

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1706
DEC 4

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Conservation Building

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 205 Minnesota Avenue not for publication

city or town Walker vicinity

state Minnesota code MN county Cass code 021 zip code 56484

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Ian R. Stewart 12/2/02
Signature of certifying official/Title Ian R. Stewart Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State of Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall 1.15.03
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Conservation Building

Cass County, MN

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	2	buildings
1		sites
	3	structures
		objects
2	5	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

Federal Relief Construction in

Minnesota, 1933-1941

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/municipal building
RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/municipal building
RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th AND EARLY 20th CENTURY
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/
Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
walls WOOD
SHINGLE
roof ASPHALT
other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Period of Significance

1934-1936

Significant Dates

1936

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Parsons, Donald J.C., Architect

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Conservation Building

Cass County, MN

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 2.5 acres

Quad Name: Walker, MN 1996

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

UTM grid 1: Zone 15, Easting 380260, Northing 5217420

UTM grid 3: Zone, Easting, Northing

UTM grid 4: Zone, Easting, Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rolf T. Anderson and Melanie Mullins (research)

organization date August 15, 2002

street & number 212 West 36th Street telephone 612-824-7807

city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55408

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name City of Walker and Cass County

street & number telephone

city or town Walker state MN zip code 56484

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

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

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Conservation Building, Cass County, MN

Description

The Conservation Building is located at 205 Minnesota Avenue in the city of Walker, a community in north central Minnesota. Walker is located on the southern shore of Leech Lake, one of the state's largest bodies of water, in a popular tourist and resort area. The building is sited along Walker's main thoroughfare, just to the east of the Cass County Courthouse, with views of Leech Lake to the north.

The Conservation Building occupies an entire city block, bounded by Minnesota and Michigan Avenues to the north and south, and Second and Third Streets to the east and west. A semi-circular driveway provides access to the site, entering the property from Minnesota Avenue on the east and Third Avenue on the west. The driveway creates a large grass-covered median positioned between the building and Minnesota Avenue. The grounds are generally flat and covered with grass, although the property rises steeply toward the southwest. A rock garden is located on these slopes, in the southwest corner of the property. In addition, a number of evergreen trees are found on the grounds, with the heaviest concentration along the south and west perimeters adjacent to the rock garden.

The property includes one contributing building, one contributing site, two non-contributing buildings, and three non-contributing objects.

1. Conservation Building

The Conservation Building is a large rectangular building, 99' long. The Craftsman style building rests on an exposed stone-faced foundation and is capped with a medium-pitch gable roof with asphalt shingles. The roof features wide over-hanging eaves and exposed rafters. The building is stained a dark brown, while the trim is painted bright orange.¹ There are two distinct sections to the building: a two-story section to the west measuring 50' long and 32.5' wide, and a one-story section to the east measuring 49' long and 40.5' wide.

¹ A historic black and white photograph of the Conservation Building appears to indicate that the clapboard siding was originally stained a somewhat darker tone than the wood shingles on the second story. The trim appears to be rather light.

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Conservation Building, Cass County, MN

The two-story section is covered with wide, roughly sawn, clapboard siding that extends to the second story sill level. From that point, wood shingles extend to the eaves. A horizontal trim board with a scalloped edge extends around the building at the sill level, marking the change in materials.

The north facing principal façade is symmetrical and organized into three bays. The central bay projects from the face of the wall and includes the entrance. The entry is reached by four steps that are flanked by low stone walls. The risers are also faced in stone. The six-light entry door is flanked by side lights. Each flanking bay to the side of the entrance features a grouping of three, six-over-six-light, double-hung sash.

A balcony on the second story extends the full width of the central bay and projects over the entrance below. It is supported by four carved brackets and covered by a projecting gable roof. Two decorative brackets support a beam that in turn supports the roof. The balcony is faced with wooden balusters with diamond-shaped cut-out designs and a scalloped edge. A central door with 15 lights provides access to the balcony. Six-over-six-light, double-hung sash are positioned to each side of the door. Each bay flanking the balcony features a grouping of three, six-over-six-light, double-hung sash, corresponding to the fenestration on the first story.

The first story of the west facade includes two pairs of six-over-six-light sash positioned to the left. A smaller six-light sash is positioned to the right. Five, six-over-six-light, sash are centered on the second story. The windows are incorporated within a second balcony. This balcony is also supported by four carved brackets and the detailing is identical to the balcony on the north facade. However, there is no door from which to access the balcony. A six-light attic window is centered in the gable end. Five large brackets support the projecting eaves.

The first story of the south facade includes a central entrance door with six lights. The door opens to a small concrete porch with two steps. To the left of the doorway is a single six-light sash. To the right are two pairs of six-over-six-light sash. There are eight windows on the second story. From left to right, there are a pair of six-over-six sash, two single sash, and finally two pairs of sash corresponding to the fenestration on the first story. A brick chimney projects from the south slope of the roof.

Only a small portion of the upper wall surface is exposed on the east façade of the two-story section of the building because of the adjacent one story wing. However, a split-stone chimney can be seen as it passes through the gable end and four large brackets that support the eaves are also visible.

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Conservation Building, Cass County, MN

The one-story section of the building, located to the east, is 49' long and 40.5' wide, eight feet wider than the two-story section. The north facing principal façade is symmetrical and organized into three bays. The central bay includes the entrance, which is sheltered by a projecting roofline. The entry is reached by three steps that are flanked by low stone walls. The risers are also faced in stone. The entry door is constructed with vertical planks with wrought iron hinges. A small window in the door is glazed with round, hand-blown, medallions. The door is flanked by narrow window openings. Each flanking bay to the side of the entrance features a grouping of three, six-light casement sash positioned high on the wall surface.

The east façade features groups of three, six-light casement sash at both the left and right. These windows are the same height as the similar groupings on the north façade. A large square panel is positioned between the windows and extends into the gable end. The panel is formed with wood trim and is divided into three sections. The top section consists of a group of three casement sash, identical to the flanking windows. The two lower sections feature six, square decorative panels. Each panel features a square within a square. At the center of each panel is a wood diamond.² Five large brackets support the projecting eaves.

