



VOYAGEURS
NATIONAL PARK
ASSOCIATION

Newsletter
Spring/Summer 2019

Help Keep Voyageurs Wild Forever

voyageurs.org

Some time has passed since saws laid low the old growth forests and engines roared through the wilderness that is now Voyageurs National Park.

Though this period of resource exploitation seems a distant memory, the fingerprints of human use are not so easily erased. The decisions made almost a century ago have outlived those who made them, the scars still visibly etched over the expansive wilderness. Straight line clearings in bogs and wetlands from old roads still persist throughout the Kabetogama Peninsula, and the scalloped tire ruts from trucks and other equipment are still imprinted on the forest floor. In and around Hoist and Moose Bay, the old railroad grade endures, weaving around the ridges and through the lowlands. The 5-foot high berms on either side still stand tall in places. Beavers have helped dismantle this grade by damming the lowlands the railroad ran through, in turn submerging and eroding the grade. Yet, it will almost certainly be decades until the grade is permanently gone.

Fortunately, the establishment of Voyageurs National Park has allowed the wilderness to heal, to swallow past indiscretions whole—forests have regenerated, artifacts have been buried under the slow annual accumulation of decomposing leaf litter, and mosses, lichens, and the elements have leveled

old structures. But more importantly, park establishment meant the permanent preservation of the woods, water, and wilderness for future generations unimpaired, no more could this land be exploited and degraded.

But are we really leaving Voyageurs unimpaired for future generations?

Aldo Leopold realized the inherent contradiction in the preservation of wild places, stating that “all conservation of wildness is self-defeating, for to cherish we must see and fondle, and when enough have seen and fondled, there is no wilderness left to cherish.”

The continual use of Voyageurs by all of us has contributed to impacts on this incredible area that are easily avoidable with a concerted effort.

One of the ways we can “Keep Voyageurs Wild” is by reducing and eliminating the accumulation of litter and garbage on the park’s pristine shorelines. Most of this pollution likely comes from objects inadvertently flying out of boats, but I have seen instances where trash was intentionally left on shore. The overarching problem is that nature cannot make sleeping pads, life jackets, beer cans, plastic bottles, buckets, fishing

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2019

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Voyageurs National Park Association's mission is to connect people to Voyageurs National Park, enhance the visitor experience, and protect the park for present and future generations.

Voyageurs.org

An Essential Partnership

A team of Teen Ambassadors paddles across Kabetogama... a scientist conducts research at a wolf den... a group of 4th graders spots a bald eagle... a crew of volunteers helps clear a portion of overgrown trail... a family plans their first camping trip... an intern takes sky quality readings... thousands view an online video about Voyageurs National Park... new educational signs are installed at Oveson Fish Camp... ecologists test the best way to remove invasive cattails from park wetlands...

All of these are examples of activities supported by the partnership efforts of Voyageurs National Park Association and the National Park Service. Together, VNPA and NPS are making sure people can enjoy the unique experience and wild character of Voyageurs for generations to come.

Early in 2019, VNPA became the official Friends group of the park, formally solidifying the group's role as charitable partner, serving the park through fundraising, advocacy and community engagement. Our collaborative growth and joint vision gives promise to the role this public-private partnership will play in stewarding Voyageurs.

We couldn't do this work without you. In 2019, we'll break ground on two partnership projects - the Mukooda hiking trail and Kettle Falls overlook. Beyond that, we plan to collaborate on Dark-Sky Park designation, connect more kids to the park, expand sustainable recreation opportunities for visitors, improve historic landmarks, and develop a joint volunteer program to support environmental stewardship and trail management.

Thank you for being a part of our Voyageurs community! Wishing you a summer full of swimming, boating, fishing, stargazing, hiking, and marshmallow roasting in Voyageurs National Park.

With gratitude,



Christina Hausman Rhode
Executive Director



Bob DeGross
Superintendent



Continued from front cover

lures, foam containers, and plastic bags disappear. And so trash only increases with time.

