

NORTHERN WAKE

SPRING / SUMMER 2023 | Voyageurs
Conservancy **V**



Voyageurs Conservancy is the
official charitable partner of
Voyageurs National Park

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

SUMMER PROGRAMS | YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK | WOLF PROJECT | CRANE LAKE VISITOR CENTER



LETTER FROM PARK SUPERINTENDENT, BOB DEGROSS

April 2023

Last year, our park saw historic floods that tested our staff and local communities. Again, we are thankful for everyone's hard work, especially park staff and park neighbors, who came together to help each other. This summer I am looking forward to getting out and enjoying the park more - boating, fishing, and hiking alongside friends of the park like you.

The National Park Service team is working on many projects, with Voyageurs Conservancy support, to protect and study our natural and cultural resources, and improve the visitor experience at Voyageurs National Park. Our team is making improvements to the Kettle Falls area, continuing the wetland restoration project related to hybrid cattail removal, and continuing monitoring efforts that keep our forests and waters thriving.

We work collaboratively with Voyageurs Conservancy, the park's official philanthropic partner, to keep Voyageurs wild, connect the next generation to the park, and improve the visitor experience. I am thankful for Voyageurs Conservancy members. Because of our strong partnership, we are taking on larger projects together - expanding our wetland restoration work, growing the Voyageurs Classroom to connect more kids and families to the park, and working with the Crane Lake community to develop a partnership visitor center.

All of us at Voyageurs National Park thank you for supporting the Voyageurs Conservancy. The National Park Service can't do it alone; your support is essential.

Sincerely,
Bob DeGross



LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHRISTINA HAUSMAN RHODE

Dear Friends and Supporters,

These days, my two-year-old keeps me busy - constantly running and dancing, tasting and throwing new foods, demanding the train song one more time, and flipping between meltdowns and giggles. But most of all, he keeps me exploring the natural world through a child's eyes: stopping to investigate the depth of every puddle, picking up and studying leaves on our path, pointing at every bird and squirrel as if he has never seen one before, catching snowflakes on his tongue, and marveling at the colors of new flowers. Our walks are slow, winding, and intentional.

The little things in nature are truly things to be in awe of, yet sometimes we forget when we don't take that intentional time to explore. I hope your ventures in Voyageurs National Park this year bring you that lens of child-like wonder and appreciation of our natural world.

If we are to protect Voyageurs National Park for future generations, it is essential that kids of all backgrounds experience and see themselves in this place. Our Voyageurs Classroom program helps us ensure kids and families can make quality connections to the outdoors through environmental education experiences.

Without the support of Conservancy members, there would be no programming for kids at the park. We plan to expand this work by introducing our mobile classroom, enhancing our programs to preserve and appropriately share Ojibwe culture, and hosting a group of teachers from across the country in the park this summer who will help us expand our curriculum and national reach. Thank you for making this possible.

Let's all get out and explore and play this summer!

With gratitude and wonder,





Bethany Roiland

VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK OPERATIONAL UPDATES:

KETTLE FALLS

In 2023 the National Park Service will be installing camper cabins in the Kettle Falls area. These cabins will provide visitors another level of opportunity to experience the woods and waters of Voyageurs. Docks, trails, and social areas will be developed for each camper cabin in the near future.

ASH RIVER & KABETOGAMA BOAT RAMPS

The dock at the Ash River Visitor Center boat ramp will be removed and a new dock will be constructed early in the summer. The Kabetogama Lake Visitor Center boat ramp will be removed and replaced in late summer, likely between August and September.

Please check www.nps.gov/voya for closures and recreation.gov to learn more about launch sites for Voyageurs boat tours.

FROZEN LAKES MANAGEMENT PLAN

The National Park Service developed a draft proposed Frozen Lake Surface Access and Use Plan and is seeking public input. The plan will establish new guidelines for visitors, protect park resources and viewscapes, and help the park come into compliance with federal regulations and respond to changes in outdoor recreation trends with OHVs and ice fishing shelters. The changes will not impact snowmobiling in the park. This first public input period will be open through June 3, 2023.

