

Voyageurs National Park Association Newsletter

October 2015



National Park Service



Josh Henderson

Alyssa Ebel

1975: A Year to Remember

A first class stamp was 10 cents and a gallon of gas cost 57 cents. Radios were playing the chart topper *Love Will Keep Us Together* by Captain and Tennille, along with hits like John Denver's *Thank God I'm a Country Boy* and Frankie Valli's *My Eyes Adored You*. *Wheel of Fortune* and *Saturday Night Live* premiered on television and the movie *Jaws* was thrilling moviegoers across the country.

And on April 8, 1975, Congress enacted Voyageurs as the 36th national park in the United States – in large part thanks to the work of Voyageurs National Park Association!

In 2015, Voyageurs celebrated its 40th anniversary, and 2016 will mark the Centennial of the National Park Service. We invite individuals of all ages to come help us unwrap our gift and experience this national treasure.

Discover the pristine North Woods lake country. With 30 lakes to explore by boat, canoe, or kayak, miles and miles of hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoe, and snowmobile trails, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

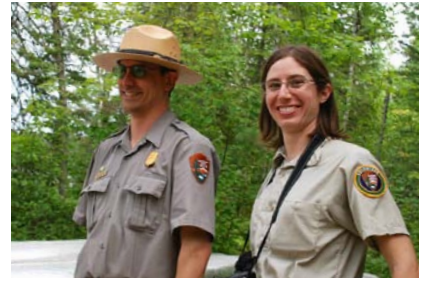
Whether you want to create your own adventure and enjoy a secluded campsite – or if you'd rather join park staff for a guided boat ride – we hope you'll visit soon and help us celebrate.

From the Staff of Voyageurs National Park

Our mission is to protect and promote the natural, recreational, and historic resources of Voyageurs National Park. Learn more and support your park at Voyageurs.org.



www.voyageurs.org



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We wish to thank outgoing board member Forrest Flint for many years of service!

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As we commemorate Voyageurs National Park Association’s 50th anniversary, the park’s 40th, and the National Park Service Centennial, it’s a time of celebration, but also a time for reflection. We are grateful to work with people like you who share our love for Voyageurs and help us continue to protect, promote and be inspired by this special place.

Looking toward the next fifty years, we are developing a strategic road map and plan for future success. We are reaching out to partners, members, and local communities to help us create a vision that enables VNPA to make an even greater impact. As part of that process, we would love to hear from you. Please let us know what you think is most needed to ensure Voyageurs remains a place that we can all enjoy for years to come at Voyageurs.org/next50.

Recently, you helped us permanently protect 61 acres in the park, expand our Teen Ambassador and volunteer initiatives, and match federal funds to support trail and wetland habitat restoration projects. Thank you! We look forward to partnering and celebrating with you in 2016 for the Centennial.

For Voyageurs,

Christina Hausman
Executive Director

Lindsey Remakel
Board Chair

New Board Members



Spencer Smith

“From a young age, Voyageurs National Park has been a special place to me and my family. For over 25 years, I have been camping, fishing, boating, and hiking in the park. Being a part of VNPA allows me to serve the park that I’ve grown to love and inspire others to do the same. It is an honor to partner with the incredible individuals who work tirelessly to protect the park’s beauty and promote all that it has to offer.”



Jeffrey D. Brown

“Voyageurs National Park is a natural and historic treasure. As an outdoorsman and environmentalist, I’m happy to be part of VNPA, the organization that helped make the park possible, and the organization that does such great work to protect and promote this beautiful northern Minnesota gem for generations to come. I encourage others to support our programs and our collaboration with the dedicated and talented staff of Voyageurs National Park.”

