

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form**

SEP 15 1989  
NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

**A. Name of Multiple Property Listing**

Minnesota State Park CCC/WPA/Rustic Style Historic Resources

**B. Associated Historic Contexts**

Landscape Architecture in Minnesota State Parks, 1933-1942  
State Park Development in Minnesota State Parks, 1889-1942  
Rustic Style Architecture in Minnesota State Parks, 1905-1942  
CCC/WPA Federal Relief Programs in Minnesota State Parks, 1933-1942

**C. Geographical Data**

The State of Minnesota

☐ See continuation sheet

**D. Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Nina M. Archabal

9/5/89  
Date

Signature of certifying official Nina M. Archabal

State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Beth Boland

10/25/89  
Date

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

---

**E. Statement of Historic Contexts**

---

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 1

---

ASSOCIATED HISTORIC CONTEXTS

I. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

The landscape design implemented in Minnesota's State Parks represents a carefully formulated philosophy which had already been implemented by the landscape architects of the National Park Service. As early as 1910 it had been recognized that the national parks were in desperate need of a centralized administrative system sensitive to park development. Park supervision had been haphazard at best and development had taken place with little regard to the natural landscape and environment. In his Annual Report for that year Secretary of the Interior Richard A. Ballinger recommended the creation of a "bureau of national parks and resorts under the supervision of a competent commissioner, with a suitable force of superintendents, supervising engineers, and landscape architects..." [1]

When the American Society of Landscape Architects met in Boston in 1916 they also supported the campaign for a professional park bureau. After studying the national park problem and its relationship to the landscape architecture profession they passed a resolution supporting the park bureau bill introduced by Congressman Kent of California in January 1916.

"Whereas, the need has long been felt, not only for more adequate protection of the surpassing beauty of those primeval landscapes which the National Parks have been created to perpetuate, but also for rendering this landscape beauty more readily enjoyable through construction in these parks of certain necessary roads and buildings for the accommodation of visitors in a way to bring the minimum of injury to these primeval landscapes...(it is resolved)...that the American Society of Landscape Architects endorses the Bill (H.R. 8668), entitled a Bill to Establish a National Park Service." [2]

During the same session Landscape Architect James S. Pray of Harvard University outlined the role of the landscape professional in the proposed park bureau.

"Let me go on the record as believing that the surpassing beauty of our National Parks is neither safe, nor will be made enjoyable for the maximum number of people with the minimum injury to that landscape beauty, unless the

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number     E     Page     2    

---

administration of the National Park areas employs the best expert council it can secure in the profession of Landscape Architecture." [3]

He also specified four areas where landscape expertise was essential.

"First, a careful determination of proper boundaries of the National Parks, not arbitrary, as those at present, but in consonance with the topography and with landscape unity; second, the development of comprehensive general plans for every National Park and Monument showing roads, bridges, trails, buildings, etc., so far as these may be needed, and at the same time can be built without injury to the landscape, and the adoption of a definite policy of development; third, the approval of designs for buildings and other special structures; fourth, prescribing a system of intelligent and scrupulous maintenance having particular regard to the protection of the beauty of the landscape." [4]

The Kent bill to create the National Park Service was passed by Congress and signed by President Wilson on August 25, 1916. By the spring of 1918 Stephen Mather had assumed the Director's position and together with his assistant, Horace Albright, he formulated the first "State of Policy" of the National Park Service. The statement clearly reveals the influence of J.S. Pray and the American Society of Landscape Architects and it ultimately provided the basis for National Park Service Rustic Style Architecture and Landscape Architecture for the next 20 years.

"In the construction of roads, trails, buildings and other improvements, particular attention must be devoted always to the harmonizing of these improvement with the landscape. This is a most important item in our programs of development and requires the employment of trained engineers who either possess a knowledge of landscape architecture or have a proper appreciation of the esthetic value of park lands. All improvements will be carried out in accordance with a preconceived plan developed in special reference to the preservation of the landscape, and comprehensive plans for future development of the national parks on an adequate scale will be prepared as funds are available for this purpose." [5]

Mather went on to form a professional park bureau staff which could now implement this philosophy. Charles P. Punchard was appointed National

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 3

Park Service Landscape Engineer and he and Civil Engineer Goodwin formed the nucleus of this staff. Landscape problems were inspected at Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Rocky Mountain, Mount Rainier, Crater Lake, General Grant, Sequoia, and Hawaii National Parks. Each of the parks was in need of roads, trails and buildings yet many already suffered from poorly planned or located facilities. Punchard's responsibilities included "not only design of new National Park Service structures, but also the supervision of concessioner facility design and construction, the development of local plans for National Park Service utility yards, housing complexes, and administrative sites, the planning of campgrounds, and consulting with the National Park Service Civil Engineering Division to assure proper landscape sensitivity in road and trail projects." [6]

When Punchard died in 1920 his position was filled by Assistant Landscape Engineer Daniel P. Hull. Hull's designs of 1921 represent the first well-developed examples of National Park Service Rustic Style Architecture. These buildings are characterized by non-intrusive designs constructed with native materials such as logs or stone. The designs improved stylistically until not only were the buildings designed to harmonize with the environment but to harmonize in a cultural sense as well. By 1927 few buildings had actually been constructed due to a lack of funding but there was now universal acceptance concerning the most appropriate architectural expression for the national parks. [7]

As funding increased during the late 1920s and early 1930s the National Park Service entered a period of unparalleled development. The Landscape Division was now headed by Thomas C. Vint and experienced a significant increase in its professional staff. Vint's major achievement during this period was the creation of the master plan concept.

"The master plan as developed by the Park Service is a comprehensive land mass plan that contains all the basic known facts and needs for the protection, use and development of a land mass set aside for a principal purpose or purposes, taking into consideration the potentialities for adjacent land uses and their effect on the area under study. A National Park Service master plan therefore consists of many maps and pages of written material covering every conceivable bit of information on an area, including its natural features, history and archaeology, engineering, road construction, developments of all kinds, forest-fire protection, maintenance, and nearly everything that must be considered in planning the protection and development of a piece of land for public use." [8]

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number   E   Page   4  

---

The master plan was coordinated by landscape architects and became the ultimate design for an entire area. It included detailed plans for development, statements covering the purpose for establishing the park, the interpretive aim and the administrative program for realizing various plans. Unplanned, haphazard work was not allowed and an approved master plan was required for each park. [9]

When National Park Service funds were cut back during the last year of the Hoover administration, the landscape architects shifted their attention from construction activity to preparing park plans, preliminary sketches and building plans for proposed development. By the time Roosevelt was inaugurated in March 1933, the National Park Service had specific development plans in its files through fiscal year 1939. [10]

Roosevelt's election opened a new period in the history of the National Park Service. The Park Service greatly expanded its responsibility as Roosevelt incorporated the expertise of the well organized and highly professional bureau into his expansive relief programs. When the Emergency Conservation Work Act of March 1933 created the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Park Service was one of the bureaus designated to receive enrollees. However, the Park Service quickly realized that the staggering manpower offered by the C.C.C. could not be accommodated by the projects in the national parks alone. Since they were also authorized to supervise projects in state, county and metropolitan parks, the Park Service turned its attention to large scale development in these areas as well. Not only was there a recognized need for recreational facilities at the state level but the Park Service was keenly aware that intensive development which was inappropriate for the national park system could be undertaken in these areas.

A state park assistance program was organized and placed under the Branch of Planning supervised by Conrad Wirth, son of Minneapolis Park administrator Theodore Wirth. The program grew so rapidly that within a few months it was designated as a separate "State Park Division" and was regionalized in order to supervise the State Park Emergency Conservation Work. From the beginning, the state park assistance staff looked to the work of Thomas Vint and his staff as a model. Wherever possible the E.C.W. regional offices of the State Park Division were staffed with professionals who had previous national park experience. The park service also made it clear that the same high standards which had controlled the work in the national parks would also continue under the emergency park development program. [11]

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   E   Page   5  

---

In order to supervise the hundreds of C.C.C. camps conducting state park development, the National Park Service was faced with an immediate need for the professional services of architects, landscape architects, engineers, foresters, naturalists and geologists. The landscape architects in particular had a significant effect on the quality of state park development. They were usually chosen as travelling inspectors to oversee the work in the state park camps and, in addition, an effort was made to have at least one landscape architect in the supervisory personnel in every state park. Their purpose was to develop areas that were thoughtfully designed and to discourage undertakings that would adversely effect the natural character of the park. During this period, the National Park Service became the largest employer of landscape architects in the history of the profession. [12]

Minnesota's state park system was an enthusiastic recipient of the labor intensive manpower offered by the C.C.C. and the skilled supervision of the National Park Service. In May 1933, state officials were contacted by the Park Service in order to begin their cooperative collaboration. The Park Service obtained office space on the fifth floor of the Post Office and Federal Courts Building in St. Paul and hired a professional staff to develop landscape and architectural designs for execution within Minnesota's state parks. Principal figures in what was known as the Minnesota Central Design Office were Edward W. Barber, Chief Architect, V.C. Martin, Architect, N.H. Averill, Landscape Architect and Oscar Newstrom, Engineer. This office was actually a branch of a National Park Service Regional Office. Minnesota initially fell under the jurisdiction of the Regional Office in Indianapolis but was reassigned to the Omaha Regional Office as a result of an subsequent reorganization.

According to Edward Barber, meetings were conducted by the Park Service in order to educate the staff on the design philosophy which had already been implemented within the national parks. Photographs of appropriate construction, such as buildings at Yellowstone National Park, were shown. [13]

The initial master plans for Minnesota's state parks were drafted by Walter Clark, a National Park Service Landscape Architect, until the young staff of the Central Design Office gained a thorough understanding of the process. Later, much of the landscape work and master planning was completed by Averill. Typical of the master plans was the development scheme for Jay Cooke State Park. (See Exhibit I) A Vicinity Map was included indicating the surrounding area within a 50 mile radius and miscellaneous notes describe the nearby population, average rainfall, first killing frost, last killing frost, mean annual temperature, mean monthly temperature, and prevailing winds. The plan itself describes the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 6

---

following items on both a proposed and existing basis:

- Roads (graded or graveled, under construction or to be obliterated)
- Trails (foot or bridle)
- Dams
- Buildings in General
- Ranger Stations
- Contact Stations
- Patrol or Snowshoe Cabin
- Fire Lookout
- Cemetery
- Historical Monuments
- Telephone Lines (grounded, underground or to be removed)
- Truck Trails
- Power Lines (aerial or underground)
- Gates
- Boundaries (park, county or state)
- Parking areas
- Parking Overlooks
- Playgrounds
- Public Campgrounds
- Portals
- Organized Group Camps
- Picnic Grounds
- Nurseries
- Historical Sites
- Administrative Headquarters
- Turn-Arounds

This intense examination of the immediate environment provided the framework for all subsequent development and assured that the appropriate relationship between the built environment and the natural landscape would be achieved. Similar schemes were developed for many other parks, particularly those with C.C.C. camps available for large scale construction.

Detailed site plans were also designed with the same precision. Typical of these would be the site plan for Sibley State Park which clearly defines use areas based on their functional intention. Bathers, picnickers and campers are all assigned to distinct areas to avoid the congestion and over crowding caused by undifferentiated space. Circulation patterns are also clearly delineated. Yet, the overall effect is one of considerable naturalness which conceals the well thought out landscape design. Careful attention to the existing terrain and the



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 7

---

asymmetrical or picturesque placement of the Rustic Style buildings suggests an informality which serves as a successful foil to the precision of the site design.

Detailed landscape designs of the Swing Bridge Area of Jay Cooke State Park by Averill also indicate this same methodical approach. (See Exhibit II) In this case a "tree key" locates the position of every white pine, white spruce, white birch and maple tree in the area. Instructions state that "All trees planted to be native to the area and in same proportion as surrounding woods so as to blend with existing plant growth." Specific plants and shrubs are also suggested for planting in shady areas and along man-made rock outcroppings. Similar landscape and reforestation designs were generally implemented within the state park system. Another typical example is noted on the master plan for Charles Lindbergh State Park which state "This area to be reforested in an informal and natural manner only trees and shrubs native to this locality to be used."

Although master plans, site plans and landscape designs were frequently completed in the Regional Office of the National Park Service or the Minnesota Central Design Office, on site analysis was also a component of the planning process. Detailed, color coded, maps were maintained by a landscape professional and continually updated to indicate all aspects of development. Scenic State Park retains the only known extant set of such drawings in the state. This set of bound drawings clearly delineates all projects which were proposed, underway or completed. Based on project type, a unique system of color codes readily locates a specific project and identifies its status. These drawings were updated and redrawn as progress continued. Similar monthly progress reports were also prepared.

Surviving perspective drawings executed by Edward W. Barber of the Central Design Office also indicate the concern for the relationship between the built environment and the natural landscape. Accompanying working drawings reaffirm this non-intrusive approach and, in some cases, even specify the natural placement of native boulders. Typical examples would be drawings for the Mt. Tom Lookout Shelter at Sibley State Park, the Custodian's Cabin at St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area, and a dramatic bird's eye perspective of the Concourse at Gooseberry Falls State Park. (See Exhibits III, IV, V)

One of the major contributions to landscape architecture during the C.C.C. era was the development of a series of Recreational Demonstration Areas. The purpose of the R.D.A. program was to purchase submarginal land with funds from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 8

---

(F.E.R.A.) and develop these areas for recreational purposes through the use of C.C.C. camps.

Before the Roosevelt administration little had been done to solve the problem of farmlands which were submarginal from an agricultural standpoint. This land had such poor soil or was so badly eroded that countless American farmers could neither make a living from it nor find someone to buy it. During the Depression most of the people on these lands were on relief. [14]

Roosevelt established a Land Planning Committee in 1934 to develop a land utilization program which would purchase this submarginal acreage, relocate the farmers on better sites, and reforest the leached-out lands. These lands would be "demonstration areas" showing what could be done by recovering submarginal lands and reassigning them to a productive conservation purpose. [15]

The National Park Service formulated a proposal to acquire these lands, return them to their natural state, and build quality recreational facilities. Studies had indicated an urgent need for such natural areas close to population centers and available to large numbers of people. The primary goal was to develop large group camps or "organized camps" for use by accredited welfare organizations to provide outdoor vacations for masses of underprivileged children. Ultimately, 46 R.D.A.s were formed involving the purchase of nearly 400,000 acres of submarginal land.

The master-planning of the R.D.A.s and the design of the organized camps became one of the most intriguing challenges for the landscape architects of the Park Service. The built environment was to place the needs of the individual first and foremost in order to achieve the following objectives: safety; physical and emotional health; new interests; appreciations and skills; social adjustment and growth; spiritual growth; fun, enjoyment and adventure. The result was to be a healthy, happy, responsible member of society. [16]

The first step toward realizing this goal was to abandon the regimentation and overregulation which had often characterized group camping. Camp layouts were often patterned on army style barracks with a formal alignment of buildings and camp programs were often crowded with little regard to physical differences or individuality. The overall effect was largely institutional. [17]

Landscape architects of the Park Service chose a new and innovative approach for the design of the organized camps which featured

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 9

---

decentralization and a scaling-down of all component parts. The fundamental element of this system was called the "unit" and usually consisted of a cluster of four, five or six cabins, each designed for four campers. An ideal unit accommodated 24 campers and also contained a unit lodge and kitchen, a unit wash house and latrine, and one or two counselor's cabins.

A typical organized camp contained four separate units for a total of 96 campers. Each unit was located out of sight and sound of each other as well as an administrative core which included a main recreation and dining hall, a central hot shower house, laundry and latrine, an infirmary, an administration building, and quarters for the director, staff and helpers. A larger camp might have a craft shop, nature study building and council ring. The entrance road to the camp was allowed to penetrate only as far as the administration building with a service road to the kitchen building. All other connections among the various parts of the camp were by foot trail only.