At campsites, there is not enough dead and downed wood around campsites for visitors month after month, year after year to have campfires. As a result, some visitors have turned to cutting down live trees or dead standing trees around campsites (both of which are not allowed in the park). Over time, visitors remove trees from a larger radius around campsites, further degrading the forests.

Voyageurs National Park is a valuable, loved, and iconic wilderness for all to experience, a place to see, feel, smell, and hear the wilderness, a place of solitude and reflection. I have no doubt we can achieve the desired outcomes of continued enjoyment of the park by visitors while also reducing or eliminating the negative effects such use has on our shared natural resource.

But one thing is for certain: these problems will not fix themselves. Fortunately, the solution is simple and easily achievable: “leave it as you found it.” We all have a role to play. By following this key tenet of the *Leave No Trace* ethic when in Voyageurs, we can greatly minimize, and even

eliminate future impacts in our park. But I think we should all take this one step further: *leave it cleaner than how you found it*. If you see garbage at a campsite, on a shoreline, or floating in the lake, take a moment and clean it up. Simple acts of stewardship such as this are what will ensure our park continues to be preserved for all who use the park after us.

I think about the exploitation of this land years ago, and wonder why so many were unconcerned as the wilderness was sliced up and the last old-growth forests harvested. I am optimistic that those who visit Voyageurs in the decades to come will look back and be thankful that there were so many who were concerned with keeping Voyageurs wild.

By Tom Gable, Dayton Wildlife Fellow, PhD candidate, University of Minnesota; VNPA Science and Policy Committee Volunteer

Learn more about *Leave No Trace* and ways you can help Keep Voyageurs Wild at Voyageurs.org/loveyourpark



Congratulations to 2018 first place winner in wildlife and scenery: Michael Olsen

Submit your best park pics at [voyageurs.org/photocontest](https://Voyageurs.org/photocontest).

Your images help us protect, share, and celebrate Voyageurs National Park.



Kevin Gilsdorf

Voyageurs National Park's Water Invaders

While they may not be readily apparent from the surface, aquatic invasive species (AIS) are a very real threat to the ecosystems of places like Voyageurs National Park. Across Minnesota and much of the United States, species such as the spiny water flea, zebra mussels, and Asian carp are already affecting habitats and food chains in waterways where they have been inadvertently introduced.

In Northern Minnesota, including parts of Voyageurs, the spiny water flea has already decreased the biomass of zooplankton in some lakes by up to 40-60%. This decrease in a key food source in the lake-based food chain may cause declines in natural fish populations that feed on these organisms, and is likely having negative effects on popular species like walleye. Other invasive species can damage critical fish habitat. Rusty crayfish, another species that has infiltrated parts of Voyageurs, survive by eating the vegetation that usually provides habitat for many freshwater fish.

Besides their effect on the fish populations so prized by anglers at Voyageurs, some invasive species can directly impact boaters by clogging boat motors, damaging equipment, or disrupting the lakes in general. In the long run, these issues can become a damaging economic burden for individuals, small businesses, public land managers, and communities.

In order to combat these problems and avoid long-term negative consequences, many different groups and agencies are working together to understand them. Groups such as the International Joint Commission (IJC), the National Park Service, the University of Minnesota, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources are conducting research on the effects, spread, and prevention of aquatic invasive species in Voyageurs and its surrounding watershed.

As Voyageurs National Park copes with the emerging effects of species such as spiny water flea and rusty crayfish, the park also works to make sure that other species don't manage to invade in the first place. So far, Voyageurs has been able to avoid invasion of zebra mussels, but many fishing lakes within driving distance have been infested, including Lake Superior, many waters in Crow Wing County, Itasca County, and as close as Red Lake.

With multiple jurisdictions involved in the Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed in both the U.S. and Canada, solutions and further measures to prevent invasion will take time, effort, and cooperation between many different groups. Regional scientists and resource managers are exploring ways to complete a comprehensive AIS risk assessment for the entire watershed to give us a better picture of the current state of our ecosystems and any emerging issues.

