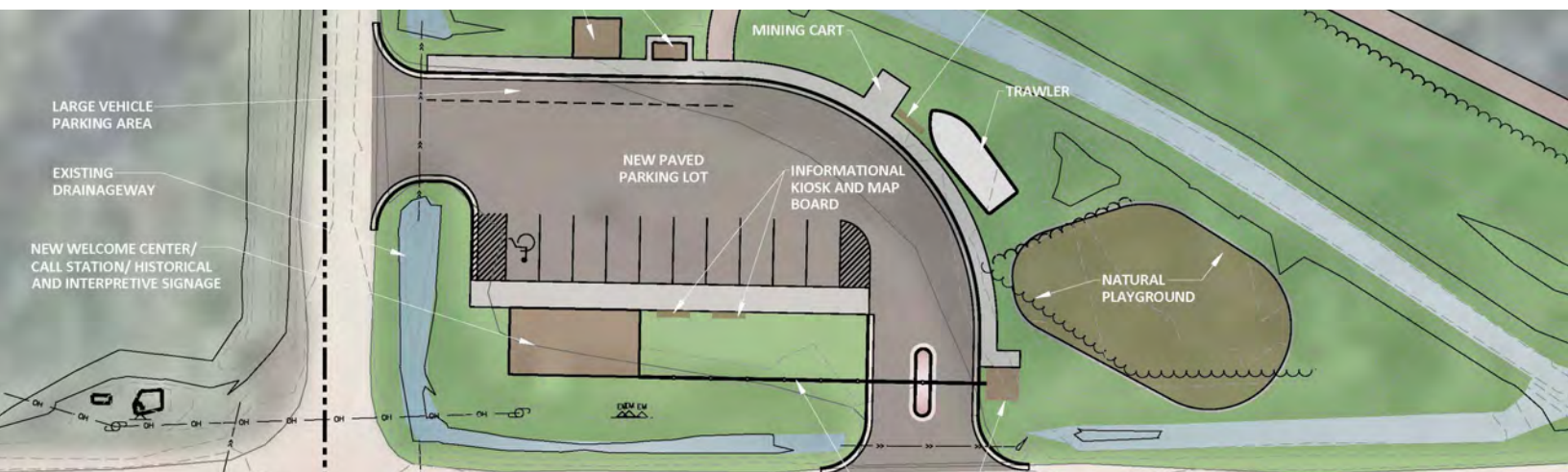




Northerly Park Master Plan

Prepared for Lake of the Woods County
by Houston Engineering, Inc.
Date: Fall 2024



Lake of the Woods County

Northerly Park Master Plan

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Appendix

A. Master Plan Concepts

B. Interpretative Signage



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Project Steering Committee

- AJ Pirkl
- Joe Laurin
- Kelli Knight
- Terri Peterson
- Paul Colson
- Scott Head
- Jared Olafson
- Boyd Johnson
- Eric Best

Consulting Team: Houston Engineering, Inc.



1.0 PROJECT INFORMATION AND SITE INFORMATION

Project Information

In early 2024, Lake of the Woods County Minnesota contracted with Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI) to complete a comprehensive master plan for Northerly Park within Angle Township. Angle Township is the northern most point in the continental United States and Northerly Park is the first and only park located in this region. Before this point, a small but energetic local group had been primarily responsible for the planning and execution of the project. This group became part of the master plan's Steering Committee.

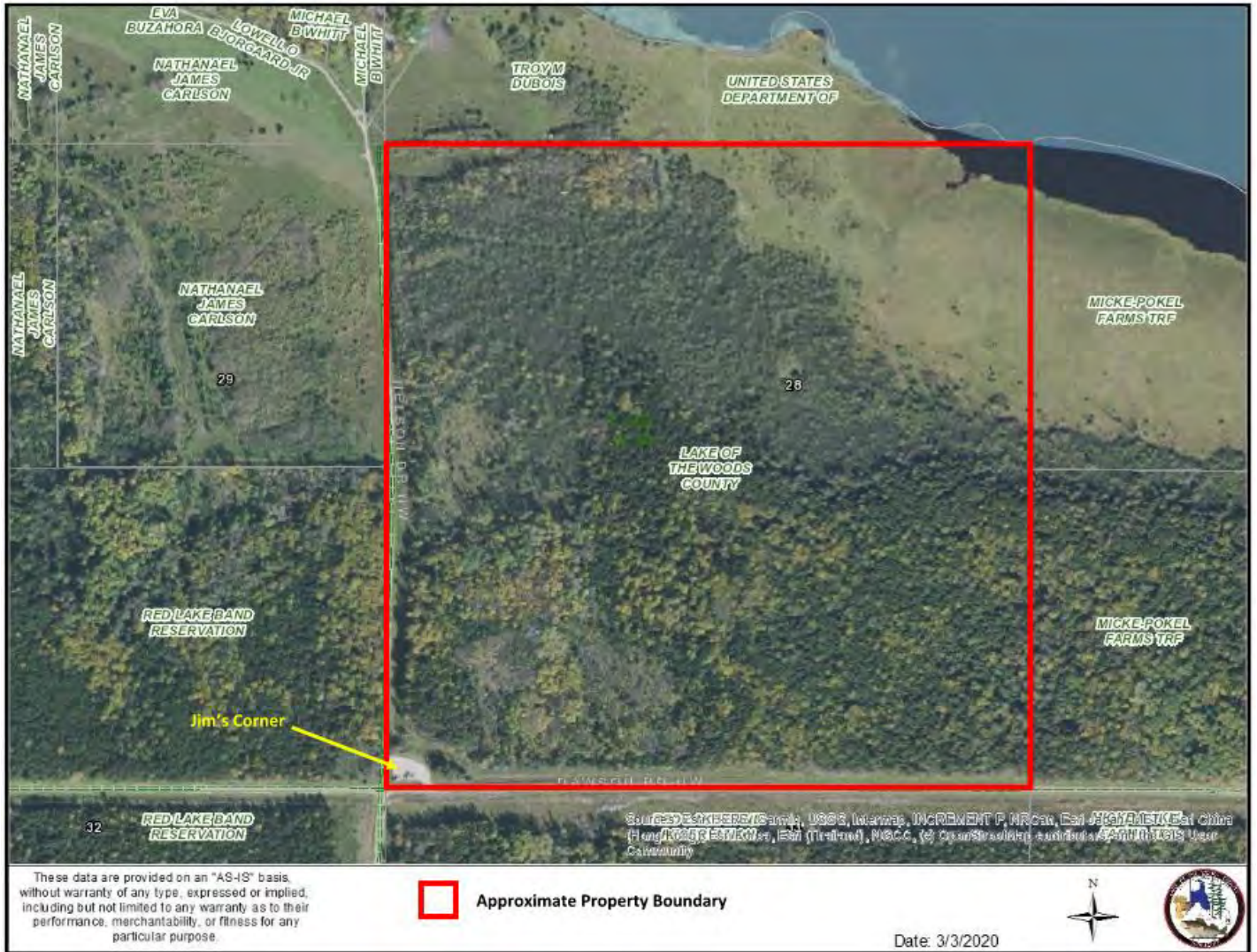
Northwest Angle and Northerly Park have a unique story to tell visitors in regard to history and the natural beauty of the area. The key themes for the park would include the early explorers of the area, history of the international boundary, hunting, mining, Native American culture, and area wildlife. All of these themes would then be brought to life in a town square-type gathering place and park for Northwest Angle. In addition, the park would allow visitors to gain access to the natural setting through walking and cross-country ski areas and an observation tower.

Site Information

Northerly Park is located on 160 acres of land within Angle Township. Angle Township is a smallish peninsula measuring 123 square miles of American soil, which is effectively an island, surrounded on all sides by American lake or Canadian woods. The township is only accessible by car to the rest of Lake of the Woods County by traveling through Canada.