More details at: voyageurs.org/NPSfrozenlakesplan

ZEBRA MUSSEL PREVENTION

To prevent the spread of invasive zebra mussels in the park, vessels crossing the Kettle Falls Portage from Rainy to Namakan Lake will need to be decontaminated by trained staff. There may be delays at the portage as vessel decontamination can take 30-45 minutes. Additionally, boats may only traverse at Gold Portage traveling from Kabetogama Lake to Black Bay, Rainy Lake. These portage restrictions and decontamination stations are in response to the discovery of invasive zebra mussel larvae in Rainy Lake.

NEW VOYAGEURS STARWATCH CRUISE

Enjoy a new boat program at Voyageurs National Park! View constellations, planets, and galaxies aboard The Voyageur tour boat, while rangers tell stories about constellations and help you to identify them. The Starwatch Cruise boards at the Rainy Lake Visitor Center and runs in August and September.

More details at: recreation.gov or www.nps.gov/voya/thingstodo



Richard LaCombe Jr



Steve Brown



Ben Summe

SUMMER PROGRAMS AT THE PARK



Ryan Brady for Wilderness Inquiry

FEATURED SUMMER PROGRAMS

DARK SKY PROGRAMS

FRIDAYS JULY 7- SEPT 8
10:00 - 11:00 PM

Voyageurs Forest Overlook, near Ash River Visitor Center

HIKE WITH A SCIENTIST

JUNE 17, JULY 15, AUG 19, SEPT 16

Learn about the real world science happening at Voyageurs National Park with the scientists in the field!

STAR PARTY

AUGUST 10 - 12

Thursday in International Falls

Friday at Rainy Lake Visitor Center

Saturday at Kabetogama Visitor Center

+ Crane Lake Dark Sky Event August 22nd

JUNIOR ANGLER FISHING PROGRAMS

JUNE 22, JULY 13, JULY 27, AUG 24

Woodenfrog Campground

VOYAGEURS PHOTO CONTEST

Submit your favorite Voyageurs memories, win prizes, and help protect and support your national park.

Learn how to enter & find more information at

voyageurs.org/photocontest

Summer adventures are right around the corner! Voyageurs Conservancy is thrilled to offer new and enhanced programs to deepen your connection to Voyageurs National Park. In partnership with the National Park Service, our Voyageurs Classroom includes a suite of family-friendly programs. Give your family the opportunity to meet a Park Scientist and learn about their fascinating field work or learn how to fish with a Park Ranger at a Junior Ranger Angler program.

Voyageurs National Park has some of the darkest - and most brilliant - night skies! This summer, enjoy a guided tour across space with a Voyageurs Conservancy education specialist and experience Minnesota's national park after dark. With our brand-new 18' telescope, you'll have the opportunity to view distant planets, galaxies, and mesmerizing starscapes like never before! Our third-annual Star Party returns on August 10-12 for a lively, multi-day astronomy festival featuring special speakers, constellation tours, and telescope sessions. Additionally, you can help us understand and protect our dark skies by participating in citizen science projects throughout the summer.

We have countless opportunities for you to enjoy and discover Minnesota's national park!

Special thank-you to Curtis Wong for generously donating a 18' Obsession Telescope to enhance Dark Sky Programs at Voyageurs National Park!

FOR A FULL LISTING OF EVENTS & PROGRAMS, PLEASE VISIT VOYAGEURS.ORG/EVENTS



NEXT GENERATION

VOYAGEURS CLASSROOM INITIATIVE

The Voyageurs Classroom Initiative builds lasting connections to Voyageurs National Park in the next generation, sparking an interest in outdoor play, environmental science, stewardship and history. This joint education program between Voyageurs National Park and Voyageurs Conservancy strengthens our relationship and increases equitable access to nature.

