

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC) FOOTBRIDGES
Pipestone National Monument
36 Reservation Avenue
Pipestone
Pipestone County
Minnesota

HAER MN-119
HAER MN-119

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

National Park Service
Interior Regions 3, 4, and 5
U.S. Department of the Interior
601 Riverfront Drive
Omaha, NE 68102

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC) FOOTBRIDGES

HAER No. MN-119

Location: Pipestone National Monument, 36 Reservation Avenue, Pipestone, Pipestone County, Minnesota

USGS Pipestone North Quadrangle – Minnesota 7.5 Minute Series, 2010

UTM: Zone 14, Easting 714708, Northing 4876897 (NAD 83)

UTM: Zone 14, Easting 714709, Northing 4876894 (NAD 83)

Significance: The two footbridges were part of the initial development at Pipestone by the Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division (CCC-ID). The footbridges, constructed 1934-37, have local significance and are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for their association with the CCC and Works Progress Administration. The materials and naturalistic design of these resources reflect the philosophy of incorporating natural landscape elements into planning and design.

Description: The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Footbridges provided safe passage over Lake Hiawatha run-off. According to the “Development of Dam #1 (HS-5), Pipestone National Monument:” A shallow body of water located below the falls of Pipestone Creek (now commonly known as Lake Hiawatha) was first noted in the fall of 1836 by artist/ethnographer George Catlin in his quick sketch of the falls and creek watershed. This diminutive lake was first recorded in a photograph by William Illingworth in June 1870. The photo, taken from a vantage point atop Winnewissa Falls, shows a small body of water far in the treeless distance to the west.

By the end of the 19th century, tourism and travel had begun to be recognized as important regional industries. Minnesota established two state parks in the 1890s, and by the early 1900s a state park movement developed. Local residents and civic groups focused efforts in the development of a local recreational park.

“The Pipestone community supported the idea. In September 1924, the American Legion post in Pipestone organized a volunteer work force to help maintain the area. They cut weeds around Winnewissa Falls, hauled loose rock to the foot of the lake, scraped and deepened the lakebed, and built a small dam. They estimated this would raise the level of the lake to about 12 feet at its deepest, and make it more attractive as a site for swimming.”¹

According to the “Pipestone National Monument Ethnographic Landscape Report:” “Two small CCC-ID footbridges are located about fifteen feet from the Circle Trail. The bridges are simple concrete structures with a slight barrel arch. The tops of the structures are covered in small irregular pieces of Jasper stone set in concrete with smaller granite rocks lining both sides of each bridge. Each of the bridges is about five feet long and two feet wide. The bridges sequentially pass over two parallel stream beds, separated by about five feet. The bridges are the only remnants of the CCC-ID circulation system not incorporated into the Mission 66 design. Any trail to or between the bridges is no longer visible. During the summer, the structures are concealed by vegetation to visitors on the

¹ “Development of Dam #1 (HS-5), Pipestone National Monument.” National Park Service.

Circle Trail.”² The CCC-ID footbridges have not been altered or changed since their Depression-era construction.

History: In 1933, the first piece of major legislation in President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s Civil Works Administration established the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW), popularly known as the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC), through Executive Order 6101. This organization enlisted young men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five to preserve and protect the nation’s natural resources, and to reduce unemployment. Many projects focused on forestry, flood control, soil erosion, and forest fires. Enrollees built new roads, reservoirs, and fire towers and planted millions of trees in U.S. national, state, and community parks.

Initially developed to provide relief to unemployed youth, the ECW was modified on April 14, 1933. The organization expanded enlistment to include 14,000 American Indians. By the end of 1933, it was reported that there were 67 reservation projects. Before the CCC (ECW) was ended in 1942, over 80,000 American Indians had worked for the relief agency.

The Indian ECW (IECW) was administered solely by the Office of Indian Affairs in the Department of the Interior, outside the restrictions of the principal ECW organization. The Office of Indian Affairs selected the men and directed the work. Few camps were constructed since most of the men were married and worked on projects on a daily basis and returned home at night. Additionally, the tribal council participated in the administration of the work projects and American Indians were given wide latitude in the selection of work projects and supervisors in an effort to give them management of their own affairs. Like the rest of the ECW enrollees, they received a \$30 monthly stipend and health and education benefits. Unlike other ECW work, there was no prevailing plan or control at Pipestone, no monthly reports or monthly inspections. Each reservation or project individually requested funding and approval for work directly to the Office of Indian Affairs.

The IECW program did not begin at Pipestone Reservation until January 1934. Pipestone Indian School Superintendent Balmer provided general supervision of projects at the reservation, using as much Indian labor as possible. In a letter from Superintendent J.W. Balmer to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier on December 27, 1933, Balmer described the condition of the “Park Area.” He wrote that the park site “embraces the Red Pipestone, Winnewissa Falls, the Rock of Gitchhe-Manitou, and several other noted historical points and also includes practically the entire lot where timber, bush, shrubs, or other growths of this nature exist.” In addition to the pipestone quarries, he noted the ledge outcrop of quartzite and “several caves and other interesting formations that are a natural part of the rock ledges.”