Teen Ambassador Reflections



In 2016, VNPA will partner with the National Park Service and Wilderness Inquiry to send our 100th Teen Ambassador to Voyageurs National Park. National parks are our greatest outdoor classrooms, yet many Minnesota youth do not have the resources to experience them. The Ambassador program provides an opportunity each year for Minnesota teens to go on a five-day learning adventure in Voyageurs National Park and a three-day paddle on the Mississippi River. With the generous support of our members, we work to ignite a love for conservation and exploration in these teens. Here are some reflections from 2014-2015 Ambassadors and program leaders:



“I care more about the park now, because sometimes I took it for granted, because I’m from International Falls and it’s like my backyard. But after seeing all the other people who care so much about what I see every day made me rethink how important the park is.”
– Gage, International Falls Ambassador

“In order for the next generation of park visitors to be invested in Voyageurs, they first need to understand the park and its resources. Giving Teen Ambassadors a chance to assist with a wildlife research project helps show them the importance of what we do and allows them to connect to the park in a unique way.” – Lisa Maass, Voyageurs National Park Wildlife Technician



“Another thing that is amazing to me about this park, it makes you feel connected with history in a more meaningful and profound way. We had the privilege to camp, sleep, eat, converse, and laugh at the same spot where the natives of this land used to be. It makes me more curious. It makes me want to learn more.” – Faiza, Minneapolis Ambassador

“National Parks like this one are some of the most beautiful things in life.” – Jake, St. Paul Ambassador

“I learned I can push myself to the mental limits” – Joey, International Falls Ambassador

Heart of the Continent Partnership Launches TraveltheHeart.org

Geotourism: Tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place — its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and well-being of its residents.

Travelers seeking unspoiled places and culturally authentic experiences now have a valuable new resource in a comprehensive Geotourism MapGuide and website for the Heart of the Continent region. The landmark project has taken two years to plan and execute and is a historically significant asset for everyone who visits or lives in the region.

The MapGuide and website highlight the natural, cultural and historic attractions that define the region.

MapGuide projects have been completed in regions such as Greater Yellowstone, Norway, Peru, Baja California, Vermont, Newfoundland and Appalachia.

The National Geographic Society is working with local organizations, businesses and residents to map the best of the Heart of the Continent. You can still recommend historic, cultural and natural landmarks; events, attractions and activities; businesses; trails; artists, and artisans at Traveltheheart.org.

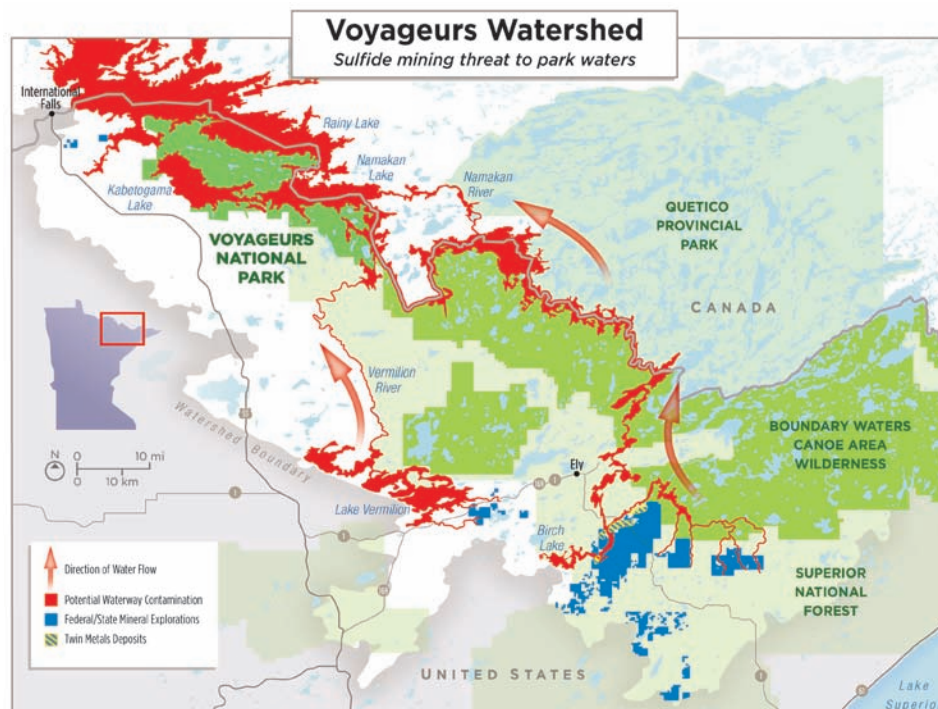
VNPA, NPCA Commission Sulfide Mining Study