Northerly Park is mostly undeveloped now, but is known as the location of Jim's Corner where there is a very small unmanned border stations (shed) that people check-in and check-out of the United States. Jim's Corner is then a must stop location on the way to Angle Township.



Site location.

2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PHASE 1

Public engagement is key to a project master plan being accepted and supported by local citizens. The public engagement for the Northerly Park Master Plan included **three public engagement opportunities**. Below is the public engagement collected through these opportunities and the priorities that were determined with all of the information gathered.

Northerly Park Site Visit

April 24, 2024

On April 24, 2024, HEI and members of the Steering Committee took a tour of Northerly Park and much of Northwest Angle to gain a better understanding of the park site and community to develop a vision for Northerly Park.

The day was perfect for the tour and the steering committee was very engaged showing how much this project means to the overall community. We started with breakfast and good conversation. Steering Committee members agreed that an outdoor space highlighting the Angle way of life, nature, and history is very important to creating greater awareness of Northwest Angle. There was also discussion about information to highlight in Northerly Park with historical interpretative signage. They urged us to think about elements to include in the park of children with very little currently in the Angle area. Some other items discussed during the day included:



Tour of Northerly Park.

- The old commercial fishing trawler is coming. 36 feet long by 10 feet wide – see park map for possible location. Could have interpretative signing with it about commercial fishing.
- The ideas for the park should include a connection to the lake.
- We need to phase this park plan.
- How to highlight island life?
- The Steering Committee liked the idea of a Ft. St. Charles theme for entrance.
- First half of site nearest to Jim's Corner are large mature trees (this area does not seem to get very wet very often). The second 1/4 are short and some scrubby trees (this seems a wetter area) with last 1/4 marshland.
- They understood that the boardwalk could become very expensive. They would be fine with an option for a nature walking trail in areas of the park that allow for

that – maybe that could where the cross-country ski trail is? Or within the first half of the park where the trees are more mature, and it seems to be less wet.

- They found that access to the lake through the park is very important via a dock.
- A paved bike trail would be a great addition on perimeter of the park (by the roads?).
- Very interested and focused on nature. A lot of stories about animals, flora, forest floor, etc.
- Mining car can be placed at the park (feldspar mining interpretive signing with it).
- The big Northwest Angle sign at Jim's Corner now needs to be included somewhere in the park in some manner.
- Joe told a story about Mooselvania – crazy story!

Northerly Park Webpage (Social Pinpoint)

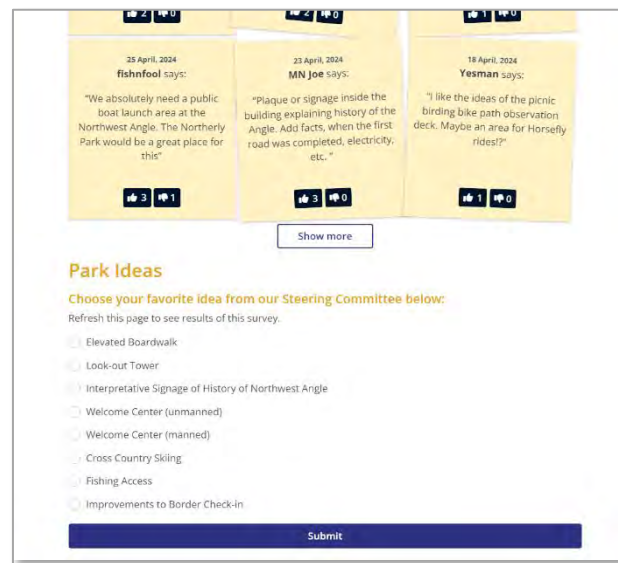
Big Ideas

Common ideas were merged together and each thumbs up was counted from the Northerly Park webpage:

- Public boat landing with parking/dock – 18
- Picnic area/tables – 9
- Restroom – 3
- Walking trail - 1
- Interpretative signage of history of Northwest Angle - 2
- Birding area – 6
- Bike path – 6
- Observation deck – 3

Summary of Big Ideas Vote:

The big winner of the big ideas contest was a **public boat landing with a dock** (18 votes). People were also very interested in a **picnic area** (9 votes). Several people also mentioned a **birding area** (6 votes) and a **bike path** (6 votes) as big ideas.



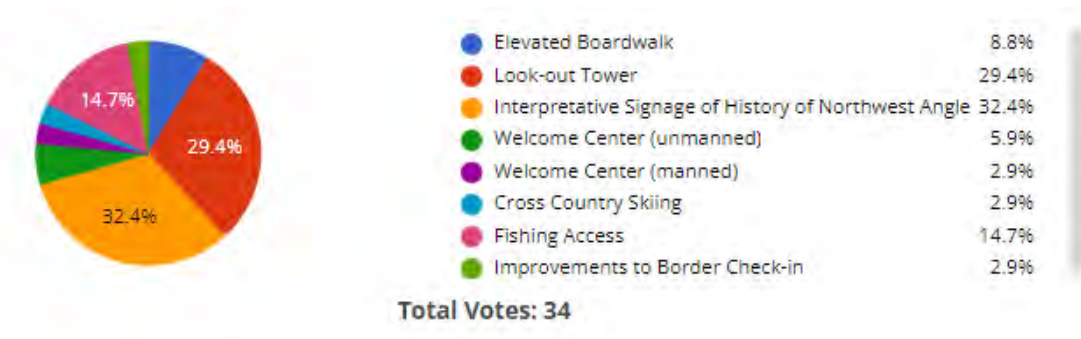
Public comments on Social Pinpoint site.

Steering Committee Ideas for Park

The Steering Committee had identified 8 options for people to vote for their favorite item to include in Northerly Park.

Summary Steering Committee Ideas Voting

The big winner of the Steering Committee ideas was the **interpretative signage of history of northwest angle** (32.4%), followed closely behind was the **look-out tower** (29.4%). The only other project to gain more than 10% of the vote was **fishing access** (14.7%).



Northwest Angle Northerly Park Master Plan – Public Meeting

April 24, 2024 – 5:00-7:00 pm at Jerry's Bar and Restaurant

- About 25 to 30 attendees

Items to include in the park were requested by the attendees, plus all ideas that were listed on the project website were also included. The next page details a list of those items ranked in order of preference (all attendees were given 8 voting dots to place on their top eight desired park items).

Summary of Public Meeting Ideas

The public meeting had a couple new big ideas brought forward. The top vote getter for the meeting was an **elevated canopy tour** (14 votes). In addition, a **trap shooting and rifle range** had 11 votes. Other top vote getters were consistent with the project website ideas including a boardwalk, tower, and bathroom. Ideas with 8 or 9 votes included two new ideas for a **workout pavilion** and **shore lunch spot**. Otherwise, the ideas were also consistent with top ideas on the project website including fishing dock and picnic area.

Desired Amenities from Public Meeting		
Amenity	Votes	Top Ranked Items
Tower	13	★
Summer Walking Trail	4	
Winter Cross Country Ski Trail	6	
Interpretative Signage	6	
Boardwalk	11	★
Elevated Canopy Tour	14	★
Monkey Bars	1	
Rock Wall	1	
Swing Set	1	
Bench	3	
Fishing Dock	9	★
Shore Lunch Spot	9	★
Umbrella/Maypole	1	
Paved Bike Trail	2	
Workout Pavilion	8	★
Dog Waste Site	2	
Fire Pit	1	
Billboard for Public Events	5	
Drive-in Movie Theater	4	
Horseshoe Pits	3	
Flagpole	4	
Traditional Home Cabin	4	
Bathroom	10	★
Birding Area	1	
Snowshoe Area	6	
Picnic Area/BBQ Pit	8	★
Food Plot for Wildlife and Deer	4	
ATV Trail	2	
Dark Sky Deck/Telescope	5	
Large Muskie Statue		
Fresh Water Well	5	
Trap Shooting/Rifle Range	11	★
Horsefly Rides		
Geocaching/Orienteering Course	1	
Ft. St. Charles Replica/Tree Fort	5	
Welcome Center	2	
Improvements to Border Check-in		
Map of US Geographical Extreme Points	4	

Visit to Angle Inlet School

Members of the Steering Committee visited the Angle Inlet Elementary school on the afternoon of April 24, 2024. The kids were asked what they thought would be best ideas for the park. What we heard were places to play basketball, ride their bikes, fish, and playground. The school children also liked the idea of a bike trail and area to roller blade.