A 1964 addition extends from the south façade of the one-story wing. The addition is 70' long and 40' wide. It is constructed entirely with patterned concrete block that has been painted brown. The addition is covered with a low pitch gable roof with asphalt shingles. Double entrance doors are centered in the south façade of the addition. There are no windows. The addition obscures the south façade of the original building. However, from the interior, it appears that the façade included three groupings of casement sash positioned high on the wall surface.

The interior of the two-story wing includes an entrance hall that extends the entire width of the building to the rear entry. A large office is located on each side of the hall. Another hallway extends from the left of the entrance, across the front of the building, to the one-story museum wing. However, the entrance to the museum has been closed off. There is an open counter along the hallway where tourists may currently receive information. It is not likely the counter was in place historically.³ A short hallway at the rear of the entrance hall leads to two restrooms. The stairway to the second floor is also located at the rear of the entrance hall. It features an open banister.

² The panel may have been designed to help alleviate what might have been an awkward elevation with windows positioned at different heights.

³ The original architecture plans for the building have not been located and may no longer exist.

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Conservation Building, Cass County, MN

The second story originally included three large rooms: a room to the east side that extended the full width of the building; a room in the center, from which the north balcony is accessed; and a room on the west side. During the period of significance, the room to the east was partitioned into two spaces, and the room to the west was partitioned into three spaces. The partitions were built with fiberboard. Currently, the rooms on the west side are closed off and the floors covered with insulation.

The basement reveals the building's poured concrete walls. The lower level is partitioned into several spaces and may have provided additional office space.

The two-story section of the building is currently occupied by the Leech Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, which also provides tourist information.

The one-story portion of the building continues to house the original wildlife museum. The museum is one large room. It does not have a basement. The room features an asphalt tile floor, a beamed ceiling with acoustical tile, a massive split-stone fireplace, and original display cases and exhibits. The wall surface above the display cases is fiberboard.

The fireplace is centered on the west wall. It is 11' long and 41" deep and features an opening with a segmental arch. Each corner is cut from a single stone. A Mr. Christensen from Backus constructed the fireplace as well as the exterior stonework. To the right of the fireplace are two steps leading to a doorway (now closed) that connects the museum to the two-story portion of the building.

The remainder of the room is encircled with built-in display cases. In addition, a large display case for a number of exhibits is positioned in the center of the room. There are ten large dioramas, each 8' x 12'. They include scenes of bobcats, brush wolves, a badger and fox with kits, waterfowl and trumpeter swan, songbirds, summer deer, black bear with cubs, lookout tower and campground, winter deer, and beavers. There are six smaller dioramas including scenes of lady slippers, a fisher, an otter, muskrats, snapping and mud turtles, a herring gull, a snowshoe rabbit, a mink, and a weasel. In addition, there are various head mounts of deer, elk, moose, and a buffalo displayed on the walls, as well as various birds and fish. A large bull moose head is displayed above the fireplace.

The entrance to the 1964 addition is centered on the south wall. Two wooden signs are positioned to each side of the entrance. Each features an Indian man with a headdress and the

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wording, "Indian Curios." These signs originally advertised the sale of clothing, beadwork, and leather goods created by Native Americans under a WPA craft program. The addition provides space for various displays and exhibits on Native American culture.

2. Rock Garden

A large Rock Garden is a site located on the hillside at the southwest corner of the property. The garden is framed by spruce and cedar trees and features landscaped slopes amid many rocks and boulders. Other features include footpaths, stone steps, and a rock-lined stream that extends from the hilltop to an ornamental pool at the base of the hill. Rocks and boulders surround the oval-shaped pool. The plantings include a variety of perennials such as ferns, hostas, columbine, and lily of the valley, as well as many annuals. The Rock Garden was constructed by Robert Pauly, a local resident, along with WPA work crews. Pauly recalled that at one time there were 100 workers constructing the Rock Garden. He continued to care for the garden into the 1980s.

3. DeLury Monument

The DeLury Monument is located to the west of the Conservation Building, near the western perimeter of the property. It consists of a stone boulder with a bronze plaque affixed to the face. The plaque reads, "1957 – Daniel DeLury – For over fifty years of untiring effort to make his dream of Walker the beautiful come true – Erected by the citizens of Walker." Daniel DeLury was a local attorney and civic leader who is one of the individuals credited with initiating the plans for the construction of the Conservation Building. Because the DeLury Monument was constructed after the period of significance, it is considered a non-contributing object.

4. Huset School

The Huset School is a small log building located immediately to the east of the Conservation Building. The building is covered with a gable roof. The one room school was built in 1912 in Boy Lake Township in rural Cass County. It was named for the pioneer family that donated the land for its construction. The building was moved to its present location in 1968 and is owned and interpreted by the Cass County Historical Society. Because the Huset School was moved to the site after the period of significance, it is considered a non-contributing building.

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5. Cass County Historical Museum

The Cass County Historical Museum is located to the east of the Huset School, along the eastern edge of the property. The one story building is approximately 75' long and 50' wide. The building is clad with metal and is covered with a low pitch gable roof. The building was constructed in 1981. From 1968 until the time the building was constructed, the Cass County Historical Society was located in several rooms in the Conservation Building. In 1986, the City of Walker transferred the land associated with the museum to Cass County. It appears that the land transferred to the county is somewhat larger than the footprint of the building. Because the Cass County Historical Museum was constructed in 1981, after the period of significance, it is considered a non-contributing building.

6. Statue of Justice

The Statue of Justice is located between the Cass County Historical Museum and the Huset School. The statue was moved to the site in 1968 and mounted on a stone pedestal. The statue was originally located atop the dome of the adjacent Cass County Courthouse. When the courthouse dome was demolished in 1961, the statute was saved and placed in storage until it was moved to its present location in 1968. Because the Statute of Justice was moved to the site after the period of significance, it is considered a non-contributing object.

7. "Walker on Leech Lake" Sign

A large sign, essentially a billboard, is located on the west side of the grass-covered median between the semi-circular drive and Minnesota Avenue. The sign includes a map of Leech Lake along with the wording, "Walker on Leech Lake – Muskie Capital of the World". The sign is oriented to the northeast so that it is clearly visible to cars and pedestrians approaching the Conservation Building from the east. The sign was originally located at the edge of town and was moved to its present location in the late 1950s. Because the "Walker on Leech Lake" Sign was moved to its present location after the period of significance, it is a considered non-contributing object.

