. The first bridge was located by the first falls at Copper Falls, the second below Tyler Forks, the third spanned Tyler Forks above the falls. (Barabe, Journey Vol. 1, 173)

Before the state of Wisconsin officially purchased the land for park purposes, the citizens of Mellen tried to make the area accessible to the public by creating better roads, but the county budget, the town of Mellen, and the township of Morse could not afford the expense. In 1922, Mellen businessmen formed the Copper Falls Committee that collected and donated over \$600 and gave it to the Town of Morse to help pay for a better road to Copper Falls. The town of Mellen donated the machinery and manpower to make this possible. In 1924, the Ashland County Board appropriated \$1,000 to fix the road between Mellen and Copper Falls. (Barabe, Journey Vol. I, 179)

Mr. and Mrs. August J. Froming operated a concession with food and drinks on the land that eventually became Copper Falls Park. They also collected a modest fee to help pay for developing parking areas. Just before the arrival of visitors on July 4, 1924, the Mellen *Weekly-Record* notified all local people to: "Co-operate with the caretaker at Copper Falls by not parking at the top of the hill. It sets an example for tourists and in many instances leads them to believe that there is no parking space below. As the small parking fee of \$0.25 was the sole support of the Falls, Mellen people were asked to be willing to set an example for outsiders." (Barabe, Journey Vol. I, 180)

The Mellen *Weekly-Record* printed an article on June 18, 1925 entitled "Hall Would Lease State Park of Copper Falls Area." The article stated: "The members of the Wisconsin Conservation Commission, Hall, Webster, and Harrington, paid Mellen a visit and thoroughly went over the grounds at Copper Falls Park. The conservation commission has the money and the authority to lease the park, pending the action of purchasing by the state legislature, and it is practically certain that will be done in the immediate future. Elmer S. Hall, the head of the commission, stated that it is his intention to try to negotiate a lease on the property until 1927, at which time he will have the matter brought before the State Legislature." (Barabe, Journey Vol. I, 188)

A letter to the Fromings from the Superintendent of Forest and Parks, C. L. Harrington, dated May 15, 1929, states: "As soon as the state assumes ownership of the land at Copper Falls, you will have to

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discontinue any parking charge that you may be making in the parking area. Your concession building should be of a strictly temporary character, namely, that it could be moved away or torn down with relative ease and without suffering financial loss. It would be unwise under the circumstances to put in any substantial investment in improvements in view of the fact that the state may come into full possession of this area at any time. We would allow you to continue the season as a concessionaire, but the parking charge would have to be discontinued as soon as full possession was assumed by the state. Of course, as long as you were the representative of the Power Company on this area, you would have all rights to protect it and we would make some arrangement with you as soon as the Power Company relinquishes ownership." (Wisconsin Conservation Commission, Series 812, Box 2, Ashland County, 1929) The area became an official state park when the state of Wisconsin purchased two hundred acres of land on May 3, 1929 from the Border Land Company for \$5,000. The state purchased another 320 acres on May 6, 1929 from the Lake Superior Power Company for \$10,000. Six years later, the state purchased additional acreage prior to the assignment of a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) work camp.

Areas of Significance

Rustic Architecture

When President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's federally funded programs for economic relief became available during the Great Depression in 1933, the National Park Service faced a massive architectural problem: What should be the style of America's park buildings and how could they be built as inexpensively as possible?

To address this issue, the National Park Service, under its director Thomas Vint, issued national guidelines for development of America's most beautiful landscapes. Some of those guidelines were as follows: All architects needed to draft a Master Park Plan, where all construction workers, utility workers, and road crews worked from the same park plan. The design of all park structures had to be as inconspicuous as possible, in complete harmony with the natural flow of the landscape, and built with minimal disturbance to the land using natural materials. All roads, bridges, foot trails, and shelters must surround the main lodge as the focal point of the park. Building materials should come from trees harvested from the park property or the surrounding area and hewed into usable timber. Stone used in foundations, fireplaces, and landscape work must be harvested from the land. All landscape designs and building blue prints had to be approved by the appropriate state and national authorities before construction began. Upon completion of all park projects, blue prints needed to be archived with the National Park Service office of every state as a permanent, historic record of when and how the park buildings were designed and constructed. ([Http://www.cr.nps.gov](http://www.cr.nps.gov))

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Park building designs were generally very simple, square, rectangular or L- shapes. Some recreational park buildings were two-story buildings but the majority were one-story designs. Harvesting building materials from surrounding land combined with handmade methods of hewing and cutting stone were elements of the Rustic Style promoted by the Park Service. The method of construction required stripping bark from trees, shaping the logs into square beams with a broad axe, and hand-cutting stone used in foundations and fireplaces. This rustic, hand-made method of construction and use of building materials established a uniform style of park architecture identified with Civilian Conservation Corps and Works Progress Administration construction from 1933-1942. ([Http://www.cr.nps.gov](http://www.cr.nps.gov)) The most identifiable feature for Rustic architecture is using natural materials harvested from the land that gives America's park buildings textures and colors in complete harmony with the landscape.

It is important to note that the builders of Rustic park architecture during the CCC and WPA years most likely were first or second-generation immigrants. Hand-crafted methods of construction came out of economic necessity from old world masters and pioneer parents and grandparents. Many of the CCC men came from farms where they had "jack of all trades" skills and experience in hewing barn beams. Some of the homes where they grew up had been built from materials they harvested from the land. This is probably the last generation of men capable of rustic-style construction due to their prior experience with it. It makes the buildings they constructed exceptionally valuable and irreplaceable.

White pine, red pine, jack pine, cedar, tamarack, and hemlock provided the primary lumber for construction of the buildings, park furniture, signs, bridges, and stairways within Copper Falls Park. All large timber cleared from building sites, roads and trails was used in construction. However, the majority of timber came from state-owned land and was brought into the park.

The Mellen area has a growing season of around 110 days, which tends to make the timber very dense. Even though pine is generally easy to cut, the timber from this boreal and mesic forest area tends to be exceptionally hard. Foundations and buildings constructed from this timber are well preserved with minimal dry rot or insect infestation.

Quarried Mellen black granite provided the stone material used in foundations, fireplaces, bridge pilings, and retaining walls. The color of each stone is predominantly dark gray with black speckled markings. Occasionally, some stones have hues of tan or beige. The color blends beautifully with the weathered gray color of the cedar shake roofs.

Tons of quarried flagstone were brought into Copper Falls Park and mortared into pathways, stairs, and viewing vistas to provide level walking areas. The stonework was predominantly used to level areas

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where the grade needed to be gently sloped where sand paths became too slippery. The flagstone has hues of soft gray, gray-black, gray-blue, and gray-green. There are many areas where a flagstone path was constructed next to a black granite retaining wall where the colors of the two types of stone perfectly compliment each other.