Other areas have begun pilot programs to start to address these issues. Recently, resort owners on Lake Vermilion and Pelican Lake went through voluntary MN DNR training and became part of a program run by the North St. Louis County SWCD to help with early detection of AIS. This resort ambassador program is intended to help create community accountability in our waterways and is being explored for areas like Kabetogama in the future.

Koochiching County helped bring in a decontamination unit near Rainy Lake which has been available for public use for several years. For boaters who frequently launch from the Rainy Lake Visitor Center or nearby marinas, we encourage you to use the decontamination station (location rotates around entry points on Highway 11). St. Louis County is working

with the Park Service and others to establish new decontamination stations near the park. Both counties run boat inspection programs at major entry points and are exploring other prevention methods. Voyageurs is also working on a rapid response strategy so that staff may be able to prevent a zebra mussel infestation if a new introduction is detected early and in a confined area such as a marina.

You Can Help

As a visitor to Voyageurs National Park, you can play an important role in ensuring that you do not contribute to the spread of these species. These invasions can happen both intentionally and unintentionally. Deliberately transferring species into a new environment, such as dumping a home aquarium into a lake, is an easily avoidable intentional introduction. Unintentional introduction, such as having AIS attached to the boat or fishing gear that you bring into the park, is harder to avoid. But by being vigilant and following a few key suggestions, you can help make sure that you don't accidentally introduce invasive species.

To ensure that you don't bring invasive species into or out of the waters of Voyageurs, remember to Clean, Drain, Dry, and Dispose! Clean your boat as best you can with hot water both before and after boating in the park, using decontamination stations where they are available.



David Owen

Drain livewells, bilge, and anything else that holds water before you leave the access area after boating. Dry your boat and fishing equipment before using them in a new lake. Boats should either be dried for five days or washed with hot water before launching in a new lake (and before they arrive at Voyageurs) Dispose of unwanted bait and fish parts in the trash. Encourage others to do the same! If everyone does their part, we can help keep our waters clean and free of damaging aquatic invasive species.

VNPA is partnering with NPS to support prevention efforts with volunteers, visitor education and funding. Thank you for helping keep Voyageurs wild and protecting it from aquatic invasive species.

Protecting the Interior Lakes

As of now, the park's interior lakes are not yet infested with invasive animal species, making it all the more important for visitors to be vigilant and do their part to help protect them.

The National Park Service has adopted the following measures to protect the interior lakes in Voyageurs National Park from the spiny water flea, other exotic species, and fish diseases:

- Artificial bait only on all interior lakes
- No privately-owned watercraft allowed in interior lakes (the park will continue to provide canoes and rowboats for rent and through a commercial partner on Mukooda Lake)
- No float plane landings on interior lakes

If you plan to explore the park's interior lakes, please follow these best management practices:

- Bring a separate set of gear that is likely to contact lake water (including fishing gear) to use on the interior lakes, or before using any gear on an interior lake, make sure that all gear has been thoroughly dried for 5+ days or washed with hot water (>140 degrees F)
- When leaving any lake, remove aquatic plants and animals, including gelatinous or cotton batting-like material from equipment, including fishing line

Your Gifts at Work in 2018

Land & Water Conservation

VNPA purchased 6 acres in 2018 to add to the park. The previous landowners commented:

"We are grateful our piece of property in the beautiful wilderness will remain a wilderness and not cluttered or despoiled by billboards or commercialization. We also recognize constant vigilance is necessary to protect and preserve a wilderness. The National Park system at present offers this assurance. May it always be so!"

VNPA has conserved 79 acres since the park's establishment through the Land Preservation Initiative.



Visitor Experience Projects

VNPA provided support for a new paddle launching dock at the Rainy Lake Visitor Center and a camping reservation kiosk at Crane Lake, and engaged volunteers to work on clearing the Kab-Ash Trail. VNPA also provided funding for visitor education resources like new signage at Anderson Bay and Oveson Fish Camp.