The landscape design of the Recreational Demonstration Areas clearly demonstrates the close relationship between physical form and consequent social results. Here the ultimate psychological effects on the users themselves, the campers as individuals and as social groups, became the major design determinants along with topographic and climatic conditions. The individual unit achieved a high degree of self-sufficiency and within it each member was assigned a personal role. Every camper was expected to take his turn in preparing breakfast and midday meals which were served in the unit lodge, while only the evening meal was prepared for the entire camp at the central dining hall. The basis for this approach was both sociologically and educationally sound as it instilled a sense of individual freedom along with personal responsibilities. Healthy group loyalties were promoted with a strong sense of belonging, first to the cabin's team of four, next to the unit of twenty-four, and then to the membership of the entire camp. In its way it represented a microcosm of life in a viable society. [18]

One of the largest Recreational Demonstration Areas in the country was developed in Minnesota on the St. Croix River. Approximately, 18,483 acres of submarginal land were purchased and became one of 34 R.D.A.s in the nation with group camp facilities. Over 100 buildings were constructed in three organized camps named for their location within the park: St. John's Landing Group Camp, Head of the Rapids Group Camp, and Norway Point Group Camp. The site plans for the group camps clearly follow the suggested layout with small clusters of cabins arranged around a central administrative core (See Exhibit VI) although each camp varies both from an architectural and functional standpoint. The St. John's

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 10

---

Landing Group Camp was the first one completed and opened in July 1936 providing a healthy outdoor experience for girls between the ages of 10 and 14 from urban families on relief. The St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area was transferred to the State of Minnesota by the Federal Government in 1943 and has remained a member of the state park system since that time

These various Emergency Conservation Work activities were closely supervised and scrutinized by the National Park Service. Each plan and drawing was approved by the Park Superintendant, Regional Inspector, Director of State Parks, Regional Office of the National Park Service as well as the Washington Office. National Park Service personnel involved in the planning and development of the Minnesota park system included:

Kenneth Shelley - an inspector for the National Park Service assigned to Minnesota; a graduate of the University of Illinois' School of Landscape Architecture.

Grant Ross - an inspector for the National Park Service; a graduate of the University of Washington's College of Civil Engineering.

Harry L. Staves - an inspector for the National Park Service; a graduate of Iowa State College's School of Landscape Architecture.

George Nason, Sr. - chief of design for the Omaha Regional Office of the National Park Service; a graduate of the University of Minnesota's School of Civil Engineering and Harvard's School of Landscape Architecture.

Harry Curtis - assistant director of Region IV National Park Office and regional supervisor of the "State Park, Parkway and Recreational Area Studies; former assistant director of the Indiana State Park System.

Edward W. Barber - graduate of the University of Minnesota and Chief Architect for the Minnesota Central Design Office. Barber was the major designer of Minnesota's rustic style state park buildings.

U.W. Hella - National Park Service civil engineering foreman for the C.C.C. camp at Scenic State Park and later served as C.C.C. camp superintendent at Cascade River and Sibley State Park.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   E   Page   11  

---

Hella was transferred to the Omaha Regional Office of the N.P.S. to serve as a traveling inspector and subsequently served in a similar capacity within the Minnesota Division of State Parks. He helped implement the Park, Parkway and Recreational Area Study in Minnesota and was eventually appointed Director of State Parks.

The Park Service was quick to respond if it appeared a state was involved in inappropriate development. In fact, Conrad Wirth, who was in charge of all aspects of the C.C.C. involving the National Park Service, stated that a state might lose federal assistance if their activities were harmful to the environment. However, the Park Service was clearly satisfied with the work completed in Minnesota. [19]

Within this framework of a defined design philosophy, master planning and close professional supervision, Minnesota's state parks developed facilities which responded to the needs of the public as well as the natural environment. The result is clearly one of the most successful expressions of landscape architectural design.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 12

---

## II. STATE PARK DEVELOPMENT

The state park movement in the United States had its beginning in 1864 when California established the Yosemite area as a state park. Frederick Law Olmstead, the recognized father of landscape architecture, served on an eight man Yosemite Commission to determine the policies for the park and his preliminary report of 1865 is now considered one of the major documents of what became the state park movement.

It therefore results that the enjoyment of scenery employs the mind without fatigue and yet exercises it; tranquillizes it and yet enlivens it; and thus, through the influence of the mind over the body, gives the effect of refreshing rest and reinvigoration to the whole system.

Men who are rich enough....can and do provide places of this needed recreation for themselves. They have done so from the earliest period known in the history of the world...

Thus unless means are taken by government to withhold them from the grasp of individuals, all places favorable in scenery to the recreation of the mind and body will be closed against the great body of the people.

To simply reserve them from monopoly by individuals, however, it will be obvious, is not all that is necessary. It is necessary that they should be laid open to the use of the body of the people.

The establishment by government of great public grounds for the free enjoyment of the people under certain circumstances, is thus justified and enforced as a political duty. [20]

Another significant event in the history of the state park movement was the dedication of Niagara Falls Reservation as New York's first state park in 1885.

Minnesota was also among the first states to begin building a system of state parks. Minnehaha Park was briefly designated a state park in 1885. However, the park system actually began in 1889 when the Legislature established Camp Release near Montevideo in Chippewa County as a State Monument. It commemorates the site at which Chief Red Iron released 269 white prisoners during the 1862 U.S.-Dakota Conflict. A step of major importance was taken in 1891 with the establishment of Itasca State Park to preserve the headwaters of the Mississippi and to "maintain intact, forever, a limited quantity of the domain of this commonwealth, 7 miles long and five in width, in a state of nature." [21] Another notable achievement took place in 1895 when Minnesota and Wisconsin created

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 13

---

separate interstate parks across from each other on the St. Croix River.

Like the national park system, Minnesota's state parks were originally established in order to preserve and protect scenic and historic areas rather than provide major recreational facilities. Other early state parks were Minneopa (1905), Jay Cooke (1915), Sibley and Whitewater (both 1915), and Scenic (1921). Like Camp Release, several other early state parks were established at the sites of monuments commemorating events in the U.S.-Dakota Conflict. The first of these was a monument erected in 1873 at Fort Ridgely Cemetery, now part of Fort Ridgely State Park established in 1911. Others were later erected at Birch Coulee and Lake Shetek and other isolated sites that were never designated as parks.

Yet, nearly 55 years after the establishment of Yosemite, the state park movement was sporadic at best. Little more than a handful of parks had been established among only about one-third of the states. [22] Only New York, Indiana, Wisconsin, Connecticut, and possibly California had anything even approaching a firm state park organization, and none of these owned what could reasonably be called a system of state parks. [23]

However, within a relatively brief period of time, two important events quickly influenced the state park movement. The first was the impact of the automobile which had intensified at the end of the war and which had been slowly but surely making the American people more mobile. To a degree unknown in earlier years the American family started taking to the road, and the demand for outdoor recreational areas shot upward accordingly. "In the two years immediately after the armistice several states, especially those wheelhorses Connecticut, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, responded with new parks." [24]

A second catalyst was Stephen Mather, who as director of the National Park Service had the sensible notion of looking to an ample, nationwide system of state parks to serve as a buffer to protect the great national parks from a dangerous avalanch of motorized visitors.

After all, the most pressing public demand was for intensive recreation--for such day-use facilities as bathing beaches and picnic grounds, for short-term rather than long-term use. State parks could be geared for these purposes just as well as national parks and often better. Moreover, dense urban populations would normally find state parks nearer and more easily accessible than national parks. For intensive recreation, the superlative scenery of the national parks was certainly not a primary requirement; indeed, facilities for swimming would in many cases appear more important. Of a more modest scenic level than

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 14

---

national parks, state parks of satisfying quality would be easier to find, justify, and establish. The move toward more state parks, Mather may have surmised, might also curtail the large number of lowgrade, unqualified national park proposals that began to be urged upon the Park Service by ambitious politicians and local groups. [25]

Mather immediately began to organize one of the national conferences for which he was famous. Beginning in 1920, he enlisted the services of conservationists in various states and Des Moines was selected as a good central location for a large conference. At Mather's request Iowa's Governor W.L. Harding sent out thousands of invitations to a general park conference, urging the governors of the other states to send delegations. When the conference convened in 1921 for what turned out to be an epochal meeting, twenty-five states were represented by over two hundred individuals. The group quickly organized as the National Conference on State Parks. The Des Moines meeting had profound results, not only in the founding of the N.C.S.P., which still holds annual meetings and is a source of strength, but also in such a resurgence of interest and determination that it could at last be fairly said that a state park movement was on the way. During the years following the meeting, new parks were added in twenty states, including eight that had owned no state parks before 1921. No less that seventeen states created their first state park boards or commissions between 1921 and 1927 or otherwise enacted laws clarifying the responsibility and authority for management of the state's recreational and scenic areas. [26]

By 1925 Minnesota had 23 areas categorized as parks or monuments, although they lacked any kind of centralized administration. Prior to 1925 Itasca State Park was administered by the Department of Forestry, Sibley State Park was under the Game and Fish Commission and other parks in existence were administered by the State Auditor. Yet, the management of each park was left mostly to local advisory committees. A Conservation Commission composed of the Auditor, Game and Fish Commissioner, and the Forestry Commissioner was created in 1925, and the state parks remained under its jurisdiction until 1931, when the Department of Conservation was established in response to a campaign led by Hannah Kempfer, one of Minnesota's first women legislators.

The Minnesota State Park System experienced its greatest period of growth during the depression era of the 1930s as a result of the various federal relief programs. Recreational facilities were developed within many of the existing parks and an additional 19 parks were created during a 6 year span. Beginning in June 1933, large scale conservation measures and recreational developments were undertaken by the Civilian Conservation



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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 15

---

Corps in Camden, Fort Ridgely, Flandrau (Cottonwood River), Gooseberry Falls, Itasca, Jay Cooke, Scenic, Sibley, and Whitewater State Parks and the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area. Once W.P.A. funds became available in the spring of 1936 numerous projects were begun in smaller parks which did not warrant a C.C.C. camp.

Yet, the National Park Service, which supervised these various activities, insisted that the states agree to manage and maintain these newly founded park systems. In Minnesota alone, over \$1.9 million in federal funds had been spent on state park development in less than two years and the National Park Service essentially insisted upon a guarantee that this investment would be protected and adequately maintained. The Park Service required that the state appoint a trained park specialist with whom the federal park agencies might deal in order to perfect plans for improvements and supervise the various work activities. Harold W. Lathrop, an apprentice to Minneapolis City Park Superintendent Theodore Wirth, was appointed Director of State Parks by the Commissioner of Conservation. His salary was initially paid from federal funds with the stipulation that the next legislature include this appropriation in the budget for the Department of Conservation. This was necessary in order to request further National Park Service Emergency Conservation Work Camps for additional state park improvements. [27]

The Department of Conservation also specifically requested that the legislature of 1935 create a separate Division of State Parks. Headed by Lathrop, the Department of State Parks was officially formed on July 1, 1935 "to acquire maintain and make available to the public suitable places for recreation; to rent, lease, or operate public service privileges and facilities in any state park...and to acquire lands...for the purpose of public recreation, or for the preservation of natural beauty of natural features possessing historic value. [28]

The Division of State Parks quickly expanded and included an Assistant Director, Architect, Landscape Architect, Engineer, and District Supervisors for both the northern and southern areas of the state. The staff essentially provided a small version of the professional bureau employed by the National Park Service to supervise the State Park Emergency Conservation Work. The administrative staff of the Division of State Parks included the following personnel:

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 16

---

Director -- Harold W. Lathrop  
Assistant Director -- Emil E. Krueger  
Bookkeeper-Stenographer -- Francis J. Scully  
Northern District Supervisor -- U.W. Hella  
Southern District Supervisor -- R.W. Law

Project Supervisor -- John H. Martin  
Field Engineer -- Lehmann Taylor  
Office Engineer -- Harold Petersen  
Draftsman -- Henry Nielsen  
Stenographer (N.P.S. Office) -- Hilda Weinmann  
Stenographer (State Office) -- Carmel Thompson

Lathrop summarized the philosophy of this newly formed Division by stating "Our past attitudes permitting parks to drift without providing funding for their improvement and supervision must be changed to an attitude of interest and intense supervision." [29]

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 17

Once the Division of State Parks was formally organized and able to cooperate fully with the National Park Service and the various federal relief programs, extensive development was able to take place within the state park system. Between 1933 and 1938 the following parks received federal assistance through the Civilian Conservation Corps, Works Progress Administration, and the National Youth Administration:

PARK	CCC	WPA	NYA
Alexander Ramsey .....		X	
Beaver Creek Valley .....		X	
Birch Coulee .....		X	
Buffalo River .....		X	
Camden .....	X	X	
Charles A. Lindbergh .....		X	
Chippewa Mission .....		X	
Cottonwood River .....	X	X	
Fort Ridgely .....	X		
Gooseberry Falls .....	X		
Interstate .....		X	
Itasca .....	X	X	
Jay Cooke .....	X	X	
Lake Bemidji .....	X	X	X
Lake Carlos .....		X	
Lake Shetek .....		X	
Middle River .....		X	
Minneopa .....		X	
Monson Lake .....	X	X	
Mound Springs .....		X	
Oronoco .....		X	
Pomme De Terre .....		X	
Scenic .....	X		
Sibley .....	X		
Sleepy Eye .....		X	
Split Rock Creek .....		X	
Toqua Lakes .....		X	
Two Rivers .....		X	
Whitewater .....	X	X	

Assistance was also obtained for the following areas which would eventually be placed under the jurisdiction of the Division of State Parks:

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 18

AREA	CCC	WPA	RDP
St. Croix RDP .....	X		X
Cascade .....	X		
Lac qui Parle .....		X	

This rapid growth was carefully supervised and monitored by not only the National Park Service but also the Minnesota Division of State Parks. The District Supervisors of the Division were in fact traveling inspectors who continually reviewed the progress of the various relief programs and filed detailed monthly reports. Reuben W. Law, a Landscape Architect, supervised the southern half of the state and U.W. Hella, who later became Director of State Parks, supervised the northern half. Their reports provide an elaborate document of the development of Minnesota's state park system. (See Exhibit VII) In addition to the narrative reports, monthly progress reports updated the status of each park project. The reports specified the exact percentage of a particular project which had been completed. These projects included everything from building construction, entrance roads, quarrying rock, topographic surveys to making shakes and sanding bathing beaches. (See Exhibit VIII)

Another major achievement in the history of the state park movement occurred in 1936 when at the request of the National Park Service the Seventy-fourth Congress enacted legislation whereby the service was empowered to continue on a permanent basis the cooperation with the states it had established as a result of the work by the Civilian Conservation Corps. A nationwide study was made to secure basic data so that the service and the states could develop integrated park and recreation systems based on the best experience in the nation.

The importance of comprehensive park, parkway, and recreational area planning had long been recognized but only in a few cases had any of the states formulated any long-range plans based on in-depth studies of land uses and recreation needs. It was a well-known fact that leisure time needs increase with economic growth and social advances as well as with population growth. However, in order to fill these needs, recreational resources had to be appraised and recreational needs estimated and only on a the basis of comprehensive surveys was it possible to establish and maintain standards that were both adequate and feasible in terms of available resources. The national study included an inventory and analysis of existing park, parkway, and recreational facilities, whether federal, state, county, municipal or private. It also brought together plans or proposals for future park development that had been drawn up at

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 19

---

these various levels, including areas studied for possible acquisition or development, an analysis and appraisal of findings, and recommendations. [30]

The individual states also prepared their own versions of this study and in 1938 through the cooperative efforts of the National Park Service, the Works Progress Administration, the State Planning Board and the Division of State Parks, the first long range study of the state's park system and recreational needs was prepared. It was intended to "set forth in an orderly and logical manner, well recognized policies and standards for the state's use, and for the use of other recreational agencies. It shows, how, through the acceptance of these policies and standards, and through the coordinated activities of all interested groups and agencies, a state-wide, efficient, and economical park and recreation system may be obtained for Minnesota's residents and their hundreds of thousands of visitors." [31] The advantages of such a report were described as follows:

1. It points the way toward, and makes possible a well-rounded state-wide park and recreational system for Minnesota residents.
2. It serves as a guide to a sound program of land acquisition and development for recreational use.
3. It further coordinates an orderly development as against undirected growth.
4. It guides public interest.
5. It encourages continuity of sound park and recreational policies.
6. It creates a sound basis for emergency work which can be placed under way at short notice.
7. It stimulates the donation of suitable land for recreation.
8. It encourages tourist activities while at the same time pointing the way for maintaining and improving Minnesota's natural assets.
9. It offers supporting evidence to justify budget and legislative requests by the park administrative agency. [32]

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 20

---

The study recommended that Minnesota's State Parks should be expanded from 45,449.49 acres to 70,309.57 acres including the addition of 14 new park areas. One goal was to have a state park within 30 miles of every resident. At one time only 306,000 or 11.9% of the population was within that distance. However, just between 1933 and 1937 that situation had changed dramatically as seen when state park maps are compared for those years. (See Exhibit IX)

The report served as the basis for establishment of Cascade River, Mille Lacs Kathio, Lac qui Parle, Minnesota Valley, Nerstrand Woods, Frontenac, Forestville and Kilen Woods as units of the state park system. [33] The survey also resulted in the reclassification of areas under the control of the Division of State Parks into the following categories:

State Parks are those areas of considerable extent, established under control of the Division of State Parks, in which are combined superlative scenic characteristics and a fairly varied and extensive opportunity for recreation, or distinctive characteristics for a certain section of the state with exceptional opportunity for active recreation. Essential to the character of any State Park are the preservation of the native landscape and native vegetation, and the withholding of all its natural resources from commercial utilization. Ordinarily they should be of not less than 500 acres in extent. They following were classified as State Parks:

1. Alexander Ramsey
2. Beaver Creek Valley
3. Buffalo River
4. Camden
5. Cottonwood River
6. Gooseberry Falls
7. Interstate
8. Itasca
9. Jay Cooke
10. John A. Latsch
11. Kaplan Woods
12. Lake Bemidji
13. Lake Carlos
14. Lake Shetek
15. Middle River
16. Minneopa
17. Scenic
18. Sibley
19. Two Rivers
20. Whitewater

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 21

---

State Memorial Parks are those areas which have been set aside primarily to interpret some phase of outstanding historical significance or to perpetuate the memory of some outstanding citizen, but which because of their size, offer extensive opportunities for recreation of a state park nature and serve a similar purpose as State Parks, except for the lack of superlative scenery. These areas should ordinarily be not less than 100 acres in extent. The following areas were classified as State Memorial Parks:

1. Birch Coulee
2. Charles A. Lindbergh
3. Fort Ridgely
4. Monson Lake

State Recreational Reserves are those areas of large extent, which, lacking scenic distinction, supply exceptional opportunities for active recreation. The natural resources of these lands are to be protected from commercial utilization. They should preferably be not less than 400 acres in extent. The following were classified as State Recreation Reserves:

1. Mound Springs
2. Pomme De Terre
3. Split Rock Creek

State Waysides are those smaller areas under the control of the Division of State Parks, which are situated along or close to major highways and have scenic, historic, or scientific significance. They offer limited facilities, designated to provide the highway traveler a place to stop and rest, to enjoy a superlative landscape, or historic or scientific feature, or to picnic or camp.