Overall Recommendations Based on Public Engagement

Based on all public engagement activities at this point, there are several common themes that have emerged for the park.

These themes should be brought into the identity of Northerly Park and should include the below park ideas at least in one or more of the preliminary park plan concepts.



1. Some type of **access to the water** was a high priority in all three public engagement sessions.
 - a. Public boat launch/dock
 - b. Fishing access
 - c. Fishing dock and shore lunch spot
2. A **look-out tower** was the big winner in two public engagement sessions (public meeting and steering committee vote).
3. A **boardwalk** was the top vote getter for the public meeting, and fourth highest vote getter of steering committee.
4. A **bathroom** was a common ask of voters at the public meeting and was mentioned on the project website.
5. **Interpretative signage** of Northwest angle was the highest vote getter of the Steering Committee ideas and was mentioned in the other two engagement activities, but not as high a priority.
6. Two emerging priorities from the public meeting was a **trap shooting area** and an **elevated canopy tour**. The Steering Committee determined that although the trap shooting area is a good idea, it did not fit into the park and should be located in a different location.
7. A big request by the kids engaged during the public meeting and visit to the school is a **playground area and bike trail**.
8. With some interest in a **workout pavilion**, perhaps aspects of that could be included in the park also.

A preliminary master plan utilized information from the public engagement report to help develop the park components. After review by the Northerly Park Steering Committee and Lake of the Woods County Commission, HEI utilized Social Pinpoint to include the preliminary plan maps to ask the public to comment on what they like, don't like, or should change. This information was used to develop the final Northerly Park Master Plan.

3.0 HISTORICAL INTERPRETATIVE SIGNAGE

The project Steering Committee was very active in suggesting topics for historical interpretative signage that could be located at Northerly Park. Based on those suggestions, the HEI team researched through web-based sources and through resources provided by the Lake of the Woods County Museum and the Warroad Heritage Center. All this information was then summarized into 6 historical interpretative signs. All six signs are intended to be placed at Northerly Park and are included in the final master plan. All six signs are in the appendix of this master plan document.

Northwest Angle Through History

What's with the Bump in Minnesota?



Benjamin Franklin

The Northwest Angle owes its existence to Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, John Jay, and John Adams through negotiations with Great Britain that culminated in the settlement of the 1783 Treaty of Paris at the close of the Revolutionary War.



David Thompson Original Survey Marker

Mitchell Map

John Mitchell was a cartographer for the lord commissioner of trade and plantations for Great Britain and made a brave attempt to depict the interior of North America. This map completed in 1755 was known as the "Mitchell Map" and is what the negotiators relied upon for the new boundary. The map depicted Lake of the Woods as an oblong body of water lying east of the Mississippi River with waters that flow into Lake Superior.



Mitchell Map

Boundary Error

The boundary proposal that was accepted included a definition which stated that "the northern boundary go to the said Lake of the Woods; thence through said lake to the northwestern point thereof, and from there on a due west course to the river Mississippi." This proposed boundary would have given the British access to the Mississippi River in Canada allowing joint navigation for both countries. However, the Mississippi River headwaters had not yet been discovered and was actually 140 miles south of Lake of the Woods. Lake of the Woods waters actually flow north into Hudson Bay.

What Minnesota Could Have Looked Like

It was the intent of the negotiators to define the boundary through the Great Lakes to the head of Lake Superior then west to the Mississippi. Had this intention been correctly carried out much of northeastern Minnesota would today be part of Canada.

David Thompson: Contributions to International Boundaries

David Thompson was born in 1770 and was raised in a charity hospital. He worked as a fur trader and surveyor with the Hudson Bay Company and then The Northwest Company and became one of the greatest surveyors and map makers in history. In 1798, Thompson proved that the northernmost source of the Mississippi was 140 miles south of Lake of the Woods. This discovery confirmed the existence of a northwest boundary gap. Thompson set the first survey markers in the area and some are still visible today.



Northwest Angle: This Tiny Minnesota Community is Completely Surrounded by Canada

Following the Louisiana Purchase, a new treaty in 1818 corrected this boundary discrepancy, by running the border due south from, the northwestern tip of the lake, to the 49th parallel. Unfortunately, this fix created a 26-mile jog in the border, a little "bump" of Minnesota that pokes up into Canada to this day. A dispute over the exact location of this point continued for the next century and a final agreement was not signed until sometime in the 1920s. A smallish peninsula measuring 123 square miles of American soil, Northwest Angle is now effectively an island, surrounded on all sides by American lake or Canadian woods.



Interpretative sign.

4.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PHASE 2

Based on the Phase 1 public engagement, two park concept plans were completed and reviewed by the Northerly Park Steering Committee. The next step was to gain additional public input on the two concept plans from the public. Both concept plans were then posted to the Northerly Park project website and citizens were asked to rank their favorite park elements. A Grand Forks Herald newspaper article was published that described the draft concept plans and included a link to the project website. Steering Committee members were asked to spread the word and Facebook pages were updated to have additional people comment. In the end, 17 people ranked the park elements and resulted in rankings generally consistent with phase 1 of the public engagement process.

The Steering Committee requested that all public engagement activities be averaged together to gain a larger representation for ranking of Northerly Park elements. Below is the analysis of all public engagement activities and the resulting combined recommended park elements. The elements were ranked based on how many times each element was in the top 5 and/or top 10 of the public engagement activities that rated park elements.

Northerly Park Public Engagement Opportunities and Rankings									
Summary									
		Concept				Steering			
		Average	Meeting	Big Ideas	School	Committee			
Rank	Park Element	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Top 5	Top 10	Top Combined Recommended Elements
NA	Elevated Canopy Tour	NA	1				One	One	
#1	Welcome Center	3.62	28			5	Two	Two	1. Boat Launch and Fishing Dock
#2	Boardwalk	3.9	4			4	Three	Three	2. Boardwalk
#3	Boat Launch and Fishing Dock	4	6	1		3	Three	Four	3. Vaulted Toilet
#4	Viewing Tower	4.5	2			2	Two	Two	4. Paved Hiking/Bike Trail
#5	Picnic Area/Shore lunch on dock	5.1	7	2			Two	Two	5. Viewing Tower
#6	Paved Hiking Trail in Concept 1	5.6	17	4	X		Two	Three	6. Picnic Area/Shore lunch on dock
#7	Vaulted Toilet	5.85	5	3			Two	Three	7. Welcome Center
#8	Paved Hiking in Concept 2	6.1	17	4	X		Two	Three	8. Community Pavillion/Workout
#9	Community Pavillion/Workout	6.64	8		X		One	Three	9. Historical Interpretative Signage
#10	Natural Hiking Trail	6.73	17					One	10. X-CSki Trail/Shoe Area
NA	Trap Shooting/Rifle Range	NA	3				One	One	11. Natural Playground
#11	Information Kiosk/Billboard	7.36	13					One	12. Trap Shooting/Rifle Range
#12	Paved Parking	7.5						One	13. Elevated Canopy Tour
#13	X-C Ski Trail/Shoe Area	7.5	10			6		Three	14. Natural Hiking Trail
#14	Natural Playground	7.67			X		One	Two	15. Information Kiosk/Billboard
#15	Historical Signage	8.42	11			1	One	Two	16. Paved Parking
#16	Fort St. Charles Façade	10.1	15						17. Picnic Area/BBQ Pit
#17	Feldspar Mining Cart	11.56							
#18	Fishing Trawler	11.9							
	Picnic Area/BBQ Pit	NA	9					One	
	Dark Sky Deck	NA	14						
	Fresh Water Well	NA	15						
	Top 5								
	Top 10								

Summary of Northerly Park public engagement opportunities and rankings.