2018 Teen Ambassador



Protect Starry Skies

This summer, Voyageurs will apply for Dark-Sky Park designation through the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA). If neighboring public lands in the Heart of the Continent region secure the same, the IDA may designate the area the first International Dark Sky Region!

The night sky is a resource greatly obliterated by a wash of artificial light. We are committed to preserving our dark nights and starry views due to the impact light pollution has on animals and insects, human health, and tourism.

Wetland Restoration

Hybrid invasive cattails have invaded approximately 500 acres of wetlands in Voyageurs, displacing native communities of plants such as wild rice, sedges, rushes, and native cattail. A 10-year restoration project will improve habitat for wildlife, provide enhanced opportunities for fishing, and help restore wetlands to more natural states. In 2018, staff treated approximately 40 acres in Black Bay (Rainy Lake) and released muskrats for biocontrol. VNPA is proud to be a partner in this effort.

Next Generation

In its sixth year, the National Park Teen Ambassador program continues its mission to connect Minnesota youth to their National Park through camping, paddling, hiking, and hands-on lessons activities around environmental stewardship and conservation careers. Participants explore Voyageurs and the Mississippi River, returning to participate in a civic voice workshop. In addition, elementary school groups were provided field trip grants to visit Voyageurs throughout the year.

Community Engagement

The Park Service and VNPA hosted community events that engaged over 7,000 people including the launch event for the new Voyageurs quarter, a State of the Park series, Pints for the Park events, a winter speakers series, and special summer programs at Crane Lake.

Government Shutdown

During the partial federal government shutdown of 2018-19, VNPA partnered with the Park Service to sustain partial winter operations for visitor safety during variable winter weather and lake ice formation. Along with the use of federal fee revenue, VNPA's funding helped bring back a small team of park staff to open the Rainy Lake Visitor Center for weekend hours, groom some ski trails, conduct ice condition assessments for visitor safety, and groom the Green Trail for snowmobilers and local businesses.

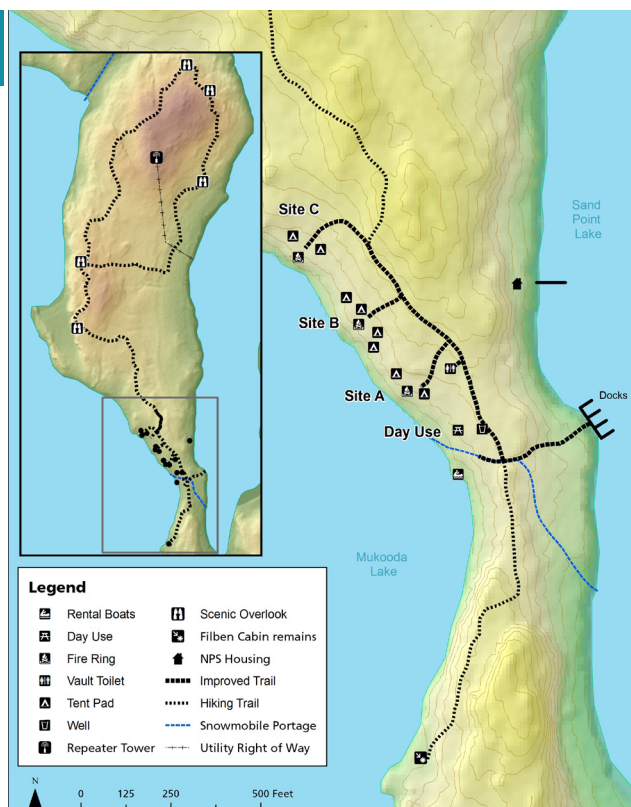
Project Update: Mukooda

VNPA is partnering with the Park Service to create new recreational opportunities at Mukooda Lake, an interior lake near the southeast end of the park, north of Crane Lake.