Voyageurs National Park encompasses more than 84,000 acres of water – an area roughly the size of Minneapolis and Duluth combined. The lakes and rivers of Voyageurs National Park are now at risk from proposed sulfide mining projects in its watershed. There are numerous locations where mining corporations are exploring for copper, gold, and nickel. The process to extract these metals from sulfide ore deposits produces sulfuric acid and other contaminants, which can leak into the surrounding waters. This pollution would head downstream toward the park. Even small amounts of acid mine contamination leaking into the Rainy River Drainage Basin would impact Voyageurs' ecosystem for decades and threaten its pristine waters and wildlife, world-class fishing, and the family-owned small businesses that serve park visitors.

In early 2015, with support from the Quetico Superior Foundation, VNPA and the National Parks Conservation Association commissioned a study to document potential risks to Voyageurs. The full report can be found online at voyageurs.org/sulfide-mining.

KEY FINDINGS

- Because of the watershed's unique geology and water-dominated landscape, acid mine pollution from sulfide mines as far as 100 miles away will impact Voyageurs National Park.
- Even small amounts of contamination will impact the park's fish, wildlife and entire ecosystem for decades.
- The long-term nature of sulfide mining pollution means it is nearly impossible to stop once it starts; there would be little chance of preventing the pollution from reaching Voyageurs National Park.
- Mercury has already impaired Voyageurs' lakes, necessitating fish consumption advisories. Even small quantities of acid mine pollution will increase the mercury in the park's waters, further endangering both fish and humans.
- Mine waste, or tailings, would be stored behind dams that must not fail in perpetuity or they will release acid mine drainage. However, research shows that failures are common, and leakage in the watershed could flow toward the park, putting its waters at risk.



Map courtesy of National Parks Conservation Association



“Voyageurs is at the downstream end of its watershed, so everything entering the watershed passes through it before reaching Canada. Mercury contamination, leaching of arsenic, or other acid mine drainage will pass through the park.”
— Tom Myers, Ph.D., Hydrologist

VNPA sponsored Tom Myers' presentation at the March 2015 International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Forum. The International Joint Commission (IJC), a bi-national body, issued a proposed Water Quality Plan of Study for the Rainy River/Lake of the Woods Watershed recommending action to scientifically assess the risk from new mining proposals in the watershed. *Photo by Lee Grim.*

61 Acres Permanently Protected

In December 2014, the National Park Service used funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to acquire a 61-acre parcel from Voyageurs National Park Association, officially adding this scenic place to Voyageurs National Park. The land, located on the Kempton Channel of Rainy Lake, encompasses boreal forest and several hundred feet of sand beach shoreline. The site is on the north side of the Kabetogama Peninsula, a 75,000-acre roadless area, which provides a habitat for wolves, black bear, moose, otter, and eagles.

Voyageurs National Park Association acquired this property in 2012 before the opportunity for public ownership was lost. This was made possible through the Wallace C. Dayton Voyageurs National Park Legacy Fund – a critical land conservation fund created in partnership with the WM Foundation. It is named in memory of Wallace Dayton, a well-loved conservationist, outdoor enthusiast, and one of the founders of Voyageurs National Park.

“The white sand beach, the tall pines and jagged rocks, the view – everything about this property is magnificent. I am so glad this is now a place we can all go and enjoy with our families as part of our national park,” said executive director, Christina Hausman. “We at Voyageurs National Park Association are so grateful to the many people whose efforts made it possible for us to add these 61 acres to the park. We particularly wish to thank our members and contributors to the Wallace C. Dayton Voyageurs National Park Legacy Fund for making this possible, as well as Fredrikson & Byron, P.A. for their pro bono support of land conservation efforts in Voyageurs National Park.”