Architects For Copper Falls Park

Bernard Herbert Knobla worked for the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Division of Forest and Parks. He received his bachelors of architecture from the University of Minnesota in 1932. (1956 American Institute of Architects, Knobla) Mr. Knobla is credited with designing the L-shaped combination building at Copper Falls in 1935, with an addition made to the building in 1937. It is believed he also designed the Contact Station in 1937, because it is identical in design and construction with the combination building, even though the blue prints for the Contact Station were not located and the architect could not be positively verified.

Other names listed on blue prints for contributing buildings, structures, objects, and site furnishings within the period of significance were: A. Keegan; Roger C. Kirchoff; H. Spiegel; A. E. Loomis, Jr.; C. Lashua, and a person with the last name of Pregond, who drafted the blue prints for several footbridges. (Architectural Blue Prints)

The four primary buildings at Copper Falls State Park bear testimony to the quality of their design and craftsmanship in construction. It is nearly 70 years since the CCC laid the foundation for the combination building in 1936. At the time, Bernard Knobla needed to design the 98 X 54 foot combination building with enough weight-bearing supports to withstand average snowfall amounts of around 120 inches per season. ([Http:www.glif.org/pub/winter01/forest_restoration.htm](http://www.glif.org/pub/winter01/forest_restoration.htm)) Storms over the years brought tornadoes with hail and downpours in excess of 5 inches of rain resulting in massive flood damage throughout the park. The buildings have withstood temperatures ranging from as high as 104 to 42 below zero.

The notched, mortised and tenoned joints pinned in both directions, along with steel gusset plates continue to provide exceptional strength to the walls and roof of each building. The foundations and fireplaces of mortared Mellen granite make this cluster of CCC and WPA-era buildings and the pump house unique in Wisconsin.

Every phase of construction involved hand tools and an acquired skill in knowing how to use them. From tree identification and selection in the forest to matching every log of the same diameter on the job site, each person involved in construction required a broad body of knowledge of the entire process.

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The CCC Educational Report of July 1937 shows that 19 men attended carpentry classes to learn how to construct the combination building. (National Archives, Camp D-692, Education Report, 7-37) The hewing yard consisted of only seven men who supplied building materials for all of the construction projects. Carpenters notched every vertically stacked log for a tight fit and uniformity in appearance. This required more than classroom knowledge but exceptional skill, precision, and patience with an axe.

The selection of natural materials, their preparation for use, and the hand-crafted methods of construction are a lost pioneering art used in Rustic Architecture. Meticulous care was taken not only in the design, but the supervision, and workmanship of these buildings to warrant they be nominated to the National and State Register of Historic Places as exemplar masterpieces of Rustic Architecture important to American culture and our Wisconsin park development history during the CCC and WPA-era.

CONSERVATION

Conservation Movement

In the past 100 years, each generation has had to define the point that separates modern industrial progress and consumption of the natural resources that supports that progress. This has resulted in a combination of legislation, education, life-style changes, and work involving preservation, conservation, and resource management. The entire conservation movement in the past 100 years started with good leadership, but it became most effective when it involved each citizen taking responsibility for their own community. One of the greatest success stories in Wisconsin is the restoration of the cutover to a thriving forest surrounded by healthy wetlands filled with wildlife. In the center of this success story is Copper Falls State Park.

A turning point in the use of our natural resources came when President Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) created the first National Conservation Commission and appointing Gifford Pinchot as its chairman. In 1909, the commission compiled an inventory of all U.S. natural resources and drafted policies for their management. This prompted several state-level conservation initiatives where Wisconsin began correcting the damage done to its exploited timber resources. In 1916, Congress passed the National Park Service Act, creating the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior. This act ensured protection of our nation's great scenic wilderness areas for all generations to come.

Several distinguished citizens from Wisconsin made contributions in conservation that have benefited and influenced the entire nation. Conservationist John Muir, grew up in Portage, Wisconsin and

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attended the University of Wisconsin in 1861. His book entitled *Our National Parks* portrayed our nation's most scenic wilderness areas as essential to our American culture.

The Wisconsin legislature created the first Wisconsin State Park Board in 1907 and hired John Nolen, a noted landscape architect, to draft a feasibility plan for Wisconsin's State Park System. Nolen's report, published by the State Park Board, provided guidelines for the Wisconsin River, Fish Creek in Door County, and the confluence of the Mississippi and Wisconsin rivers. All but the Dells of the Wisconsin River became state parks soon after. In 1915, the State Park Board merged with the State Board of Forestry, the Fisheries Commission, and the State Game Warden Department. They formed a new agency known as the State Conservation Commission. (<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org>)

In 1904, Wisconsin appointed E. M. Griffith as the first Chief State Forester. He pioneered the idea of starting a state tree nursery to provide seedlings for reforestation and state-owned forests. His efforts resulted in the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest, which is Wisconsin's first and largest state forest near Lake Tomahawk. (DNR, 2004 Year Of Wisconsin Forestry,1)

On March 1, 1911, the United States Congress created a National Forest Reservation Commission and authorized the acquisition of lands on the watersheds of navigable streams for the purpose of conserving their navigability. The purpose was to: 1) protect against disastrous erosion of the soil on mountain slopes and against the destruction of the soil and soil cover by forest fires; 2) preserve water power, since, like navigation, they depend for their value upon the evenness of stream flow; 3) preserve the purity and regularity of flow of mountain streams, with a view to their use for the water supply of towns and cities; 4) preserve timber supply to meet the needs of the industries of the country; 5) preserve the beauty and attractiveness of the uplands for the recreation and pleasure of the people. (www.lib.duke.edu/forest/research/weeks_law.com) This legislation became known as the Weeks Law, which authorized the purchase of land for national forests. The Clarke-McNary Law of 1924 also made provisions for the purchase of land from private landowners for the purpose of establishing national forestland. With the help of federal funds, the state of Wisconsin began the acquisition of land for the creation of the Chequamegon and Nicolet National Forests.

In 1913, the Wisconsin legislature established boundaries of a state forest reserve area that included 1.25 million acres of state and private land in 12 protective districts. In 1918, tax delinquent land listings filled two pages in the Mellen paper with delinquent amounts from \$10 to \$13 per forty acres. (Barabe, Journey Vol. I, 153.) Using available federal funds, the Conservation Commission began purchasing land in the cutover of Bayfield and Ashland counties for the purpose of creating a national forest. Land within Forest, Vilas, Oneida, Price, and Iron counties became the focus for the creation of

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a state forest, state tree nurseries, and areas rezoned for farm-forest.

Wisconsin received \$5,000 of Weeks Law funds for fire protection with the understanding that the state would spend \$15,000 of its own funds for this purpose. This investment made Wisconsin a leader in forest fire prevention. (Rohe, 33) By 1917, Jack Vilas pioneered forest fire detection by airplane making his first flight over Trout Lake near Boulder Junction, Wisconsin. His efforts greatly improved the methods of forest fire detection for the entire Great Lakes region.