Voyageurs National Park recently completed the environmental review process for this development. The park analyzed two alternatives and selected the plan that will redesign the existing campground and add a day-use area and hiking trail. The campground will consist of two small campsites, each with two tent pads and one large campsite with four tent pads. A new day-use area will be developed, as well as interpretive media and approximately 3 miles of trail that will connect the campground to the historic Filben Cabin ruins to the south and provide day hiking opportunities via a looped trail to the north. The existing dock on Sand Point Lake will also be redesigned to accommodate more boats.

The latest plan addresses concerns raised by the Boise Forte Band of Ojibwe. Changes to the Mukooda area will greatly improve recreation opportunities in the eastern region of the park, and help protect sensitive archaeological and natural resources.

VNPA would like to thank REI for being our first lead supporter of the hiking trail at Mukooda Lake!



Project Update: Kettle Falls

VNPA is providing funding and expertise for an effort to rebuild the overlook at Kettle Falls. Scott Bilben with North 40 Landscape Architects volunteered his services to create a design and construction drawings for the project. The current overlook will be torn down in 2019 and \$50,000 in support from VNPA will be matched with federal funds to rebuild the site making it safer for visitors, protecting an archaeological site, and allowing the structure to better fit with its surrounding natural environment.

The National Park Service is conducting long-term site planning for the Kettle Falls historic district which will involve new visitor opportunities and extensive restoration.



Thank you Scott Bilben for donating your time and expertise to support the Kettle Falls overlook project!

Clean Water Initiative

Voyageurs National Park's waters are being negatively impacted by human wastewater generation and disposal, threatening the long-term health of our ecosystems and tourism economy. This initiative is a collaboration between Koochiching and St. Louis County elected officials and concerned citizens to improve wastewater treatment in the area. They have been able to secure \$25M in project grants for improvements at Crane and Kabetogama Lakes, and an effort underway at Island View on Rainy.

Ellsworth Rock Gardens

Improvement projects at Ellsworth including a new dock, accessible trail and restroom facility will be completed in 2019. VNPA will help fund new interpretive media to better tell the Ellsworth story, and restore elements like the teepee.

Oveson Fish Camp

The park recently completed projects at this historic landmark on Rainy Lake including an enhanced dock to accommodate the park's tour boat, improved trails, and new visitor education signs funded by VNPA.

Tilson Connector Trail

Recently the Polar Polers, a local cross-country ski club, helped lead an effort to construct a bog walk that makes the Tilson Creek Trail network, west of the Rainy Lake Visitor Center a year-round recreational opportunity. The Park Service is working to re-route a portion of the Tilson Connector Trail around a small wetland to do the same. Once completed, the trail network will be a 17-mile summer hiking and winter cross-country ski/snowshoe opportunity.

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Statement of 2018 Activities

SUPPORT & REVENUE

Grants	\$24,000
Donations	\$137,442
Miscellaneous Income	\$2,518
<i>Total Support & Revenue</i>	<i>\$163,960</i>

EXPENSES

Program Service	\$108,906
Management & General	\$36,000
Fundraising	\$20,696
<i>Total Expenses</i>	<i>\$165,602</i>
<i>Revenue (Under)/Over Expenses</i>	<i>\$(1,642)</i>
<i>Extraordinary Expenses - Land Acquisition</i>	<i>\$146,762</i>
<i>Change in Net Position</i>	<i>\$(148,404)</i>

Statement of 2018 Financial Position

ASSETS

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$98,757
Legacy Fund Investment	\$302,239
Fixed Assets & Equipment	\$59,040
Other Current Assets	\$45
<i>Total Assets</i>	<i>\$460,081</i>

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Accounts Payable	-
Accrued Expenses	\$4,478
Equity	\$455,603
<i>Total Liabilities & Net Assets</i>	<i>\$460,081</i>

Management & General 12%
Fundraising 7%
Program Service and Land Acquisition 81%

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Thank you! You support the ongoing protection and advancement of Voyageurs National Park.
 This list recognizes donors who gave Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2018. If you identify errors or omissions, please contact us at 612-333-5424.