1. Camp Release State Memorial Wayside
2. Chippewa Mission State Historic Wayside
3. Garvin Heights State Scenic Wayside
4. Horace Austin State Scenic Wayside
5. Inspiration Peak State Scenic Wayside
6. Joseph R. Brown State Memorial Wayside
7. Oronoco State Scenic Wayside
8. Sleepy Eye State Scenic Wayside
9. Toqua Lakes State Scenic Wayside
10. Traverse Des Sioux State Historic Wayside
11. Old Crossing Treaty State Historic Wayside

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 22

---

State Monuments are those small tracts or structures established under the control of the Division of State Parks, to commemorate persons, events or sites of state-wide historical importance. Because of their limited area, they serve no recreational purpose other than passive. The following were classified as State Monuments:

1. Acton
2. Brook Park
3. Hinckley
4. Milford
5. Moose Lake
6. Sam Brown
7. Schwandt
8. Wood Lake

With time many of these distinctions were modified. However, these classifications enabled park visitors to determine the character of an area and the type of development from the official park title. They also provided the Division of State Parks with an accurate method with which to categorize its resources.

As the Minnesota state park system continued to grow and expand, park attendance increased as well. It was estimated that 650,000 persons visited the State Parks during the 1937 season, yet, during the 1941 season attendance through September of that year was estimated at 1,300,000. The three most popular parks were Interstate with 290,000 visitors, Itasca with 175,000 visitors, and Jay Cooke with 135,000 visitors. These figures compared favorably with attendance at the National Parks. Yellowstone National Park had 581,000 visitors that year, only twice that of Interstate; Zion National Park had 190,000 visitors, only 10,000 more than Itasca; and Sequoia National Park had 300,000 visitors, only 5,000 more than Interstate.

Since the formative years of the 1930s, the Minnesota state park system has grown to include 64 parks with over 221,000 acres. The preamble to the state park legislation incorporates the Organic Act establishing the National Park Service and thereby states the management objectives of the state park system: "To conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 23

---

**III. CCC/WPA FEDERAL RELIEF PROGRAMS**

On March 21, 1933, just shortly after he took the oath of office as the 32nd President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt presented a message to Congress on the topic of unemployment relief. His proposal was prompted by the impetus of the Great Depression, when unemployment rose from just over 3% of the civilian work force in 1929 to over 25% in 1933. Not only were many young people unemployed but approximately 30% of those working had only part time jobs. [34]

Roosevelt suggested a prompt plan to enroll unemployed persons in public employment. He stated:

...I have proposed to create a civilian conservation corps to be used in simple work, not interfering with the normal employment, and confining itself to forestry, the prevention of soil erosion, flood control, and similar projects...The type of work is of definite, practical value, not only through the prevention of great financial loss, but also as a means of creating future national wealth... Control of such work can be carried on by executing machinery of the Departments of Labor, Agriculture, War, and Interior. The enterprise will...conserve our precious natural resources and more important will be the moral and spiritual gains of such work.

Roosevelt's attempt to conserve both human and natural resources was an extension of his own personal philosophy. His first appointment as a New York State Senator was chairman of the State's Committee on Forests, Fish and Game. In that position he was able to spearhead the passage of the first New York legislation on supervised forestry. While Governor he encouraged the state legislature to pass laws to aid in county and state reforestation. Public works projects were also created for the unemployed. [35] Roosevelt continually demonstrated his concern for both the environment and the unemployed.

Congress responded quickly to Roosevelt's proposal and on March 31, 1933 Executive Order 6106, Relief of Unemployment through the Performance of Useful Public Works, was passed by the Congress. One of the chief components of the legislation established Emergency Conservation Work, which was immediately referred to as the Civilian Conservation Corps, although not officially designated as such until 1937.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number E Page 24

---

Upon signing the bill Roosevelt indicated he would like the program operational within just two weeks. A meeting was held with representatives from the Departments of War, Labor, Interior, and Agriculture to discuss the implementation of the legislation and the duties of each agency. As part of this cooperative effort, the Department of Labor was to initiate a nationwide recruiting program, the Army was to condition and transfer enrollees as well as operate and supervise work camps, and the Park Service and Forest Service, known as the technical services, were responsible for the actual work projects, technical planning and execution, and supervision of the work force. [36]

Enrollees had to be unemployed single men between the ages of 18 and 25. United States citizenship was required as well as sound physical fitness and each person selected had to demonstrate need as well. The Park Service was also allowed to hire a limited number of skilled local men known as locally employed or experienced men (LEMs). For these men the marriage and age stipulations were waived. The bulk of the work force, however, was to be taken from the unemployed in the large urban centers. Enrollment regulations were later relaxed in order to include American Indians, locally employed men, and veterans of World War I. These enrollees, usually in their 30s and 40s, were granted special camps operated on a more lenient basis than regular camps. [37]

Enlistment was guaranteed for a 6 month period with a two year maximum. In return, each enrollee received food, clothing, shelter, and an allowance of \$30. per month, although it was required that \$25. be returned to their families. Roosevelt also insisted that each camp contain a minimum of 200 men.

On April 7, 1933 the first C.C.C. camp (Camp Roosevelt) was opened near Luray, Virginia. By September 1933 there were 1,520 C.C.C. camps with a total enrollment of 248,740. [38] This manpower offered the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service the means to expand and develop national and state forests as well as national, state, county and metropolitan parks.

In Minnesota, C.C.C. enrollees were sent to state-wide headquarters at Fort Snelling, later known as the Head Quarters Company, Minnesota District, which was in fact the 7th Army Corps. Here they received clothing and supplies and were sent on to the camps. In 1937 Grand Rapids replaced Fort Snelling as the state headquarters. By August 1933 there was 12,200 men employed in 61 camps throughout Minnesota. These camps were divided into the following types:

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 25

On U.S. National Forest	24
On State Forests	24
<u>On State Parks</u>	<u>3</u>
On Private Land or Forests	1
Erosion and Flood Control	9

Although this project concerns only those camps associated with State Parks and recreational development, the majority of the C.C.C. camps were located in state and national forests. Supervised by the U.S. Forest Service, they were involved in forest improvement, fire fighting, disease and insect control, erosion and flood control, stream improvement and wild life management. Reforestation and timber stand improvement occupied much of the C.C.C. efforts in Minnesota's Chippewa National Forest. Newly acquired land was in poor condition and required all aspects of forest improvement and, in addition, one C.C.C. crew helped build the Lydick Nursery in 1934 so that adequate seedlings would be available for reforestation. [39] Similar nationwide efforts greatly impacted forest architecture and even by 1935 it was concluded the C.C.C. had advanced forestry by 10 to 20 years.

The three State Park C.C.C. Camps supervised by the National Park Service were located at Itasca, Jay Cooke, and Scenic State Parks. These camps were first occupied on June 27, 1933, June 22, 1933 and June 21, 1933 respectively. By August 1934 additional camps were operating at Whitewater, Gooseberry Falls, Camden, and Fort Ridgely State Parks, and Spruce Creek Highway Wayside. In all, 22 camps were authorized by the National Park Service to operate in state and municipal parks, highway waysides and a Recreational Demonstration Area, although the camp at Beaver Creek Valley State Park was never placed in operation.

<u>CAMP NO.</u>	<u>NAME OF AREA</u>
NP-1	St. Croix RDA
SP-1	Itasca State Park
SP-2	Jay Cooke State Park
SP-3	Scenic State Park
SP-4	Whitewater State Park
SP-5	Gooseberry Falls State Park
SP-6	St. Croix RDA
SP-7	Sibley State Park
SP-8	Glenwood Municipal Park
SP-9	Whitewater State Park
SP-10	Gooseberry Falls State Park
SP-11	Camden State Park
SP-12	Fort Ridgely Memorial State Park

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number E Page 26

---

SP-13	Spruce Creek Highway Wayside
SP-14	Cottonwood River State Park
SP-15	Mille Lacs Lake Highway Wayside
SP-16	Leech Lake Wayside Park
SP-17	Lake Vadnais Metropolitan Park
SP-18	Lakeshore Wayside Park
SP-19	Itasca State Park
SP-20	Beaver Creek Valley State Park
SP-21	Jay Cooke State Park

Sometimes a camp would close only to be reactivated at another date. Such was the case at both Jay Cooke and Fort Ridgely State Parks. Or two camps could be operating simultaneously within the same park such as Itasca. The same Company could also move from one state park camp to another. One camp moved from Fort Ridgely State Park to the Mille Lacs Highway Wayside project only to be ultimately transferred to the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area. Side Camps were also established when a full company was unavailable or unnecessary. A Side Camp of the Sibley State Park C.C.C. camp developed nearby Monson Lake State Park and a Side Camp from the Lakeshore camp completed unfinished projects at Jay Cooke State Park after the C.C.C. camp was suddenly closed.

At its peak in 1935, there were 74 C.C.C. camps in operation in Minnesota, making it ninth in the nation in the number of camps. All told throughout the country there were 482 C.C.C. camps in state parks under the supervision of the National Park Service and over 120 C.C.C. camps under N.P.S. supervision in the national parks. In addition, there were over 2,000 C.C.C. camps working in private, state, and national forests under the supervision of the U.S. Forest Service.

The Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) was created in 1935 by executive order of President Roosevelt to provide useful work for needy unemployed persons. The W.P.A. was essentially established in response to criticisms of the New Deal and attempted to replace relief programs with work programs. The program addressed the unemployment of large number of professional, technical, and other service workers. The W.P.A. was transferred from the Department of the Interior to the Federal Works Agency in 1939 and renamed the Work Projects Administration.

The program was operated in cooperation with a state or local agency which sponsored a particular project. The sponsor supervised the project, paid for materials and equipment, while the W.P.A. paid for the majority of the labor costs. The State of Minnesota acted as the sponsor

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 27

---

for State Park projects with the ratio of federal to state funds for a particular project at about 11 to 1. However, in 1937 this ratio changed to 4 to 1, making it more difficult for the state to provide the sponsor's share of the cost. This was considerably more expensive than a C.C.C. project where the ratio was generally about 20 to 1.

In 1935 after W.P.A. funds became available, the Minnesota Department of Conservation applied for 18 W.P.A. projects involving improvements in various smaller state parks. However, a state's application was third in priority behind municipal and county projects and funding was delayed until the spring of 1936. Eventually over 20 state parks received W.P.A. funds for projects ranging from roadwork and bridges to recreational facilities.

Unlike the C.C.C. which only operated within a framework of organized camps, W.P.A. projects generally employed local people from the surrounding community. However, there were W.P.A. Transient Camps or Work Camps as they came to be called. These camps had their origin several years earlier in the Transient Relief Camps operated by the Emergency Relief Administration (E.R.A.). These camps, sometimes called "tramp camps", employed homeless transient men. State park transient camps were later turned over to the National Park Service in 1936 for administration, including feeding and housing the men. In 1938 the camps were transferred to the W.P.A. for operation. However, regardless of the administration of the actual camp itself, the work performed by the transient men was supervised by the National Park Service throughout the entire period. W.P.A. Work Camps were located at Itasca, Lake Shetek, Cottonwood River, Two Rivers, and Whitewater State Parks and a similar camp was operated by the Resettlement Administration at the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area.

In addition to the recreational development and conservation measures which were undertaken by the C.C.C. and W.P.A. in the state park system, both groups were involved in archaeological excavation as well as historical reconstruction. The C.C.C. camp at Fort Ridgely reconstructed the Commissary building at the fort and excavated the foundation walls for the remaining structures. The C.C.C. Camp at Jay Cooke State Park reconstructed the Fond du Lac Trading Post. A W.P.A. project at Lac qui Parle State Park reconstructed the Chippewa Lac qui Parle Mission. At Itasca State Park, the W.P.A. Work Camp camp conducted an archeological investigation of an ancient Indian site supervised by the University of Minnesota. The excavations at Nicollet Creek resulted in the discovery of 2,170 bones from caribou, buffalo, elk, bison, deer, fish and birds.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 28

The total impact of the C.C.C. and W.P.A. programs is also evident through an analysis of federal and state expenditures for these programs. From 1934 to 1936 the federal government supplied 86.47% of the Minnesota state park dollar with the remaining 13.53% paid by the state. Expenditures per park from the inception of the relief programs through September 1939 are as follows:

Alexander Ramsey State Park

WPA Expenditures	\$ 57,524.00
State Expenditures	4,471.00

Buffalo River State Park

WPA Expenditures	\$ 61,088.00
State Expenditures	5,854.99

Camden State Park

CCC Expenditures	\$483,000.00
WPA Expenditures	29,150.00
State Expenditures	4,510.00

Charles A. Lindbergh State Park

WPA Expenditures	\$ 64,171.00
State Expenditures	7,132.35

Cottonwood River State Park

CCC Expenditures	\$883,000.00
ERA Expenditures	35,929.00
WPA Expenditures	151,587.00
State Expenditures	57,608.00

Gooseberry Falls State Park

CCC Expenditures	\$1,083,000.00
State Expenditures	930.11

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 29

---

Interstate State Park

WPA Expenditures	\$ 56,622.00
State Expenditures	4,221.00

Itasca State Park

CCC Expenditures	\$1,267,000.00
ERA Expenditures	51,401.00
WPA Expenditures	148,127.00
State Expenditures	18,971.00

Jay Cooke State Park

CCC Expenditures	\$533,000.00
WPA Expenditures	13,402.00
State Expenditures	2,728.00

Lake Bemidji State Park

NYA Expenditures	\$ 28,606.00
WPA Expenditures	4,143.85
State Expenditures	6,824.40

Lake Carlos State Park

WPA Expenditures	\$ 38,202.00
State Expenditures	6,583.00

Lake Shetek State Park

WPA Expenditures	\$125,601.00
ERA Expenditures	42,446.00
State Expenditures	20,377.00

Middle River State Park

WPA Expenditures	\$ 79,013.00
State Expenditures	6,179.00



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 30

---

Minneopa State Park

WPA Expenditures	\$ 45,881.00
State Expenditures	3,888.00

Mound Springs State Recreational Reserve

WPA Expenditures	\$ 37,587.00
State Expenditures	1,063.00

Oronoco State Scenic Wayside

WPA Expenditures	\$ 38,744.00
State Expenditures	1,701.00

Pomme De Terre State Recreational Reserve

WPA Expenditures	\$ 30,443.00
State Expenditures	3,929.00

Sibley State Park

CCC Expenditures	\$700,000.00
State Expenditures	5,157.00

Two Rivers State Park

WPA Expenditures	\$173,604.00
State Expenditures	13,331.00

Whitewater State Park

CCC Expenditures	\$267,000.00
ERA Expenditures	37,680.00
WPA Expenditures	114,202.00
State Expenditures	14,177.00

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 31

Total expenditures are as follows although no figures are available for Scenic, Fort Ridgely, and Lac qui Parle State Parks and St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area:

	<u>Federal</u>	<u>State</u>
CCC	\$5,216,000	\$66,652
ERA	167,426	
WPA	1,269,091	117,159
NYA	<u>28,606</u>	<u>5,824</u>
Totals	6,681,123	\$189,635

However, as C.C.C. enrollment began to fall and state funds necessary to sponsor W.P.A. projects diminished, state park development also began to decline. Even as early as 1935, the C.C.C. camps were removed from Jay Cooke, Fort Ridgely and Whitewater State Parks due to declining enrollment. Harold W. Lathrop, Director of State Parks, reported that

The reduction of enrollment for CCC of 16% from 600,000 to 500,000 was responsible for Minnesota's losing these three camps. We have been notified that during the period from January 1 to June 30, 1936, a further reduction will be effected amounting to 40% of those camps remaining as the enrollment of CCC will be reduced to 300,000. With this anticipated loss of a least 5 camps, it will be necessary to study which camps can best be removed without sacrificing benefits justly necessary. [40]

By the late 1930s funding problems made it difficult for the state to sponsor additional W.P.A. projects and if the termination of a C.C.C. camp was expected, every effort was made to complete the most important park improvements. However, even in late 1939 plans were completed for long-term programs for 5 C.C.C. camps in the event the situation improved. These plans called for continuing work in Itasca State Park through 1945; four additional years were planned for Jay Cooke State Park; three years at Cottonwood River; five years work at St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area; two years at Lake Carlos and one year at Gooseberry Falls.