Essential to change in conservation came from the logging industry itself and the people hired to manage operations. George Corrigan, from Mineral Lake, worked for the Foster-Latimer Lumber Company in Mellen and devoted his life to improving the working conditions of lumber workers and the cause of forestry and conservation in the early-1900s. In 1990, the state recognized the efforts of George Corrigan by adding his name to the Wisconsin Forestry Hall of Fame as a person who made a major contribution to the practice of forestry in Wisconsin. (Rohe, 122)

Wisconsin naturalist Aldo Leopold made one of his greatest contributions by emphasizing the importance of conservation education. His conservation ideas from his book *A Sand County Almanac* emphasized that: We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us instead of a community to which we belong. (Leopold, vii) Leopold raised awareness that man's relationship with the land is an ethical responsibility.

On November 1, 1928, the Mellen Weekly-Record printed an article entitled "New Forest Scheme Suggested by Nagler." In the article it stated: "Realizing that reforestation is the basis of successful conservation work, Conservation Director L. B. Nagler has recently suggested a new co-operative reforestation scheme between counties and the Wisconsin Conservation Commission which promises to be one of the most important steps yet taken by the commission in its work. Director Nagler suggests that many of the abandoned and tax delinquent farms of the state which are not best adapted to agricultural purposes could be planted to trees. After half a century, these cultivated forests will be very valuable, not only intrinsically, but also as object lessons to the millions of tourists who annually visit our state."

Mr. E. J. Vanderwall began his career as a forest ranger in the Mellen area in 1929, enforcing the hunting and fishing regulations, as well as protecting Wisconsin's waterways and newly reforested areas in the cutover. He became the director of the Wisconsin Conservation Commission in 1942, with a great fondness in his heart for the continued development of Copper Falls State Park. (Barabe, Vol. 1, 329)

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In 1935, the Wisconsin legislature passed a bill that made the teaching of conservation in public schools compulsory. ([Http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints)) However, Mellen High School's principal, Mr. Herbert H. Kuckuk, started teaching conservation in 1931. A cabin built by the Mellen High School Junior Forest Rangers on Loon Lake became a classroom for those interested in forestry. Nearby, Copper Falls State Park became an extension of that classroom. The Junior Forest Rangers had a large membership with state representation at Wisconsin State Fairs and at the National 4-H Congress in Chicago, IL. Participation in the Junior Forest Rangers qualified some members to be chosen for four-year college programs in forestry. Mr. Kuckuk often spoke at annual teacher's conventions regarding the importance of conservation programs within Wisconsin's curriculum. Unfortunately, this particular outdoor program was lost during World War II and resumed within the school classroom thereafter. Those early days of the outdoor classroom resulted in Mellen High School being one of 115 forestry schools in Wisconsin. Today, Copper Falls State Park remains an integral part of the lesson plan for field study.

Without a doubt, one of the greatest turning points in national and state conservation legislation came during the administration of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's development of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). What every state needed most was supplied by the CCC and WPA programs, namely manpower and funds.

The CCC operated on a quota system established by the Department of Labor that calculated the number of unemployed men receiving relief funds per county. This quota system required arranging Wisconsin's 71 counties according to economic need. Ashland and Bayfield counties were ranked among the most oppressed counties of Wisconsin during the Great Depression. (WPA, Projects, Ashland County, Series 271, 1935-1941) The quota system determined how many men from each county could be accepted into the Civilian Conservation Corps program and it also determined how much funding each county would receive for Works Progress Administration Projects. Ashland County and Copper Falls Park in particular obtained a priority focus for appropriation of both funds and manpower.

Initially, the Wisconsin Conservation Commission "favored limiting Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) to forest protection districts in need of reforestation, erosion control, and fire suppression work. In addition, the Commission favored the improvement of buildings and facilities at state fish hatcheries and state parks." (Wisconsin Conservation Department, Conservation Commission Minutes, February 13, 1934, Series 812, Box 2).

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An assessment of Wisconsin's land use by the Conservation Commission, at the request of President Roosevelt in 1933, gave them an opportunity to define areas of natural mesic and boreal forest, wetlands, swampland, wild rice marshes, bogs, and the many needs unique to the Great Lakes Upland. In many ways, the state of Wisconsin started over to give nature a helping hand where overuse had almost destroyed the eco-system. In 1937, several farmers from Mellen moved to the Drummond Forest-Farm Community created in Bayfield County. In addition, a large part of the Conservation Commission's plan created large, natural habitat areas that were connected to each other. This plan designated acreage for the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest in proximity with Copper Falls State Park, state forest nurseries, and rezoning for privately-owned managed forest lands. The Wisconsin Conservation Commission determined the mixed sand, clay and rocky river acreage at Copper Falls best suited for no other purpose than park and recreation use and participating in the conservation vision for Wisconsin habitat conservancy.

According to Dr. James Meeker, Associate Professor of Natural Resources and Biology at Northland College in Ashland, the average return-time for regenerating a forest after a fire is from 50 to 100 years. ([Http://www.glif.org/pub/winter01/forest_restoration.htm](http://www.glif.org/pub/winter01/forest_restoration.htm)) In addition to areas of forest fire damage, clear-cut logging so completely decimated the timber species that they could not regenerate themselves. Mr. E. W. Tinker became the Regional Forester in charge of all forests in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan in 1929. (Mellen Weekly-Record, January 9, 1936) He created county shelter belts, state and federal forestlands, and seedling nurseries in some of the most heavily logged acreage in the United States.

The Wisconsin Conservation Department completed a report dated March 24, 1939 summarizing the amount of state funds appropriated for reforestation in 1938:
(Wisconsin Historical Society, Wisconsin Conservation Commission Minutes 1939, Series 812, Box 2)

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Stock distributed to farmers for private planting under the general terms of the Clarke-McNary Law | \$2,600,000 |
| Planted by CCC camps | 9,000,000 |
| Planted by WPA | 4,600,000 |
| Extension and school forests | 3,200,000 |
| Planted by soil conservation and other federal agencies | 5,200,000 |
| Highway and other miscellaneous tree planting | 700,000 |
| TOTAL | \$25,300,000 |

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Essential to the conservation master plan for Wisconsin was the acquisition of parkland. Within Copper Falls the Wisconsin Conservation Commission made a concentrated effort to increase tree specie diversity that provided important habitat for wildlife, fish, and native and migratory bird species. Reforestation helped create a thermal cover for streams and rivers within the park and watershed protection retarding spring run-off and erosion. The work performed by the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration within Copper Falls Park greatly aided and advanced the natural process of tree and plant regeneration and habitat formation in excess of 50 years.

The CCC provided a tremendous service by surveying all parkland prior to construction. The field notes of CCC foreman Charles E. Baker when he surveyed the Copper Falls Park on September 16, 1936 revealed the great erosion that had taken place along the Bad River causing the river to greatly change its course. Baker reported: "The location of the NE corner of Sec. 8 by natural features presented great difficulty. The original pine-bearing trees were cut in the lumbering days as I learned from an old timber cruiser, and the stump must long ago have tumbled into the steadily eroding gorge of the creek along with much of the forest that used to grow on its slopes. The course of the river has changed a great deal since 1862; near the corner it is eating southward into the rocky bluff, so that the old south margin of the stream is destroyed, but I was able to distinguish the north margin of 75 years ago, as it is quite distinct with trees and stumps that could not have grown since then. There are three crossings of the Bad River in Sec. 8." (Property of Mellen Historical Society, Survey of Boundaries of Copper Falls State Park, Baker, 1936, 16) As Baker's field notes indicate, old-growth timber still existed within Copper Falls Park when the CCC developed it in 1936.

