

# NORTHERN WAKE

SPRING / SUMMER 2022 | Voyageurs  
Conservancy **V**

**Voyageurs Conservancy** is the  
official charitable partner of  
Voyageurs National Park

Learn more: [voyageurs.org](https://www.voyageurs.org)

SUMMER PROGRAMS | YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK | DARK SKY CLASSROOM | 7 ACRES ADDED TO VOYAGEURS



Patrick Horden

## LETTER FROM PARK SUPERINTENDENT, BOB DEGROSS

I believe Benjamin Franklin said: *“The good that we do together surpasses the good that we can do alone.”*

This is not only true of individuals, but of organizations as well. Throughout my career with the National Park Service, I have seen the agency evolve to a philosophy that recognizes community engagement and partnership as integral to achieving success.

From my perspective at Voyageurs National Park, success is measured by the quality of the park’s resources and available opportunities for visitors to connect with those resources. This connection ultimately leads to a deeper understanding and appreciation for these special places that were protected for all to enjoy. This success isn’t achieved by the National Park Service alone. We have vital partnerships that assure, *“The good that we do together...”* From leaders in our gateway communities, to commercial operators providing visitor services, to agency partners that assure the quality of our natural resources, and to you, members of our philanthropic partner the Voyageurs Conservancy.

We work collaboratively with Voyageurs Conservancy, the park’s official philanthropic partner, to keep Voyageurs wild, connect the next generation to the park, and improve the visitor experience.

Some items of note related to these overarching goals are the protection of lands through the Wallace C. Dayton Legacy Fund for Land Protection; ongoing wetland restoration work; improving aquatic invasive species prevention resources; providing youth opportunities through the Voyageurs Field Fellows program, Teen Ambassador program, and the new Voyageurs Classroom Initiative; and financial assistance to maintain campsites, historic structures, and trails. The Voyageurs Conservancy has been instrumental in establishing new infrastructure such as the Rainy Lake fishing pier and the Mukooda Trail, and is providing future assistance for the Crane Lake visitor facility.

**All of us at Voyageurs National Park thank you for supporting the Voyageurs Conservancy.** Together, the future holds opportunities for us to protect the woods, water, wildlife, stone, and sky of Voyageurs National Park and provide opportunities for all to enjoy the wild nature of this special place.

The National Park Service can’t do it alone; your support is essential.

## LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHRISTINA HAUSMAN RHODE

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Since listening to Dr. Anton Treuer speak at our Spring Thaw event, I’ve been thinking a lot about our connection to place and to the future. Dr. Treuer encouraged us to always make decisions while keeping in mind the next seven generations. How will the actions we take today impact our grandchildren’s grandchildren - their ability to look up and see the stars, to eat the fish they catch, to hear the warblers arrive in the trees in June, or to enjoy a paddle or boat ride through miles of vast waterways? This past year, I welcomed my first son; now more than ever I hold this commitment firmly in my heart.

Thank you for being a community of supporters who understand the importance of connection--to place, to the past, and to the future--and our role in stewarding wild places like Voyageurs National Park. As you read this newsletter, I hope you feel proud of the important projects and programs you helped make possible. From launching our new education and Field Fellows programs, to funding on-the-ground projects like the Jun Fujita cabin restoration, it was a busy year expanding our impact.

Let’s continue to ensure Voyageurs National Park is a place where we all can connect to the past and future—for generations to come.



See you on the water,

Christina Hausman Rhode

## DECONTAMINATION STATIONS HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ZEBRA MUSSELS

This summer, the Conservancy is helping fund the National Park Service's efforts to prevent the spread of invasive zebra mussels in the park, and we will need your help. Beginning in May 2022, vessels crossing the Kettle Falls Portage from Rainy to Namakan Lake will need to be decontaminated by trained staff. There may be delays at the portage as vessel decontamination can take 30-45 minutes. Additionally, boats may only traverse at Gold Portage traveling from Kabetogama Lake to Black Bay, Rainy Lake. These portage restrictions and decontamination stations are in response to the discovery of invasive zebra mussel larvae in Rainy Lake.

Thank you for taking this into account as you plan your summer park adventures. We all need to help protect the aquatic ecosystems of Voyageurs National Park.