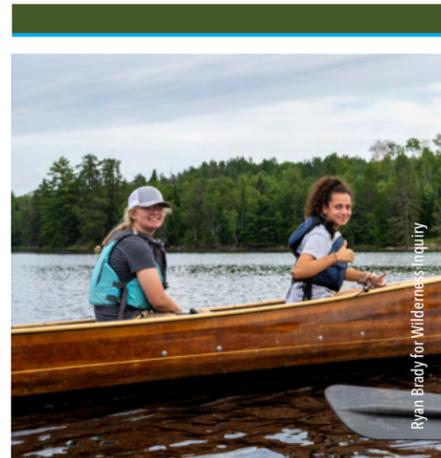
Voyageurs Conservancy expanded park field trips for local schools, provided support for NPS Interpretive Ranger staff, and increased capacity for the new Dark Sky Classroom. Launched in February 2022, the Dark Sky Classroom brought 322 students out of their desks and immersed them in the wonder of Voyageurs National Park's night sky through live virtual field trips and park visits. Students learned about inspiring phenomena such as northern lights and how to engineer solutions that protect starry skies.

The Voyageurs Classroom Initiative is largely funded by the Minnesota Environmental and Natural Resources Trust fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). The National Park Foundation and Voyageurs Conservancy members also support environmental education programs at Voyageurs National Park.

1,930 YOUTH & FAMILIES WERE SERVED IN '22 THROUGH PARK-BASED AND VIRTUAL EXPERIENCES.

NATIONAL PARK TEEN AMBASSADORS

Our award-winning National Park Teen Ambassador Program reached more youth than ever before - empowering 208 high school students to experience Voyageurs National Park on fully-funded canoeing, camping, and outdoor leadership trips. Students were served from 17 schools in the Twin Cities and local gateway communities in northern Minnesota. Teen Ambassadors camp under the stars, navigate the park's magnificent waterways, and become confident stewards of their national park. Voyageurs Conservancy has provided scholarships for Minnesota high school students since 2012 with a focus on diverse and under served communities.



Ryan Brady for Wilderness Inquiry

VOYAGEURS FIELD FELLOWS

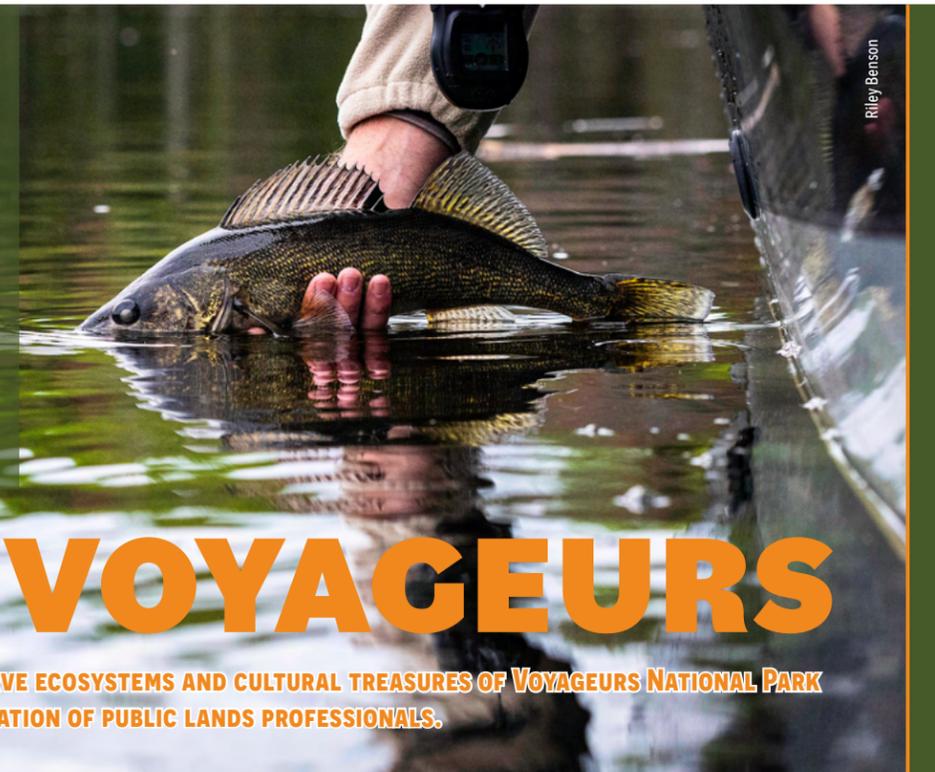
Voyageurs Conservancy supported five Field Fellows who contributed to conservation projects, education programs, and scientific research in the park. The Conservancy's Field Fellowship program invests in our future conservation leaders, offering stipend-paid opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to gain hands-on career experience in Voyageurs National Park. Summer 2022 Field Fellows supported major conservation efforts at the park including:

AQUATICS AND FISHERIES MONITORING INCLUDING LITTLE SHOEPACK LAKE MUSKIE RESEARCH, WATER QUALITY MONITORING, AND HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM SURVEYS

WOLF ECOLOGY RESEARCH FURTHERING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUMMER REPRODUCTION AND PREDATION BEHAVIOR OF WOLVES

WILDLIFE AND WETLAND PROJECTS INCLUDING VEGETATION SURVEYS; INSTALLING BAT RECORDING DEVICES; AND CONDUCTING WETLAND MAMMAL, MARSHBIRD, AND LOON SURVEYS

BOAT DECONTAMINATIONS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE ZEBRA MUSSELS INTO PARK WATERS



Riley Benson

WILD VOYAGEURS

OUR FIELD FELLOWS HELP PRESERVE ECOSYSTEMS AND CULTURAL TREASURES OF VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK AND REPRESENT THE NEXT GENERATION OF PUBLIC LANDS PROFESSIONALS.

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF ZEBRA MUSSELS

In Summer 2022, Voyageurs Conservancy provided the park \$9,000 in funding to significantly increase staff capacity to decontaminate vessels, educate the public, and engage partners in an unified response to invasive zebra mussels. We funded 4 Aquatic Invasive Species Technicians at the Kettle Falls Portage who decontaminated 570 vessels and engaged 650 visitors to prevent zebra mussel spread in the park's waters. The 260,000 people who visit Voyageurs each year enjoy kayaking, swimming, boating, and world-class fishing on its pristine lakes. These efforts protect the watershed's precious ecosystems and some of Voyageurs National Park's most beloved native fish, including walleye.



National Park Service

VOYAGEURS WOLF PROJECT

Voyageurs Conservancy provided funding to the Voyageurs Wolf Project, an ongoing research and monitoring effort focused on understanding the summer ecology of wolves in the Greater Voyageurs Ecosystem. This funding furthered research on the behaviors between wolves and beaver populations and sponsored a Wolf Ecology Field Fellow to engage in field work with the Voyageurs Wolf Project.



Tom Gable

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Love Your Park events connect families to recreation and learning opportunities in Voyageurs National Park. Over 600 participants engaged in star gazing, hiking, outdoor art experiences, public paddling days, and even deep-dives into the 2.8 billion year geologic history of Voyageurs National Park. The expansion of in-park programming supports local businesses and tourism, while engaging more Minnesotans in their state's outdoor heritage.



VOYAGEURS COMMUNITY ARTIST & EDUCATOR

Voyageurs Conservancy was proud to partner with Sam Zimmerman and support our first Community Artist & Educator at Voyageurs National Park. This vibrant "Giiwedino-Manidoog / Spirits of the North" mural by Sam Zimmerman illuminates the indigenous culture that has and continues to influence the park. Rich with symbolism, the painting features 16,866 stars for every day Voyageurs National Park has been open to the public. "The story of this piece is to celebrate the beauty of the land, water and sky, the animal spirits of the park, while also serving as a reminder to visitors that the park sits on ancestral Anishinaabe and Ojibwe homes and indigenous culture was and is part of the story of the park."