Company D-692 began with their specialty of drainage preparation along the banks of Bad River prior to clearing land for the combination building, the parking lot and campground. Since these areas were considered flood-prone areas, many man-hours were devoted to constructing riprap along the shoreline of the Bad River to aid during times of rapid spring thaw and storm run-off.

The preparation of the building site by the CCC for the combination building, parking lot, campground, roads, and all foot trails began with the careful removal of all native plants, seedling trees and shrubs as designated by the United States Forest Service. These were removed and transplanted within the park. The CCC cut large trees within proposed building sites and brought the logs to the hewing yard where they were used for construction materials. Nothing was destroyed or wasted in the building process.

Before the CCC continued with reforestation efforts, the U.S. Forest Service noticed that an abundance of rabbits within Copper Falls Park ate seedlings faster than the trees could be planted. The bounty system in Ashland County created a tremendous imbalance in the predator/prey ratio. In 1936, if a

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person brought the carcass of a timber wolf or brush wolf into the county clerk's office in Ashland, they could receive up to \$20 for killing a female and \$15 for killing a male. The clerk's office also granted awards of \$5 for a coyote, bobcat, or Canada Lynx. To eradicate the rodent problem within the park, several CCC men used rifles and snares before reforestation efforts could proceed. (The bounty system did not end in Wisconsin until 1957. [Http://www.wildlifesciencecenter.org](http://www.wildlifesciencecenter.org)) Large raptors served an important function in controlling the rodent populations.

A CCC "Summary of Projects" report dated July 30, 1936 stated that tree and plant disease control for the eradication of noxious weeds that spread White Pine Blister Rust became an essential work detail within Copper Falls Park. A group of men from Camp Copper Falls worked with foresters in the removal of skunk weed, black currant and gooseberry bushes from the park. (National Archives, Wisconsin: Camp-D-692, July 30, 1936)

Landscaping required careful study of elevations and soil consistency for each functional purpose. Even after the land had been surveyed and the Master Plan drafted, CCC and WPA workers had to work with natural obstructions such as boulders, tree roots, crumbling sandstone, hard-packed clay or loose sand and gravel. Generally speaking, the CCC can be credited with doing the rough clearing and sculpting of the landscape while the WPA did most of the finish-work in mortaring the retaining walls and walkways.

The CCC cleared large areas for picnic, playground, athletic field, campgrounds, and parking areas located on the east side of the Bad River. On addition they cut trails, stairs, rest areas, and viewing vistas along park trails. (Wisconsin Historical Society: Wisconsin Conservation Department, Series 271, Box 904, Folder 9) Some of the retaining walls contained stacked granite blocks without mortar that aided in retarding run-off and erosion.

In 1936, the CCC stopped every car entering the park during a severe drought to inform the public of fire danger and patrol the park to enforce the ban on campfires and smoking. They created firebreaks, removed brush and forest fuels from the woods, and contributed hours of fire tower and fire-watch duty. These were invaluable services the CCC and WPA performed to protect the forest habitat and the construction of new buildings.

Due to the great distances involved with hauling materials, the construction of flagstone paths and retaining walls took WPA workers several years to complete. WPA workers completed the majority of the finishing stonework for retaining walls flagstone paths and viewing vistas 1938 and 1941. A WPA Project Units Report dated September 3, 1941, from field officer Leif Steiro states that: "Quarrying and

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setting flagstone for walks and steps to the Bad River bridge began on March 31, 1941 and work was suspended on August 21, 1941 due to lack of funds. Work completed is estimated to be 85% of work planned in the proposal. Workers completed quarrying and hauling 15 cords of flagstone and setting 2,850 square feet of stairs and walkway." (Wisconsin Conservation Minutes, WPA, 9-3-1941)

Only one week after WPA funding ran out, a severe flood forced all park work to turn into a repair and clean-up effort. After several days of rain that made the ground saturated, the Bad River flooded its banks on August 30, 1941. The *Mellen Weekly-Record* reported: "Out at Copper Falls, 27 sightseers were marooned during the flood. They had driven out to see the large volume of water going over the falls and before they realized the danger, the highway behind them became impassable and cut off their retreat. In the party was a 17-month old baby. They were forced to stay at the park overnight until the water receded." (Barabe, Journey Vol. I, 318)

After the flood, retaining walls and tree planting became an important area of focus to prevent washout of landscaped areas. Two semi-circular granite and flagstone rest areas were created on the north and south side of Devil's Gate Footbridge not only for functional use, but also as an important erosion barrier. A three-foot, semi-circular, mortared granite retaining wall contains a park bench on the north side of the Bad River, east of the Devil's Gate footbridge. The plank bench is missing at the rest area on the south side of the Bad River.

Severe flooding from the Bad River is one of the most destructive forces of nature within Copper Falls Park. In 1946, powerful floodwaters filled with debris weakened bridge pilings and caused the stairway opposite the combination building to crash onto the log footbridge. This resulted in rebuilding the bridge in 1948 to its present location north of the combination building. Careful placement of thick, mortared retaining walls on each side of the bridge helped insure this disaster would not be repeated. When the flood destroyed the swimming pool and buildings along the Bad River, they were never replaced in this flood-prone area. As necessary, the Master Plan for Copper Falls Park needed to be adapted to the occasional reality of flood destruction.

After the flood of 1946, county road crews made another concentrated effort to build up the road bed and install drainage ditches and culverts where needed along the Bad River adjacent to Copper Falls Road and along Highway K. This area remains a low-lying, flood-prone area where the ground is easily saturated during times of rapid thaw or heavy downpours. The *Mellen Weekly-Record* reported of another flood incident on July 3, 1951 where: "Firemen drove to a point on Copper Falls Road where it was reported that six people were clinging to the roof of a car." (Barabe, Journey Vol. 1, 460)

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Current Habitat and Animal Populations Within Copper Falls Park

Wisconsin State Board for the Preservation of Scientific Areas is responsible for identifying and designating specific state-sponsored protection areas. The first board evolved into today's State Natural Areas Program. Natural areas are chosen which best represent the wealth and variety of Wisconsin's native landscape for education, scientific research, and for the long-term protection of Wisconsin's biological diversity for future generations. Copper Falls State Park has been designated a State Natural Area because of its outstanding natural communities, its critical habitat for rare species, its significant geological features and its wealth of resources for research and education. Copper Falls State Park is in partnership with the surrounding natural areas of Ashland County such as the Chequamegon Oak Hardwoods, McCarthy Lake and Cedars, Spider Lake, and Caroline Lake where the Bad River originates. (Wisconsin DNR, PUB-ER-115-2005, 4)

Copper Falls State Park also actively participates in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Program, which identifies plant, animal, and bird species, monitors activity, and keeps records on the status of each if they are endangered, threatened or in a special concern category. Grey wolf packs are currently growing in numbers exceeding 265 in the entire state and can sometimes be heard around Copper Falls Park. A thriving herd of 25 elk were released into the wild by the DNR at Clam Lake in 1995 and now roam the Copper Falls area in search of browse material. (Riepenhoff,14)

Copper Falls State Park currently contains Loon Lake, Murphy Lake, the Bad and Tyler Forks rivers, and Little Creek. Within the park are eight and one-half miles of river rapids. The parkland is surrounded by Scott-Taylor Creek, the Montreal Creek and Krause Creek that supports critical wetland habitat for a variety of plant life, trees, fish, animals, and water-dependent birds.