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The Conservation Building retains a particularly high degree of architectural integrity. Very few changes have occurred to the building and its original fabric is remarkably intact. The most significant change was the museum addition in 1964. However, this change was not an intrusive modification. The original landscaping immediately around the building itself, consisting of shrubs and evergreens as depicted in historic photographs, is no longer in place. But original evergreens are still found on the property, particularly along the southern and western perimeters near the Rock Garden. Modern additions to the property have also had little impact, such as the Huset School, DeLury Plaque, Statue of Justice, and the "Walker on the Lake" Sign. The most significant addition has been the construction of the Cass County Historical Museum, although even this larger scale building does not seriously impact the integrity of the site. Access to the site was modified slightly when Third Street was vacated as a result of an expansion of the Cass County Courthouse. There is now a courthouse parking lot at the northern portion of the former street. The west end of the circular drive to the Conservation Building is now accessed through the entrance to this parking area.

Remarkably, the Conservation Building still retains its original functions. The wildlife museum remains in place and open to the public, and the building continues to provide tourist information and office space for civic organizations.

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Conservation Building, Cass County, MN

Statement of Significance

The Walker Conservation Building is associated with the context of Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota and is historically significant at the state level under National Register Criterion A in the area of Politics and Government as an important example of the municipal facilities made possible by the Federal Relief programs of the New Deal. The State Emergency Relief Administration (SERA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) sponsored the construction of the building which provided employment during the Great Depression and allowed the town of Walker to construct a facility designed to meet civic goals and objectives. The primary purpose of the building was to promote the conservation of natural resources and to facilitate tourism and economic development in the area. These goals distinguished the building from Minnesota's typical New Deal municipal projects that usually involved the construction of city halls, schools, libraries, and community buildings. The wildlife museum represents the only facility of its type in northern Minnesota and was one of only several museums built by the New Deal in the state. The Walker Conservation Building is also important for its associations with a variety of New Deal programs and activities. The SERA conducted its operations in the building, and the U.S. Forest Service, the Minnesota Department of Highways, and the Minnesota Department of Conservation all maintained offices in the building while utilizing New Deal funding and manpower. In addition, handicrafts were sold in the building that had been created by WPA craft programs. Few buildings have been identified in the state with such significant connections with New Deal programmatic operations.

Construction of the Conservation Building was described in the Improvement Bulletin, a regional construction trade periodical, on September 29, 1933, with the following announcement:

Walker, Minn. – Conservation Bldg – (\$25,000). Construction with federal funds recommended by Daniel DeLury as first step in aid to conservation.

DeLury was a local attorney and civic leader and a member of the Walker Conservation Unit No. 1, an organization created to promote the conservation of natural resources and to facilitate useful civic projects in the Walker area.

The next known citation in the Improvement Bulletin was dated May 12, 1934:

Walker, Minnesota. Administration Building and Museum (\$15,000). Plans being figured. Owner, village, architect D.C. Parsons, 1645 Hennepin Avenue,

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Conservation Building, Cass County, MN

Minneapolis. Frame construction, wide siding exterior, one story, stone foundation and fireplace. Swiss Chalet design. About 40 x 50, wide floors, toilets, building to house museum and offices of Game, Fish, Highway and Forestry Departments. Plans nearing completion.

On June 4, 1934, the Walker Village Council passed the following resolution, "Be it resolved that the village clerk be instructed to advertise in the official paper a notice for bids for a Conservation Building to be opened at a special council meeting on June 29." At the same meeting, the Minnesota Department of Highways presented plans for the construction and improvement of Trunk Highway 371 that were also approved.¹

A subsequent article in the Improvement Bulletin dated June 22, 1934, noted the cost of construction at \$17,000 and announced that bids would close on June 29 and that labor would be furnished by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA).

The special meeting of the Village Council scheduled for June 29 was postponed until the regular meeting of July 2. At that meeting the following bids for building materials were accepted:

Bragg Hardware Company - \$550.00 for hardware, paint, and shingles
\$200.00 for plumbing and fixtures

Bailey Lumber Company - \$5,777.00 for lumber, cement, roofing, and millwork

M.G. Stokesberry - \$324.00 for electrical equipment and wire

Ed Wold, a local contractor, was appointed foreman in charge of construction. The mayor, F.S. Grindall, and two council members, R.F. Ross and C.E. Rausch, were appointed to work with the foreman on the construction project.²

On July 6, 1934, the Walker Pilot reported that the bids on materials had been accepted, noting that Walker firms had submitted all of the successful bids. The article went on to note that, "The Conservation Building will be a two-story structure in the Swiss style of architecture with a large one-story wing which will house a museum of Northern Minnesota wild life, plants and other specimens." It was also noted that labor had been allowed under an SERA project.

¹ Minutes of the Village Council of Walker dated June 4, 1934.

² Minutes of the Village Council of Walker dated July 2, 1934.

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On July 13, 1934, the following article in the Walker Pilot reported that excavation on the Conservation Building had begun:

Engineers of the State Department of Highways gathered in a little clump in the middle of Walker's ball diamond Tuesday, squinted through a transit, stretched a chain and tapped a little stake down just northwest of the pitcher's box. They squinted again, tapped another (stake) down southwest of second base.

It was the end of the ballpark and the beginning of the new Conservation Building.....

In addition to the Conservation Building, which was conceived at Daniel DeLury's banquet at the Chase (Hotel) last fall and will be dedicated to the proposition that conservation of trees and fish and game is vital in this section of the country, Walker is to have a parked approach to the east side of the village.

The Department of Highways has purchased from the village enough land along the right-of-way of Highway 371 just east of town to provide for a system of landscaped walks, winding roads and a lakeside parking spot in the vicinity of the old mill site.

A.R. Nichols, consulting landscape architect of the State Board of Control, and Harold Olson, highway beautification engineer with the Department of Highways, were in Walker Tuesday examining the building site and the proposed parkway. They with Harry Sorenson, resident highway engineer, staked out the new Conservation Building.....

County board members Tuesday morning took 10 minutes off from their wrestle with the perennial tax abatement petitions and went out in front of the courthouse to look over Mr. Nichols' plan for thinning out the elm trees which line the sidewalk. The landscape man maintained that the trees are too close together for their own good, that every other tree, approximately, should be removed for the benefit of the remainder. He showed the commissioners how the too-frequent trees are killing each other, and the dads acceded to his advice to permit the thinning out. A few of the trees will be replanted.