5.0 FINAL MASTER PLAN, COST ESTIMATES, AND PROJECT PHASING

The final Master Plan and cost estimates were then developed based on all the public input and guidance from the Steering Committee and County Commission. Below is the final master plan and cost estimates.

Master Plan

See Appendix for Full Master Plan document.



Cost Estimates

NORTHERLY PARK PRELIMINARY OPC - OPTION 2			
ITEM	QTY	COST	TOTAL
8' WIDE PAVED TRAIL (LF)	4700	\$ 55.00	\$ 258,500.00
8' WIDE GRAVEL TRAIL (LF)	7100	\$ 20.00	\$ 142,000.00
COMMUNITY PARK VIEWING TOWER	1	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
COMMUNITY PARK PARKING LOT (NO CURB) SF	28600	\$ 10.00	\$ 286,000.00
COMMUNITY PARK SIDEWALK (SF)	3250	\$ 20.00	\$ 65,000.00
COMMUNITY PARK BOARD WALK	1520	\$ 300.00	\$ 456,000.00
COMMUNITY PARK NATURAL PLAYGROUND	1	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
COMMUNITY PARK PAVILION	1	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
COMMUNITY PARK VAULT TOILET	1	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
COMMUNITY PARK SITE FURNISHINGS (PICNIC TABLES, BENCHES, TRASH RECEPTACLES, KAYAK LAUNCH)	1	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
COMMUNITY PARK TOTAL			\$ 1,197,000.00
JIM'S CORNER PARKING LOT (SF)	10700	\$ 10.00	\$ 107,000.00
JIM'S CORNER CURB (LF)	550	\$ 40.00	\$ 22,000.00
JIM'S CORNER VISITOR CENTER (SF)	800	\$ 200.00	\$ 160,000.00
JIM'S CORNER SIDEWALK (SF)	2308	\$ 20.00	\$ 46,160.00
JIM'S CORNER VAULT TOILET	1	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
JIM'S CORNER BOARD WALK	760	\$ 300.00	\$ 228,000.00
JIM'S CORNER NATURAL PLAYGROUND	1	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
JIM'S CORNER SIGNAGE	5	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
JIM'S CORNER FORT ST. CHARLES FENCE (LF)	104	\$ 100.00	\$ 10,400.00
JIM'S CORNER FORT ST. CHARLES TOWER	1	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
JIM'S CORNER SITE FURNISHINGS (PICNIC TABLES, BENCHES, TRASH RECEPTACLES)	1	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
JIMS CORNER TOTAL			\$ 728,560.00
SUB-TOTAL			\$ 2,326,060.00
10% CONTINGENCY	10%	\$ 2,326,060.00	\$ 232,606.00
TOTAL			\$ 2,558,666.00

6.0 POSSIBLE PROJECT GRANT OPTIONS

The following grant options have been included for Lake of the Woods County to consider when putting together an overall capital improvements plan that includes improvements to Northerly Park.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

- **Outdoor Recreation Program:** Application deadline is March 31 - \$10,000 to \$350,000 – 50/50 match
- **Boating Infrastructure Grant Program:** Only infrastructure for boats more than 26 feet long.
- **National Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership:** Must be a community with more than 30,000 people or a census tract determined to be disadvantaged (check of this shows that County land technically does not qualify, but census tracts nearby do)
- **Federal Recreational Trail Program:** Application deadline in 2024 was February 29. Up to \$200,000 award with 25% match.
- **Parks and Trails Legacy Grant Program:** Provides funding for parks and trails of regional needed to determine regional significance. \$12 million was available in 2024.
- **Regional Trail Grant Program:** Grants to local units of government to promote development of regionally significant trails outside metro area. Priority for trail project funding will be given to projects that develop trails of significant length (although is not a requirement). Application deadline is in the spring with the approval in the summer. Maximum award is \$300,000 with 25% match.
- **State Park Road Account Program (SPRA):** This program exists to help local governments improve access to public recreation facilities. Grant applications are due November 1, 2024. Grant awards are announced in April 2025.
- **Public Water Access Site – Partnership Funding:** Provide financial and technical assistance for eligible public water access projects including development and/or improvement of public carry-in and trailer boat access sites including parking lots, docks, launching ramps and state water trail campsites, rest areas and portages. Contact Parks and Trails Area Supervisor for more information.

Minnesota Department of Transportation

- **Carbon Reduction Grant:** Discuss options to utilize funding with MnDOT and Headwaters Regional Development Commission.
- **Transportation Alternatives Grant:** A competitive grant opportunity for local communities and regional agencies to fund projects for pedestrian and bicycle

facilities, historic preservation, Safe Routes to School, and more. Minnesota will be soliciting projects for approximately \$12.5 million in available grant funding across the state where the total is sub-targeted to the seven area transportation partnerships. (Headwaters Regional Development Commission for Lake of the Woods area).

Rural Development of US Department of Agriculture

- **Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program – Rural Communities:** Grant and low-interest loans for essential community facilities in rural areas. Applications accepted on a rolling basis.

Historical Society

- **Minnesota Historical Society Legacy Grant** (possible for historical interpretative signage)

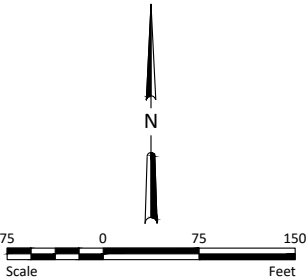
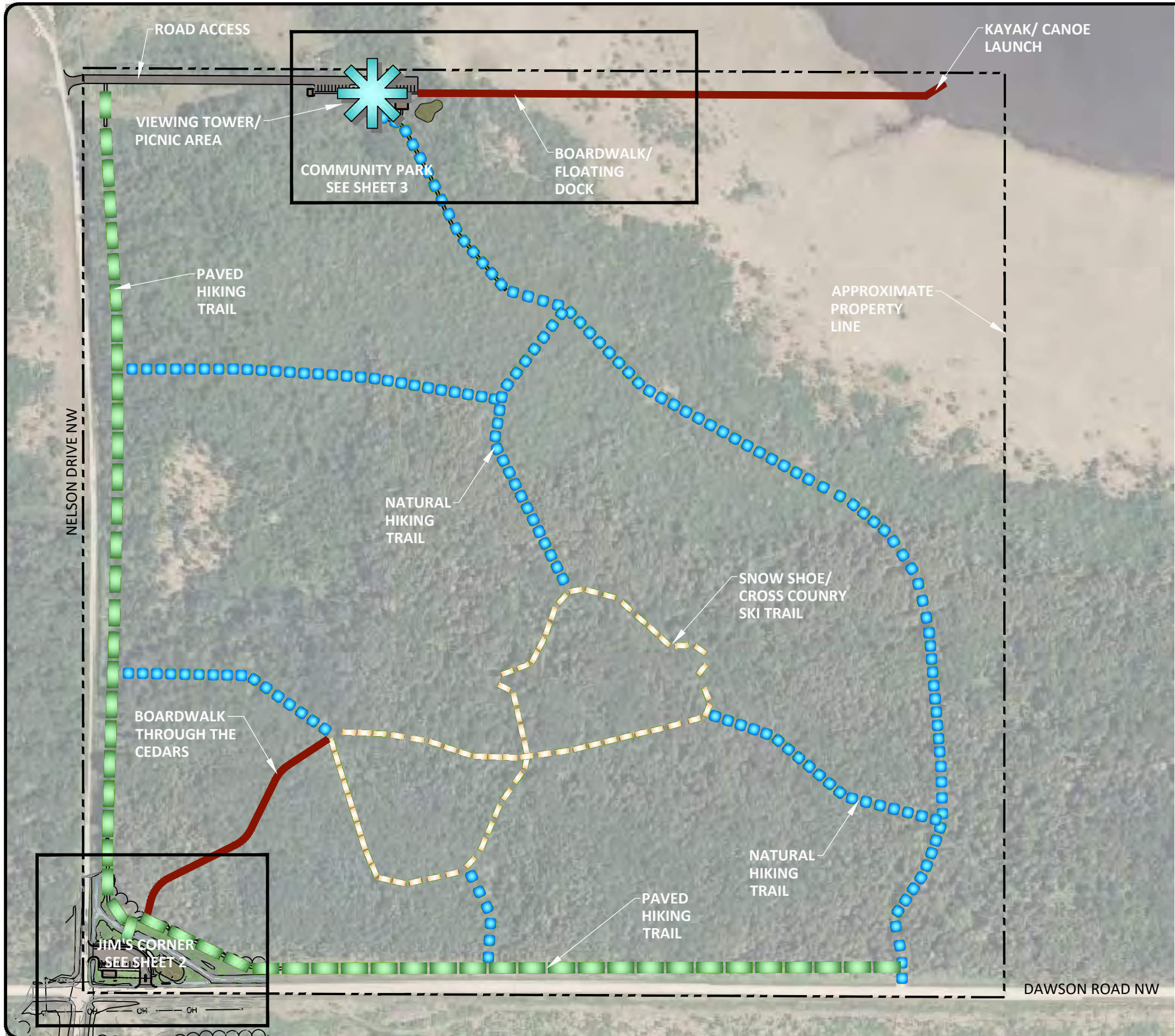
Foundations