Bad River

The Bad River is the main attraction at Copper Falls State Park providing some of the most spectacular scenery found in Wisconsin. It originates at Caroline Lake south of Mt. Whittlesey on the Iron-Ashland county line. The Bad River makes a southerly loop slightly north of the town of Morse before continuing its course through Mellen and Copper Falls State Park. The Bad River is navigable in some areas with steep 29-foot bedrock drops, boulder-bed rapids and cascades, and areas of alder swamp.

Tyler Forks River

The Tyler Forks River flows 36 miles before emptying into the Bad River in Ashland County at Copper Falls State Park. The entire river is considered trout water, with a one-mile section near the confluence with Gehrman Creek designated exceptional resource waters for supporting a Class I trout fishery. Brook and brown trout are considered common, with an occasional rainbow trout. Brownstone Falls

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near the river's mouth presents a barrier to migratory fish from Lake Superior. A variety of bottom types occur in the river, from unstable sand to bedrock and rubble near the falls. Deep pool areas and long shallow riffles provide good habitat as the river passes through upland hardwood. The stream supports beaver, muskrat and migratory waterfowl.

Gehrmann Creek

This short stream is considered a Class II trout fishery. It flows partly through pastured upland hardwood before entering the Tyler Forks River a little more than a mile above its confluence with the Bad River.

Nearly all of the private land surrounding Copper Falls Park is MFLO (Managed Forest Land-Optional) zoning status for planting and maintaining forestlands with the option of allowing hunters to walk on private property. This is a critical conservation program where private citizens can contribute their efforts to the management and protection of natural resources on their own land.

Throughout the period of significance to the present day, Copper Falls Park has been the site of many visiting school groups interested in art and photography, as well as archeology, geology, forestry, conservation, biology and botany, to name a few. The rivers and lakes provide natural resource instruction as well as habitat study for all the natural communities it supports.

Copper Falls State Park is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in the area of conservation. The purchase of the land by the state contributed to reforestation efforts and set aside this area of natural beauty for all to enjoy. Especially during the CCC and WPA years, their efforts in minimizing soil erosion and fire danger as well as tree reforestation and critical habitat formation, preserved and promoted specie health in the variety of tree, plant, mammal, bird, reptile, fish, and invertebrate communities the park continues to support.

On January 10, 2005, Copper Falls Park received 700 additional acres of wilderness in the Plum Creek Timber Purchase. Today, Copper Falls State Park has grown to encompass 3,343 acres of waterfalls, canyons, rivers, lakes, and wilderness providing one of the most beautiful natural areas to be found in Wisconsin. This achievement would not have been possible without the efforts made by the Civilian Conservation Corps and Works Progress Administration. The time and energy spent on its physical development and reforestation during the post-logging era advanced the natural process in nature that would have taken 50 to 100 years to accomplish. Copper Falls is an essential state natural area critical to Wisconsin's native species and has a signature landscape that is easily identifiable so that its health, integrity, and beauty is of absolute value. It is, therefore, equally important to our national heritage that

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Copper Falls State Park be placed on the National Register of Historic Places in the area of conservation.

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Development of Roads and Tourism

Every tourist's memories of a vacation to northern Wisconsin includes the aroma of pine in the air, an exhilarating swim in a lake, the fragrance of a freshly-caught trout cooking over a camp fire, and a glimpse of an eagle riding the air currents overhead. When you add to this itinerary a healthy hike along a river path and the sight of majestic waterfalls, there is no wonder why tourists made Copper Falls State Park an essential part of their recreational plans.

Summer camps became popular to tourists, especially on Lake Herbert, southeast of Mellen. In 1902, Northland and Bethany Bible Summer School Camps became popular on Lake Herbert to the point where visitors officially changed the lake's name to Lake Galilee. (Barabe, Journey Vol.-I, 48) The camps built mission buildings that were used for sleeping quarters, worship and bible study. On the east side of Lake Galilee, several professors from the University of Chicago built summer cottages.

Day-travelers, who stayed at the Chequamegon Bay Hotel in Ashland, often drove by car to Copper Falls because they had heard of its exceptional beauty. Other tourists traveled north by train from Illinois and southern Wisconsin to enjoy the many lakes and rivers for swimming, fishing or hunting. As lake cottages and resorts grew in popularity in the 1920s, perhaps the most distinguished tourist to northern Wisconsin at the time was President Calvin Coolidge, who enjoyed trout fishing on the Brule River west of Ashland.

Good roads and tourism seemed to go hand-in-hand in northern Wisconsin. The first automobile made its way to Mellen from Ashland in 1907. At the time, residents of the area claimed that the roads were impassable even with a lumber wagon. "A person could travel from Ashland to New Orleans, but the stretch between Mellen and Morse would be the worst part of the trip." (Barabe, Journey Vol. I,60) This situation did not change until the late-1920s. Residents of Mellen claimed they would not attempt to drive to Hurley in a car until 1928.

August (Gus) Froming and his wife lived in a log cabin on what became the park grounds. Gus was the first caretaker, police officer, and concession owner at Copper Falls. He also collected \$0.25 per car for a parking fee. In 1925, Gus informed the Mellen *Weekly-Record* that: "Tourists are beginning to visit our beauty spot in greater numbers. On July 4, 80 cars, practically all strangers, visited the park and on Sunday the registry reached 93." (Barabe, Journey Vol. I, 190).

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Mr. Walter Willoughby, one of the early pioneers of the Mellen area, retained land ownership of the Loon Lake beach but allowed other people to use it. At the time, he thought the town of Mellen would buy his property for a city beach area. (Barabe, Journey Vol. I, 213) This transaction eventually did take place enabling the Wisconsin Conservation Commission to obtain 80 acres at the entrance to the park from the city of Mellen in 1954.

As the volume of visitors to the park increased, numerous tragedies occurred at Copper Falls resulting in death or severe injury when rocks broke or visitors stepped off a ledge falling into the gorges below. Without adequate funds for park development, visitors proceeded at their own risk.