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Labor for the Conservation Building and the landscape work will be picked from the relief rolls in the county NRS (National Re-employment Service) office, and the projects will be governed by Emergency Relief Administration requirements as to hours, wages and employment.³

An article in the Cass County Pioneer also dated July 13, 1934, provided additional information about the building and the purpose for its construction.

Friends of conservation and those interested in developing Minnesota as the playground of the United States will be glad to know that work has actually begun on the new Conservation Building in Walker. On Tuesday of this week Mr. Nichols, Landscape Architect of the State Board of Control and of the Highway Department, and Harold Olson, who has charge of the Roadside Beautification program of the State Highway Department, visited Walker and staked out the building. On Thursday morning under the supervision of foreman Ed Wold teams commenced the work of excavating the main part of the building which will be two stories.....The landscape plans in connection with the building are very elaborate including driveways, and some very artistic tree planting.....

A certain amount of preliminary work has to be done such as excavating the basement and when this is completed a full force of men will be employed to complete the building with reasonable speed. The labor is being furnished through (the) County Relief Organization and this will furnish considerable employment for citizens of Cass County. The construction of this building will demonstrate that the conservation movement in this region at least is a permanent institution and investors will feel confident in buying Lake Shore property and constructing homes not only for the summer, but for the entire year.....

Very little information is available about the actual construction of the building. An article in the Walker Pilot dated July 27, 1934, noted, "Under the direction of Ed Wold, foreman, a crew of men hired through the relief office laid the cement Wednesday morning and started on the stone work for the foundation of the Conservation Building." An article dated September 7,

³ The terms FERA, SERA, and ERA were sometimes used interchangeably.

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Conservation Building, Cass County, MN

1934, stated, “.....carpenters finished putting up the first-story dimension lumber in the new Conservation Building, and continued to push the work at good speed.” The same article noted that Guy H. Nelson, a former Walker resident, donated the asphalt shingles for the building, valued at \$300.

During the next four months, the city paid the contractors who supplied the materials the following amounts: Bailey Lumber Company - \$4,040.15; Bragg Hardware - \$621.59; and M.G. Stokesberry - \$385.25. The Globe Feed Store was paid \$72.60 for grass seed.⁴

On May 29, 1935, the Cass County Pioneer reported that, “The grounds are being beautified and a wonderful rock garden has been built. Everything possible is being done to make the building and grounds one of the show places of Walker. Hon. Daniel DeLury, who is now visiting in Canada, has given the project much of his time this spring and has supervised, to a considerable extent, the landscaping of the grounds.”

In May 1935 it was also announced that the SERA had selected Walker as the headquarters for a new office that would serve Cass, Hubbard, and Wadena counties. Glenn T. Holstad, the Cass County SERA administrator, was named the tri-county administrator. All phases of direct relief and work relief were to be coordinated from the new office. The purpose of the reorganization was to increase efficiency and reduce costs. Similar consolidations had occurred elsewhere in the state.

Initially, it was stated that the SERA office would be located in the county courthouse, but it was announced in late June 1935 that the office had moved to the second story of the Conservation Building. The Walker Business Men’s Club donated \$150 in order to partition the space into individual offices.

However, the Conservation Building and grounds were not yet complete. There had not been adequate funding to complete the work. But when the WPA was created in July 1935, a grant application was submitted in order to finish the project. The village council met in a special meeting on August 13, 1935, “For the purpose of acting on the application to (the) ERA (WPA) and determine (the) amount to be pledged by the village council for improving grounds, rock garden, walks, and installing furnace in Conservation Building.” It was determined that the city’s cost would be was \$980.00 and a motion was made and carried to approve the project.⁵

⁴ Minutes of the Village Council of Walker dated October 8, 1934, November 5, 1934, December 3, 1934, and January 7, 1935.

⁵ Minutes of the Village Council of Walker dated August 13, 1935.

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On August 30, 1935, the Walker Pilot reported that: the completion of the Conservation Building headed the list of WPA projects sent to Washington, D.C. for approval.

Prospects for early completion of the Conservation Building loomed bright this week with receipt of information from Victor Christgau, Minnesota WPA director, with headquarters in St. Paul, that the WPA project, calling for final completion of the building and grounds had been approved by his office and forwarded to Washington.

The project, as outlined by Fabian Redmond, area engineer, and sanctioned by the village council, would install curbing, sidewalks and driveway in the circular entrance to the Conservation Building grounds, install heating facilities for the building and complete details of the museum. The grounds also would be sodded and beautified under the proposal.

The Conservation Building was conceived two years ago with the formation of Walker Conservation Unit No. 1, and was constructed a year ago. Final completion was delayed through the lack of funds, but with the government's WPA work project, it is expected to have the building entirely finished before winter sets in.

Under the WPA proposal, the federal government would appropriate \$3,523 while the village would have to assume \$980 of the cost of the project, this being for part of the material.

Plans for the construction of the sidewalks, curbing and driveways were laid several weeks ago when engineers from the state highway department surveyed the grounds. A survey was made last fall, but the markings established at that time had been destroyed.

The museum, located in the east end of the two-story structure, is also rapidly taking shape, with Alph Peck of Virginia expected to install the beaver exhibit, donated by the state game and fish division, this week. Mr. Peck was here a week ago to install the exhibit but work on the display cases was necessary. Deer and other exhibits of wild life native to this section will be installed in the near future.

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The remainder of the Conservation Building is utilized as headquarters for the district forestry offices, ERA headquarters,⁶ blister rust control, a state forestry project, and highway engineers, who will outline work for the highway beautification CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) camp located on Kabekona (Bay on Leech Lake).

A prior article dated August 2, 1935, clarified the activities of these various agencies:

Walker's famed Conservation Building.....is a virtual bee-hive of activity, with the offices of four distinctly separate government functions being located there.

The top floor of the two-story unique structure furnishes headquarters for administration of relief (in) the area, (under the) tri-county set-up, including besides Cass, Hubbard and Wadena counties, and employing approximately 20 people.

J.C. Porisch, district forest ranger of Walker, has offices on the main floor. He is located on the west side of the building. Personnel for acquisition by the federal forestry department of some 200,000 acres of delinquent tax land south of Leech Lake also will be quartered with Mr. Porisch.