- **T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program:** Application Deadline is September 30.
- **McKnight Foundation Vibrant and Equitable Communities:** Not usually for governmental entities.
- **Community Heart and Soul Seed Grant Program:** Up to \$10,000.
- **U.S. Bank Foundation:** Supports communities through work, home, and play grants.
- **State Farm Good Neighbor Citizenship Grants:** Focus on safety, education, and community development.



Appendix A. Master Plan Concepts

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NORTHERLY PARK MASTER PLAN
PARK AREA: ±160 ACRES

TRAILS:
NEW PAVED TRAIL: 4,700 FEET
NEW NATURAL HIKING TRAIL: 7,100 FEET
EXISTING SNOW SHOE/ CROSS COUNTRY TRAIL: 3,400 FEET

JIM'S CORNER:
NEW WELCOME CENTER, CALL CENTER AND VAULT TOILET
TRAIL HEAD CONNECTION TO NEW TRAILS
EDUCATIONAL/ HISTORICAL/ INTERPRETIVE DISPLAYS
NEW PARKING LOT W/10 PARKING SPACES
NATURAL PLAYGROUND AREA
BOARDWALK THROUGH THE CEDARS
SITE FURNISHINGS (PICNIC TABLES, BENCHES, TRASH RECEPTACLES)

COMMUNITY PARK AREA:
VIEWING TOWER
COMMUNITY PAVILION
NEW PARKING LOT WITH 20 PARKING STALLS
BOARDWALK/FLOATING DOCK W/ KAYAK/CANOE LAUNCH
VAULT TOILET
NATURAL PLAYGROUND AREA
SITE FURNISHINGS (PICNIC TABLES, BENCHES, TRASH RECEPTACLES, KAYAK LAUNCH)

- LEGEND:**
- BOARDWALK/ FLOATING DOCK
 - PAVED TRAIL
 - NATURAL HIKING TRAIL
 - SNOWSHOE/ CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRAIL
 - VIEWING TOWER/ PICNIC AREA

CONCEPT 4

No.	Revision	Date	By



Drawn by JJJ	Date 8-26-2024
Checked by EH	Scale AS SHOWN



NWA NORTHERLY PARK
LOTW COUNTY
ANGLE INLET, MN

CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN
OVERALL
PROJECT NO. 12380-0001

SHEET
1

H:\JBA\12380\12380_0001 NWA Northerly Park\CAD\Plans\12380-0001 Master Plan 4.dwg-Master Plan - Jim's Corner-10/11/2024 10:51 AM-(johnson)



CONCEPT 4

No.	Revision	Date	By



Drawn by JJJ	Date 8-26-2024
Checked by EH	Scale AS SHOWN

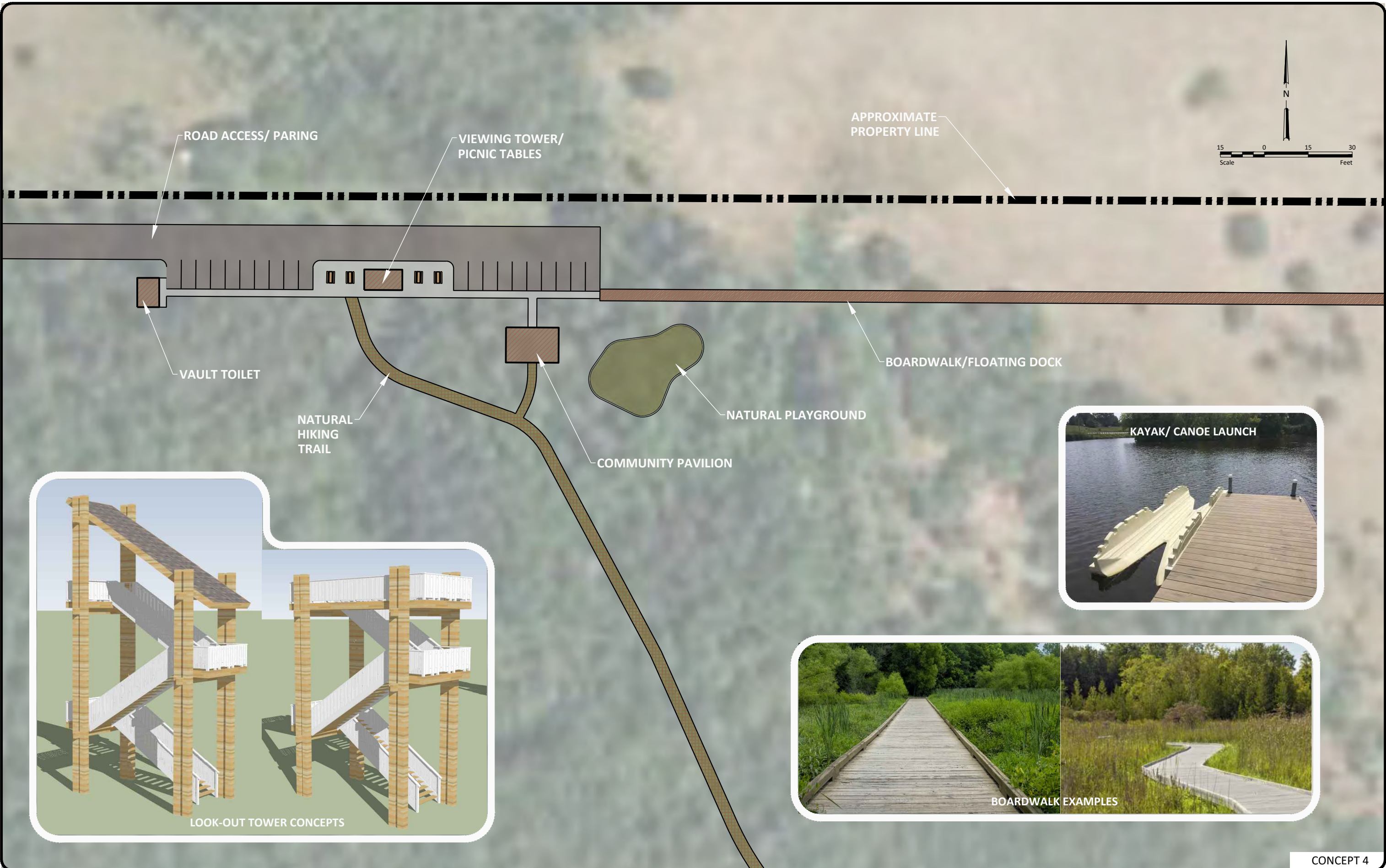


NWA NORTHERLY PARK
LOTW COUNTY
ANGLE INLET, MN

CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN
JIM'S CORNER
PROJECT NO. 12380-0001