By May 1941 only 5 W.P.A. projects were in operation and only four C.C.C. camps remained. By early 1942 it was clear that the federally sponsored state park improvements were nearly at an end.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 32

---

As these programs came to a close, disposition was also made of the C.C.C. and Transient Relief camps. As early as May 1937 procedures were approved by the National Park Service for the Disposition of Unoccupied Emergency Conservation Work Camps. Buildings were to be transferred or salvaged under the following circumstances:

1. If it is not planned to occupy the camp within one year and if the cost to recondition the buildings is more than \$4,000.
2. If it is not feasible to occupy the camp within three years under the 25% reduction program.
3. All buildings held to be used as Side Camps should be eliminated.
4. Eliminate all buildings being used or held by any agency other than the C.C.C. if any of the above criteria is met.
5. Camp sites occupied by Work Camps should be transferred to the agency with which the Park Service is cooperatively carrying on the work if they are not desired for further ECW occupancy.

C.C.C. camps were generally considered temporary facilities and featured quite plain utilitarian wood frame structures organized in military like rows. One exception was the C.C.C. camp at Scenic State Park which was constructed with palisade siding. The standard camp was formed in a rough "U" shape with a recreation hall, garage and maintenance building, a hospital, administrative buildings, a mess hall, officers' quarters, enrollee barracks, and an education building; approximately 24 structures in all. [41] A portable, prefabricated building was mass produced in 1935 which could be bolted together in 5 foot sections. C.C.C. Director Robert Fechner ordered that all future Emergency Conservation Work camps of this type be built.

For these reasons, very few C.C.C. camp buildings survive. Many of the buildings from the Itasca State Park C.C.C. camps were shipped to Alaska, where they were used during World War II. The C.C.C. camp at Whitewater State Park, which was later used as a WPA Transient Camp, housed German prisoners of war who worked in nearby food processing plants during World War II. Many of the buildings remained until 1953 when a tornado destroyed the camp. One building from a C.C.C. camp at Itasca State Park survives and two buildings from camp NP-1 remain at St. Croix State Park. Several C.C.C. camp buildings were transferred to state parks to be used as group camp facilities but none survive today. The Rabideau C.C.C.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 33

---

Camp in the Chippewa National Forest, now listed on the National Register, is apparently one of three surviving C.C.C. camps in the country.

A number of Transient Camp buildings survive. The W.P.A. camp at Cottonwood River State Park is now used as a group camp facility and includes 8 barracks, 2 latrines and the officers quarters. This camp also housed German prisoners of war. The W.P.A. camp at Lake Shetek, although no longer in state hands, is now used as a church camp. Several buildings survive from the Elk Lake and Squaw Lake Transient Camps at Itasca State Park.

In June 1942 the Civilian Conservation Corps came to an end. The W.P.A. program was later terminated in July 1943 although all related state park projects in Minnesota had already come to a close. The work programs were victims of declining enrollment as a result of the improved economy as well as the demands of the war effort. Yet, in less than 10 years the Civilian Conservation Corps left a lasting legacy for America. Considered one of the great conservation programs in the history of the United States, not only were over 3,500,000 young men given training and employment but conservation measures were virtually unparalleled. The extensive park expansion and development was in large part responsible for the modern state and national park systems. In fact, the Civilian Conservation Corps is said to have sent the state park movement ahead by 50 years.

On July 15, 1942 Itasca State Park Camp SP-19 came to a close. It was the last Civilian Conservation Corps State Park Camp in the United States.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 34

---

IV. RUSTIC STYLE ARCHITECTURE

Rustic style architecture as constructed in Minnesota's state parks represents the prevailing design philosophy of the National Park Service in the 1930s.

"This little noticed movement in American architecture was a natural outgrowth of a new romanticism about nature, about our country's western frontiers....The conservation ethic slowly took hold in this atmosphere of romanticism. Part of this ethic fostered the development of a unique architectural style. Perhaps for the first time in the history of American architecture, a building became an accessory to nature...Early pioneer and regional building techniques were revived because it was thought that a structure employing native materials blended best with the environment...No (other) single government agency has to date been responsible for such a revolutionary break in architectural form." [42]

The style was inspired by folk traditions such as the pioneer log cabins as well as European sources such as Swiss Chalets, Norwegian Villas and Rhineland Castles. Landscape architects such as Andrew Jackson Downing also influenced the development of the rustic style by stressing the importance of nature in architectural design. This idea was later developed by Frederick Law Olmsted whose best known work was the design for Central Park in New York City in 1858 which emphasized the natural forms of the landscape and which featured a number of rustic style buildings.

Olmsted and his followers created park-like settings for everything from estates and college campuses to cemeteries, commuter suburbs, and city plans. Long after his death Olmsted's theories continued to have a major impact on the architecture of park structures built throughout the country as part of the federal work programs during the Depression. [43]

Other late 19th century architects such as Henry Hobson Richardson, Bruce Price, and McKim, Mead and White constructed buildings with natural materials such as native stone, timbers and shingles, and experimented with the Stick and Shingle styles thought to be particularly appropriate for resort communities. Another influence was the construction of immense rustic style camps in the Adirondacks by wealthy east coast families in the 1880s and 1890s.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 35

---

The railroads brought the first major development to the national parks in the late 19th century. However, initial designs like the classically inspired Lake Hotel, built at Yellowstone National Park by the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1890, tended to disregard the natural landscape. Yet, with time, the railroads began to design more sensitively once they had realized that distinctive hotels in romantic settings drew more patrons.

After the turn of the century, the development of railroad hotels began to accelerate. In 1903 the Northern Pacific Railroad constructed the Old Faithful Inn at Yellowstone National Park. The 6 story resort is a spectacular example of a log, stone and shingle rustic park building in the Swiss Chalet tradition. Designed by Robert Reamer, the building features a log frame structure sheathed with shingles, logwork piers and two stories of projecting dormers protruding from an immense main gable, all executed in a very western frontier manner. [43]

Another significant design of 1903 was the Sierra Club's Le Conte Memorial Lodge built in Yosemite Valley and designed by Mark White. Weathered granite dominated the symmetrical building with an exaggerated roofline comprising more than half of the height of the structure.

James J. Hill's son Louis Hill also recognized the potential benefits for the Great Northern Railroad in developing facilities in the national parks. Addressing a conference on national parks held at Yellowstone in 1911, he explained that "The railroads are greatly interested in the passenger traffic to the parks. Every passenger that goes to the national parks, wherever he may be, represents practically a net earning." [44] That same year Hill obtained the right to build a series of lodges at newly established Glacier Park, to be operated by the Great Northern Railway's Glacier Park Hotel Company. Louis Hill was impressed by the forestry building at the Portland Exposition of 1912, and he hired its architect, S.L. Bartlett of Chicago, to pattern the Glacier Park Lodge lobby after it. Built that same year, the lobby was encircled by two tiers of balconies supported by tall round tree trunks which retained their bark, and its gable roof with skylight was supported by unpeeled log trusses. [45]

While hotel architects were experimenting with rustic interpretations of log and wood frame construction, St. Paul native Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter was designing park buildings that appeared to grow out of the landscape and which were constructed of locally quarried stone, abode, and other materials. Many of the hotel designers were inspired by European traditions, but many of Colter's designs imaginatively and freely recalled elements and details of American Indian construction.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 36

---

Her work ultimately had a tremendous impact on the development of the rustic style architecture used throughout the country's state and national parks. [46]

Colter was hired by the Fred Harvey Company, operator of restaurants, hotels, and other concessions for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway, to decorate the Indian building situated between their new Mission Style hotel and the train depot in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The project was a success, and it led to Colter's next commission in 1905 for another building for Indian craft sales known as Hopi House, located in what later became Grand Canyon National Park.

Colter designed many of the buildings constructed at the Grand Canyon by the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railroad over the next three decades, including the Lookout Studio (1914), Phantom Ranch (1922), the Hermit's Rest and the Watchtower (1932), and the Bright Angel Lodge and Cabins (1935). Her designs followed Olmsted's principle that any structure in a park which drew attention away from the works of nature was inappropriate. Her work was observed by individuals from the National Park Service, and construction designed to harmonize with Colter's buildings at the Grand Canyon formed the first well developed examples of National Park Service Rustic Style. [47]

By the time the National Park Service began operations in 1917, the national parks offered park buildings in styles ranging from Swiss Chalet to Indian Pueblo, and as William C. Tweed's study on N.P.S. rustic architecture states, "If there was a lesson available from the sample, it was that park buildings properly designed to harmonize with their natural setting were distinctly more appropriate." [48]

Park Service engineers and landscape architects experimented with a variety of styles including pueblos, traditional log cabins as well as combination frame and stone structures and gradually perfected what became known as National Park Service rustic architecture. Regional adaptations were developed as well. By the early 1920s another principle was emerging in the design philosophy of the Park Service; namely, that a building was expected to harmonize not only with its natural surroundings but with the park's cultural context as well. Thus, a "trapper cabin" ranger station was built in Yellowstone with chopped, rather than sawn, exposed log ends, Indian pueblos and Spanish Colonial adobes were built in the southwest, and a building reminiscent of pioneer Mormon settlers' dwellings was built in Utah's Zion National Park. [49]

The massive, five-story Ahwahnee Hotel at Yosemite National Park built in 1926 is a major milestone in the rustic architecture movement in the



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 37

---

national parks because of its innovative use of modern building materials to create a rustic effect. The concrete and steel building used concrete molded and painted to look like exterior logs and wood siding. Park Service designers also began to apply rustic style principles to roads, bridges, signs, overlooks and entrance portals.

Once Roosevelt's Emergency Conservation Work Act established the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1933, the National Park Service began to supervise large scale development in both state and national parks. A separate State Park Division of the National Park Service was established and regional offices staffed with N.P.S. professionals were created. Building on the earlier work of the N.S.P. Landscape Division, the N.P.S. State Park Division designed thousands of rustic structures for parks scattered from Maine to California.

In order to train newly hired architects and landscape architects in this newly developed design philosophy, the Park Service issued a textbook, Park Structures and Facilities, funded by the C.C.C. and edited by Albert H. Good, an architect for the State Park Division. The publication was later expanded to a 3 volume edition in 1938. Good's introductory chapter in the 1935 version remains the definitive statement on rustic or non-intrusive architecture as practiced by the National Park Service prior to World War II. "Successfully handled (it) is a style which, through the use of native materials in proper scale, and through the avoidance of rigid, straight lines, and over sophistication, gives the feeling of having been executed by pioneer craftsmen with limited hand tools. It thus achieves sympathy with the natural surroundings, and with the past." [50]

This design philosophy was based on the conclusion that the primary reason for setting aside these park areas was simply to conserve them. Therefore, natural features, not man-made, should be emphasized and every structure was to be considered an intrusion. The built environment was to be limited and subordinate to the natural landscape and could best achieve harmony with the natural surroundings when constructed with native materials such as log or stone. Good also explained that a building should not call attention to itself and should appear to spring from the soil through the use of rock faced foundations, battered walls, and appropriate plantings. Large or numerous buildings should be avoided. Exterior colors such as warm browns or driftwood gray were preferred as were brown or gray roofs. Stone work should be in the proper scale and logs with a certain textural surface were recommended.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 38

---

Minnesota's state parks contain a number of rustic style buildings employing elements of this design philosophy which were constructed long before the Emergency Conservation Work which popularized the style. Douglas Lodge, built in 1905 at Itasca State Park, is the oldest log structure in the state park system and the first of many to be constructed at Lake Itasca. It was followed by the Clubhouse built in 1911. This two story log structure features a very unusual hip on hip mansard type roof with bell shaped dormer windows. The interior of the lodge is organized around a two story lobby with the sleeping rooms on both floors opening onto this central space. A nearby rental cabin, also of log construction, was built at about the same time.

Other notable rustic style buildings at Itasca State Park include 6 log rental cabins built in the 1920s, the Nicollet Court lodge built in 1925, and a 2 story dormitory with log cabin siding constructed in 1927. Another distinctive building is the Old Park Headquarters, a sprawling one story log structure built in 1923 as well as an adjacent shingle clad water tower.

Interstate State Park also contains 2 rustic style buildings constructed long before the advent of the federal work programs of the 1930s. Both buildings employ local basalt rock quarried within the park and clearly influenced the design of the later W.P.A. construction.

Beginning in 1933 when the National Park Service began supervising state park development through the use of C.C.C. camps, construction of over 300 rustic style buildings was undertaken. The principal design work was executed in the Minnesota Central Design Office in St. Paul which was actually a branch office of the National Park Service Regional Office in Omaha. Chief Architect Edward W. Barber recalls how N.P.S. staff conducted sessions explaining the appropriate style for state park buildings and displayed pictures of various buildings such as the Old Faithful Inn. [51] Barber and his staff readily adapted to this style and designed an enormous variety of buildings generally constructed of stone, logs, or stained wood depending on the indigenous materials native to a park area

Both the design and fine craftsmanship of Minnesota's rustic style buildings received praise from the National Park Service. The Shelter Pavilion at Scenic State Park as well as two service buildings were featured in the National Park Service publication Park Structures and Facilities. Albert Good comments "In this example Minnesota justifies her advantage of superior native timber resources by the fine character of the log construction...No one region seems to have been blest beyond its fair share of natural resources of the first flight. An imagined

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number E Page 39

---

ideal park structure...would assuredly specify logs and log construction from Minnesota." [52] (See Exhibit X) In conjunction with an Equipment and Maintenance Building Good states "A mere facilitating building glorified by the excellent log work almost invariably found in Minnesota. When all structures in parks exemplify the sturdy forthrightness of this example, many existing buildings will have been replaced." [53] (See Exhibit XI) A storage building also receives praise for its fine construction. (See Exhibit XII)

One building and one structure from Itasca State Park are also featured in the National Park Service publication. A Well Shelter (now razed) consisting of a gable roof supported by massive log posts was described as "Certainly exempt from any accusation of 'twiginess' this little structure perhaps exemplifies ideal proportions for a truly rustic construction. The idea of a hollowed-out log as a receptacle for the piped spring water is novel. The ragged shake roof is particularly well-done. There is neither economy of materials nor of originality to detract from this example." [54] (See Exhibit XIII) The Old Timer's Cabin, the first C.C.C. constructed building at Itasca, features almost startling proportions with walls only 4 logs high. Good states, "Only the sworn statement of one who is well informed, to the effect that this cabin was built from wind-falls and not cut timber, permits conservationists to show this cabin here. Almost humorous in its scale, it is far from that as a reminder of magnificent forests all but extinct. As a relic of the days when trees were trees, this cabin can inspire us to firm resolution to permit them to be so again in the long term future." [55] (See Exhibit XIV)

A Picnic Shelter at Whitewater State Park is also pictured in the N.P.S. publication. It is described as a building with "features that differentiate it from the cast-in-one-mould-and-too-often-repeated shelter types. The continuation of the floor to give a stone paved walkway around the building is a novelty that would seem to offer the advantage of projecting the shelter's use into the immediate environs. The style of the roof shingling gives interest. The effect of the masonry is a happy mean between refinement and rusticity." [56] (See Exhibit XV)

Park Buildings throughout the state were executed with this same thoughtful design and precise craftsmanship. These buildings include shelters, lodges, cabins, refectories, bathhouses, sanitation buildings, administration buildings, residences, service buildings, and group camp facilities. Numerous park structures include water towers, trail shelters, bridges, dams, spillways, drinking fountains, picnic tables, entranceways, and overlooks.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 40

---

These buildings and structures were usually built of native materials often from the park itself. Log construction was generally employed in the northern portion of the state where timber resources were available. Stone buildings were typical in the south and northwest and a combination thereof was often utilized in the central section of the state. The stonework includes limestone, which was used in the southern part of the state; dark basalt rock and sandstone in the east; colorful quartzites in the southwest; vivid granite along the North Shore of Lake Superior; and fieldstone in the west, north, and northwest.