For more information, please visit [voyageurs.org/zebramussels](http://voyageurs.org/zebramussels)



## SUMMER PROGRAMS AT THE PARK



Glenn Benedicto



Sarah Liao



Jamie Current

They say it's better late than never! With ice remaining on the lakes of Voyageurs National Park until mid May, warm weather and boating season felt like a distant memory. Summer is finally here and we are excited to share a suite of programs in and around Voyageurs National Park.

The Voyageurs Conservancy and the National Park Service are working collaboratively to bring you new programs that connect you to Voyageurs and build community. Peer through a telescope and learn beneath shooting stars at our Dark Sky Programs or discover the diverse resources of Voyageurs National Park at a Voyageurs TENTtalk.

### FEATURED SUMMER EVENTS

**DARK SKY PROGRAMS**  
FRIDAYS JUNE 17 - SEPTEMBER 16

**VOYAGEURS STAR PARTY**  
AUGUST 19 & 20

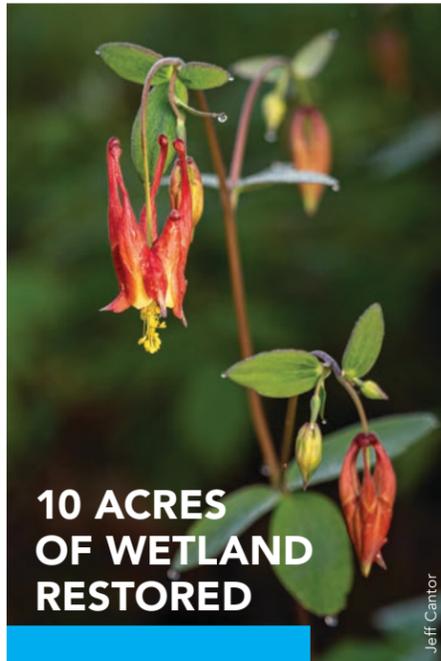
**ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST**  
OPEN JUNE 1 - OCTOBER 30

Submit your favorite Voyageurs memories, win prizes, and help protect and support your national park. Learn how to enter and find more information at

[voyageurs.org/photocontest](http://voyageurs.org/photocontest)

FOR A FULL LISTING OF EVENTS & PROGRAMS, PLEASE VISIT [VOYAGEURS.ORG/EVENTS](http://VOYAGEURS.ORG/EVENTS)

# Your Dollars at Work: 2021 Highlights



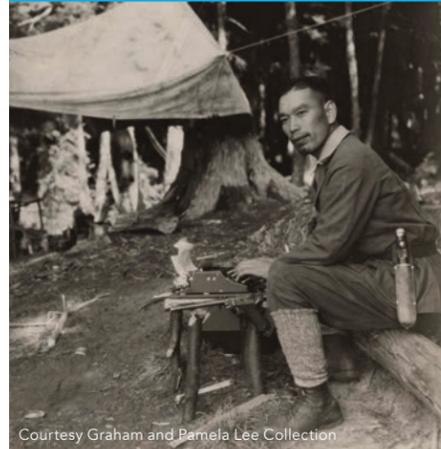
## 10 ACRES OF WETLAND RESTORED

Jeff Cantor

The Conservancy funded reseeding efforts to restore native vegetation along an additional 10 acres of previously cattail-invaded shoreline habitat. In Summer 2021, wetland restoration activities were focused in Olson, Cranberry, and Lost Bays. The multi-year wetland restoration project with the National Park Service and many partners provides critical habitat for waterfowl, fish, and native vegetation such as wild rice.