DARK SKY PROGRAMMING

Voyageurs Conservancy summer Dark Sky Programs inspired over 360 visitors and families with weekly constellation tours, telescope sessions, and our second annual Voyageurs Star Party. This multi-day astronomy festival inspired attendees with special speakers and night sky tours under constellations, nebulae, distant galaxies, and the dazzling Northern Lights. As a certified International Dark Sky Park, the Conservancy and National Park Service host joint programming to preserve natural darkness and connect all ages to the wonder of Voyageurs' starry skies.



PROTECTING VOYAGEURS' HISTORY AFTER FLOODING

Voyageurs National Park experienced historic flooding in Summer 2022 that caused major impacts to docks, backcountry trails, campsites, homes, and area businesses. Rainy Lake and the Namakan Lake Basin experienced water levels 22 inches higher than the 2014 flood and broke the previous record set in 1950. It is estimated that two-thirds of the park's archaeological sites were covered by water during the flood. Voyageurs Conservancy provided critical funding to monitor the park's 450+ archaeological sites and support historical building rehabilitation. The Conservancy will continue to work closely with the National Park Service to respond to natural disasters and preserve the park's ecological and cultural resources.

PARK BY THE NUMBERS

221,434 PARK VISITS **2,097** CAMPING RESERVATIONS **1,533** HOUSEBOAT PERMITS

4,682.25 VOLUNTEER HOURS AT THE PARK **42,718** VISITOR CENTER VISITORS

1,343 NEW JUNIOR RANGERS **9** HISTORIC BUILDINGS SECURED DURING SUMMER FLOODING

74 ACRES OF WETLANDS TREATED FOR INVASIVE SPECIES

VIEW THE ENTIRE 2022 ANNUAL REPORT AT [VOYAGEURS.ORG/2022](https://www.voyageurs.org/2022)