Bidding Farewell to Conservation Pioneer, VNPA Founder Martin Kellogg

Martin Kellogg quietly helped create Voyageurs National Park, Grand Portage State Park and numerous environmental organizations

A giant tree just fell in the forest and there is a reason why you might not have heard it. Though he played a key role in the creation of two iconic Minnesota parks and several key environmental institutions, Martin Kellogg never sought to be the center of attention. Instead, he was driven by a desire to protect Minnesota's most special outdoor treasures by using his influence with key political, business and conservation leaders in ways that will benefit Minnesotans for generations to come. Kellogg died March 21 at the age of 88.

“When you think about outdoor recreation, conservation and tourism in Minnesota you have to recognize Martin's role in the development of all three,” said Brett Feldman, Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota executive director.

Kellogg's conservation work spanned both federal and state park systems and also included involvement in the creation of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, but it was his pivotal role in the creation of Minnesota's National Park, Voyageurs, that may never be fully appreciated.

“He worked to bring Gov. Elmer Andersen's vision for a park protecting the Kabetogama Peninsula to life, serving as a founding board member of Voyageurs National Park Association, coordinating broad public support for the park across the state, and testifying before Congress,” said Christina Hausman Rhode, Voyageurs National Park Association executive director. “Like many of his other conservation efforts, he found ways to bridge diverse and influential

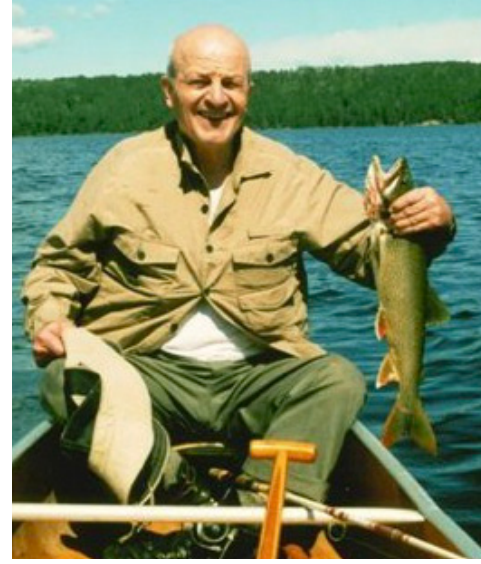
groups of people together, always being respectful of differing opinions, and galvanizing them towards a common goal for Minnesota's outdoor legacy.”

A Marine veteran with degrees in law, business administration and industrial engineering; and master's degrees in accounting and economics, Kellogg worked for more than four decades as a business executive.

Kellogg used his business acumen to help build several environmental nonprofit organizations. He understood that creating parks and wilderness areas alone didn't guarantee they would be protected forever. He believed ongoing stewardship was a job for nonprofit groups with staff, volunteers and resources that could defend them at all costs. So even though he could count such dignitaries as Gov. Elmer Anderson and American author and wilderness protection advocate Sigurd Olson among his friends, Kellogg was deeply committed to finding and nurturing the next generation of conservation leaders to continue work he was doing. He did this with numerous people and organizations.

In reflecting on Voyageurs, he wrote, “Our descendants should have a much greater legacy than our fading photographs, our trophies mounted on walls, and a few parks and zoos. That is the full meaning of most everyone's longing and revering of a park such as Voyageurs National Park.”

Kellogg supported Voyageurs National Park Association with his leadership, giving, and service for over 50 years. Thank you, Martin.



Tom Gable

Voyageurs Wolf Project Captures Fishing Wolves

The Voyageurs Wolf Project team received national media attention, including coverage in the *New York Times*, for capturing on video wolves catching fish in the park. Check out the video on the ‘Voyageurs Wolf Project’ Facebook page. VNPA is proud to be a partner on this wolf research effort.