In the office space next to the forester, T.R. Day, highway department surveyor and engineer, is laying out the plans for erection of the highway beautification camp to be located on Kabekona Bay. After this camp has been set up, Mr. Day will outline the work of the camp from his office in the building.

The huge program of the forestry department in the eradication of pine blister rust, will have as its central office in the Chippewa National Forest, the Conservation Building. Joe Lick, St. Paul, will have charge of the work and will have two assistants with him in the building. A staff of 17 field surveyors will operate from these headquarters.

If it were not for the unusual and adequate facilities offered by the Conservation Building, it is very probable that these government projects would not have their

⁶ The WPA assumed responsibility for work relief projects of the SERA.

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offices in Walker, as there would be insufficient space to quarter them in the courthouse building, the only other available place.

Each of the four agencies was associated with the New Deal. The SERA was a New Deal program handling direct relief and work projects for the tri-county area. The WPA later assumed many of its responsibilities. The U.S. Forest Service was working on the expansion and development of the Chippewa National Forest made possible by the unprecedented funding and manpower made possible by the New Deal. The office in Walker was handling the land acquisition for the newly created Walker Ranger District. The ranger station for the district was later built at the east side of town, not far from the Conservation Building. The Minnesota Department of Highways was providing the work projects for CCC Camp SP-16 located just north of Walker on Kabekona Bay on Leech Bay. The Walker Pilot noted, "The camp was set up as a special camp, with the National Park Service supervising the men, and the state highway department allotting the work." The camp was one of only four CCC Camps in Minnesota dedicated strictly to highway improvement projects. One major project was trunk highway improvements in Walker. Finally, the Minnesota Department of Conservation was conducting a blister rust eradication program in cooperation with the Chippewa National Forest. The WPA provided the manpower. As of August 30, 1935, 100 men were employed on the project.

An article in the Walker Pilot dated November 8, 1935, noted that the Conservation Building was nearly complete:

Fourteen laborers, two painters, and two trucks have started to put the "finishing touches" on the new Conservation Building in Walker. The project will total \$4,503 of which \$3,523 is furnished by WPA. The foreman of this project is Bob Pauley.

This building has been used for the past few months in housing the relief and forestry offices; but the interior has never been finished-off, no heating plant installed, nor has the outer grounds been completed.

The crew at work will clear up the grounds and level off the drive way and sidewalks for final construction when spring rolls around. A few additions will also be made on the rock garden. Painters will complete the interior decorating.

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The village of Walker is furnishing the heating plant for this building which will in the future be the tourist information center of this section.

Nothing could be more attractive to the eye of one driving into Walker than this colorful building, sitting within a birds-eye-view of beautiful Leech Lake. In the spring when the grounds are newly planted and the rock garden complete, a great deal more attractiveness will be added to this setting for the eyesight of the summer horde of tourists.

A second article in the same issue discussed work on the museum as well as the grounds. The headline stated that, "Newly Completely Life-Like Beaver Scene in Walker Conservation Bldg. Important Step in Conservation Cause." The article noted:

The beaver scene is now completed in the museum at the new Conservation Building at Walker. The animals, and the services of the experts employed to install this scene, were both furnished by the State Conservation Commission, who are to be thanked and congratulated for their progressive steps in thus bringing the cause of conservation to the attention of the public.

The scene occupies the northeast corner of the museum, is protected by a large plate glass, and when the electric lights are turned on, a family of five beavers is seen at work in a poplar grove. One old beaver is chewing down a tree, another is cutting a log in two and the three children are busily engaged making a supper out of the bark of poplar limbs. In the distance is seen a beaver dam, a stream and a beaver house. In the foreground, moss, flowers, ferns and grasses make the scene realistic.

The taxidermist work was performed by Alph Peck of Goodland, Minnesota, an expert at the business. One visitor at the museum said, "Mr. Peck's work will compare favorably with similar exhibits in Chicago and New York." It is a source of pride, also, to know that the landscape painting and the arrangement of the exhibit were performed by a Walker artist in the person of Austin O. Sarff, who will soon acquire a national reputation for such work. Mr. E.V. Willard, Conservation Commissioner, and former Game and Fish Commissioner Erling Swenson, took a great deal of interest in this exhibit, and Mr. Willard has employed State Trapper Fairbanks to secure good specimens for a winter deer scene, a bear den, a group of timber wolves, and other scenes for the Walker

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Museum, which next season will be used as a Tourist Information Bureau and will be visited by many thousands of summer travelers.

Work started this week, a WPA project, in beautifying the grounds surrounding the Conservation Building, and in preparing the lawn for grass-seeding and tree-planting next spring. The rock garden constructed by Robert Pauley is completed, with the exception of the brook, which awaits a few finishing touches.

An article in the Walker Pilot dated November 15, 1935, stated, "Considerable black dirt has already been hauled onto the grounds of the Walker Conservation Building in preparation for the lawn improvements next spring. The driveway and walks will also be put in next spring as will additional improvements be made (sic) on the rock garden. This work is being done under WPA projects."

At a meeting of the Walker Village Council on December 2, 1935, it was agreed to call for bids for a heating plant for the Conservation Building. Apparently, kerosene heaters had been used previously. However, when the bids were received they were all rejected as too high. Finally, on December 23, 1935, the Village Council accepted a bid from Walker Hardware to install a forced-air heating system at a cost of \$990.00. Edward Staede, a local citizen, donated \$100.00 toward the heating system.

An article in the Cass County Pioneer dated June 3, 1936, described the progress being made on the grounds of the Conservation Building:

The proposed beautification and improvement of the grounds around the Walker Conservation Building is underway and from what has been accomplished already one can see that the plan to have that place a beauty spot for our village to be proud of will soon be a reality.

When the building and ground(s) were first proposed, an elaborate blue print of the lay-out was prepared by the State Engineer and we all thought that the pictures and prints portrayed a very nice dream picture and could hardly realize that it would be possible for such to actually be placed here within our village. But now, we not only can realize it, but know that the picture and dream will soon have come true.

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At the present time, a crew of about a dozen men are working on the project under the Federal Aid System and they are under the efficient foremanship of Isaac Collins, an expert in the making of concrete walks and curbing as they should be made.....