Wildlife Research Fellowship

By Joshua Smith

I began my work through the VNPA-funded wildlife research position in the field. I spent a beautiful fall weekend in October working with Dr. Steve Windels and others, checking beaver traps and scouting for active lodges. We captured three beavers, saw mound and bank-type lodges, hiked around one of the islands, and experienced some of the logistical challenges associated with long-term research projects.

Getting into the field provided clarity in context as I began working with several datasets associated with beaver population dynamics in the park. Through the project, we sought to address how changes in the 2000 rule curves for water level management regimes impact various aspects of beaver ecology. To date, we have found that water level is an important factor in lodge site selection, and these effects are influenced by basins (e.g., Rainy versus Namakan Reservoirs) where flow regimes tend to differ. Next we intend to investigate similar effects on age- and sex-specific survival, productivity, and body condition.

We have also looked at the effects of equipping transmitters to beavers to study survival and movement patterns. Comparisons of survival, changes in body condition, and reproductive output of transmitter-equipped beavers to beavers equipped only with ear-tags showed no significant difference. Our goal is that this analysis will assist others in implementing best practices when tagging semi-aquatic species.



I would like to thank VNPA and its supporters for funding this position. Endeavors such as this fill a much needed void in research. With fiscal deficits and government shut-downs, our natural resources and the agencies charged with protecting them take significant budget cuts. Research projects such as this and support from partners go a long way.

Meadwood: Romantic but Comfortable

By Catherine Crawford, National Park Service

More than 40 years ago, before Voyageurs National Park became a reality, hundreds of cabins and many resorts were scattered along the shores of these border lakes. Sixteen historic properties remain today which represent the way people lived, worked, and played in this remote region. The structures at these historic sites embrace two stories – how they were built and who built them. 80-year-old Meadwood Lodge, now one of the park's three visitor centers, was part of a resort beyond the end of the road, only accessible by boat. The log and stone lodge was of one man's vision, a vision so compelling that each succeeding owner maintained the resort mostly unchanged. This is a story told in two parts and as true to the memory of the people involved as is possible.

As described in the 1938 Tourist Edition of The Daily Journal, Meadwood Lodge is “located in the pristine wonderland at the eastern end of Lake Kabetogama. Romantic but comfortable, this lodge adjoins the choicest fishing spots on this famed border lake.”

On a high rocky shore, surrounded by tall pines, with spectacular views of the lake, the lodge blends into the landscape. The rustic structures of Meadwood, carefully crafted from local materials, are settled into the hollows and depressions of the rocks as though they had been comfortably reclining there for hundreds of years.

Who created this idyllic retreat? Little is known about Ted Mead, designer and builder, except for the shared memories of people who lived and worked in the area.

According to Nobel Trygg, a retired forester who worked with Civilian Conservation Corps crews in that area of Kabetogama, “In 1935 we



From left: Dr. Levin, Alyce Mead, Mrs. Levin, Ted Mead.

had one resorter move in. His name was Mead. He built the resort just west of the mouth of Ash River. . . . He didn't know where his land was so I went with him and compassed out his two government lots. . . . He built a nice lodge there and quite a few cabins.”

Edna Town, who lived with her family across Kabetogama Narrows from Meadwood, remembered that “Meadwood was built a couple of years after Towns moved to their [commercial fishing] camp across from the Ash River, about 1935. The Meads had one boy. He was Ted's son . . . The Meads lived in Orr . . . had a store in the big green building . . . where they sold wild rice, etc.”

In the recollections of Edna's brother-in-law, William Valentine, Sr., “Meadwood Resort was built sometime during the 1936 [Kabetogama Peninsula] fire by two young Finlanders who were possibly Mrs. Mead's brothers. . . . These two fellows were having trouble getting sick from the drinking water until Mrs. Mead showed them how to put rocks in a pail and get water deep and quickly from the lake.”