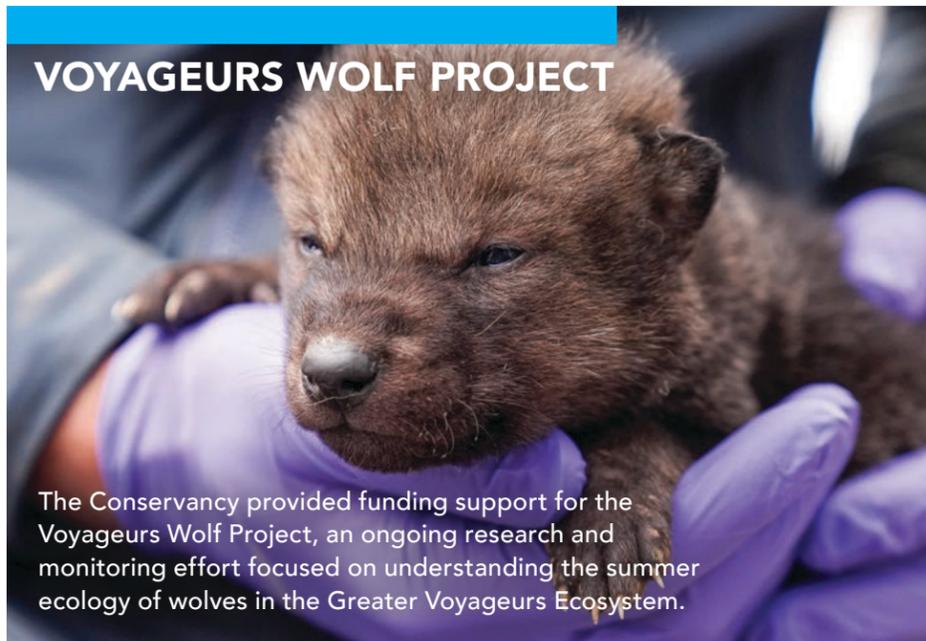
## JUN FUJITA CABIN AND CAMP MARSTON RESTORATION



Courtesy Graham and Pamela Lee Collection

In Fall 2021, the Voyageurs Conservancy funded youth preservation crews to restore and preserve Jun Fujita's cabin. This project with the Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps addressed nearly \$50,000 in deferred maintenance. Funding from the Conservancy and National Park Foundation helped the park address major safety and structural concerns, ensuring the Jun Fujita cabin's legacy is preserved and shared with visitors.

Jun Fujita was a talented photojournalist, actor, and poet. Through his lens, he captured monumental moments including Al Capone and the St. Valentine's Day Massacre. Fujita sought refuge among the boreal forests and wildflowers in what is now Voyageurs National Park. His photos were used by conservationist Ernest Oberholtzer to prevent a series of dams from being built within the Rainy Lake watershed and to preserve the precious ecosystems of the north woods.



## VOYAGEURS WOLF PROJECT

The Conservancy provided funding support for the Voyageurs Wolf Project, an ongoing research and monitoring effort focused on understanding the summer ecology of wolves in the Greater Voyageurs Ecosystem.