In 1935 a Minnesota Division of State Parks was established within the Department of Conservation and a design staff was also organized. This staff immediately employed the rustic style based on principles clearly illustrated by the buildings designed by Barber and his staff. There was considerable cooperation between the two design offices, however, the Minnesota Central Design Office generally designed park structures for execution by the C.C.C. whereas the Design Office within the Division of State Parks was essentially involved in designing park buildings to be built by the W.P.A. By this time, however, N.P.S. rustic style architecture was firmly established and the Minnesota Division of State Parks merely continued the existing tradition.

The W.P.A. projects were often on a smaller scale and without the extensive development which was possible when a C.C.C. camp was available. Designs for these parks which were prepared within the Division of State Parks were often duplicated or adapted from previous designs by the Minnesota Central Design Office. For example, a nearly identical T-shaped log kitchen shelter was constructed at both Charles A. Lindbergh and Bemidji State Parks. Edward Barber's design for a Shelter Pavilion at Sibley State Park was later constructed at Lake Bronson State Park. Oscar Newstrom, from the Central Design Office, designed a 32' x 18' sanitation building which was employed in numerous parks for both C.C.C. and W.P.A. projects. And Edward Barber's bathhouse design became a standard type throughout the state. However, in spite of duplication, the inevitable variation in building materials and construction details gave each structure its own individual character and identity.

Edward Barber was clearly the major design influence in the Central Design Office. Some of his most notable designs include many of the log buildings at Scenic and Itasca State Parks, the River Inn at Jay Cooke State Park, the Lodge and Combination Building at the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area, the dramatic concourse at Gooseberry Falls State Park, and the Mt. Tom Shelter at Sibley State Park. (See Exhibits IV and V) While these buildings remain clearly within the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 41

---

generally accepted confines of the rustic style, Barber designed four unusual buildings for Cottonwood River (Flandrau) State Park which remain the most distinctive architecturally of any constructed in Minnesota's state parks. Constructed of local quartzite, these buildings feature picturesque steeply pitched rooflines with dormers and chimneys, as well as small pane casement windows which were designed to reflect the German Architecture of the nearby New Ulm area.

Among the designers of the Division of State Parks, Harold Petersen created three of the most interesting buildings of the W.P.A. projects. His design for a sanitation building at Minneopa State Park began with the standard rectangular form but was expanded to include unusual bell-shaped entrance screens covered with finely detailed gabled roofs. He was also responsible for the refectory building at Interstate State Park and the state's only water tower with an observation deck at Lake Bronson State Park.

All told, an incredible variety of designs were created by the designers of the National Park Service Regional Office in Omaha, the Minnesota Central Design Office and the Minnesota Division of State Parks. The design work and construction, however, was subjected to continual approval and supervision. Drawings were approved by the Park Superintendent, Inspectors from the National Park Service, the Director of State Parks, the Omaha Office of the N.P.S., and the Division of State Parks within the Department of the Interior in Washington. On site supervision and inspection was also critical to successful log and stone rustic style construction. Regional Inspector U.W. Hella, who later became Director of State Parks, relates how he once noticed a masonry wall at Itasca State Park with a continuous horizontal joint near the base. Although it had taken hours for the C.C.C. enrollees to construct the stonework, Hella instructed the masons to raze the wall and begin again since the lengthy joint was not an acceptable element of rustic masonry. [57] This intensive supervision of both design and construction resulted in the artistic achievement which characterizes Minnesota's Rustic Style park buildings.

The eventual decline of rustic architecture was a result of the very reasons for its success. It required large amounts of labor, including skilled and unskilled workmen and highly trained professionals. Intensive labor projects became uneconomical and even when they were affordable, stone masons and log builders were difficult to find. National Park Service rustic architecture was adapted to the pre-war situation and it was not able to meet the rising demand for park

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 42

---

facilities. There was also a gradual rejection of the romanticized rustic design and an emphasis on simplicity, structural honesty, and more economical construction. Rustic architecture also had its disadvantages from a maintenance standpoint. Custom hardware, rafters, hand split shakes, and log trim were hard to replace when damaged or deteriorated. These problems were often insurmountable for a small park maintenance staff. [58]

Nevertheless, "Rustic architecture achieved its goals. It allowed the development of necessary park facilities without needless disruption of the natural landscape. It facilitated the separation of the parks from the rest of the world, allowing them to become reserves governed by well-obeyed rules far different from those typical of the non-park situation. It assisted in the formulation of a conservative image for the parks, an image that for better or worse still dominates the public's park expectations to much larger degree than is generally appreciated. At its best, rustic architecture produced buildings of rare and distinctive beauty. A unique expression of twentieth century American architectural thought....to be treasured and conserved. [59]

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 43

---

FOOTNOTES

1. William C. Tweed, Laura E. Soulliere, and Henry G. Law, National Park Service Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942 (San Francisco: National Park Service, Western Regional Office, Division of Cultural Resource Management, 1977), p. 18, citing Richard A. Ballinger, Annual Report (Department of the Interior, 1910).
2. Tweed, p. 21, citing the American Society of Landscape Architects, "Our National Parks: A Conference," Landscape Architecture, A Quarterly, VI (April 1916), p. 111-112.
3. Tweed, p. 22.
4. Ibid., p. 22.
5. Tweed, p. 23, citing the National Park Service, Report of the Director of the National Park Service (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), p. 274.
6. Tweed, p. 27.
7. Ibid., p. 47.
8. Conrad L. Wirth, Parks, Politics, and the People (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), p. 58.
9. Norman T. Newton, Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 535.
10. Tweed, p. 74.
11. Ibid., p. 91.
12. Newton, p. 578.
13. Interview with Edward W. Barber by Rolf T. Anderson, Lake City, Minnesota, December 1987.
14. Wirth, p. 176.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 44

---

15. Newton, p. 625.
16. Albert H. Good, Park and Recreation Structures Part III (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1938), p. 120.
17. Ibid., p. 110.
18. Newton, p. 631.
19. Minnesota Department of Conservation, Report for the Division of State Parks (September 1939), p. 3.
20. Cited in Newton, p. 594.
21. 1895 Legislative Manual, p. 222.
22. Newton, p. 600.
23. Ibid., p. 600.
24. Ibid., p. 601.
25. Ibid., p. 601.
26. Ibid., p. 603.
27. Minnesota Department of Conservation, Second Biennial Report for Fiscal Years 1933-34, p. 98.
28. Cited by Harold W. Lathrop in the February 1936 issue of the Minnesota Conservationist, in a series of articles from February-June 1936 on "Minnesota State Parks," n.p.
29. Second Biennial Report for the Fiscal Years 1933-34, p. 98.
30. Wirth, p. 167.
31. State of Minnesota, Minnesota Park, Parkway and Recreation Area Study (September 1938), p. 8.
32. Ibid., p. 7.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 45

---

33. U.W. Hella, Quest for Excellence (Minneapolis: Minnesota Parks Foundation, 1985), p. 5.
34. John C. Paige, The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service 1933-1942: An Administrative History (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1985), p. 5.
35. Ibid., p. 3.
36. Thomas C. Hogg, Willian D. Honey, Kimberly K. Lakin, and Alison T.Otis, The Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps: 1933-42 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, 1986), p. 8.
37. Paige, p. 15.
38. Wirth, p. 107.
39. Hogg, p. 40
40. Minnesota Department of Conservation, Report for the Division of State Parks (October 1935), p. 3.
41. Paige, p. 71.
42. Tweed, p. i-ii, citing Merrill Ann Wilson, National Park Service Historical Architect.
43. Tweed, p. 5.
44. Patricia Murphy, The Public Buildings of the State of Minnesota: An Architectural Heritage (St. Paul: Peregrine Publications, Minnesota Historical Society, 1986), p. 30, citing Bill McMillian, The Old Lodges and Hotels of our National Parks (South Bend, Indiana: Icarus Press, 1983), p. 87.
45. Murphy, p. 30.
46. Ibid., p. 30.
47. Murphy citing Tweed, p. 31.
48. Tweed, p. 16.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number E Page 46

---

49. Murphy, p.31.
50. Albert H. Good, Park Structures and Facilities (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1935), pp. 3-4.
51. Interview with Barber.
52. Park Structures and Facilities, p. 147.
53. Ibid., p. 242.
54. Ibid., p. 91.
55. Ibid., p. 226.
56. Ibid., p. 135.
57. Interview with U.W. Hella by Rolf T. Anderson, St. Paul, Minnesota, December 1987.
58. Tweed, pp. 96-97.
59. Ibid., p. 106.

---

**F. Associated Property Types**

---

I. Name of Property Type \_\_\_\_\_

II. Description

III. Significance

IV. Registration Requirements

☒ See continuation sheet

---

☒ See continuation sheet for additional property types

---

### G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

---

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

☒ See continuation sheet

---

### H. Major Bibliographical References

---

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- ☒ State historic preservation office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency

- ☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☐ Other

Specify repository: Minnesota Historical Society, Ft. Snelling History Center,  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55111

---

### I. Form Prepared By

---

name/title	<u>Rolf T. Anderson</u>	date	<u>September 3, 1988</u>
organization	<u>N/A</u>	telephone	<u>612-824-7807</u>
street & number	<u>3632 Park Avenue South</u>	state	<u>Minnesota</u>
city or town	<u>Minneapolis</u>	zip code	<u>55407</u>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 1

---

## ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

### I. PUBLIC USE BUILDINGS

#### DESCRIPTION

The Public Use Buildings in Minnesota's State Parks are generally those buildings associated with the intensive recreation areas within a park. These usually include picnic areas, campgrounds, beaches, and areas reserved for dining or lodging. (See Exhibit XVI) This property type is divided into the following structural types.

#### A. SHELTER BUILDINGS

The Shelter Building is virtually a standard feature in every park in the state. In its commonest form it is designed to serve as a picnic shelter, usually rectangular in form with enclosed ends and open sides. The Shelter Buildings are constructed with stone, logs, or a combination of stonework to the sill level and rough vertical boards with battens above. These buildings are covered with gabled roofs which were originally completed with wooden shakes or shingles. The interior spaces features massive stone fireplaces, built-in seats, and heavy exposed log or timber trusses.

A kitchen area with built in cast-iron cook stoves was often included in the picnic shelters. This sometimes resulted in an extension of the rectilinear plan or frequently produced a T-shaped design with the kitchen located behind a central fireplace and the stoves built into the same mass. In this form, the building was usually termed a kitchen shelter and sinks and counter space were provided as well.

A small concession was sometimes included in one end of the shelter. Completely enclosed versions of the shelter invariably contained a series of casement windows.

#### B. COMBINATION BUILDINGS

Combination Buildings are those structures which combine three or more functions within a single building. Typical variations might include a shelter, refectory, and restrooms; showers, laundry, restrooms, and kitchen; or shelter, refectory, and bathhouse. The resulting buildings are usually the largest within the park system and often maintain a

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 2

---

strong visual presence. For this reason they are categorized as a separate structural type rather than associating them with a structural type based on their dominant function.

The Combination Buildings are usually sprawling, irregular structures constructed with stone, a combination of logs and stone, or stone and rough vertical boards and battens. Complex rooflines often result with intersecting gable roofs of various heights which sometimes define the separate functions within. Notable examples of this structural type are found at Jay Cooke and Cottonwood River (Flandrau) State Parks and at the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area (now St. Croix State Park). These buildings were designed by Edward W. Barber of the Minnesota Central Design Office of the National Park Service.

## C. SANITATION BUILDINGS

A 32' x 18' sanitation building was designed by Oscar Newstrom of the Central Design Office which was utilized throughout the Minnesota state park system. This rectangular building features 2 latrines separated by a small utility space, entrance screens, and a gable roof. Casement windows opened at the top and allowed only partial opening for additional privacy.

In spite of the standard plan, a surprising variety of designs resulted due to the different native building materials employed. These sanitation buildings were constructed with stone, logs, stone to the sill level with either logs, rough vertical boards and battens, or horizontal siding above. One sanitation building at Jay Cooke State Park incorporates a block house style water tower.

Entrance screens are stone, log, or a combination of stone and board and batten. In some instances the entrances are covered with gable roofs.

The interiors have generally been remodeled, often several time over the years, with new fixtures installed, the tip-trough system replaced by flush toilets, and skylights added.

## D. BATHHOUSES

Like the sanitation building, the bathhouse design became a standard feature with only minor differences in design and execution. These buildings are rectangular in plan with overall dimension usually 88' x 22'. The central section contained a concession, check-room, restrooms

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 3

---

and storage areas, and was flanked by loggias allowing free circulation through the building. This portion of the building was always covered by a gable roof. Partially enclosed changing wings were placed on either side of the building and could be entered from the loggias. The womens' dressing room was usually slightly larger than the mens' and often contained individual changing booths.

Stone was the typical building material for the central section of the bathhouse with vertical boards and battens resting on a low stone base used in the changing wings. The concession counter was always covered by a slightly projecting roof which was supported by heavy timber brackets.

Seven bathhouses were designed in this manner although the changing wings have all been removed except at Lake Shetek State Park. The concession space has often been adapted to other uses and in some cases changing booths have been installed in the loggias.

Itasca State Park features the state's only surviving log constructed bathhouse complete with intact changing wings and a projecting porch supported by massive timbers.

## E. ADMINISTRATION BUILDINGS

The Administration Building or Contact Station is not a common structural type in Minnesota's state parks with only 3 buildings constructed solely for that purpose and only 2 surviving. This function was sometimes included in the design for the custodian's residence and many storage and equipment buildings provided office space as well. The Administration Building was only included in the state's largest parks.

The contact station at Itasca State Park serves as a control point near the park entrance and features a T-shaped design utilizing log construction resting on a rock-faced foundation.

The Administration Building at St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area began as a small office constructed with sandstone laid random ashlar to the sill level with vertical boards and 1" x 2" battens above. The building was expanded in 1941 to a much larger building containing a lobby, restrooms, and a concession and souvenir area.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number F Page 4

---

F. CABINS

Cabins were constructed in concentrated use areas for rental purposes and to provide accommodations for caretakers, naturalists, lifeguards and concessionaires. The oldest rental cabins were built at Itasca State Park in the 1920s. These log cabins features rectangular plans with 2 or 3 bedrooms, porches, gable roofs, and split stone fireplaces. In the 1930s an unusual log 4-plex and 6 smaller rental cabins were added. These became typical of the cabins constructed by the federal relief programs and featured one single room with a small kitchen and toilet. In addition to the log cabin type, a number of cabins were executed using frame construction featuring stone or rough horizontal siding to the sill level and board and batten siding above, or sometimes the cabin was clad completely with boards and battens. Two fourplexes, two duplexes and two single cabins were constructed at St. Croix State Park with plans to build at least an additional 20 units.

In time, the rental cabin became an uneconomical operation for the parks to maintain and nearby resorts grew resentful of the competition. Many cabins were removed or simply used for storage or interpretive purposes, or as accommodations for seasonal help. Itasca State Park retains the only remaining rental cabins in the state park system.