County Trunk K originally served as the entrance to Copper Falls Park. This road turned into deep, muddy ruts every spring requiring cars to be freed with the assistance of a road grader. Once visitors arrived at the park, they followed worn paths that brought them to the edge of rock formations as pieces of rock fell into the canyons below. Those who tried picnicking had no place to go if confronted by wild animals that were attracted by the smell of food. Without adequate roads, recreational shelter buildings, proper sanitation facilities, and the construction of safe bridges and trails, there was limited use of the parkland. The only people who tended to visit the park were those who lived in the area. However, the improvement of state and county roads greatly aided the growth of tourism in northern Wisconsin.

The years of Prohibition from 1920-1933 had an impact on northern Wisconsin tourism as tavern owners from Chicago purchased resorts and continued their bootleg operations supposedly undisturbed in Wisconsin's wilderness. The Little Bohemia Resort, 50 miles southeast of Mellen near Mercer, probably became the most notorious resort when John Dillinger, Baby Face Nelson and their gang had a shoot-out with Federal agents. This resulted in the accidental shooting of a former Mellen High School student who was a patron of the resort at the time. Al Capone also frequented his Hideaway near Couderay, in northwestern Wisconsin.

During the turn-of-the-century, nearly every other building on Main Street in Mellen was a tavern. Prohibition forced every tavern owner out of business or forced them to sell other goods and services. The time formerly spent in a local pub switched to outdoor sporting activities and family picnics.

Probably one of the greatest attractions for tourists coming to Copper Falls was the low cost involved. Seventy years ago, when everyone's economic reserves were minimal and when families tended to be large and multi-generational, a picnic in the park became an enormous treat that often took the place of

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a vacation. A picnic at Copper Falls Park became a way of celebrating holidays, weddings, and special community events.

After President Franklin Roosevelt lifted the Prohibition laws in 1933, park concessions throughout Wisconsin sold beer to visitors. Patrons purchased 3.2 beer, near beer or Roosevelt beer for \$0.10 or \$0.15 a glass up until the late-1950s. The sale of beer drew large crowds and added to the popularity of Wisconsin state parks. The repeal of Prohibition also greatly added to tourism in northern Wisconsin as tavern business escalated near lake resorts and alcohol sales increased with tourist traffic from "dry" states.

In 1935 when 164 young men from Company D-692 came to Mellen, in addition to the teachers, technicians, and medical personnel required for running a CCC camp, it instantly increased the population by at least 12 percent. The money spent by the men at local businesses, the extra people hired by the camp to run its operations, the food and supplies needed to feed a CCC camp, in addition to the supplies purchased for construction at the park literally saved the town of Mellen from economic extinction during the post-logging era and the Great Depression. Without Copper Falls State Park this would not have occurred. It is interesting to note that August J. Froming, the early concession owner, became the tool keeper for Camp Copper Falls.

During the peak years of the Depression, free entertainment was all that most could afford. As a result, cookouts, dances, concerts, sing-a-longs, and wrestling matches at Copper Falls Park became important sources of entertainment for the entire family. In particular, the Camp Copper Falls baseball team along with the Mellen WPA Red Birds provided countless hours of entertainment for the local community. Scheduled games often took place at Copper Falls Park against local high school teams, the Mellen Merchants, the Mellen Woodticks and the CCC and WPA baseball teams from the surrounding area.

Company D-692 hosted a open-house barbecue and several major events at the park during the time they were stationed there. According to the Mellen *Weekly-Record* for July 24, 1936: "The new baseball diamond at Copper Falls Park, which also will be used for the parade and exhibition drill of the visiting girls' drum and bugle corps, has been manicured to immaculate perfection. A visit to the park found a detail of young men just adding the finishing touches to the pit where the Sunday dinner will be barbecued. A large number of the young men at Camp Copper Falls are from southern Illinois and they know all about barbecues. They plan to feed 1,200 people next Sunday, although there will in all probability be three times that number of visitors at the park."

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As tourist traffic increased to Copper Falls Park, local entrepreneurs in Mellen became involved in serving the needs of the public. Sporting goods stores emerged selling sports equipment, cold beverages, tents, ammunition, bait, fishing lures, guide service, boat rentals, and refrigeration service for displaying trophy fish. Taverns welcomed travelers to Friday night fish fries. Without a doubt, the increased tourist traffic to Copper Falls Park greatly benefited the economy of Mellen, if only to fill a tank with gas. In fact, Copper Falls Park became one of the major reason for traveling to this part of Wisconsin.

Copper Falls Park and the town of Mellen are so closely interconnected that it is nearly impossible to visit one without visiting the other. Annual July 4th parades and activities always include an all-day picnic at the park. Added to these festivities are Mellen High School all-class reunions that use park facilities as a gathering place.

At the time the Civilian Conservation Corps began their park development work in 1936, Copper Falls Park received around 30,000 visitors. During the second season, they received 42,000 park visitors in 1937. (Mellen Weekly-Record, September 2, 1937) Keeping records of this information became an essential part of park planning for the state of Wisconsin as they could visibly see how park development had a direct impact on the increase in tourist traffic. This remains to be an important function of the Department of Natural Resources.

Today, the combination building at Copper Falls State Park, along with all the buildings, structures and sites that support the operation of the park, provide shelter and safety for thousands of state residents and out-of-state tourists. There are currently 130,000 annual visitors (2004 count per DNR). They come to enjoy the outdoor amenities provided in the park.

CONCLUSION

One of the translations for the Indian word Wisconsin means "the gathering of the waters." As the Bad River spills over Copper Falls and mixes with the white foam of the Tyler Forks River at Brownstone Falls, this spectacular piece of land embodies the very name of our state and everything we identify with Wisconsin heritage and culture.

The critical period of significance from 1929 to 1953 became a genesis for both mankind and land that encompassed the entire nation in an effort of survival. Transforming the cutover and surrounding lands into a thriving habitat remains one of the most dramatic conservation accomplishments in Wisconsin and American history. Without this effort, the work performed by the CCC and WPA would have been postponed indefinitely or neglected altogether had it not been for the establishment of these programs

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and the investment made in our American landscapes. The story of the development of Copper Falls State Park needs to be remembered and passed on to future generations so that its fragile eco-system will be respected, valued, and protected along with its historic buildings.

In the words of former Wisconsin Governor (1959-1963) and U.S. Senator (1963-1981) Gaylord Nelson, "Intellectually, we finally have come to understand that the wealth of this nation is its air, water, soil, forests, minerals, rivers, lakes, oceans, scenic beauty, wildlife habitats, and biodiversity. Take this resource base away, and all that is left is a wasteland." (Nelson, inside jacket) As the founder of Earth Day, Nelson especially taught us to be attentive to the warning signs in our environment. Full participation in the National Heritage Program makes Copper Falls State Park a special outdoor school of conservation study whose value is beyond measure to the state and to the nation.