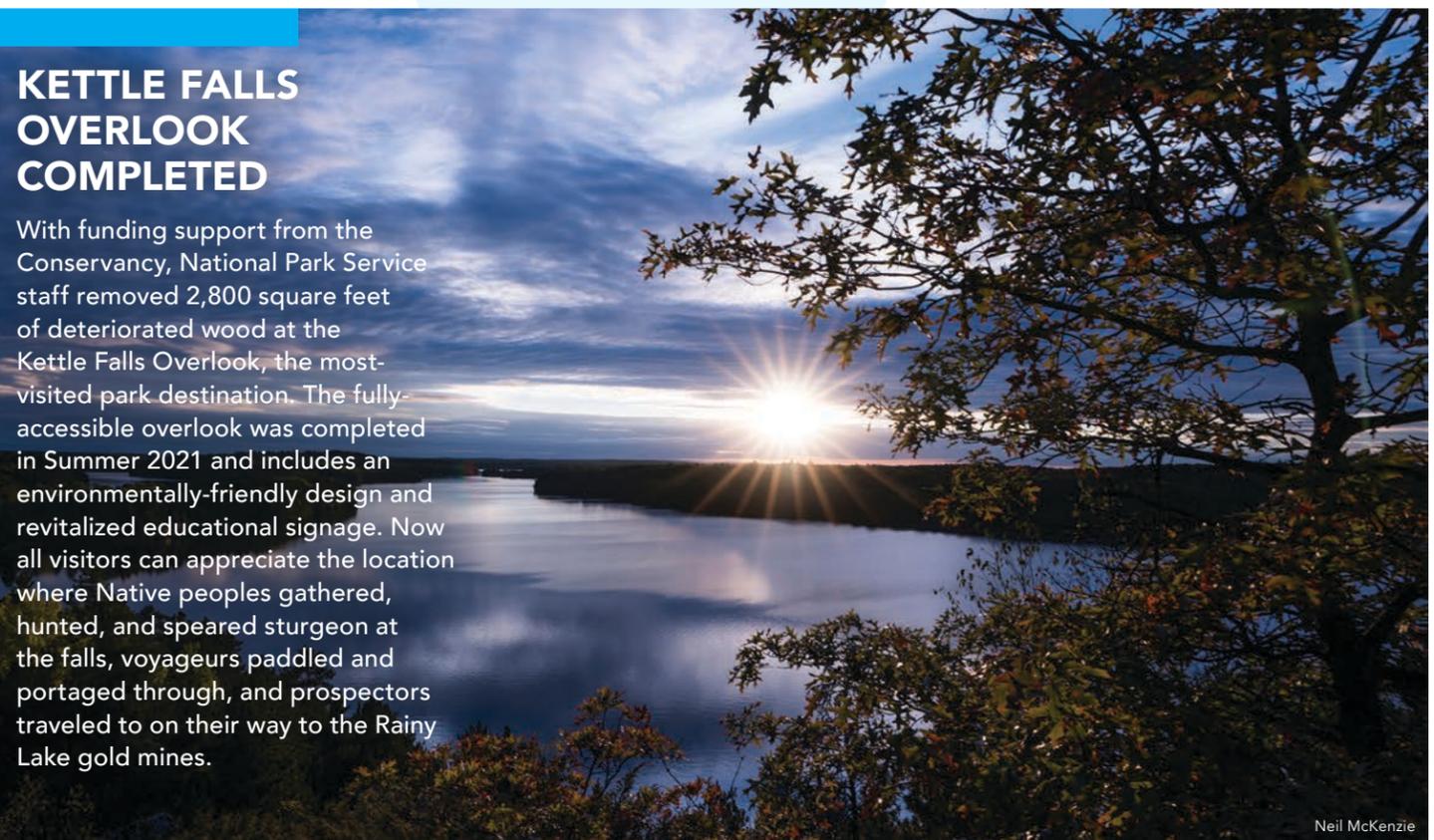
## NEW RAINY LAKE FISHING PIER

Eric Miller



Eric Miller

The Voyageurs Conservancy awarded Voyageurs National Park an additional grant for wayside signs at the new Rainy Lake Fishing Pier and hosted a grand-opening event. The Rainy Lake Fishing Pier was funded in partnership with the Rainy Lake Sportfishing Club and the Conservancy. This fully-accessible pier allows visitors of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities angling opportunities on the outstanding waters of Rainy Lake.



## KETTLE FALLS OVERLOOK COMPLETED

With funding support from the Conservancy, National Park Service staff removed 2,800 square feet of deteriorated wood at the Kettle Falls Overlook, the most-visited park destination. The fully-accessible overlook was completed in Summer 2021 and includes an environmentally-friendly design and revitalized educational signage. Now all visitors can appreciate the location where Native peoples gathered, hunted, and speared sturgeon at the falls, voyageurs paddled and portaged through, and prospectors traveled to on their way to the Rainy Lake gold mines.

Neil McKenzie

# More 2021 Highlights

## Voyageurs Star Party

Voyageurs National Park and the Conservancy celebrated their first summer as an International Dark Sky Park with a multi-day Voyageurs Star Party.

Glen Benedicto

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### Women of the Water / Mukooda Hiking Trail

Voyageurs Conservancy and NPS partnered with Women of the Water, a Crane Lake community boating club for a service project on Mukooda Lake. Volunteers built monofilament recycling stations that keep dangerous waste such as fishing line, hooks, and tackle off park shorelines.

## 2021 Park by the Numbers

- 243,042** Park Visits
- 4,816** Camping Reservations
- 2,059** Houseboat Permits
- 4,917** Volunteer Hours at the Park
- 36** Acres of Wetlands Treated for Invasive Species
- 34,350** Visitor center visitors
- 2,428** New Junior Rangers
- 30** Muskellunge tagged in Little Shoepack Lake as part of a population assessment project
- 10** park wetlands monitored for amphibian calling and water depth
- Water quality monitored in **15** lakes

Rachel Thompson

## NEXT GENERATION

### Voyageurs Classroom Initiative Led by New Education & Outreach Director

The Conservancy hired its first Education & Outreach Director, Breanna Trygg. New staff serve as a catalyst for community, tribal, and education partnerships to increase programming that connects youth and families to their national park. The Voyageurs Classroom Initiative is a joint program with Voyageurs National Park that includes a suite of education programs, field trips, and opportunities.