G. LODGES

Lodges for large scale accommodations were not built in Minnesota by the C.C.C. or the W.P.A. However four rustic style buildings which may be classified as such were built at Itasca State Park prior to the 1930s. Douglas Lodge is a large, rectangular, gable roofed log structure with saddle-notched corners built in 1905. The first floor contains a lobby, with a massive split-stone fireplace, and dining facilities. Accommodations are located on the 2nd floor. The Clubhouse, built in 1911, is a 2 story log structure with an unusual mansard roof with dormers. Ten sleeping rooms are arranged around a two story lobby. Nicollet Court, built in 1925, is a two story frame structure sheathed with board and batten siding which provides motel style accommodations. This building contains eighteen guest rooms and a lounge. The final structure of this type is a large 2 story dormitory type building constructed in 1927 with log cabin (simulated log) siding. This building is used by seasonal help.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 5

---

## H. MUSEUMS

Three examples of Museum Buildings were constructed in Minnesota's state parks. A small one room museum is included in a c1920 stone building at Interstate State Park in a structure which also provides restrooms facilities. The museum contains a number of glass display cases containing interpretive material appropriate to the surrounding area.

A large size museum building is located at Itasca State Park. This rectangular, one story, building located on the edge of Lake Itasca features log construction.

The Civilian Conservation Corps camp at Fort Ridgely State Park reconstructed the Commissary Building from the Old Fort to serve as a Museum. This granite building is covered with a gable roof and provides museum space as well as an assembly room. A variety of display cases and a registry desk were designed as well.

## I. REFECTORIES

A Refectory within the definition of this structural type refers to a moderate size dining facility, rather than the small concessions often associated with a bathhouse or picnic shelter. A Refectory would include a dining room or counter space with stools, and a kitchen facility. This type of building tends to be a larger structure with a rectilinear plan, built of stone or a combination of log and stone construction. Typical examples would be the Forest Inn at Itasca State Park or the Bridgehead Refectory at Gooseberry Falls State Park.

None of the Refectory Buildings retain their original use and are most commonly used today as gift shops, interpretive spaces, or shelters.

## J. FISH HOUSES

Although several Fish Cleaning Houses had been constructed in the state park system, only one remains extant. The Fish House at Sibley State Park is a small square building constructed with local split stone to the sill level followed by a series of squared posts which support a hip roof. The areas between the posts are screened. This building still retains its original function.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 6

---

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Minnesota State Park Public Use Buildings are historically significant for their association with the social, political, and economic impact of the Great Depression and the subsequent development of the various Federal Relief Programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps or the Works Progress Administration which were generally responsible for their construction. The Civilian Conservation Corps in particular is considered the most popular and successful of these programs and is also considered one of the great conservation programs in the history of the United States. The Corps not only provided employment for over 3.5 million young men but together with the Works Progress Administration also significantly advanced recreational development throughout the country. The Public Use Buildings are also historically significant for their association with the development of the Minnesota state park system. These buildings represent the first state wide efforts to provide state owned and centrally administered recreational facilities to a large segment of the population.

Public Use Buildings are architecturally significant as exceptional examples of rustic style architecture which represents a distinctive and uniquely American architectural style possessing high artistic value. These log and stone constructed buildings feature irreplaceable labor intensive methods and finely crafted detailing based on National Park Service design philosophy. The buildings represent the first major architectural style to be developed and proliferated by one single organization. The landscape design incorporating the Public Use Buildings is architecturally significant for its ability to represent an achievement in landscape architecture involving the introduction of the concept of master planning to state park development. The master plan determined the locations and relationships of the Public Use Buildings and was the first attempt to direct all aspects of state park expansion on a long term basis in order to insure nonintrusive and environmentally sensitive development of recreational facilities.

## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The Public Use Buildings represent a property type which has remained remarkably unchanged since construction. However, the following criteria should be applied in order to place these properties on the National Register of Historic Places:

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 7

---

1. A Public Use Building should be designed in the rustic style and constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Works Progress Administration, or the National Youth Administration. However, the following criteria should be applied to those relatively few buildings which do not meet each of these requirements:
  - a) If a Public Use Building is not constructed in the rustic style, it should be included in a master plan which was executed by the CCC or WPA.
  - b) If a Public Use Building predates the work programs of the Depression Era, the building must be constructed in the rustic style.
2. The construction of a Public Use Building should have been completed by the end of 1942.
3. A Public Use Building should retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A building's major design characteristics and original exterior building materials must continue to remain the dominant design features. Window replacement with appropriate sash, a change in roofing material from wooden shingles to asphalt, or the removal of changing wings from a bath house would be acceptable alterations. However, a log building could not be sheathed with horizontal siding or an addition could not overwhelm the original construction and still remain eligible for the National Register.
4. A Public Use Building need not retain its original function if the above integrity requirements continue to be met.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 8

---

II. SERVICE AND SUPPORT BUILDINGS

DESCRIPTION

Service and Support Buildings in Minnesota's state parks are generally those buildings associated with a service yard. In its simplest form, the service yard consists of the custodian's residence and a two stall garage with shop and office space. In a larger park, such as St. Croix, the service yard is expanded to include an entire complex of buildings containing multiple residences, warehouses, maintenance and equipment buildings, an ice and wood house, and perhaps a small building for oil and paint storage. However, certain Service and Support Buildings such as utility related structures, like water towers or pump houses, may be located in a concentrated use area in addition to a service area.

A. CUSTODIANS' DWELLINGS

Custodians' Dwellings, or Cabins as they were generally referred to, are perhaps the most readily adapted to the rustic style of any park structures. A residence can clearly recall a rustic pioneer homestead, which is not always the case with picnic shelters or garages which have no rustic style precedent.

Park residences are usually constructed with logs, stone, board and batten siding, or a combination thereof. The buildings are usually rectangular or T-shaped designs covered by gable roofs originally sheathed with wooden shakes or shingles. Original drawings even specify broken chimney tile in order to enhance the rustic effect. The interior plans invariably include a living room, kitchen, two bedrooms, and a bath. The living rooms are often particularly finely crafted with massive stone or brick fireplaces, beamed ceilings, hardwood floors, V-joint paneling, bookcases, and an occasional built-in nook.

A standard plan was employed in residences built at Fort Ridgely, Sibley and Camden State Parks. However, they were constructed with not only a variety of building materials but also a varying combination of materials and the duplication is not readily apparent. Other notable residence buildings were built at Whitewater, Cottonwood River (Flandrau), as well as Scenic State Park which contains the only state park residence constructed completely with logs.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number F Page 9

---

A number of non-rustic style buildings were also constructed. These buildings are similar in size and plan to their rustic style counterparts but were finished with clapboard siding rather than logs, stone, or stained rough board siding.

Alterations to these buildings have generally been limited to the replacement of the wooden shingles with asphalt, the addition of a third bedroom, or the replacement of the original casement windows.

**B. MAINTENANCE AND EQUIPMENT BUILDINGS**

Maintenance and Equipment Buildings usually consist of a large garage building with multiple stalls for equipment storage and a smaller section providing space for an office, shop and tool room. The rustic style was adapted to include this utilitarian building with a number of imaginative designs constructed with logs, stone, and board and batten siding. Of particular interest was a service building constructed at Itasca State Park which featured a two story block-house style tower. (See Exhibit XVII) Scenic State Park contains the only surviving log constructed Maintenance and Equipment Building.

A standard plan with a 2 stall garage and adjacent office and tool room was employed in 7 different parks. The garage section of the building is generally built with stone and covered with a gable roof while the office/toolroom portion is constructed with stone to the sill with board and batten siding above and covered with a hip roof. In some situations the floor plan was reversed and in one case a non-rustic style version was constructed. The garage doors are built with vertical planks and contain small fixed sash. Window openings throughout are 3 over 3 or 6 over 6 light casements.

**C. STORAGE BUILDINGS**

Storage Buildings are generally warehouse type facilities, either large or small scale, constructed in addition to a Maintenance and Equipment Building. These range from a small rectangular log building at Scenic State Park to a 77' long stone warehouse at St. Croix State Park. This building features an 8' wide loading dock sheltered by a bracketed canopy which runs the entire length of the building. Another example is a warehouse building at Itasca State Park of wood frame construction, sheathed with clapboard siding to the sill level and board and batten siding above.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 10

---

These buildings are characterized by gable or hip roofs originally covered with wooden shakes or shingles and feature small-pane casement windows.

D. ICE AND WOOD HOUSES

Once a standard feature in every park, many Ice and Wood Houses have now been razed or converted to other uses. This structural type is characterized by rectangular or T-shaped plans, stone or log construction, with board or batten siding only occasionally applied, and a gable roof. The facades are generally windowless and storage for both ice and wood was provided in separate areas within a single structure. The floor of the wood shed was often dirt while the floor of the ice house was sand or sand and gravel.

Representative examples include a 20' by 16' log building at Scenic State Park, a 44' by 19' split stone structure at Sibley State Park which also includes a pump room, and a massive sandstone building with buttresses at St. Croix State Park with 1900 square feet of storage space.

Today these buildings usually provide general storage space or have been adapted to other functions such as sanitation facilities.

E. WATER TOWERS

A Water Tower was a necessary feature in the design of a state park so that an adequate supply of clean water and sanitation facilities could be provided. These structures were often 16 feet square at the base with a lower section constructed with reinforced concrete faced with battered stone masonry laid random ashlar. The upper section conceals the tank and was generally frame construction sheathed with split logs, rough vertical boards, or clapboard siding. The towers were capped with hipped roofs with heavy wooden shakes or shingles. The overall height of the water tower was usually 35 to 40 feet.

Design details include plank doors with strap hinges, entrance canopies supported by timber brackets resting on stone corbels, and louvered openings which pierce the upper structure. Occasionally, a small one-story pump house was built in conjunction with the tower.

This type of building clearly characterizes rustic style architecture as practiced by the National Park Service. It demonstrates that it was acceptable to employ modern building technology as long as the building appeared rustic. This is illustrated by a partially razed water tower at

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 11

---

Itasca State Park which reveals its reinforced concrete walls and steel beams, which once supported the water tank, as well as portions of the tower's stone veneer.

The Water Towers have generally retained their architectural integrity although occasionally the upper structure has been removed or modified. The most common change has been the removal or abandonment of the original steel or redwood tanks in favor the modern pressure tanks which may operate at ground level.

## F. PUMP HOUSES

Pump Houses often existed as separate buildings when they were not included within a water tower. These structures were approximately 12' by 13' and were constructed with native stone. These buildings feature plank doors, gable roofs with wood shingles, log rafters, lookouts, and small casement windows.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Service and Support Buildings are historically significant for their association with the social, political, and economic impact of the Great Depression and the subsequent development of the various Federal Relief Programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration which were generally responsible for their construction. The Civilian Conservation Corps in particular is considered the most popular and successful of these programs and is also considered one of the great conservation programs in the history of the United States. The Corps not only provided employment for over 3.5 million young men but together with the Works Progress Administration also significantly advanced recreational development throughout the country. The Service and Support Buildings are also historically significant for their association with the development of the Minnesota state park system. Built in conjunction with the Public Use Buildings, the Service and Support Buildings represent the first state wide efforts to provide state owned and centrally administered recreational facilities to a large segment of the population.

Service and Support Buildings are architecturally significant as exceptional examples of rustic style architecture which represents a distinctive and uniquely American architectural style possessing high

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 12

---

artistic value. These log and stone constructed buildings feature irreplaceable labor intensive methods and finely crafted detailing based on National Park Service design philosophy. The buildings represent the first major architectural style to be developed and proliferated by a single organization. The landscape design incorporating the Service and Support Buildings is architecturally significant for its ability to represent an achievement in landscape architecture involving the introduction of the concept of master planning to state park development. The master plan determined the locations of the Service and Support Buildings as well their relationship to the Public Use Buildings and was the first the first attempt to direct all aspects of state park expansion on a long term basis in order to insure nonintrusive and environmentally sensitive development of recreational facilities.

## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Support and Support Buildings have generally retained their individual integrity although many are now interspersed with a variety of modern service buildings. However, due to the scarcity of particular structural types, certain requirements for registration have been modified. The following criteria should be applied in order to place these properties on the National Register of Historic Places:

1. A Service or Support Building should be designed in the rustic style and constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps or the Works Progress Administration. However, the following criteria should be applied to those relatively few buildings which do not meet each of these requirements:

- a) If a Service or Support Building is not constructed in the rustic style, it should be included in a master plan which was executed by the CCC or WPA.
- b) If a Service or Support Building predates the work programs of the Depression Era, the building must be constructed in the rustic style.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 13

---

2. The construction of a Service and Support Building should have been completed by the end of 1942.

3. A Service and Support Building should retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. However, if the building represents a scarce historical resource, the requirement for integrity of location may be modified on a limited basis. For example, three buildings at Scenic State Park have been moved a very short distance and placed on new foundations within the service yard. However, they are of exceptional significance because they represent the state's only collection of log constructed Service and Support Buildings.

A building's major design characteristics and original exterior building materials must continue to remain the dominant design features. Window replacement with appropriate sash or a change in roofing material from wooden shingles to asphalt would be acceptable. However, a log building could not be sheathed with horizontal siding or an addition could not overwhelm the original construction and still remain eligible for the National Register.

4. Service and Support Buildings need not retain their original functions if the above integrity requirements continue to be met.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 14

---

III. PARK STRUCTURES

DESCRIPTION

Park Structures include the miscellaneous structural elements which often form the fabric of an historic landscape by strengthening the connections between public use buildings. The following structural types are included:

A. DRINKING FOUNTAINS

State park Drinking Fountains are constructed with native stone and usually rest on a 10 foot square area paved with stone flagging. The fountains are generally 2'5" to 3'0" square at the base and rise to a height of 3'0" with a slight batter so that the overall dimensions at the top are 1'8" to 2'0". The bubbler is placed on the top and a faucet is generally located at the side. A stone step is often located at one side to allow children to reach the fountain.

B. SIGNS AND ENTRANCEWAYS

Park entrances often feature two stone pylons flanking the entrance road. One version is characterized by a low horizontal design with a sign identifying the park set into the stonework. Another type features an upright pier with the sign hanging from an extended arm. Examples of these designs are found at Itasca State Park and Gooseberry Falls State Park.

C. FIREPLACES

This structural type refers to an outdoor camp stove type fireplace. In its simplest form it is merely a cast-iron grate set in stone masonry. A somewhat more formalized version features 18" wide stone sidewalls and a 2 foot chimney to the rear.

D. PICNIC TABLES

Many parks in Minnesota once contained numerous picnic tables built entirely of massive split logs. No examples of this type survive. However, a number of picnic tables which utilize masonry construction remain extant. The masonry is confined to the side walls which

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 15

---

originally supported split log seats and a log slab table top. The table and seats have generally been replaced although in some cases only the deteriorated side walls remain. These tables were not confined to designated picnic areas and may be found on scenic hillsides, along creeks and riverbanks, as well as in deeply wooded areas. Gooseberry Falls State Park contains 30 picnic tables of this type.

E. RETAINING WALLS, CHECK DAMS, AND RIPRAPING

Stonework intended for erosion control is executed in several forms in Minnesota's state parks. Retaining walls, usually dry laid, may be found alongside buildings or parking lots built adjacent to steep hillsides. Check dams refer to stonework set directly into the ground in ravines or valleys to control runoff. Riprapping includes stonework randomly placed on embankment slopes, usually along streams or rivers.

F. CULVERTS

Culverts are simple retaining walls pierced by a drain. The masonry is usually set in mortar and often takes on the appearance of a small bridge.

G. BRIDGES

State park Bridges were constructed for both vehicular and pedestrian use. Several impressive stone arched vehicular bridges had been built although all have long since been replaced. Two notable bridges of this type were built at Whitewater State Park.

Surviving vehicular bridges are usually built of masonry and wood. Typically, concrete abutments faced with native stone support a bridge deck constructed with wooden girders, decks, and rustic style railings. Bridges which cross a wide span river channel may also contain one or two intermediary concrete piers faced with stone. The original decks and railings have usually been replaced. In addition, a 270' steel arch bridge with granite abutments was built at Gooseberry Falls State Park.

Three types of foot bridges were also constructed; truss, slab, and suspension bridges. A surviving truss bridge built with timbers, which forms a graceful segmental arch, is located at Whitewater State Park. Slab or ford type bridges were constructed at Camden State Park in areas prone to wash-outs. These bridges were simple concrete slabs faced with

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number F Page 16

---

stone. Middle River (Old Mill) and Jay Cooke State Park feature dramatic suspension bridges. These bridges are characterized by pairs of massive stone pylons which support the suspension cables.

**H. TRAIL STEPS**

Trail Steps are usually constructed with native split stone which blends into the natural landscape. Steeper hillsides may feature more formalized stairways with stonework set in mortar, stone sidewalls, and stone flagging for the landings.

**I. INCINERATORS**

Incinerators were constructed at both Itasca and Gooseberry Falls State Parks. They have the appearance of massive chimneys, approximately 10 feet high. The incinerators contain standard mechanical components encased in native stone.