Balmer outlined plans for the \$3,000 appropriation for the “Park Area” including the construction of approach roads, foot paths, gravelling approaches and paths, building benches, construction of gate posts, construction of dam No. 1 at Lake Hiawatha, construction of dam No. 2 at the lower outlet of Indian Lake and fencing around the entire “Park Area” with the work being completed by May 1,

²Kathleen Fitzgerald, “Pipestone National Monument: Ethnographic Landscape Report,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2007, 145.

1934.³ On April 6, 1934, Balmer wrote again to Collier, reporting that only limited work had been completed at Pipestone “due to the lateness of the appointment of [the] Group Foreman.” Balmer then submitted a revised outline for projects from April 1, 1934 through March 31, 1935 which included completing the Lake Hiawatha dam and adding a footbridge over the Lake Hiawatha runoff.⁴ Work continued at Pipestone throughout the 1930s with various planting and landscaping projects along with the construction of simple recreational amenities such as a picnic area. On August 26, 1937, after years of lobbying by local civic organizations and prominent individuals, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed legislation establishing Pipestone National Monument, with the CCC-ID continuing their work within the newly established park. The 1938 fiscal year proposal included a Jasper stone foot bridge to replace the hazardous steppingstones that cross the Lake Hiawatha overflow channel.

Sources:

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“Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, Pipestone National Monument.” National Park Service, 2007.

Fitzgerald, Kathleen. “Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Pipestone National Monument.” Internal draft, National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, Omaha, Nebraska, 2006.

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“List of Classified Structures.” Internal Assessments. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, Omaha, Nebraska. Accessed 5 July 2012.

Rothman, Hal K. and Daniel J. Holder. *Managing the Sacred and the Secular: An Administrative History of Pipestone National Monument*. U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, 1992.

Webb, Paul L. and Paul L. Beaubien. “Mission 66 Prospectus: Pipestone National Monument.” Internal document. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1956.

Wilkins, JoAnn and Donald L Stevens. Pipestone National Monument. National Register of Historic Places Nomination. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington D.C. Listed 2003.

³Superintendent J.W. Balmer, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier, December 27, 1933, NARA CCC-IN General Records, 1933-34, Pipestone Box No. 172, File 40754 1933-344.

⁴ Superintendent J.W. Balmer, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier, April 6, 1934, NARA CCC-ID General Records, 1933-34, Pipestone Box No. 172, File 40754 1933-344.

Historian: Pipestone National Monument was recorded from 2009-10 by Katherine Kaliszewski, National Park Service Midwest Regional Office (MWRO) intern with supplemental material provided by Donald L. Stevens, Jr., Chief of History and National Register Programs MWRO. Photographs were taken by Daniel R. Pratt in July 2009. Interns Hilary Retseck and Kayla Hassett and MWRO historian Alesha Cerny completed the report narratives in 2012. The survey was reformatted and edited for transmittal in 2021 by Cerny.

Project Information: This report was commissioned in order to comply with a stipulation in a programmatic agreement between the National Park Service and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Officer regarding the treatment of historic structures at Pipestone National Monument. The CCC Footbridges contribute to the park historic district and will be retained and preserved as a result of general management planning for Pipestone National Monument.

The CCC Dam (HAER No. MN-118), the Nicollet-Fremont Marker (HABS No. MN-171), the Circle Trail (HALS No. MN-3), the South Quarry Line Trail (HALS No. MN-4), and the Sioux Quartzite Steps (HALS No. MN-5) also will be retained and preserved as part of the programmatic agreement that implements the preferred alternative of the general management plan. However, the Mission 66 Pipestone Visitor Center (HABS No. MN-167), Residence (HABS No. MN-168), Restroom (HABS No. MN-169), and Entry Road (HAER No. MN-116), as well as the 1950 Residence (HABS No. MN-170) and the Residence Access Road (HAER No. MN-117) will be demolished. The buildings and structures interfere with the spiritual significance of the Pipestone quarries and associated natural/ethnographic elements of the national monument. The ethnographic landscape will be restored to a more natural appearance. HABS, HAER, and HALS documentation will be completed on several buildings, structures, and landscapes in the park to mitigate the adverse impacts of this extensive landscape restoration project.

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Scale stick in photographs in 4 feet long.

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Daniel R. Pratt, photographer, July 2009

MN-119-1	Context view of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Footbridges, looking southwest.
MN-119-2	View of north Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Footbridge, looking west.
MN-119-3	View of south Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Footbridge, looking east.

HAER No. MN-119-01



Kodak 100TMX



HAER No. MN-119-02





HAER No. MN-119-03



Kodak 100T MX