Major funding for the Voyageurs Classroom Initiative comes from the Minnesota Environmental and Natural Resources Trust fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR).

Our education coordinator served 506 elementary students and our education field fellow piloted dark sky education programs to 169 third and fifth grade students.



Hannah Lotz

1,659 youth and community members served in 2021 through in-person and virtual programming



### First-ever Voyageurs Field Fellows

The Voyageurs Field Fellows program increases accessibility and professional development opportunities at Voyageurs National Park. The fellowship offers students and recent graduates a stipend-paid internship to engage in real world, hands-on work at the park.

The aquatic ecology program hosted the park's first Voyageurs Conservancy Field Fellow. Reece Banta helped the park carry out funded research projects, she gained experience in studying coldwater fish habitats, cyanotoxins, and muskie populations and completing annual water quality, mercury, and invasive mussel-monitoring programs.

Sarah Bransford served as an Environmental Education Field Fellow and enhanced Conservancy education programs through an equity and inclusion lens. She implemented these improvements by leading the National Park Teen Ambassador Program. Additionally, she delivered virtual field trips to over 150 students to inspire young explorers to protect dark skies.

### Conservancy Sponsors Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Youth Corps

Youth crews from Northern Bedrock Preservation Corps embarked on multi-day "hitches" to restore aspects of the historic Jun Fujita Cabin on Rainy Lake. This project introduced young adults to historic preservation and trade skills in the outstanding outdoor classroom of Voyageurs National Park.

### National Park Teen Ambassadors

Over 160 Teen Ambassadors were served from the Twin Cities, Duluth, and local gateway schools through canoeing, camping, and outdoor leadership trips in Voyageurs National Park.

For the first time ever, the Conservancy partnered with the National Park Service and Wilderness Inquiry to host single-day park field trips with local gateway schools. The Conservancy has provided scholarships for Minnesota high school students to experience their national park since 2012.

View the entire 2021 Annual Report at [voyageurs.org/2021](https://voyageurs.org/2021)



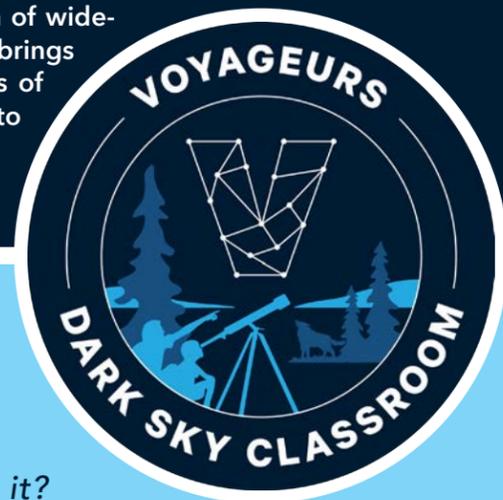
Pete Krashevich

# DISCOVERING

## THE MILKY WAY: VOYAGEURS DARK SKY CLASSROOM IMMERSSES YOUTH IN THEIR NATIONAL PARK

*HOW ARE STARS BORN? CAN YOU SEE ARTIFICIAL LIGHT FROM SPACE? WHAT IS OUTSIDE OF THE UNIVERSE?*

These are a few of the many insightful questions Education Specialist Jesse Gates receives when he presents the Voyageurs Dark Sky Classroom to a room of wide-eyed 4th grade students. Jesse is presenting a live virtual field trip that brings these young learners out of their desks and away from the bright lights of civilization. He's presenting the Dark Sky Classroom and inviting students to discover the stary skies of Minnesota's national park.



QUESTIONS GENERATED BY YOUNG LEARNERS IN THE DARK SKY CLASSROOM:

**How did the solar system form?**

*Have scientists discovered planets that could have life on it?*

**Can we travel to other galaxies?**

*The universe is currently expanding, but could it ever contract?*

**Is the universe finite or infinite?**

In 2020, Voyageurs National Park was certified as an International Dark Sky Park. The Voyageurs Conservancy is ensuring students can experience the area's magnificent night skies, whether they visit the park or not. "Many of these young explorers have never seen the Milky Way or Northern Lights. We want them to know this is a resource they can experience and even protect," says Breanna Trygg, Education and Outreach Director at the Voyageurs Conservancy.