**J. LATRINES**

Few vault-type Latrines survive from the days of the Federal work programs. Remaining examples are usually 5' by 6' buildings with board and batten siding and gable or shed roofs.

**K. STONE CURBING**

Stone Curbing was often used to define entrance roads, medians, and parking lots. Original plans usually specify an 8" exposure for the native stone.

**L. ROCK CASCADES**

Rock Cascades were generally built to provide an overflow for man-made swimming beaches. Often 6' to 10' in width and 40' to 50' long, the cascades feature native boulders set in mortar and lead to adjacent rivers.

A similar technique was employed in conjunction with a natural spring to enhance its rustic appearance, but no known examples of this type survive.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 17

---

## M. LOOKOUTS AND OVERLOOKS

Lookouts and Overlooks include those structures built to take advantage of a scenic view. Often constructed as a wayside, overlooks may contain parking areas as well as sanitation facilities. Overlooks are usually paved with stone flagging and are defined by a native stone wall with semi-circular projections allowing an optimum view. An impressive example of this structural type is the Concourse at Gooseberry Falls State Park.

Lookouts sometimes include small shelters providing limited protection. The Mount Tom Shelter at Sibley State Park consists of a massive granite pylon supporting a hexagonal hip roof. Another example is an open sided stone lookout shelter providing dramatic views high above Lake Superior at Gooseberry Falls State Park. A long abandoned shelter on the shores of Lake Itasca built with massive timbers is located at Itasca State Park.

## N. DAMS AND SPILLWAYS

State park Dams and Spillways are generally of two types; small scale diversion dams built in order to raise the river to a sufficient level to provide an adequate source of water for a small swimming beach, and large scale dams requiring extensive engineering which were built to create large size artificial lakes.

Small dams are usually 90' to 120' wide and include a spillway flanked by two stone-faced abutments. The abutment may also serve as an overlook with timber railings. A sluice gate is often incorporated in the abutment to channel water into the nearby swimming pool. Diversion dams of this type are found at Middle River (Old Mill) and Buffalo River State Park. An interesting example of this type is located at Blue Mounds State Park and features a stepped spillway of native stone blending and merging with the natural rock of the creek bed.

Large scale dams were built at Two Rivers (Lake Bronson), Lac qui Parle, and Cottonwood River (Flandrau) State Parks. The engineering problems were often complex and certain dams were designed by Division of Drainage and Waters of the Minnesota Department of Conservation with the assistance of consulting engineers. The dam at Lake Bronson posed a particular challenge since it was determined that the dam would rest on a deep bed of quicksand. In the case of Flandrau State Park, the dam was eventually abandoned due to frequent washouts.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 18

---

## O. ARTIFICIAL LAKES

Swimming facilities were considered a prime requirement in state park development according to the National Park Service. In the absence of a natural lake, nearby creeks or streams were often diverted to form a swimming pool or dams created a large body of water for a variety of water sports.

The simplest method was to divert a small creek and fill a man made depression. Another common approach was to divert a river from its original bed and use the vacated channel to form the swimming beach. These methods usually resulted in a lake approximately 150' in diameter. However the water often retained a muddy appearance from the river water and chlorination was often necessary for sanitary purposes. As a result, additional spring water was often pumped into these pools. These small size lakes contained concrete outlet dams, often with stone trim, and were protected by earthen dikes with extensive riprapping.

Large dams were built not only to create large bodies of water for recreational purposes but were often involved in drought and flood control as well. Three hundred acre lakes were formed at Flandrau and Lake Bronson State Parks and the dam at Lac qui Parle State Park formed a 15 mile long expansion in the Minnesota River.

## P. TRAIL SHELTERS

Trail Shelters were based on the primitive shelters, or lean-to structures, of the early woodsmen and hunters of the Adirondack region in New York and hence the name Adirondack Shelters. They are usually rectangular in plan with dimension approximately 12' x 9'. The side and rear walls of the log structures are enclosed and the front is left open to the campfire. The roof slopes gently to the rear while the front is protected by an overhang. Only three examples of this structural type survive. Two are located at Gooseberry Falls State Park and one is located at Scenic State Park.

An expanded version of the Adirondack Shelter was built at the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area and was used for overnight camping trips by the organized group camps. The shelters are rectangular, 32'6" by 9'8" and are constructed with 8" log posts and rough 10" board siding. Timber brackets support a 4' overhang in the front, which was screened to accommodate the campers.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 19

---

Q. CELLARS

A small cold storage cellar with stone walls and a cast concrete roof was built at Itasca State Park.

R. PLAQUES AND MONUMENTS

One Plaque and one Monument Base were constructed in the state park system by the Civilian Conservation Corps. A bronze tablet anchored to a rock was erected at Itasca State Park in honor of Robert Fechner, the first director of the CCC, who visited the park in 1939. A circular base of native granite flagging was built around a 52' high monument at Fort Ridgely State Park.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Minnesota State Park Structures are historically significant for their association with the social, political, and economic impact of the Great Depression and the subsequent development of the various Federal Relief Programs; namely the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration, which were generally responsible for their construction. The Civilian Conservation Corps in particular is considered the most popular and successful of these programs and is also considered one of the great conservation programs in the history of the United States. The Corps not only provided employment for over 3.5 million young men but together with the Works Progress Administration also significantly advanced recreational development throughout the country. The Park Structures are also historically significant for their association with the development of the Minnesota state park system. The structures were built in conjunction with the first state wide efforts to provide state owned and centrally administered recreational facilities to a large segment of the population.

Park Structures are architecturally significant as exceptional examples of rustic style architecture which represents a distinctive and uniquely American architectural style possessing high artistic value. These stone, log, and timber structures feature irreplaceable labor intensive methods and finely crafted detailing based on National Park Service design philosophy. Park Structures represent a particularly significant aspect of Park Service rustic architecture since they depict design solutions for structures such as drinking fountains or picnic tables for which no rustic style precedents had previously existed. Park Structures are significant for strengthening the cohesiveness of historic landscapes

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 20

---

and by demonstrating the diversity of design within the rustic style.

The landscape design which incorporates the Park Structures is architecturally significant for its ability to represent the results of the concept of master planning in state park development. The master plan determined the location of all structures and was the first attempt to direct all aspects of state park expansion on a long term basis in order to insure nonintrusive and environmentally sensitive development of recreational facilities.

## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Park Structures are generally ineligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places unless they demonstrate exceptional architectural or engineering significance. However, they strengthen the fabric of an historic landscape and may be considered contributing elements of an historic district. The following criteria should be applied in order to place these properties on the National Register:

1. A Park Structure should be designed in the rustic style and constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps or the Works Progress Administration. However, the following criteria should be applied to those relatively few structures which do not meet these requirements:
  - a) If a Park Structure is not constructed in the rustic style, it should be characterized by engineering significance.
  - b) If a Park Structure predates the work programs of the Depression Era, the structure must be constructed in the rustic style.
2. The construction of a Park Structure should have been completed by the end of 1942.
3. A Park Structure must be part of an historic district unless it maintains significance as an individual property.
4. Park Structures should retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. However, a structure may be eligible if its major structural components retain intact. Thus, a picnic table with a deteriorating split log table top could be considered eligible if the stone supports retain integrity.
5. A Park Structure need not retain its original function if the above integrity requirements continue to be met. Thus, a drinking fountain no longer in use would be eligible if the stonework retains integrity.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 21

---

IV. CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS, TRANSIENT RELIEF ADMINISTRATION, AND  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION CAMP BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

DESCRIPTION

The following structural types are the few survivors from the various work camps which operated in Minnesota's state parks during the Great Depression.

A. BARRACKS

Barracks are generally plain, rectangular, frame structures approximately 40' by 18'. They are sheathed with clapboard siding or vertical boards and battens and are covered with low pitch gable roofs. Entrances are placed on each end wall while casement or double hung windows are located along the side walls. Eight barracks of this type are found at Cottonwood River (Flandrau) State Park at the site of former WPA Transient Camp.

B. LATRINES

Latrine buildings are small frame structures usually with clapboard and low pitch gable roofs. One surviving vault type latrine is approximately 5' x 6' with log palisade siding and a shed roof.

C. MAINTENANCE AND EQUIPMENT BUILDINGS

Maintenance and Equipment Buildings follow the general form of the barracks building, yet on a somewhat larger scale. They are long, rectangular, wood frame buildings with board and batten siding, and low pitch gable roofs. Window openings are usually 6 or 9 light casements. Former CCC buildings of this type are found at Cottonwood River (Flandrau) and St. Croix State Park.

D. STAFF QUARTERS

Three examples of staff or officers' quarters survive in the state park system, all from transient or WPA camp facilities. Buildings from the WPA camp at Flandrau State Park and the Squaw Lake transient camp at

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 22

---

Itasca State Park follow the same utilitarian pattern of most work camp buildings. They are rectangular, wood frame, buildings with clapboard or board and batten siding, and gable roofs. A staff building at the Elk Lake transient camp at Itasca State Park is the sole surviving example in the state park system of full log palisade construction. Palisade construction was a common technique, yet it usually consisted of split logs applied as an exterior covering. In this case, however, the full log forms both the interior and exterior wall surface and provides the structural system. The building is rectangular with a hip roof and a projecting entrance.

E. PUMP HOUSES

Two Pump House buildings remain at the site of a WPA transient camp and a CCC camp at Itasca State Park. Both buildings are simple, rectangular, frame structures, with board and batten siding and gable roofs.

F. GAS PUMP

One gas pump remains intact at the site of the CCC camp at Gooseberry Falls State Park. This 7' tall, round, metal pump is somewhat rusted and is no longer in operation. The pump is approximately 20" in diameter at its base and rises 4' with an additional section approximately 8" in diameter rising the remaining 3'.

G. FOUNDATIONS AND STONEMWORK

Interspersed among the surviving buildings and structures at the work camps are a variety of structural fragments which recall the once extensive complexes. Foundation walls, stone piers, concrete slabs, stone steps, and large split stone fireplaces are often the only remaining elements to define the original location of buildings and interpret the overall campsite.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 23

---

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Work Camp Buildings and Structures are historically significant for their association with the social, political, and economic impact of the Great Depression and the subsequent development of the various Federal Relief Programs for which they served an integral role. The Civilian Conservation Corps in particular is considered the most popular and successful of these programs and is also considered one of the great conservation programs in the history of the United States. The Corps provided employment for over 3.5 million young men and even as early as 1936 is said to have advanced conservation in the United States by 10 to 20 years. By the end of the era the Civilian Conservation Corps is said to have advanced the state park movement ahead by 50 years.

Work Camp Buildings and Structures are historically significant as the few surviving reminders of the operating facilities of these relief agencies. The buildings and structures recall the substantial accomplishments of these organizations which left a lasting impression on the United States in terms of conservation, recreational development, and unemployment relief.

## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Requirements to register C.C.C., T.R.A., and W.P.A. Camp Buildings and Structures on the National Register of Historic Places are somewhat modified due to the scarcity of the resource. Due to the temporary nature of the buildings, only a handful of the hundreds of buildings survive today. The following criteria should be applied in order to place these properties on the National Register:

1. A building or structure from a work camp must be located within the state park with which it was associated and construction must have been completed by the end of 1942.
2. A work camp building must retain integrity of feeling and association.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number F Page 24

---

3. A work camp structure need only recall the existence of the building or structure with which it was associated.

4. A building need not retain integrity of location if is is relocated within the park with which it was affiliated.

5. A work camp building which is now utilized for group camp purposes should be evaluated against the above criteria rather than the criteria established for group camps constructed for that purpose.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 25

---

## V. GROUP CAMP FACILITIES

### DESCRIPTION

The Group Camp property type is developed to evaluate the significance of the 107 buildings and 8 structures constructed at three organized camps at the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area. (It also includes 5 buildings constructed at three additional state parks.)

Named for their location within St. Croix State Park, St. John's Landing, Norway Point, and Head of the Rapids Group Camps are characterized by decentralized layouts with small clusters of cabins, or units, organized around a central administrative core. The unit approach allowed a logical grouping of campers based on age, physical ability, and interests. In these small groups campers could receive considerable personal attention from the counselors and could avoid the regimentation of mass camping. Designed by the landscape architects of the National Park Service, these camps were considered an innovation in landscape design and resulted in a unique architectural departure from the usual institutional arrangement of group camp facilities.

Each group camp at St. Croix State Park maintains its individual identity from both an architectural and functional standpoint, although they share variations of the following structural types.

### A. ADMINISTRATION BUILDINGS

Administration Buildings are usually small, rectangular gable roofed structures built of logs or covered with clapboard siding to the sill and board and batten siding above. A typical building is the 28' by 14'8" log structure built at St. John's Landing which contains a Director's Office, Clerk's Office and a small canteen with a counter opening to an adjacent porch. Fenestration includes 6 or 8 light casement windows or in some cases simply screened openings with wooden shutters.

### B. STAFF QUARTERS

Staff Quarters are rectangular buildings of wood frame construction with gable or hip roofs. Exteriors are sheathed with board and battens or a combination of clapboard and board and batten siding. A typical small scale version would be a 27' by 19' structure partitioned into 4 sleeping rooms. A more elaborate staff building was constructed at the Norway

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 26

---

Point Group Camp. It features a living room with sandstone fireplace, beamed ceiling and V-joint paneling, 4 sleeping rooms, a bathroom, and a 33 foot long flagstone porch sheltered by a roof supported by squared posts.

C. HELPS' QUARTERS

Helps' Quarters are similar architecturally to Staff Quarters although usually built on a somewhat smaller scale. They may include two sleeping rooms or a living room with one or two adjacent bedrooms.

D. MESS HALLS AND KITCHENS

Mess Halls and Kitchens, or Dining Lodges as they were often called, were invariably constructed with T-shaped plans. This arrangement allowed ample light and cross ventilation and maximum efficiency between the kitchen and dining room. The plan was recommended by the architects of the National Park Service above all others.

The dining facility at St. John's Landing Group Camp built in 1935 is the first one constructed in the state park system and probably set the standard for later construction. The dining room is 68'2" by 25'4" and is joined by a 24' by 42'4" kitchen wing. The kitchen is particularly well-zoned with several functional work areas and an efficient circulation system. The building is sheathed with board and batten siding and is covered with a hip roof. Fenestration includes bands of casement windows.

Typical features include a stone fireplace located in one or even both of the end walls of the dining room or at the intersection of the dining room and the kitchen. The kitchen often included a small cold storage cellar with poured concrete walls and a long ridge ventilator above the work areas.

E. UNIT LODGES

The Unit Lodge is a major element in the decentralized design of the group camps. It is the focus of a small colony of cabins which ideally serves only 24 campers. It is thus an important component of the landscape design of the group camps in that it provides the recreational, social, educational and cultural center for the camp unit. It is both a

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 27

---

living room and clubhouse and if joined with an outdoor kitchen it can serve as a dining room as well.

Two types of Unit Lodges were constructed at the St. Croix group camps. Four lodge buildings were built at St. John's Landing in 1935. They are single room structures with casement windows, sandstone fireplaces, an exposed log truss system, and gable roofs with a medium pitch.

The Unit Lodge was expanded functionally by the addition of a kitchen shelter when four unit lodges were constructed at Norway Point Group Camp in 1937. These lodges represent the prototypical design by the National Park Service and are notable for their careful composition and finely detailed interiors. The main lodge is a 27'6" by 18' gable roofed structure with sandstone walls which rise 2'9" to the sill level with board and batten siding above. The lodge also includes a 10'8" square covered entrance porch supported by 8" by 8" posts. Windows openings are 8 or 12 light casements.

The finely crafted interiors include 1" by 3" fir flooring, V-joint pine paneling, and a sandstone fireplace with a wooden mantel with brackets which is flanked by a built-in bookcase. The entrance doors are also built with V-joint boarding and feature hand hammered hardware. The exposed 3" by 6" rafters are 3 feet on center with 3" x 6" collar beams placed every 6 feet.

A 13' by 11'9" kitchen shelter extends from the end wall containing the fireplace. A stove with a sheet iron top is built into the same masonry mass. The kitchen shelter is only partially enclosed with squared posts resting on low sandstone walls supporting the gable roof.

Designed by Architect E.T. Walley, this Unit Lodge was praised by the Regional Office of the National Park Service for its fine design.

F. UNIT CABIN

Six cabins for 24 campers were generally contained in one camp unit. These are small, rectangular, wood frame structures resting on concrete piers or foundations. The cabins are covered with gable roofs, sheathed with board and batten siding and contain large screened window openings with wooden shutters. Typical dimensions might be 18' x 12' with room for 4 cots, spaced at recommended distances, and 4 small closets. A seventh cabin was used by the unit counselors. This cabin was usually identical to the other cabins or in the case of the counselors cabins at

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 28

---

St. John's Landing, the usual entrance in an end wall was replaced with a side wall entrance sheltered by a projecting roof.