Bert Youngstrom, whose family owned the cabin west of Mead's resort, stated: “Meadwood Lodge and [Youngstrom's] cabin were built by Ted Mead with the assistance of two Finlanders. . . . They were Mead's own designs.” Neil and Edith Watson, who owned a store at Gappa's Landing, Kabetogama, agreed and said, “Mead built the lodge at Meadwood – may have had some help, but [he] was the designer and prime builder.”

The 1938 Tourist Edition touted: “Meadwood



The Meads' son with red squirrel.



Meadwood Lodge, late 1960s.



The Meads' son in resort boat.

Lodge has only new, clean cabins – all of which face the lake. They were built in 1936 and 1937 and have been maintained in the very best condition. The cottages are built sufficiently far apart to assure privacy for all guests.”

Local lore proclaimed that a stone mason and legendary drinker by the name of Louis Nelson built the fireplace in the lodge, “as were many fireplaces on Kabetogama that had a resemblance to the Meadwood fireplace.”

William Crooks, whose father owned a fox farm on the north shore of Kabetogama, remembered that “Ted Mead was noted for having the largest outboard motor made at the time. He had a relatively small boat with a large 32 hp outboard on it that he used to transport guests.”

Of all who knew the Meads, Bill Donnelly, dock boy for Meadwood in 1946-47, had the most detailed memories of them and their resort. “Meadwood was known as ‘Little Rockford’ because most of the customers came from the suburb of Chicago called Rockford,” he recalled. “The Meads went overboard catering [to] the guests which paid off with repeaters year after year.”

“The Meads had one son. He was a pilot in the RAF during WWII. Ted wanted his son to make the resort his career. [Mead’s son] loved wildlife immensely, but not resort work! Both Alyce Mead and her son were nature lovers. Both of them could get all of the small animals to eat out of their hands.” Donnelly reminisced about what a kind and attractive person Alyce was.

I.W. Stevens, a long-time resident on an island in Namakan Lake, kept a diary from 1932-1979. His entry for June 14, 1949: “Mrs. Ted Mead died.”

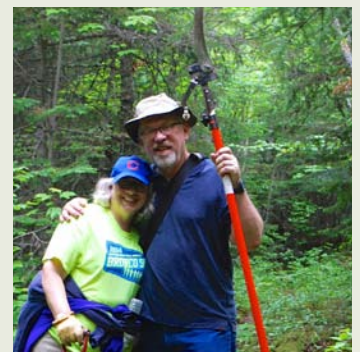
“Ted had a great love for Alyce,” Bill Donnelly remembered. “Ted couldn’t run Meadwood without Alyce. Not that he couldn’t physically – just that there were too many memories and he couldn’t be there without her.”

The man who was able to put the essence, the very spirit, of a wilderness lodge into his designs couldn’t continue to keep up his own spirits at Meadwood. In 1949, Ted Mead sold his resort.

Part Two coming in the next newsletter.

“History is rich here. When I kayak in Voyageurs National Park, I can see Native Americans and voyageurs dipping their paddles, traveling the same routes that I have crossed. People lived and died here. Tough, resilient folks who persisted because they loved this area. I, too, want to be here: to feel the awe of the land, water, and sky. It’s a pride we have all felt, this privilege to visit Voyageurs, knowing we are not the only ones, nor the last ones, to enjoy this unblemished area.”

- Diane Bradley, VNPA Member





Celebrating 40 Years



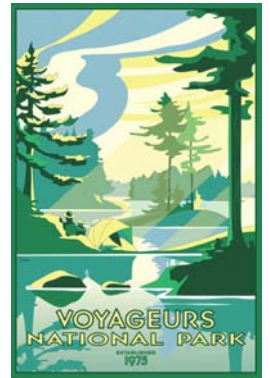
In 2015, Voyageurs National Park and VNPA celebrated the 40th anniversary of the park and VNPA's 50th anniversary with a series of community events and programs. Here are just a few ways we celebrated with long-time supporters and built a broader network of new park friends.



- VNPA worked with artist Tyler Nordgren to commission a special WPA-style anniversary print.