The Voyageurs Dark Sky Classroom is a joint program between the Voyageurs Conservancy and National Park Service that works to connect elementary students throughout the state to lessons that share the ecological and cultural importance of the region's night skies. Since its inception in February 2022, the Dark Sky Classroom has reached over 700 youth through virtual field trips and park visits. These lessons introduce young explorers to dark sky concepts such as light pollution and northern lights. Students learn about stewardship and engineer their own solutions to light pollution and disappearing dark skies. Using their newfound knowledge, students develop educational posters and construct DIY light fixtures that reduce harmful light pollution.

Through interactive visits, students feel connected to their national park while learning about engineering, science, and social studies. Jesse Gates, Conservancy Education Specialist, reflects on his experience bringing the Dark Sky Classroom to young learners:

"Presenting our Dark Sky Classroom has been such a rewarding experience! I have received an amazing set of questions as well as innovative student projects. It is clear that students have an active interest in learning about the night sky and how to protect it. I am thrilled that our Dark Sky Classroom can serve as a way to continue to feed their curiosity and test their ingenuity," says Jesse.

The Dark Sky Classroom is an ongoing resource for teachers who want an engaging way to connect their students to STEM principles and their national parks. Teachers interested in bringing the Dark Sky Classroom to their students in Fall 2023 can sign up for our Education Newsletter [voyageurs.org/voyageurs-classroom](http://voyageurs.org/voyageurs-classroom).



**SPARKING CREATIVITY AND CURIOSITY, THE VOYAGEURS DARK SKY CLASSROOM ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO BECOME NIGHT SKY INVESTIGATORS**

**A Brand New Invention!!**



**Too much light can harm nocturnal animals.**



Funding support from the National Park Foundation's Open Outdoors for Kids programs helped the Conservancy launch its virtual Dark Sky Classroom. Additional funding for the Voyageurs Classroom Initiative was provided in part by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). The Trust Fund is a permanent fund constitutionally established by the citizens of Minnesota to assist in the protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources.



**ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND**

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: ANN RANDALL

Written by Ellery McCardle, Voyageurs Conservancy Volunteer

To someone who has never visited Voyageurs National Park before, Ann Randall can sum it up for you with pure confidence.

"Miles and miles of beautiful, unadulterated wilderness," she says.

It was the park's beauty that first captivated Ann 33 years ago in 1989, when she made her first trip to the park visiting friends who had a cabin on Crane Lake.

"I remember going up King Williams Narrows to Mukooda Lake and hiking to the cabin there, which was rumored to be Al Capone's," she recalls.

Ann loved the area so much, four years later, she and her husband Brad, built a cabin on Crane Lake with a view into the park. And ever since, it seems they've tackled all sorts of activities, from skiing, tubing and fishing when their kids were younger, to now, kayaking and swimming when the water warms up each season.

"Taking a picnic lunch to Grassy Bay, Granite Cliffs or My Island is also a favorite," she says. For Ann, the area isn't just a place to relax at, she has become a part of the larger community, being involved with Women on the Water, which is a group that helps women develop skills to confidently enjoy exploring out on the water and operating a boat.

"It has been a place to meet others on the lake and develop new friendships," she says. To this day, Ann still enjoys the fact that if you have access to a boat, you can get on the water for free and explore. It can be that easy. And that's why Ann is a member of the Voyageurs Conservancy. She hopes Voyageurs National Park is preserved, so that people can take in the miles and miles of beauty for many years to come. The Voyageurs Conservancy not only protects these precious resources, but provides opportunities for families and youth to experience the wonder of Voyageurs National Park on its waterways and trails.

"Anyone with access to water transportation can enjoy what the park has to offer. We need to protect it so future generations can have this remarkable experience," she says.