The combination building, garage and repair shop, contact station, custodian's residence, and pump house are heirlooms from the Great Depression that the CCC and WPA men built for future generations. They are significant reminders of the only time in American history when the War Department hired volunteers for park development. The buildings are rustic handcrafted masterpieces belonging to this historic period in our state and national heritage. They belong to the history of our nation as symbols of perseverance, hope, and fortitude of the American spirit during the Great Depression. If the land had not been developed during this critical period, we may now only be viewing the growth in habitat that nature would have had to regenerate on its own.

Copper Falls State Park continues to draw visitors to view its spectacular scenery. Students watch for a glimpse of endangered species that have chosen this special habitat for their home. In the areas of architecture, conservation, tourism and recreation, the entire site of the original land designated for Copper Falls State Park deserves to take its rightful place of distinction on the National Register of Historic Places.

Archaeological Potential

Only one small archaeological survey of the original land purchased to form Copper Falls State Park has been completed and no archaeological or cultural sites have been identified. The dramatic physical features that drew tourists to the area in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also drew people to the area for a millennium for spiritual purposes. Archaeological and cultural sites created by these activities may be preserved in the park. Early Native American quarries and mineral extraction

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activities may also be preserved in the park, as might hunting and gathering loci. Evidence of the mid nineteenth century, and later Ruggle's, mining operations may also be preserved in the park. Limited information is available on the early period of mineral extraction and small-scale late nineteenth and early twentieth century copper mining is poorly understood. The rugged nature of the park has protected the natural features and the archaeological and cultural sites from extensive disturbances.

____ End of Statement of Significance

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6. 15/680109/5138096
7. 15/680865/5139362
8. 15/681264/5139384
9. 15/681246/5139782
10. 15/680857/5139779

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated boundary corresponds to the lines drawn on the accompanying USGS maps. The points correspond to the following UTM coordinates 1. 15 681242 5140583; 2. 15 682001 5140577; 3. 15 682084 5137787; 4. 15 681251 5136943; 5. 15 680108 5136917; 6. 15 680109 5138096; 7. 15 680865 5139362; 8. 15 681264 5139384; 9. 15 681246 5139782; 10. 15 680857 5139779.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated boundary corresponds to the land purchases made to establish and expand Copper Falls State Park in 1929 and 1936.

____ End of Boundary Descriptions

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section photos Page 1

Copper Falls State Park
Town of Morse, Ashland County, Wisconsin

PHOTOGRAPH LISTING:

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Copper Falls State park

Town of Morse, Ashland County, Wisconsin

Location of the negatives: Wisconsin Historical Society

1 of 18. North view of combination building and log footbridge over Bad River

Photographer: Kirk Knoll Date: 2003

2 of 18. South view of combination building Photographer: Kirk Knoll Date: 1998

3 of 18. Northwest view of contact Station Photographer: Jeff Peters Date: 2003

4 of 18. Northeast view of contact station Photographer: Kirk Knoll Date: 2003

5 of 18. North view of custodian's residence Photographer: Jeff Peters Date: 2003

6 of 18. Close-up north view of custodian's residence

Photographer: Jeff Peters Date: 2003

7 of 18. Northwest view of garage and repair shop

Photographer: Jeff Peters Date: 2003

8 of 18. Northwest close-up of garage and repair shop

Photographer: Jeff Peters Date: 2003

9 of 18. Log footbridge over Bad River, facing combination building

Photographer: Kirk Knoll Date: 2003

10 of 18. Pathway to Brownstone Falls Photographer: Kirk Knoll Date: 2002

11 of 18. Copper Falls Photographer: Jeff Peters Date: 2003

12 of 18. Ground view of observation tower Photographer: Kirk Knoll Date: 1999

Copper Falls State Park

Rt. 1, Box 17AA, Mellen, WI 54546
(715) 274-5123

Town of Morse
Ashland County, Wisconsin

Summer Designated Use Areas

PARK INVENTORY

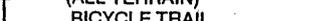
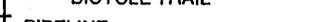
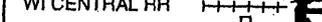
(Refer to numbered park map-A for locations)

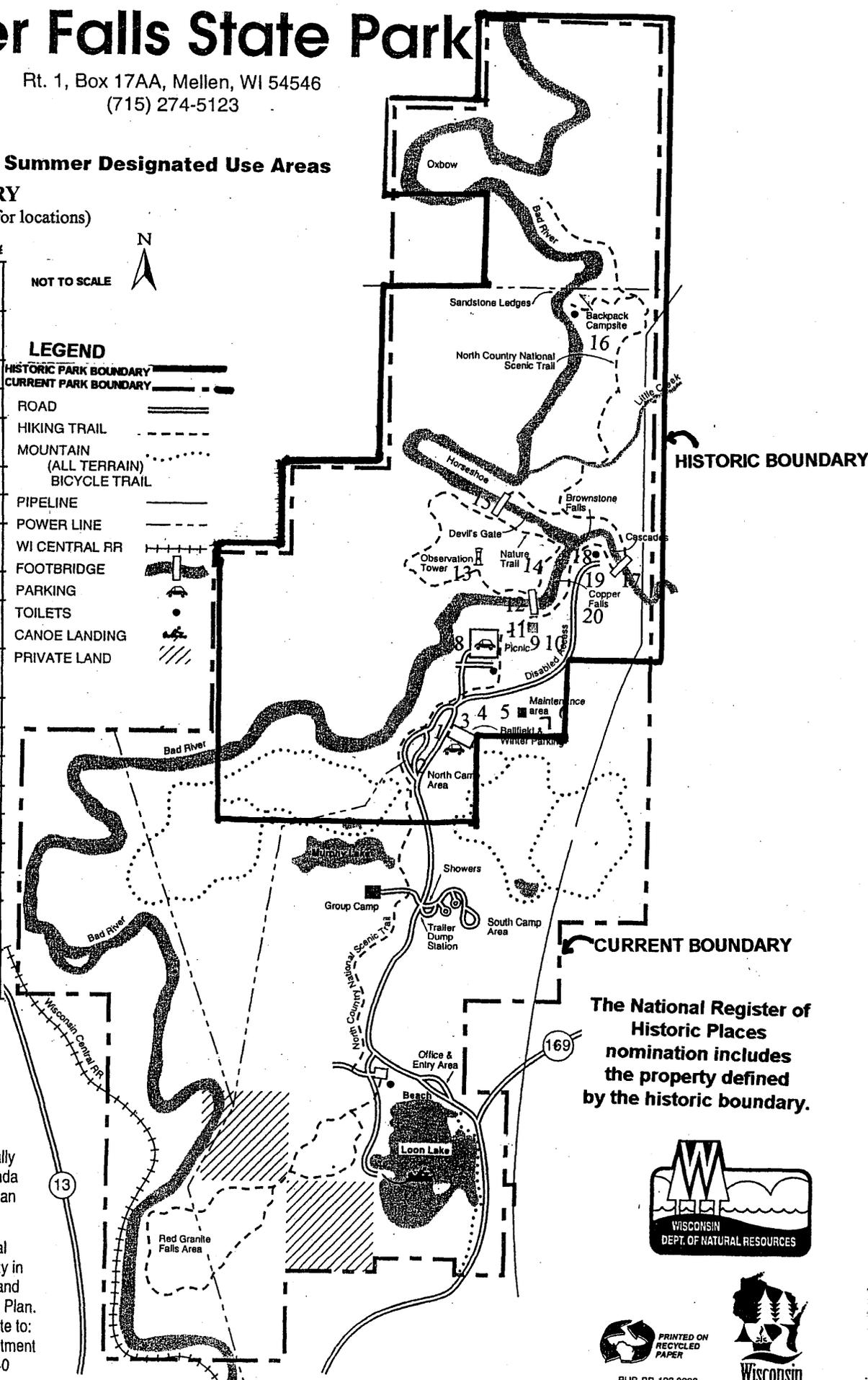
| Building/Structure | Map # |
|--|-------|
| North Camp Toilets & Bulletin Board - Area A | NC 1 |
| North Camp Toilets & Bulletin Board - Area B | NC 2 |
| Custodian's Residence | C 3 |
| Garage & Repair Shop | C 4 |
| Ranger Office-Double Trailer | NC 5 |
| 2-Door Metal Pole Barn | NC 6 |
| 4-Door Metal Pole Barn | NC 7 |
| River Campground Toilets & Bulletin Board | NC 8 |
| Contact Station | C 9 |
| Contact Station Toilets & Bulletin Board | NC 10 |
| Combination Building & Patio | C 11 |
| Log Footbridge | C 12 |
| Observation Tower | C 13 |
| Ravine Footbridge | C 14 |
| Devil's Gate Footbridge | NC 15 |
| Backpack Toilets | NC 16 |
| Tyler Forks Footbridge | C 17 |
| Pump House | C 18 |
| Handicap Toilets & Bulletin Board | NC 19 |
| Copper Falls Log & Granite Ravine Footbridge | NC 20 |