New Hat, New Role Inspiring Park Ambassadors

The fact that I wasn't working for the National Park Service anymore didn't fully hit me until I came into work one day to find a note and gift from a coworker's daughter on my desk. The 8-year-old had first met me several months before, when I was working as an interpretive park ranger at Voyageurs National Park. I had sworn her in as a junior ranger and been the one to hand her the shiny badge that marked her accomplishment. And now I, her park ranger idol, was working with her mom! Her gift, addressed to "Ranger Lindsay" and made from multi-colored pipe cleaners, was meant to be a decoration for the ubiquitous flat hat that park rangers across the country sport on the job. But I wouldn't be wearing that hat again, at least not for a while. No longer would I be giving boat tours or dressing up as a Voyageur to paddle with visitors in a replica birch bark canoe. For this year, at least, I would be serving the park in another way: as an AmeriCorps VISTA for Voyageurs National Park Association, the park's nonprofit partner.



Working at VNPA has certainly been a change, but it's also been a welcome challenge. In a few short months, I've come to realize just how important park partners like us are, both for the places we seek to preserve, as well as for the people who love them. Park partners like VNPA have a unique opportunity to forge connections between people and parks. These connections are what drives preservation. They build support for the park, and help make sure that future generations are able to enjoy it just as we have.

As a ranger, I got to share the beauty and importance of the park every day with people who came to the visitor center. Here at VNPA, I get to share that beauty and importance much farther afield and bring wonder of Voyageurs to new audiences. From the Canoeopia expo in Madison, Wisconsin to Twin Cities high school classrooms, I've had the opportunity to inspire countless others to care about this amazing place, and to offer them a chance to connect with the park. Maybe that connection is simply a first visit to Voyageurs, through our Teen Ambassador Program or otherwise. Maybe it's a donation to VNPA, which helps support our outreach efforts and funds projects at Voyageurs that don't fit into the park's limited federal budget. Or maybe it's volunteering for VNPA or the park itself to help others learn about, explore, and protect this beautiful place.

This summer, I'm excited to work with the park to build on that aspect of our work. I'll be launching a 'Love Your Park' engagement station at boat launches, visitor centers, and local community events to help get more people involved in preserving and sharing this wonderful place. I hope that through volunteering, people living near the park and around Minnesota will be able to deepen their connections to Voyageurs. Parks are, after all, preserved for people. And if those people participate in their preservation, it makes them all the more powerful.

Today, the flat hat hangs in my closet. Maybe someday I'll put it back on again. But for now, I'm happy to put on my VNPA ball cap and support the park I love from a new perspective.

By: Lindsay Brandt, VISTA Community Outreach Coordinator



Bruce McKee

Sulfide Mining Update

In May 2019, the U.S. Department of the Interior illegally renewed two Twin Metals Minnesota LLC-held hardrock mineral leases located in the Superior National Forest in Northeastern Minnesota. This places our watershed and our National Park one step closer to being impacted by sulfide-ore exploration, development and mining. VNPA supports legislation recently introduced by Rep. Betty McCollum compelling the U.S. Forest Service to complete a study on sulfide mining in the Rainy River Watershed.

Contact Governor Tim Walz and Senators Tina Smith and Amy Klobuchar (or your local Congressional rep)! We need them to act. Tell them you value the precious waters of Voyageurs National Park and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and support the withdrawal of neighboring lands from future sulfide-ore mining projects.

Your National Park Needs You

In partnership with the National Park Service, Voyageurs National Park Association works to preserve the wild character and unique experience of Voyageurs by funding projects and programs that will sustain it for generations to come. Become a Friend of Voyageurs today with a donation to support our work. Give online or call us at 612-333-5424. Thank you!

Voyageurs.org/Give



Let's Be Friends



Kimberly Haberman
2018 Photo Contest
First Place, Friends & Family



Volunteers collect wild rice



Picnic-Paddle-Yoga



Quarter Launch

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