Close attention to the details of the work is being given by both Mr. Daniel DeLury, really the father of that extensive beautification plan, and our able Mayor and fellow towneman (sic), Mr. A.O. Mohler.

With such able supervision and such a definite and excellent object as a goal of attainment, that portion of Walker in the vicinity of the Conservation Building is bound to soon be one of the most beautiful spots in northern Minnesota.

The Walker Pilot described the nearly completed building in an article dated July 29, 1936, entitled, "Conservation Bldg. to be Town Show Place." The article stated:

Monday, of this week, the editor decided to take time out to take an appreciative look at some of the good things that Walker has and some of the master improvements that are coming our way and as a part of our look-see, just took ourselves down to the new building on the block east of the Cass County Court House, and we found our time well spent down there, and so will you if you just go down there and see what we saw.

One more exhibit has been recently added to the museum connected with the Conservation Building in Walker. This time it is a winter deer-scene and it is a beauty. The three deer in the exhibit were prepared by Mr. Alph Peck of Goodland, Minnesota, and he did a splendid job on them. The scenery was painted by our local artist Mr. A.O. Sarff, and it is a masterpiece.....

A third exhibit, a summer deer-scene is being prepared at the present.

The interior of the museum is being completed as a WPA project by foreman Isaac Collins, ably assisted by Lawrence Dennis. Scenes yet to be placed in the museum consist of groups of foxes, wolves, bears, a collection of pheasants, a wild duck scene, and a number of small exhibits.....

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Mr. Collins also has a crew working on the grounds. The cement curbs and sidewalks have been completed and the ground leveled ready for grass seeding, and next year the tree planting can be completed.

Work on painting the interior of the building will be started in the near future and sewer connections have yet to be made. In the southeast (area) of the grounds, Arvig Magelssen, who is in charge of WPA Recreational Projects in the county has recently constructed a very fine tennis court.⁷ All of this work has furnished employment for several families throughout the present season.

The Walker Pilot also described the progress in an article dated August 7, 1936:

Work at the Walker Conservation Building has been progressing the last few weeks by leaps and bounds. The new flagstone walk in front of the building has been completed, a map of Leech Lake has been stenciled in the cement broadwalk surrounded by flagstones and the grounds have been seeded.

Paul Wigington, architectural engineer employed at the Conservation Building, stenciled the map of Leech Lake measuring eight feet by eight feet in the front of the entrance of the building.....⁸

Although the grass seeding at the Conservation Building has been completed, the remainder of the planting program will be deferred until the weather is more suitable. The water system is being utilized to capacity to insure a good growth of grass by fall. Extensive tree planting will not be begun (sic) until early next spring.

WPA Foreman, Isaac Collins, has his men fast at work building a rear drive at the building which will soon be finished. The rock garden and lily pool is expected to be complete by fall. Work on the interior painting of the Conservation Building will be commenced next week.

Mr. E.I.P. Staede, president of Conservation Unit No. 1 says that when the grounds around the Conservation Building are planted and the museum completed, Walker will have the finest conservation building in Minnesota.

⁷ The tennis court is no longer extant.

⁸ Neither the flagstone walk nor the map is extant.

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In time, additional exhibits were added to the museum. In 1937 it was reported that Austin Sarff was working on two new exhibits, one containing a flock of northern ducks and the other a family of four black bears. However, the museum's exhibit space was not entirely completed. But in 1946-47, the local chapter of the Isaac Walton League assisted in the completion of the museum's exhibits.

On April 26, 1940, the Walker Pilot reported that an Indian craft project employing about ten women on direct relief would begin at the Conservation Building. The crafts would be made in the building, or at home by the participants, and sold in the museum. In May 1940 it was reported that a "small collection of authentic hand made Chippewa garments and articles were received from the Detroit Lakes WPA office." The items were exhibited and orders could be placed.

In May 1941 a tourist information office was opened in the building due to the "need for a centralized information and publicity office for the Chippewa region."

An article from the Walker Pilot dated October 7, 1949, described the impact of the museum. The article began with the following statement from the editor: "We believe that one of the finest projects that has ever been launched in Walker has been our Museum. Therefore, it is with interest that we present Mr. Sarff's statement on this project. The fact that over 31,000 people visited this museum is an indication of its drawing power as an educational attraction." A portion of Austin Sarff's text follows below, including his recommendation for the expansion of the museum.

As the tourist season draws to a close it is only fair to acquaint our local people with some of the results and effects of our Museum of Natural History.

During the four months of June through September over 31,000 guests have registered at the Museum booth. Mrs. Sarff and I have devoted our time and efforts to the task of bringing to these thousands of visitors the potential values of our resort area and our village.

The favorable reaction to our wild life displays continues to grow and it is our conviction that with the expansion of our museum, its value as a center of attraction and education will be felt and warmly appreciated by resorts and recreational centers and the schools of our state.

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Student bodies 200 strong are dropping in to view our reproductions of wild life in its natural habitat. Science classes hunger for the natural and turn their keen youthful minds toward conservation of living creatures..... Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, college professors, students in biology and entomology, artists, men and women in every walk of life are starving for a better perspective of nature's bounteous store of bugs, birds, butterflies, mammals; all the living creatures that blend with the swaying foliage of our forest and make their homes beneath the sparkling surface of our sky blue waters.....

We cannot adequately describe the splendid job done at the Civic & Commerce Office for the benefit and comfort of the traveling public by Mr. Simpson and Miss Pat Ross. This splendid service should continue.

Donald J. C. Parsons

Donald J. C. Parsons, the architect of the Conservation Building, was born in Minneapolis on July 9, 1898. He graduated from West High School and attended the University of Minnesota. He was employed as a Junior Draftsman by the Thompson Yards and worked as a Senior Draftsman for the Keith Corporation and the Northwestern Library Association, all in Minneapolis. He was registered or licensed to practice architecture in Minnesota in 1933. He worked for one year as an engineering aid for what appears to have been a federal agency. He was later employed as a Senior Draftsman by the firms of Lang and Raugland and also Long and Thorshov.

Only two buildings are known to have been designed by Parsons; the Conservation Building and a residence for the editor of the Walker Pilot, a building that was under construction at the same time as the Conservation Building. It appears likely that Parsons may have had personal connections in Walker that resulted in the commissions.