- The National Park Teen Ambassador program was honored at a Minnesota Timberwolves game.

- VNPA represented the park at the world's largest paddling expo, Canoecon to educate potential visitors about recreation opportunities and the new campsite reservation system.



- Pints for the Park - VNPA launched a local brewery series to reach new audiences which will continue in 2016. Thanks to LTD Brewing for hosting our first event with over 90 attendees.



- Voyageurs National Park Day at Target Field - Minnesota Twins fans and National Park supporters cheered the Twins to a victory and celebrated Voyageurs National Park's 40th birthday. Over 65 supporters celebrated in a special VNPA group section. Our park was honored during a pre-game moment with a park ranger on the field and a video debuted on the scoreboard.

- Voyageurs National Park hosted special programming including Twilight Walks, the *Ghosts of Voyageurs*, Rainy Lake Campfires, a mini encampment at Crane Lake Voyageur Days, and an Icebox Days Snowshoe Hike.



Volunteer Impact

2014 Volunteer Rendezvous

36 volunteers gave **255 hours** of service and helped the park complete several important projects. Volunteers **restored an entire island** on Friday by removing an outhouse and other debris from the landscape. On Saturday, volunteers removed invasive thistles and other weeds, and planted **351 native plants** along the recreation trail and in the Ethnobotanical Garden at the Rainy Lake Visitor Center.

2015 National Trails Day

22 volunteers cleared the entire **two miles** of the Locator Lake Trail, removed 14 unused sign posts, repaired a canoe rack, and removed three fallen trees. In full, **147 hours of service** were donated to the park.





Diane Michaud Lowry

Park and VNPA Launch Centennial Projects

As the National Park Service approaches its Centennial anniversary in 2016, park partners like VNPA have pledged to raise private funds to match a special \$10 million Congressional Centennial appropriation to improve the facilities, accessibility, and park programs, resulting in a \$26 million total investment in national parks. More than 100 special projects across the U.S. will help parks prepare for Centennial visitors. The projects are designed to improve visitor services, support outreach to new audiences, and leverage partnerships to reinvigorate parks while forging connections with communities.

Among the initiatives funded, Voyageurs National Park and its partners will launch two Centennial projects. The first is an effort to restore wetlands in Voyageurs National Park. Matching dollars will help the park improve habitat for fish and wildlife by removing invasive cattails and restoring diversity in wetlands. VNPA and other partners will help supply matching support.

The second is an effort to restore the entire Cruiser Lake Trail System. Voyageurs National Park Association will provide the entire private match for this special Centennial initiative.

Superintendent Mike Ward commented, “Matching dollars will make it possible to improve the condition of the 10-mile long Cruiser Lake Trail by removing hazardous trees, repairing boardwalks, controlling erosion, and replacing worn-out signs – making a much more enjoyable and safer hiking experience for park visitors. This project would not be possible without the generosity of VNPA’s supporters.”

“VNPA is proud to help our park celebrate the Centennial, inspire community engagement, and connect new visitors to Voyageurs. A crucial part of this partnership effort is being able to provide matching funds to launch Centennial projects. Thank you to our generous donors who make this exciting and important work possible,” said Christina Hausman, VNPA executive director.

Please check out Voyageurs.org/Centennial in early 2016 for a list of events and programs celebrating the National Park Service Centennial. And, **Save the Date!** VNPA is hosting a special Voyageurs National Park **Centennial Celebration at Surly Brewing Event Center on April 18, 2016.**

2015 Volunteer Rendezvous

Volunteers planted over **300 native grasses, shrubs, and trees** from the park’s native plant nursery along the new Rainy Lake Recreation Trail. **28 volunteers logged 196 service hours** clearing **.4 miles** of the heaviest vegetation found along the Black Bay Ski Trail’s length; meaning that for the **first time in years**, visitors will be able to complete the Ridge Trail Circuit this winter.