SHEET
2

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No.	Revision	Date	By



Drawn by JJJ	Date 8-26-2024
Checked by EH	Scale AS SHOWN



NWA NORTHERLY PARK
LOTW COUNTY
ANGLE INLET, MN

CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN
COMMUNITY PARK
PROJECT NO. 12380-0001

SHEET
3



WELCOME AND INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE



COMMUNITY PAVILION WITH FIREPLACE AND SCREENS



WELCOME CENTER & CALL STATION



VAULT TOILET



FORTH ST. CHARLES TOWER, FENCE AND PARK ENTRANCE



NATURAL PLAYGROUND EXAMPLE

CONCEPT 4

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No.	Revision	Date	By



Drawn by JJJ	Date 8-26-2024
Checked by EH	Scale AS SHOWN



NWA NORTHERLY PARK
LOTW COUNTY
ANGLE INLET, MN

CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN
SITE AMENITIES
PROJECT NO. 12380-0001

SHEET
4



Appendix B. Interpretative Signage

Northwest Angle Through History

What's with the Bump in Minnesota?



Benjamin Franklin

The Northwest Angle owes its existence to Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, John Jay, and John Adams through negotiations with Great Britain that culminated in the settlement of the 1783 Treaty of Paris at the close of the Revolutionary War.



David Thompson Original Survey Marker

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David Thompson: Contributions to International Boundaries

David Thompson was born in 1770 and was raised in a charity hospital. He worked as a fur trader and surveyor with the Hudson Bay Company and then The Northwest Company and became one of the greatest surveyors and map makers in history. In 1798, Thompson proved that the northernmost source of the Mississippi was 140 miles south of Lake of the Woods. This discovery confirmed the existence of a northwest boundary gap. Thompson set the first survey markers in the area and some are still visible today.

Northwest Angle: This Tiny Minnesota Community is Completely Surrounded by Canada

Following the Louisiana Purchase, a new treaty in 1818 corrected this boundary discrepancy, by running the border due south from, the northwestern tip of the lake, to the 49th parallel. Unfortunately, this fix created a 26-mile jog in the border, a little "bump" of Minnesota that pokes up into Canada to this day. A dispute over the exact location of this point continued for the next century and a final agreement was not signed until sometime in the 1920s. A smallish peninsula measuring 123 square miles of American soil, Northwest Angle is now effectively an island, surrounded on all sides by American lake or Canadian woods.



Northwest Angle Through History

First Settlements in Northwest Angle



Dawson Trail Historical marker #1 at Harrison Creek

Dawson Trail

The Dawson Trail served as a vital route connecting Fort William (now Thunder Bay) on Lake Superior in Ontario, Canada, to St. Boniface (now part of Winnipeg) in Manitoba. The trail was established in 1857. It was a water trail from Thunder Bay to Northwest Angle. Then the trail became a land trail from Northwest Angle to Winnipeg. The trail facilitated trade, exploration, and communication between the Great Lakes region and the Canadian prairie west of Manitoba. Explorers, fur traders, and travelers used this trail to navigate the challenging terrain. The Dawson Trail intersected at a corner of Northwest Angle.

Today, the last 15 miles of the trails into Northwest Angle is a barely visible wood trail, whose swamps are impassable in summer and is partly used in winter as a portion of the Pan-Am snowmobile trail system. At the end of the trail, on Harrison Creek, you can still find the remains of the village that used to serve as a way station and rest area for the thousands of immigrants who had the courage to travel the Dawson Road to reach the land of their dreams. There is a historical marker on the Manitoba side of Harrison Creek that is only accessible by snowmobile across a winter road. Manitoba has an extensive Dawson Trail Commemorative Project with 15 wayfinding signs and self-guided heritage tour. Go to www.dawsontrailtreasures.ca

Nor'west – The Town that Time Forgot

A small town grew up at the mouth of Harrison Creek where the Dawson Trail was situated. Nor'west was born to accommodate the transfer of freight and passengers arriving from the east on watercraft, onto ox-carts for transport on down the Dawson Road west to Fort Garry (Winnipeg). Isolated from eastern Canada, the colony came to look south to the United States for its needs and commerce.

The Canadian leaders began to fear that the colony might be annexed by the United States unless a good Canadian route was provided. By 1874 the Canadian Government had spent \$1.25 million on the Dawson Route and supplies and emigrants were streaming into the area. A stage line ran from Winnipeg to Nor'west which now had a population of several hundred people. During the negotiations of the Indian Treaty of 1873, the community swelled when more than 1,000 Indians gathered for a council with the lieutenant-governor of Manitoba and the North West Territory.

The excavations of the town of Nor'west reveal unmistakably that it was founded on American soil. The matter was, however, a small technicality soon to be forgotten. The completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway to Kenora in 1881 spelled doom of the Dawson Trail and the Town of Nor'west then declined so rapidly that within fifty years it had passed out of memory.

First Settlers of Region

The first settlers of the Angle Inlet area established residences here around the turn of the century. Three men vie for that title: Damas Harrison, Joe Gibbins, Sr. and Martin Magnuson. Damas Harrison settled around Harrison Creek on the Canadian side, but moved to the American side sometime later at a date not determined at the old Nor'west town site.



Photo of George McPherson Sr. Family at Harrison Creek - Est. 1872

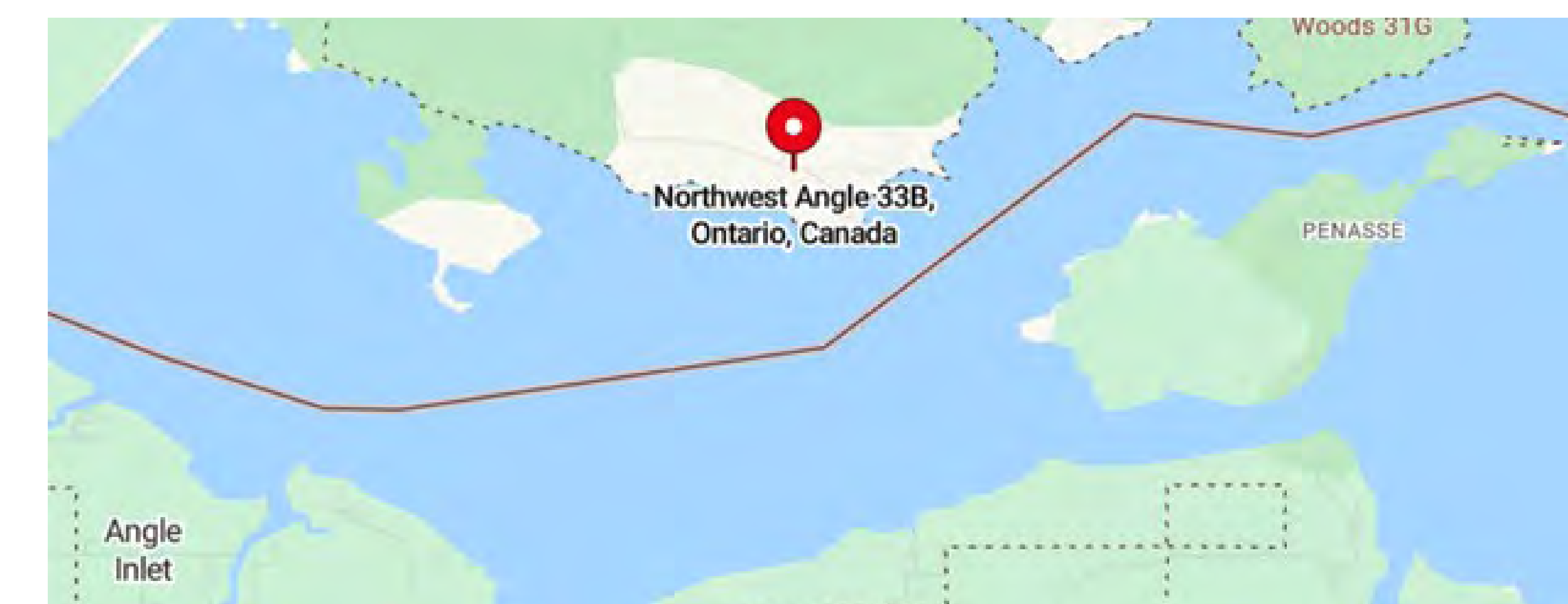
Joe Gibbins settled on Brush Island. Martin Magnuson settled on the island that now bears his name – Magnuson Island. In modern period (1872), the first white occupant of US territory on the Northwest Angle is believed to be George McPherson Sr. He operated a modest Hudson's Bay Company Trading Post on the north bank near the the mouth of Harrison Creek.