It is unclear why Parsons designed the Conservation Building in a Craftsman style. Perhaps he found its somewhat rustic appearance in keeping with the conservation-related purposes of the building.

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The Minnesota Department of Highways and Arthur R. Nichols

The Minnesota Department of Highways (MHD), established in its modern form in 1925, was initially consumed with simply building, grading, paving, and marking new and existing roads in the newly created trunk highway system. But in 1932 MDH established a new department called the Roadside Development Division. Its purpose was to incorporate the principles of landscape architecture into highway design, with an emphasis on safety and aesthetics. Harold E. Olson, an engineer who had been with MHD for ten years, was appointed to head the new division. Arthur R. Nichols, a landscape architect with a well-established practice in Minneapolis, became the Roadside Development's Consulting Landscape Architect in 1932. He helped formulate the division's early policies and goals and was the principal designer for many projects.

During its early years, the Roadside Development Division worked to improve some of the state's oldest highways that had been poorly designed. Preferable to repairing existing roads, however, was the practice of integrating roadside development early in the highway design process. The division worked to bring a "balance of safety, good construction, economical maintenance, and natural beauty" to Minnesota highways and to build roads that were in harmony with surrounding views, topography, and vegetation.⁹

During the New Deal, the Roadside Development Division conducted many highway projects and constructed dozens of wayside rests and scenic overlooks utilizing New Deal manpower from various programs. In addition, the division coordinated the work efforts of four CCC Camps devoted strictly to highway improvement and beautification projects, including the Camp on Kabekona Bay that was involved in the trunk highway improvements in Walker. The work for the Kabekona Bay Camp was directed from an office in the Conservation Building staffed by MHD.

Arthur R. Nichols

Arthur R. Nichols (1880-1970) attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) where he studied engineering, architecture, and landscape design. He was the first to graduate from MIT's program in landscape architecture. From 1902 to 1909 Nichols worked for landscape architect Charles W. Leavitt, Jr. in New York City where he met his future partner Anthony

⁹Susan Granger, Scott Kelly, and Kay Grossman. "Historic Roadside Development Structures on Minnesota Trunk Highways." Prepared for the Minnesota Department of Transportation by Gemini Research. December 1998. pp. 3.1-3.6.

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Morell. In 1906-08, while working for Leavitt, he and Morell prepared landscaping plans for the Chester and Clara Congdon Estate (Glensheen) in Duluth. In 1909 Morell and Nichols formed a partnership and moved to Minnesota.

The firm's remarkable list of achievements is lengthy and includes city master plans, civic centers; residential subdivisions; and a dozen college campuses. They landscaped private estates, and designed country clubs and many parks and parkways. From 1910-1925, Morell and Nichols were retained by the Minnesota State Board of Control, which administered all state institutions. In that capacity the partnership planned and landscaped dozens of hospitals, schools, prisons, and teacher's colleges.

From 1932-1940, Nichols alone (rather than the firm) was consultant to the Minnesota Department of Highways where he worked primarily for the Roadside Development Division. As the principal designer during the division's first decade, Nichols had a tremendous impact on the appearance of the state's roadside development work that can still be seen today. He helped establish and articulate the division's mission and he designed hundreds of miles of highway right-of-way and numerous wayside rests. His civil engineering background, combined with training as a landscape architect, gave him the practical training and technical understanding to design safe and efficient roadways that preserved and enhanced the existing scenic qualities of the landscape. He is considered one of the key individuals who established the field of landscape architecture in Minnesota and the most productive landscape architect in the history of the state.¹⁰

Nichols became involved in the Conservation Building because the improvements that the Roadside Development Division was planning for Trunk Highway 371 impacted the site of the building. It is known that Nichols, along with Harold Olson, sited the Conservation Building and positioned the circular drive. An article in the Cass County Pioneer dated June 3, 1936, stated that, "When the building and ground(s) were first proposed, an elaborate blue print of the lay-out was prepared by the State Engineer...." It is likely that this site plan was prepared by Nichols. While the plan has not been located, or may no longer exist, and thus could not be compared to the site, it is reasonable to conclude that Nichols designed the landscaping, including the Rock Garden, or at least influenced the design.

Plans have been located for the Roadside Development Division's improvements to Trunk Highway 371. The plans consist of a set of 35 drawings. The drawings are dated May 11, 1937,

¹⁰Granger. pp. 3.29-3.31.

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although it is believed the work actually began in 1936. The cover sheet states that the plans were designed and recommended by A.R. Nichols, Consulting Landscape Architect, and Harold Olson, Engineer of Roadside Development. One of the drawings provides detailed plans for the landscaping of the highway immediately to the east of the Conservation Building. In addition, the Conservation Building is depicted on the plans. Landscaping around the building, as well as along the northern and western perimeters of the site, is described as "existing evergreens." The Rock Garden is also identified. The grassy area between the circular drive and the highway depicts two "existing spruce" trees, and a number of "existing elms" along the highway.¹¹

The Federal and State Emergency Relief Administrations (FERA and SERA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA)

Congress enacted the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933 which was approved by President Roosevelt on May 12. The act created the FERA and provided \$500,000,000 for direct grants to the states. The Minnesota State Board of Control was approved as the State Emergency Relief Administration in order to administer the program at the state level. The program provided direct relief and created work programs. The FERA was discontinued at the end of 1935 and a new works program, the Works Progress Administration, was created. However, the SERA was given legal status by the state of Minnesota and it began to operate as the State Relief Agency (SRA). The SRA certified those eligible for employment under the WPA.

The WPA was established by Executive Order No. 7034, dated May 6, 1935. This action was taken by the President under the authority of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935. The nearly \$5 billion authorized by the act was the greatest single appropriation in the history of the United States and \$1.4 billion of this funding was allocated to the WPA. As originally designed, the WPA was to have two functions; first, it was to operate a nation-wide program of small useful projects designed to provide employment for needy workers, and secondly, it was responsible for coordinating the various activities of the "Works Program" as a whole. Four years later, in the President's Reorganization Act of 1939, and effective July 1, 1939, the Works Progress Administration was incorporated in the Federal Works Agency and was renamed the Work Projects Administration. By the time the WPA ended in 1943, approximately, 8,500,000 different persons were employed on projects during the eight-year duration of the program. This

¹¹ These plans are located at the Minnesota Department of Transportation in St. Paul. They are identified as Project #371-34-25.