NOT TO SCALE



LEGEND

-  HISTORIC PARK BOUNDARY
-  CURRENT PARK BOUNDARY
-  ROAD
-  HIKING TRAIL
-  MOUNTAIN (ALL TERRAIN)
-  BICYCLE TRAIL
-  PIPELINE
-  POWER LINE
-  WI CENTRAL RR
-  FOOTBRIDGE
-  PARKING
-  TOILETS
-  CANOE LANDING
-  PRIVATE LAND



The National Register of Historic Places nomination includes the property defined by the historic boundary.

This publication is available upon request in alternate formats for visually impaired persons. Please contact Linda Netzer at (608) 266-0866 to request an alternate format.

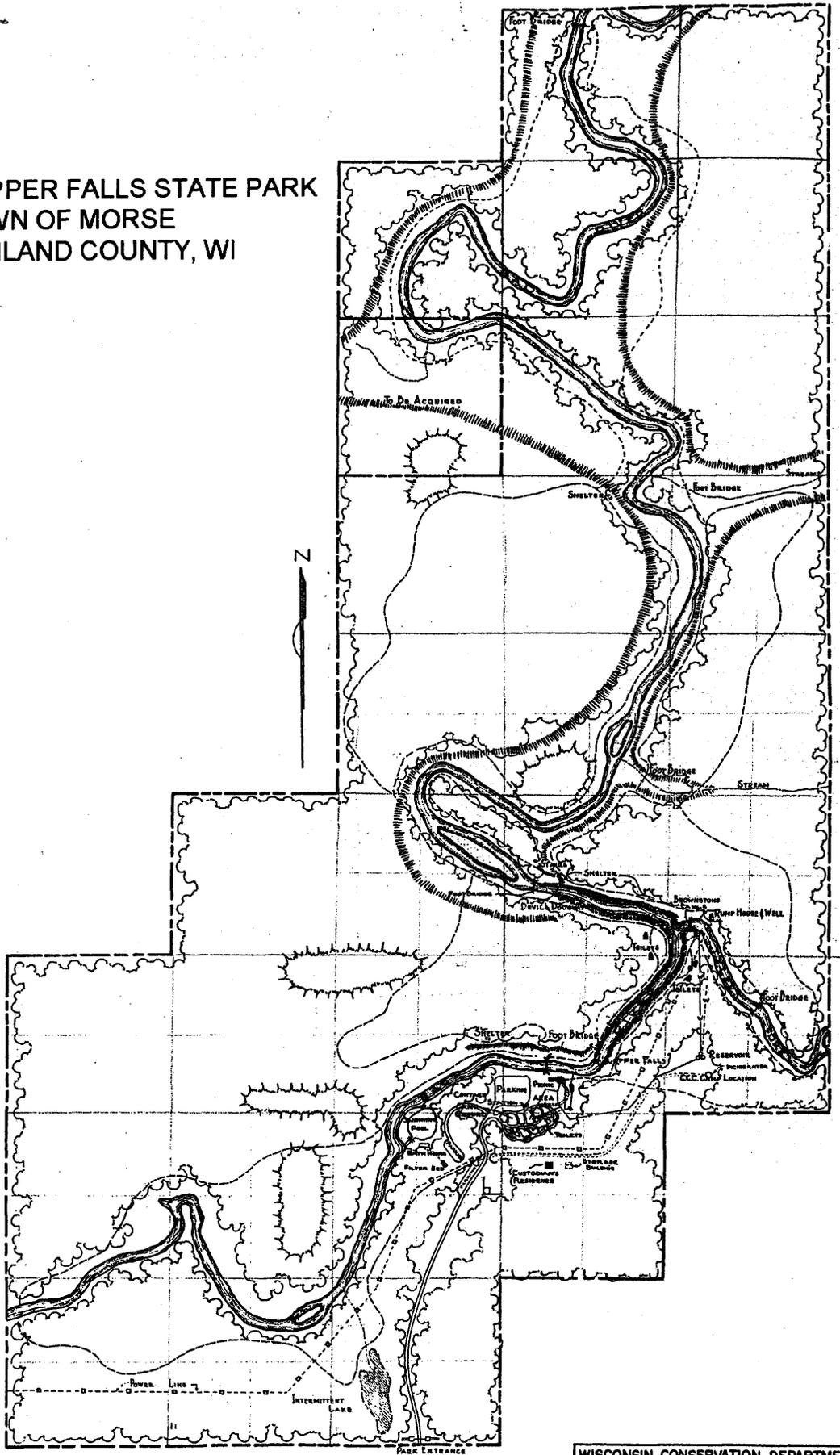
The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to: Equal Opportunity Office, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240



PUB-PR-103 2003



COPPER FALLS STATE PARK
 TOWN OF MORSE
 ASHLAND COUNTY, WI



WISCONSIN CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT
 DIVISION OF FORESTS AND PARKS
COPPER FALLS STATE PARK
MASTER PLAN
 SCALE 1" = 400'

Recommended _____ Date _____ Drawn By _____
 Approved _____ Dept. Div. of Forests-Parks _____

GENERAL TOPOGRAPHY OF COPPER FALLS STATE PARK

ASHLAND COUNTY, WISCONSIN. T. 45 N., R. 2 W., 4TH P.M.