Red Lake Indian Reservation

Today, much of the Northwest Angle is part of the Red Lake Indian Reservation. The reservation is home to the Lac du Bois Band of Ojibwa, who have maintained their traditions while navigating the challenges of sovereignty and progress. The Red Lake Tribe, holds in trust approximately 70% of the land in the Northwest Angle.

Treaty 3 First Native Reserve

There are 11 treaties signed between Canada and the First Nations Indian Tribe. Treaty 3 was signed on October 3, 1873, and includes the areas located in western Ontario and eastern Manitoba. Within the Northwest Angle area, there is 3,300 acres reserved for the Northwest Angle Indian Reserve #33B/Angle Inlet as shown on the map below. Northwest Angle #33B/Angle Inlet is accessible only by water or air. Community facilities at Angle Inlet include a health care clinic, a community hall, and an administration building.



Map of Northwest Angle #33B Reserve



Northwest Angle Through History

First Settlements in Northwest Angle



The Mystery of Massacre Island

There is a story and mystery behind this island that has been debated for generations. The winter of 1736 was hard on the people at Fort St. Charles. Their supplies were low and they were forced to eat rotten fish. They were waiting for supplies and by June they had not arrived yet. On June 5, 1736, La Verendrye sent a party of 21 men in three canoes for supplies to Mackinac Island some 1,500 miles away. The party included La Verendrye's son Jean Baptiste and Father Aulneau. On June 17 a trader from Montreal arrived at the Fort and said he had not seen the resupply party. It was later found that their entire party was massacred on a nearby island.

Stories concerning the site of the massacre differ enough that the truth is difficult to know. In 1890, Jesuit priests from St. Boniface, Manitoba believed the massacre happened on what is now known as Massacre Island and erected a cross to mark the spot. However, there are theories from settlers that the massacre did not happen on Massacre Island, but it is very likely that it happened on a nearby island that the resupply party would have used as a stop or a shield from the waves and wind of the lake.



The cross erected on Massacre Island.



Portrait of Sieur de La Verendrye.

Fort St. Charles

Fort St. Charles was established in 1732 by Sieur de La Verendrye, a Canadian explorer and fur trader. He was the first native-born Canadian to traverse the unexplored lands west of the Great Lakes. The fort, located on Magnuson's Island at the mouth of Angle Inlet, was important historically as a base for further exploration westward and for a veritable chain of forts built far beyond Lake of the Woods. It was used as a base for westward exploration, trade, and missionary work.

Reconstruction of Fort St. Charles

Because of rising pressure from the French and Indian War in the 1750s, the French left the area and the fort was forced to close. It was forgotten about for over a century and fell into a

state of disrepair. Nature had almost completely reclaimed the little fort when it was rediscovered in 1908.

By this time, only a few archaeological remains were left to identify the site.

A complete reconstruction of the fort began at the original site in the 1950s. The reconstructed Fort St. Charles

was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.



The Reconstruction of Fort St. Charles.



Northwest Angle Through History

The History of Economy in Northwest Angle



Commercial Fishing: 1888-1991

Early Commercial Fishing

Early commercial fishing on Lake of the Woods was very different from the fishing that was known in the 1930s-1980s. First, there were really no regulations on the number of nets a commercial fisherman could use on the American side of the Lake. In 1888, Lake of the Woods was opened to commercial fishing on the American side. The lake was opened on the Canadian side in 1892. Between 1888 and 1909 the total catch in pound nets and gill nets was 17.9 million pounds of fish on the American side of Lake of the Woods.