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represented about one-third of the nation's unemployed at an average monthly income of \$50. In Minnesota, one quarter billion dollars were expended affecting some 600,000 persons.¹²

The Federal Relief programs of the New Deal played an important role in Walker, and throughout Cass County, during the Great Depression. Walker not only constructed the Conservation Building, but also built a fire station and village hall, constructed a sewer system and treatment plant, and built an addition to the high school, all through New Deal programs. The level of publicity provided by the local papers is an indication of the importance of the federal assistance. On August 30, 1935, the Walker Pilot described a number of WPA projects that had just been approved, while another article discussed a several CCC Camps under construction, and a third article noted that 100 men were working on a blister rust eradication projects for the WPA. An article dated September 20, 1935, discussed 26 WPA projects in the county that were awaiting approval, and a second article discussed home loans from the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). An article dated November 8, 1935, noted that the weekly payroll for the WPA in Cass County was \$17,010 with 378 men working on 22 projects. The same issue discussed progress on the Conservation Building, and another article announced the opening of bids for the sewer system, a project by the Public Works Administration (PWA), a construction program of the New Deal. An issue dated January 24, 1936, contained articles on a new WPA conservation project, a WPA sewing project, and New Deal relief for farmers.

Registration Requirements

The Walker Conservation Building meets the registration requirements for Government Buildings as established in the Multiple Property Documentation Form entitled, "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941." The building was constructed by the SERA and the WPA and was completed in 1934-36. The project represents a significant contribution to the community and its wildlife museum provided a unique facility in northern Minnesota. The building is also notable for its strong associations with a variety of New Deal programs and activities. The Conservation Building remains the community's most prominent civic building.

¹² For additional information concerning the New Deal programs, refer to the Multiple Property Documentation Form entitled, "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941."

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Geographical Data

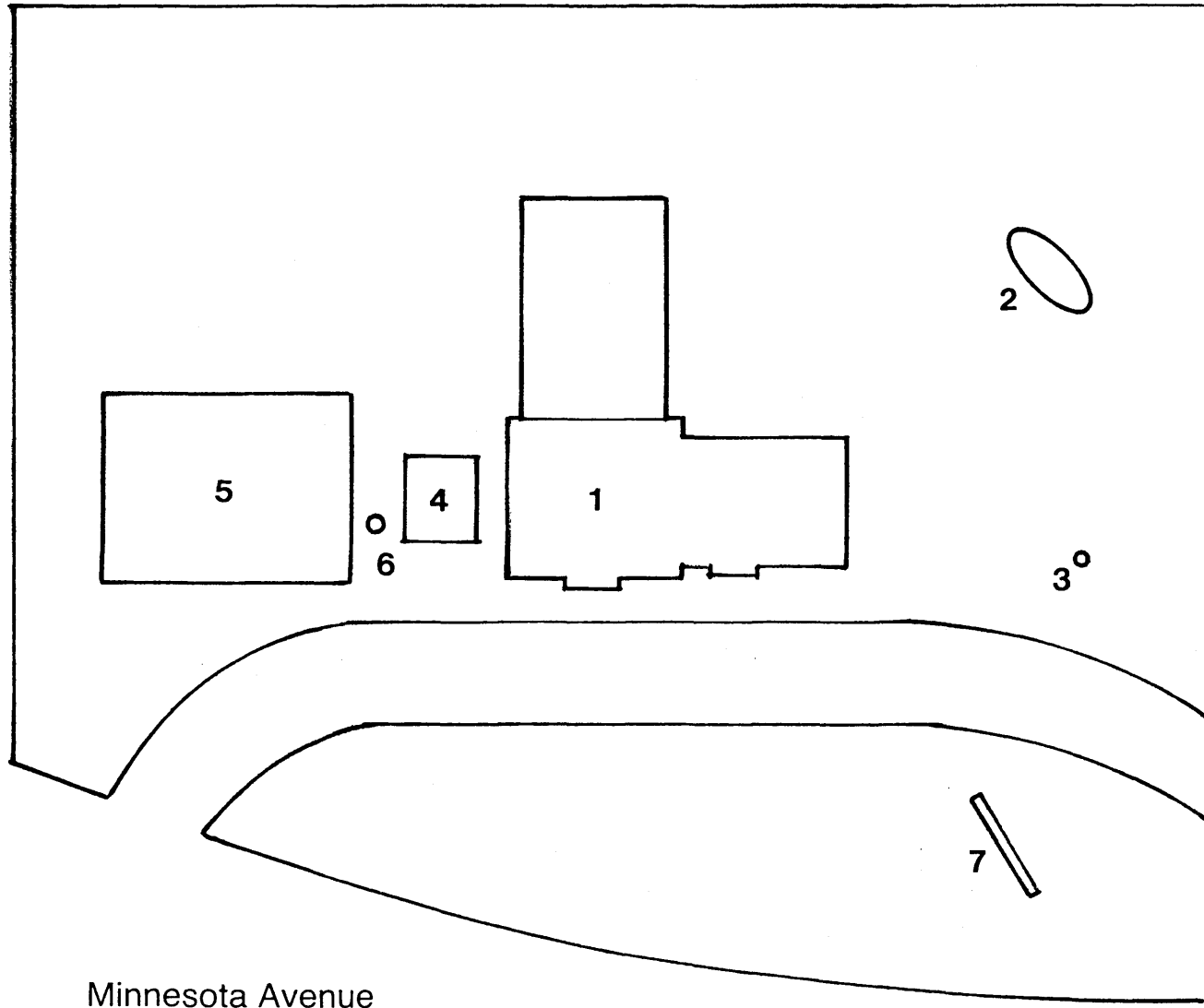
Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Conservation Building is defined by Block 25, Original Plat, City of Walker.

Boundary Justification

The boundary reflects the entire parcel historically associated with the Conservation Building.

Conservation Building Walker, Minnesota



1. Conservation Building
2. Rock Garden
3. DeLury Monument*
4. Huset School*
5. Cass County Historical Museum*
6. Statue of Justice*
7. "Walker on Leech Lake" Sign*

*Non-contributing

One inch equals approximately 50'

Minnesota Avenue

North