Ann and Brad Randall



Jonathan Bayer

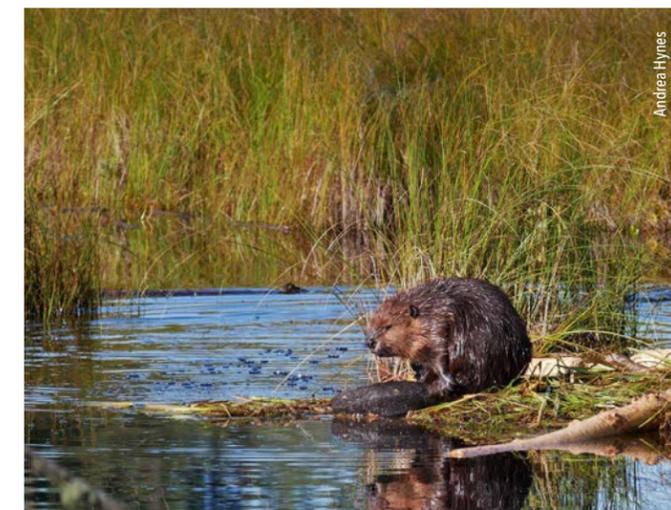
## VOYAGEURS CONSERVANCY PERMANENTLY PROTECTS 7.8 ACRES OF LAND IN MAY 2022

The Voyageurs Conservancy is proud to announce the conservation of 7.8 acres of wetland, forest, and shoreline habitat in partnership with the Maddison family.

"Since our Grandma 'Bob' Maddison first came to Namakan in 1932, we've been enjoying the natural beauty of the area. We're happy to see more land put under the protection of the Voyageurs National Park for future generations," shared Todd Maddison, a representative from the family.

The Conservancy purchased the property on Namakan Lake from the Maddison family which will eventually be officially added to the park. By developing mutually beneficial agreements with landowners, the Conservancy works in partnership with the National Park Service to add critical land within the park. We undertake new land acquisition projects each year, working with willing sellers, to protect land and provide high quality outdoor recreation, pristine viewsapes, and preserve biodiverse habitats.

The Voyageurs Conservancy has conserved an additional 73 acres since the park's establishment using support from its members and the Wallace C. Dayton Voyageurs National Park Legacy Fund, a special fund established by Dayton's family for land protection work. The Conservancy also wishes to thank the National Park Foundation and Fredrikson & Byron, P.A. for their critical support on this project.



Andrea Hynes



Sathish Johnikumar

# VOYAGEURS SPRING THAW

**Welcomes Dr. Anton Treuer and Raises \$60,000**



The connection to Voyageurs National Park was felt across the nation, as we celebrated the Voyageurs Spring Thaw with park fans in Minneapolis and virtual attendees from 32 states and Canada.

Our keynote speaker, Dr. Anton Treuer connected us back to place and inspired us to leave a better future for our descendants. Park Superintendent Bob DeGross and National Park Foundation CEO Will Shafroth reminded us why Voyageurs needs passionate caretakers. The Conservancy is grateful to build community with people like you, who believe in protecting wild places.

**Together, we raised over \$60,000 for Voyageurs Conservancy projects and programs.** These funds will give a child their first paddling experience, protect wetland habitat, and ensure our future generations get to experience the same healing nature of Voyageurs.

Thank you to all of the supporters, business partners, and corporate sponsors who made the Voyageurs Spring Thaw a major success. We look forward to celebrating with you all in 2023!

*If you missed the Voyageurs Spring Thaw, please enjoy our recorded live program at [voyageurs.org/springthaw](https://voyageurs.org/springthaw)*

**“Today, I believe we should be making decisions thinking about 7 generations ahead. No one’s going to remember our names, but there’s a chance they can paddle around Voyageur country in a canoe and receive healing from that.”**