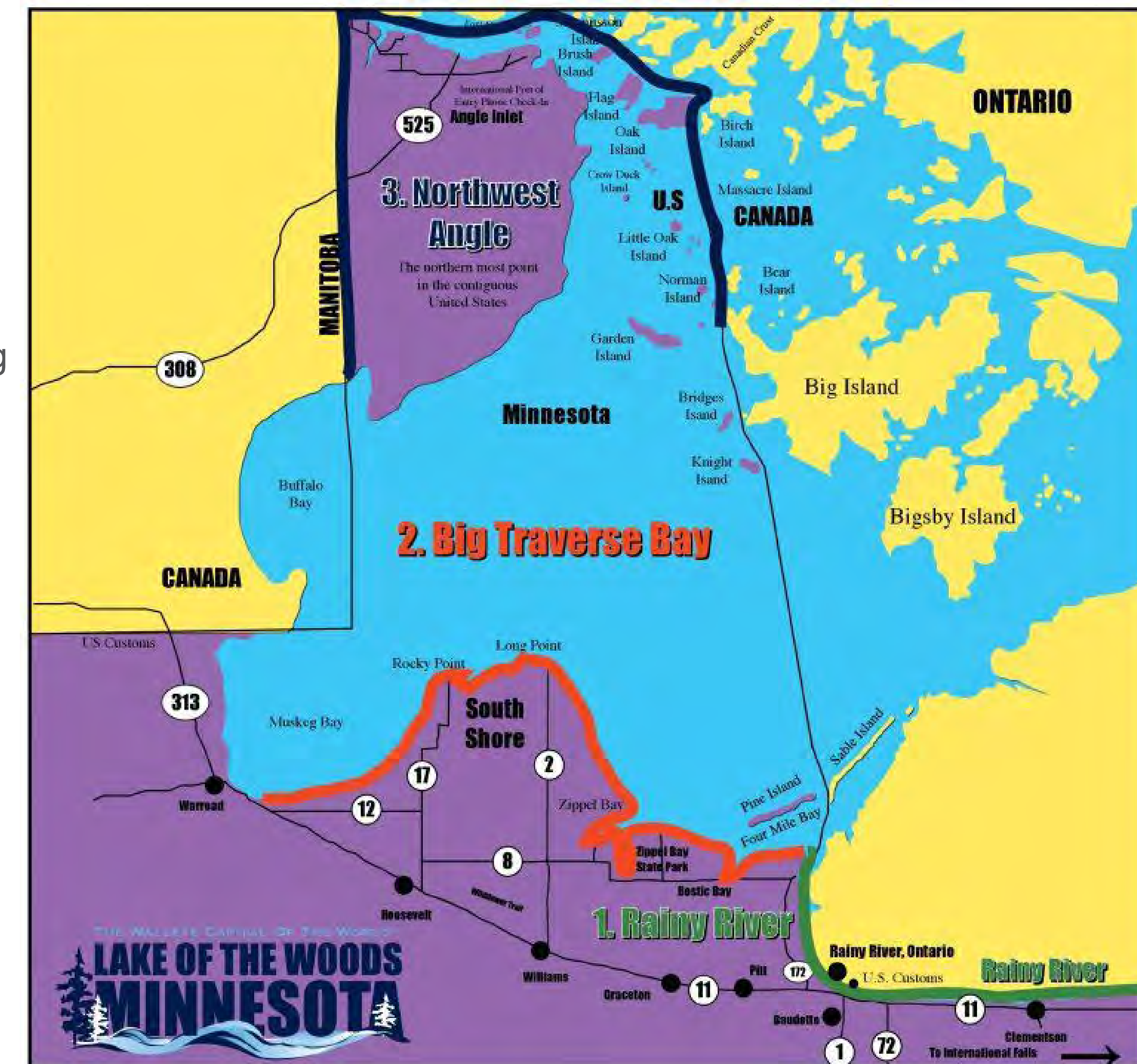
Commercial vs Sport Fishing

The rivalry between commercial and sport fishing began in the 1920s. The first mention of the conflict was in 1926. At that time there was a worry that new Game and Fish law would severely restrict commercial fishing business.

The Northwest Angle area had commercial fishing operations located on Garden Island, Oak Island, Flag Island and Magnuson Island. The operations were at their height during World War II. In the 1940s sportsman groups pushed to close the Northwest Angle fisheries. In 1947, several operations were denied the renewal of their fishing licenses. The Commercial fishing lobby was able to reach a compromise at the Legislature to allow the renewal of their fishing license, but only for existing operators and they were no longer able to transfer their licenses to their children.

One of the biggest battles was with commercial fishing trawlers. The trawlers were allowed on the lake from 1961-1964. Trawling is a catch everything you can method. On Lake of the Woods the net was dragged on the bottom of the lake. Two experimental seasons were approved for 1961 and 1962 with licenses extending to the 1963 and 1964 seasons. With joint effort from local commercial fishermen and sports fishermen, the state did not approve of trawl fishing for 1965. A refurbished Commercial Fishing Trawler is shown here on exhibit.

By the 1980s tourism and sportfishing were holding the majority opinion in the area. In 1983, State legislation was established for a quota and buyout program for commercial fishing licenses. In 1984, a 164,000 pound per year harvest was allowed and then down to a 30,000 pound harvest in 1991 after which no commercial game fish harvest was allowed on the American side. However, the last year commercial fishing was harvested from Lake of the Woods was 1985, but did continue on the Canadian side for some time.



Tourism

The early and mid-1920s saw the birth of the tourist industry in Lake of the Woods County, when resorts began to appear along the shores of the rivers and lakes. Today, resort fishing and tourism is the largest industry in the area. Sports fishing is known around the world for its premier fishing. Many of the resorts of Northwest Angle began to establish in the 1930s and 1940s.

Today, there are several options for people to take advantage of when fishing or just visiting the area. The resorts are:

- Cyrus Flag Island Resort
- Jake's Northwest Angle Resort
- Prothero's Post Restort
- Sage's Angle West Resort
- Sportman's Oak Island Lodge
- Blackbird Island Resort
- Oak Island Resort
- Angle Outpost & Resort
- Young's Bay Resort
- Angle Inn Lodge
- Bay Store Camp



Northwest Angle Through History

The History of Economy in Northwest Angle



Exploration and Fur Trade: 1730s to 1840s

British possession of the land west of Lake Superior began the gold age of the voyageurs, which, with their canoes, became the main characters in the story of this region for the next 75 years. Lake of the Woods was a major link in the voyageur's highway with all of the trade returning from the north and west destined to cross the lake. All of the rival fur companies, Hudson Bay, Northwest, XY and American established posts as they struggled to monopolize the trade. Posts of various companies stood at different times at and near the mouth of the Rainy River and near the mouth of the Warroad River. By the 1830s, the American Fur Company won the monopoly of trade on the southern side of the border but by the early 1840s the fur trade was finished.

Feldspar Mining: 1929-1935

Feldspar was extracted from pegmatite veins and used in ceramics, glass, and porcelain. The mining operations often involved hand tools, blasting, and manual sorting. Mining of Feldspar in Northwest Angle occurred on the homestead of W.C. (Bill) Rader who was also the prime mover of the operation. Mining operations began in 1929 and continued until about 1935. The mining process included drilling and blasting to loosen the rock in an open pit. A diesel-powered system provided compressed air for the air drills. Hand labor then sorted the material and loaded the selected feldspar onto small tram cars. A narrow-gauge tramway was constructed some $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to the lake. A refurbished tramcar is on exhibit here. Here the cars were dumped into a barge to be towed to the processing plant at Warroad. A small gasoline-fueled traction engine towed the tram cars. Some twelve men were reported employed at the mine – apparently on an off-and-on basis.

The operation was short lived as it was not profitable to operate. The lake prevented shipments of material to Warroad due to high winds and ice. The price to haul from Angle Inlet to Warroad and down to Chicago wasn't worth it and the plant shut down.

Northwest Angle Timber Harvest: 1949-1974

A significant timber harvest development took form on the part of the Red Lake Indian Tribe who had jurisdiction on approximately 70% of Northwest Angle. The proposal envisaged the complete harvest of all marketable timber over a period of twenty-five years. The system for timber harvest involved six selected contracting operators, each with an assigned territory. All experienced local loggers, they included Norman Carlson, Norman Hohn, Ray O'Donnel, Clifford Comstock, Ernie Carpenter, and Richard Brown. Additional small parcels were handled by Angle residents.

The entire production is reported to have reached approximately 500,000 cords of timber. Timber delivered to the Longworth siding was shipped out on 800 to 1,000 rail cars per season. Something like 150 men were employed each winter. At Norm Hohn's camp spruce pulp cutters cut about 150 sticks (approximately 2 chords) per day. Compensation in 1952 was at seven cents per stick. How large is a cord of wood? Eight feet long, 4 feet tall, 4 feet deep



Check out the mining cart on display at the park!



Northwest Angle Through History

Northwest Angle – Fun Facts

Mooselvania and the Northwest Angle

Now called Collins Island. Jay Ward the producer of the Rocky and Bullwinkle Show from the 1950s through 1960s made up the island of Mooselvania as a publicity stunt for the show. Jay Ward leased an actual island just off the coast of Northwest Angle from Doc and Betty Larson for \$1,500. Collins Island (Mooselvania) is just south of Flag Island resort. The Larson’s then used the money to build the boathouse that is still there.

Then, Ward petitioned the island (called the home to Bullwinkle the Moose) to become the 52nd state in the Union and went all over the country on an extensive promotional tour. He even tried to get President Kennedy to sign the petition but he showed up in Washington D.C. during the Cuban Missile Crisis and was told to leave. Mooselvania is actually the plot of three Rocky and Bullwinkle cartoon shows.

Did you Know?

The first road to the Angle was developed in 1969 with the help of numerous local people and Lake of the Woods County.

With the help from a diesel-powered generating station, electricity was brought to the Angle in 1973. In 1980 Manitoba Hydro lines hooked up the Angle to more reliable and efficient electricity.

Phone services arrived to Angle Inlet in 1991.

How did Angle Inlet residents communicate with people before telephone arrived? CB Radio

- Where do children go to school that live in Northwest Angle?
- Elementary school children go to the Angle Inlet School, which is the only one-room schoolhouse left in the US.
 - Middle and high school students go to Warroad School and have a 90-minute bus commute to and from school every day.