“Only in my wildest dreams would I have thought that we would have cleared as much trail as we did today.” - **Ranger Pete Sweger**

“Working with this group of people whom I have only met on one or two occasions is like being with old friends.” - **Chuck Nelson, VNPA member and volunteer**

Thank you.



Thank You to Our 2014 Donors

Contributions of \$2,500 and above

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Ken and Judy Kadash
Estate of Mary E. Kent
Minnesota Environmental Fund
Katherine and Stuart Nielsen
Quetico Superior Foundation

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Joe and Joanne Kellogg, *in honor of Martin Kellogg*
Jennifer and Bill Kellogg
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Thunderbird Lodge
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Mike, Betsy, Connor, Libby Ward
Roger Williams
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Jim and Kathy Wyman
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Contributions of \$500 to \$2,499

Ameriprise Financial Annual Giving Campaign
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Tom and Karen LeJeune
Orr Pelican Lake Resort Association
Linda Pascoe

Contributions of \$100 to \$499

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John and Julie Henricksson
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Holly and Victor Jett
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Contributions up to \$99

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Elwood Caldwell
Dale and Phyllis Callaghan
Drew and Dawn Campbell, *in memory of Nathan Vandewege*
Dave Carlson

Voyageurs National Park Association 2014 Financial Summary

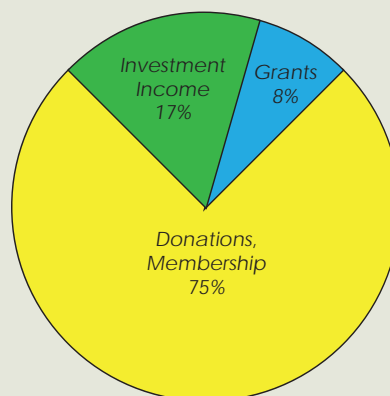
2014 SUPPORT & REVENUE

Grants	\$26,816
Donations	\$261,925
Investment Income	\$59,317
Miscellaneous Income	\$365
Total Support & Revenue	\$348,423

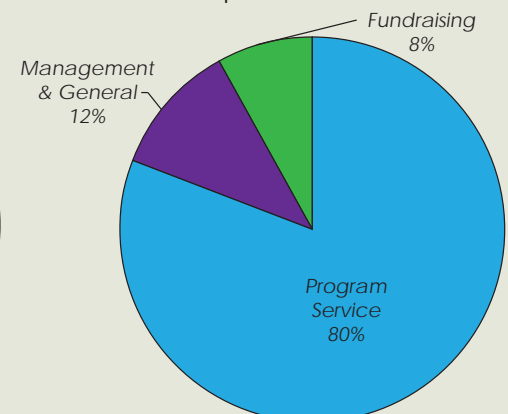
2014 EXPENSES

Program Service	\$246,171
Management & General	\$34,965
Fundraising	\$25,238
Total Expenses	\$306,374

Support & Revenue



Expenses



"From exploring the fascinating islands and diverse shorelines, to enjoying the constant surprises courtesy of the plant, bird, and animal life, we find Voyageurs National Park a pleasing balance of unspoiled wilderness with just the right amount of 'civilization' to make for a perfect vacation. We feel VNPA understands that balance, and blends programs that protect nature, land, water and wildlife while promoting accessibility to a broad spectrum of visitors and views stewardship in a holistic fashion." - Greg and Monica Yoder, Legacy Club Members



Jean Carlstrom
Nancy Cassano
Coca-Cola Bottling Company
Barbara Coffin and Daniel Engstrom
Nicole Colson
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Joseph Conrad
Patricia Cosgrove
Carlton Counard
Laura Cremin, *in tribute to Delores Cremin*
Peter and Linda Dahm
Allan and Marnie Davison
Chad and Maggie Dayton
Steve DeLapp
Daryl DeMars, *in honor of all the hard workers that keep this park running! Thank you.*
Mark Denker
Dennis Devries
Monica Dian
Marcia and Allen Dollerschell
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We make every effort to ensure accuracy. If you identify errors or omissions, please contact us at 612-333-5424, vnpa@voyageurs.org.



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