A larger unit cabin was built at the Head of the Rapids Group Camp so that the 24 campers as well as the counselors could be housed in just 3 cabins. Several very similar designs were constructed. A typical cabin was a 36' by 12' building with clapboard siding to the sill and board and batten siding above. This type of cabin is covered by a hip roof and features 12 light casements. Floor plans include one single room, two rooms, or two rooms and a small separate room for the counselors.

## G. UNIT LATRINES

Each cabin colony also had its own Unit Latrine while the entire camp shared one central washhouse with hot showers and laundry. Originally, the Unit Latrines were partially enclosed structures with one end roofed over to shelter the wash basins and the other end enclosed to house the toilets. The overall dimensions were usually 21' by 8'9" with squared posts supporting a shingled gable roof and rough board siding with battens covering the enclosed portion. Several similar version of the Unit Latrine were built as was an enclosed T-shaped latrine for a group camp which had no central washhouse.

The partially enclosed portion of the Unit Latrines have all been infilled although the structural members still remain exposed. The central washhouses have all been replaced by modern facilities.

## H. CRAFT AND RECREATION BUILDINGS

A standard craft shop was built at the three group camps of the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area and was termed a Modified Standard Type Plan by the architects of the National Park Service. The gable roofed buildings are 18'4" by 29'2" with shiplap siding to the sill and boards and battens above. Counters are built-in along the exterior walls of the buildings and a work station is placed in the center. Paired casement windows line the walls.

An expanded version included both craft and recreation rooms and contained a split stone fireplace as well.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 29

---

## I. INFIRMARIES

Infirmarys are generally rectangular, gable roofed buildings with board and batten siding. The National Park Service provided very specific information concerning the location of the infirmary as well as the requirements for its design. It should be removed from noisy recreation areas but close to the kitchen so hot meals could be served conveniently. Infirmarys included both general and isolation wards, a dispensary, a nurse's room, bath and heater room.

## J. SERVICE BUILDINGS

Service Buildings are confined to simple rectangular garage buildings, approximately 23' by 34', with board and batten siding and gable roofs. Shop and storage areas were provided as well.

## K. WATER TOWERS

Three Water Towers were built in the organized group camps of the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area. They are analyzed as a separate property type distinct from the typical water towers of the public use areas and service areas because of their utilitarian design.

The towers originally featured exposed tanks supported by braced structures composed of 10" x 10" timbers. A pump house, approximately 15' by 15', was constructed around the base of the structure and was usually sheathed with horizontal shiplap, board and batten siding, or a combination thereof. The structures were dismantled in the 1960s and pressure tanks were installed on platforms at ground level. The tower legs were sawed off flush with the roof and only the pump house buildings remain.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Group Camp Facilities of the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area are historically significant for their ability to represent a major achievement in the history of landscape architecture. The decentralized design of the group camps by the landscape architects of the Park Service was considered a major innovation and attempted to address the deficiencies of existing group camp facilities. The camps contain small

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 30

---

independent cabin colonies which are designed to eliminate overcrowding and regimentation, yet also emphasize individual needs and healthy social relationships. Therefore, the landscape designs of St. John's Landing, Norway Point, and Head of the Rapids Group Camps are exceptionally significant for their ability to demonstrate the direct psychological effect the built environment placed on the individual and thus illustrate the ultimate goal of landscape architecture.

The Group Camp Facilities are architecturally significant as exceptional examples of rustic style architecture which represents a distinctive and uniquely American architectural style possessing high artistic value. These log, stone, and frame constructed buildings feature irreplaceable labor intensive methods and finely crafted detailing characterized by nonintrusive and environmentally sensitive designs based on National Park Service design philosophy and master planning.

The St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area group camps are also historically significant as 1 of only 34 such developments originally constructed throughout the United States. The importance of this comparison may ultimately increase the significance of these properties since it is known that not all 34 developments survive. The St. Croix group camps are also significant as the largest collection of CCC/WPA constructed buildings in Minnesota.

### REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The Group Camp Facilities of the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area remain remarkably intact. The 107 buildings and 8 structures remain virtually unchanged since construction with the exception of the replacement of the shake or shingle roofs, the elimination of the upper structure of the 3 water towers, and the infilling of the open ends of a number of the unit latrines. Only the two central washhouse buildings have been removed. The Group Camp Facilities continue to serve their original function to this day.

The following criteria should be applied in order to place these properties on the National Register of Historic Places:

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number F Page 31

---

1. Group Camp Facilities should be constructed in the rustic style and should be built by a Federal Work Program of the Great Depression Era.
2. Group Camp Facilities should have been completed by the end of 1942.
3. Group Camp Facilities should retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A building's major design characteristics and original exterior building materials must remain the dominant design features. Window replacement with appropriate sash or a change in roofing material from wooden shingles to asphalt would be acceptable. However, a log building could not be sheathed with horizontal siding or an addition could not overwhelm original construction and still remain eligible for the National Register.
4. A group camp building need not retain its original function if the above integrity requirements continue to be met.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number F Page 32

---

VI. HISTORICAL RECONSTRUCTIONS AND RESTORATIONS

DESCRIPTION

Several Historical Reconstructions and Restorations were also undertaken in the state park system by the C.C.C. and W.P.A. Historic preservation and reconstruction were considered a fitting complement to the natural park landscape, particularly if the early American scene or a frontier village were recalled.

These activities were carried out in accordance with a general restoration policy adopted by the National Park Service upon the recommendation of its Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments. These guidelines were quite specific and called for historical accuracy and considerable documentation.

The historical reconstruction and restoration completed by the C.C.C. and W.P.A. included the reconstruction of the Chippewa Lac qui Parle Mission which is no longer located in a state park, the reconstruction of a Trading Post near Jay Cooke State Park, which has since been razed, and archaeological excavations and reconstruction and restoration of the Commissary Building at Fort Ridgely at Fort Ridgely State Park.

The archaeological investigations of the old Fort were supervised by an archaeologist appointed by the Minnesota Historical Society upon the recommendation of the Regional Historian of the National Park Service. Initial findings did not reveal sufficient data in order to proceed with an authentic restoration of the complete Fort, however, the following structural types resulted from the work which was undertaken:

A. COMMISSARY BUILDING

In 1935 when the investigations began, only portions of the south, east, and west walls of the Commissary Building remained from the original buildings of the 1855 Fort. Using these walls as a model, granite from the original 1855 quarry was utilized in the reconstruction of the building. Flat segmental red brick arches above the window openings were also duplicated from surviving originals during the reconstruction. The interior of the 100' by 40' gable roofed building was partitioned into two rooms, one to serve as a museum and the other a meeting room.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 33

---

## B. RESTORED FOUNDATIONS

The foundations of 6 additional buildings were excavated and brought up to grade. These included 3 Officer's Quarters, the Headquarters Building, 1 Barracks, and the Hospital. Plans were also completed for the reconstruction of the 2 story granite barracks building, however, they were never executed.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historical Reconstructions and Restorations are historically significant for their association with the social, political, and economic, impact of the Great Depression and the subsequent development of the various Federal Relief Programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration which were generally responsible for their construction. They are also historically significant for their association with the development of the Minnesota State Park System since many state parks were established at the site of historical events.

Historical Reconstructions and Restorations are also historically significant for representing some of the first attempts at historical reconstruction in the state and for their ability to demonstrate and interpret a significant aspect of Minnesota history.

## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The following criteria should be applied in order to register an Historical Reconstruction or Restoration on the National Register:

1. The reconstruction or restoration must be completed by the Civilian Conservation Corps or the Works Progress Administration.
2. Construction of the reconstruction or restoration must have been completed by the end of 1942.
3. The reconstruction or restoration must be documented as historically accurate.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 34

---

STATEMENT OF EXCEPTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

A number of state park buildings and structures built by the work programs of the Depression Era were constructed from 1940 to 1942 and have thus achieved significance within the last 50 years. Properties less than 50 years old are generally not eligible for National Register listing unless they are exceptionally significant for their contributions to American history, architecture, archaeology, or culture. Such properties must demonstrate that sufficient historical perspective, scholarly evaluation, and comparative analysis exist to justify the claim of exceptional significance.

A sufficient passage of time has now elapsed in order to consider the Great Depression as a major epoch in modern American history. The extraordinary impact of the Depression and the unprecedented Federal response has been the subject of considerable scholarly research and evaluation. The Civilian Conservation Corps, in particular, has been the recent subject of substantial studies by the two Federal agencies with which the program had been most closely associated historically, namely the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service. These recent studies conclude that the CCC was not just another relief program of the Depression Era, rather, it is now considered one of the great conservation programs in the history of the United States. The CCC not only provided significant unemployment relief, but also produced lasting results throughout state and national parks and forests. Together with the WPA, the CCC created the state park systems we know today. As a result of this scholarly research and the perspective of time, an objective assessment of the work of the CCC and WPA is now possible.

The Rustic Style design philosophy as practiced by the National Park Service during the Depression Era has also become a matter of scholarly interest and evaluation. A Park Service study, National Park Service Rustic Architecture, established the design and associative context in which the importance of such resources could be evaluated. This study established the exceptional significance of the Rustic Style through its artistic design, fine craftsmanship, and the use of native materials.

The study of Minnesota State Park CCC/WPA/Rustic Style Historic Resources surveyed every known resource in this context in the state of Minnesota in order to judge the comparative values of these properties. In

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number F Page 35

---

addition, all state park buildings and structures which have achieved significance within the last 50 years are included as integral parts of historic districts that are eligible for National Register listing. Another important consideration is the fact that development in each nominated state park began prior to 1939. Thus, the master plans which guided construction and development had long since been completed. The preparation of working drawings or actual construction might have taken place from 1940 to 1942 due to manpower or funding considerations; however, these properties simply represent the completed developmental schemes which had been formulated well within the 50 year guideline.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   G   Page   1  

---

## SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The Multiple Property Documentation Form for Minnesota State Park CCC/WPA Rustic Style Historic Resources was initially based on a reconnaissance level survey conducted by the State Historic Preservation Office of the Minnesota Historical Society. These resources were further analyzed as part of a State-Owned Building Survey Completed by the SHPO in 1986. The study concluded that Minnesota's rustic style state park buildings were one of the most significant collections of buildings documented in the survey and recommended a comprehensive inventory and evaluation in order to determine National Register eligibility.

An intensive level survey and National Register Nomination project was conducted in 1987-88 by Rolf T. Anderson under the supervision of the State Historic Preservation Office. The inventory identified 515 building and structures located in 22 state parks which were generally constructed in the rustic style by the relief programs of the Depression Era. Each property was photographed and a Minnesota Historic Properties Inventory Form was completed. Narrative architectural and historical descriptions were written. In addition, over 1,000 original drawings located at the Bureau of Engineering of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources were examined. These included master plans, site plans, road profiles, floor plans, elevations, mechanical schemes, landscape designs, and perspective drawings. Monthly state park progress reports from January 1935 to December 1942 were also examined. Now located at the Division of Archives and Manuscripts of the Minnesota Historical Society, these reports provide an extremely detailed account of state park construction and development as well as the findings and recommendations of National Park Service inspectors. Interviews were conducted with administrative personnel from the period such as U.W. Hella, a National Park Service inspector who later became Director of the Minnesota Division of State Parks, and Edward W. Barber, the Chief Architect for the Minnesota Central Design Office of the National Park Service which was responsible for the design of the majority of the state park buildings. Barber's personal collection of architectural drawings from the period were also examined.

Four historic contexts were ultimately established beginning with an analysis of rustic style architecture based on the publication National Park Service Rustic Architecture 1916-42. Particular emphasis was placed on log construction since Park Service publications from the 1930s, such as Park Structures and Facilities, indicate a strong preference for log construction as executed in Minnesota. A second context involving landscape architecture was analyzed separately from



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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   G   Page   2  

---

rustic architecture since concepts such as master planning and environmentally sensitive design are significant apart from rustic architecture and warrant individual analysis. A third context involves the substantial impact of the Federal relief programs such as the CCC and WPA and the final context analyzes the development of the Minnesota state park system. Five property types associated with these contexts as well as 52 corresponding structural types were identified.

The nominated properties include every eligible resource identified in the survey. The standards of integrity for these properties were based on National Register standards for assessing integrity. The Multiple Property Documentation Form should continue to be a useful tool in analyzing other rustic style properties and additional construction undertaken by the relief programs of the Depression Era.

Patricia Murphy, who conducted the State-Owned Building Survey, has an M.A. in architectural history from the University of Virginia. Rolf Anderson has a B.A. in architecture from the University of Minnesota.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   H   Page   1  

---

## MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

### Primary Sources

Barber, Edward W. Chief Architect, Minnesota Central Design Office, National Park Service. Interview by Rolf T. Anderson. Lake City, Minnesota. December 1987.

Barber, Edward W. Personal Collection of Architectural Drawings. Lake City, Minnesota.

Department of Conservation. Second Biennial Report: 1933-34, Third Biennial Report: 1935-36, Fourth Biennial Report: 1937-38, Statistical Report for the Biennium Ending June 3, 1940, Statistical Report for the Biennium Ending June 30, 1942. Minnesota State Archives. Minnesota Historical Society.

Department of Conservation. Monthly Report for the Division of State Parks: January 1935 through December 1942. Minnesota State Archives. Minnesota Historical Society.

Department of Natural Resources. Working Drawings and Specifications for Buildings and Structures in Minnesota State Parks. Bureau of Engineering. St. Paul, Minnesota.

Fort Ridgely State Park. Working Drawings and Specifications for Buildings and Structures at Fort Ridgely State Park. Contact Station. Fairfax, Minnesota.

Gooseberry Falls State Park. Working Drawings and Specifications for Buildings and Structures at Gooseberry Falls State Park. Contact Station. Two Harbors, Minnesota.

Hella, U.W. Director of State Parks. Interview by Rolf T. Anderson. St. Paul, Minnesota. December 1987.

Jay Cooke State Park. Working Drawings and Specifications for Buildings and Structures at Jay Cooke State Park. Park Headquarters. Carlton, Minnesota.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number H Page 3

---

National Park Service. Park and Recreation Structures. Three Volumes. Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 1938.

National Park Service. Park Structures and Facilities. Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 1935.

Newton, Norman T. Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1971.

Owen, A.L. Riesch. Conservation Under FDR. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983.

Paige, John C. The Civilian Conservation and the National Park Service An Administrative History. United States Department of the Interior. National Park Service, 1985.

Salmond, John A. The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1967.

State of Minnesota. Minnesota State Park, Parkway and Recreational Area Study, 1938.

Tweed, Willian C., Souliere, Laura., and Law, Henry G. National Park Service Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942. San Francisco: National Park Service, Western Regional Office, Division of Cultural Resource Management, 1987.

Wirth, Conrad L. Parks, Politics and the People. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   H   Page   2  

---

Old Mill State Park. Photograph Collection. Contact Station. Argyle, Minnesota.

Old Mill State Park. Working Drawings and Specifications for the Buildings and Structures at Old Mill State Park. Contact Station. Argyle, Minnesota.

Reconnaissance Level Survey of Minnesota State Park Buildings conducted in 1978 by John Walley, Surveyor, and supervised by the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office. Survey files located at the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Scenic State Park. Pictorial Review of Emergency Conservation Work for March 1934. Monthly Pictorial Progress Report of Emergency Conservation Work for June 1934. Progress Report for October and November 1935. Statistical Report for November 1935. Summary Report for October 1, 1935-January 13, 1936. Contact Station. Bigfork, Minnesota.

Scenic State Park. Working Drawings and Specifications for the Buildings and Structures at Scenic State Park. Contact Station. Bigfork, Minnesota.

Thoma, Ben. Park Naturalist. Interview by Rolf T. Anderson. Itasca State Park. August 1988.

## Secondary Sources

Hella, U.W. Quest for Excellence A History of the Minnesota Council of State Parks 1954-1974. Minneapolis: The Minnesota Parks Foundation, 1985.

Hogg, Thomas C., Honey, William D., Lakin, Kimberly K., and Otis, Alison T. The Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps: 1933-42. United States Department of Agriculture. Forest Service, 1986.

Murphy, Patricia A. The Public Buildings of the State of Minnesota: An Architectural Heritage. State Historic Preservation Office, Minnesota Historical Society. St. Paul: Peregrine Publications, 1986.