- Dr. Anton Treuer, Keynote Speaker



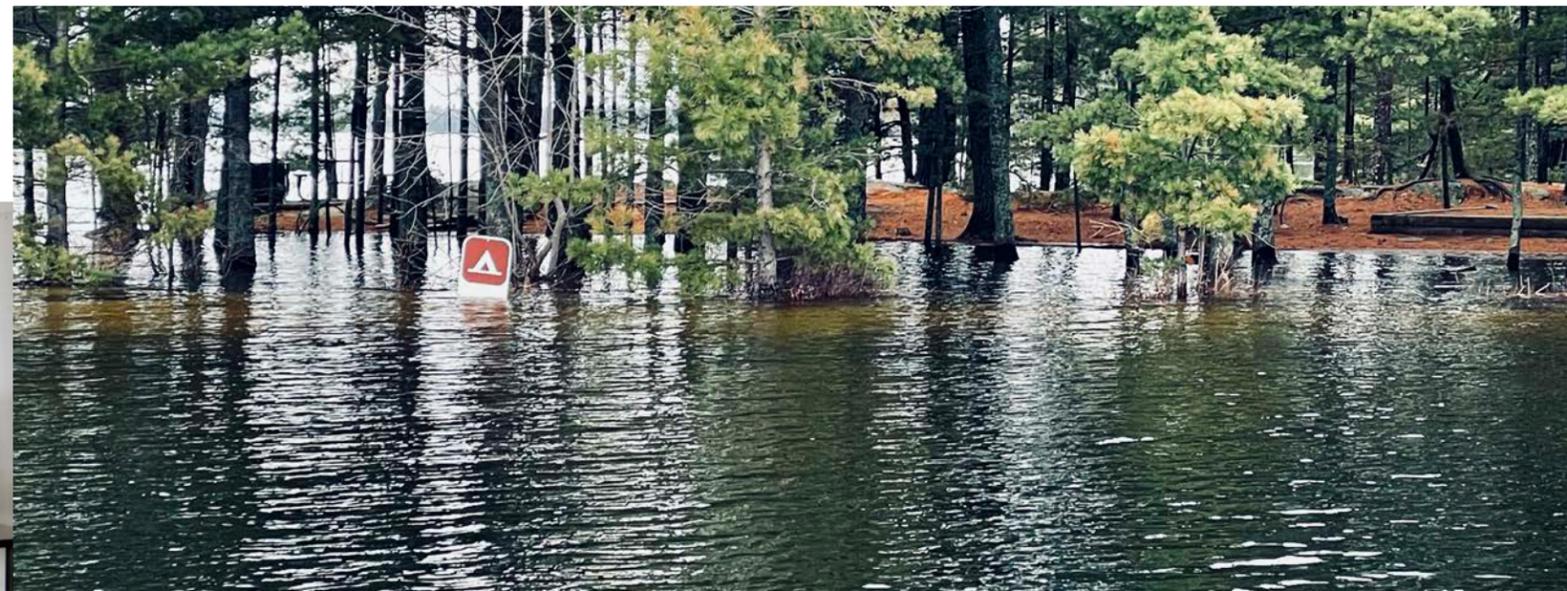
## FLOODING IMPACTS AT VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK

Late ground thaw and several high rain events are causing historic flooding in and around Voyageurs National Park. The water level is expected to exceed the level of the 2014 flood event at Voyageurs, submerging docks and putting nearly 200 homes, resorts, and buildings at risk of damage.

Visitors are cautioned to watch for floating debris and navigational hazards on park waters. Boaters should watch their speed and maintain no wake near shorelines, docks, or other developed areas. Operating with a wake causes erosion and damages shoreline nests, docks, and other structures.

The National Park Service is asking for visitors to use caution, be patient, and check for the most up to date park information that may impact travel plans. As you explore the park this summer, you may find trails not maintained, floating docks not in place, or fallen vegetation in areas. Thank you Voyageurs National Park staff and local community members for all your efforts to keep people safe and structures secured.

**As of the printing of this in May, the situation is evolving and waters are expected to continue to rise. Please visit [nps.gov/voya](https://nps.gov/voya) or [voyageurs.org/news](https://voyageurs.org/news) for up-to-date information on flood impacts and closures.**



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Front Cover Photo by Jake Dale

Jamie Current



## Evergreen Giving [VOYAGEURS.ORG/SUSTAINER](https://voyageurs.org/sustainer)

Monthly giving allows us to put more dollars directly into programs and projects for Voyageurs National Park. As an Evergreen Sustainer, you can make a lasting difference for the remarkable woods, water, and wildlife of Voyageurs.

To become an Evergreen Sustainer, fill out the envelope in your newsletter or scan the QR code above. As a 'Thank You,' All Evergreen Sustainers will receive an exclusive Voyageurs National Park bumper sticker!

# BECOME AN **EVERGREEN** SUSTAINER

EVERGREEN MEMBERSHIPS START AT JUST \$5 A MONTH AND SUPPORT PRIORITY PROJECTS INCLUDING:

### CREATE

FUTURE CONSERVATIONISTS THROUGH THE  
NEW FIELD FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

### RESTORE

WETLAND HABITAT FOR WILDLIFE,  
NATIVE FISH, AND WILD RICE

### PROTECT

CLEAN WATERS FROM  
INVASIVE ZEBRA MUSSELS

### EXPAND

NIGHT SKY EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

### SUPPORT

WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND  
BACKCOUNTRY REHABILITATION PROJECTS