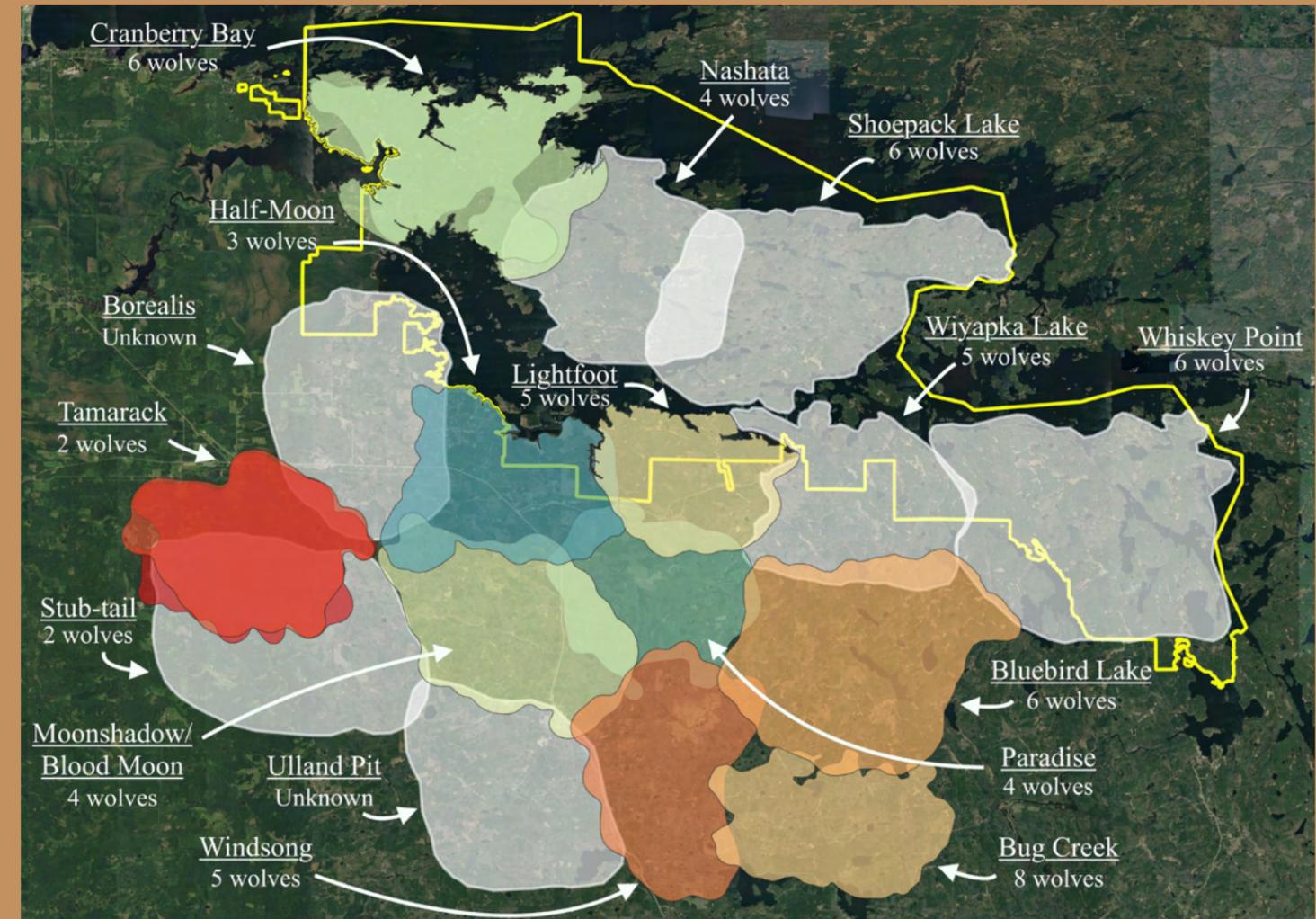
THE SINGLE GREATEST ENIGMA IN WOLF BIOLOGY: WOLF PUP SURVIVAL

Written by Tom Gable, Voyageurs Wolf Project



Wolf pups from the Bluebird Lake Pack in Spring 2022 taken shortly after we removed the pups from the den. Once pups are removed from dens, we briefly put them in a sack with their littermates where the pups wait until we can tag them. We put the pups back into the den once we are done tagging them. Photo: Anthony Souffle.

Wolf pack territories in and around Voyageurs National Park. The number below each pack refers to the number of wolves in each pack in Winter 2021-2022. We will share updated information for 2022-2023 this summer! We currently have wolves collared in the Paradise, Bug Creek, Windsong, and Vermilion River Pack. The Vermilion River pack is not on this map but is just to the east of the Bug Creek Pack.



Another spring has arrived and with it the birth of wolf pups for wolf packs in and around Voyageurs National Park. Most pups are born in the first 3 weeks of April and we know that at least 3 packs have given birth already based on the movements of GPS-collared wolves in those packs and we suspect another pack to show indications of this any day now.

One of our fundamental research objectives on the Voyageurs Wolf Project is to learn as much as we can about the pup-rearing behavior of wolves. For example, how many pups are born each year? Where are wolves giving birth to and rearing pups? How many pups survive to adulthood?

Answering these questions requires having GPS-collared wolves in packs so that we can determine where dens are. The more packs that have collared wolves in them, the more data we are able to glean. We had collared wolves in 8 different packs last fall and were excited because that

seemed to indicate we would be able to study the pup-rearing behavior of a substantial number of packs this spring.

But we should have known better. Wolves live dynamic, perilous lives that are unpredictable and ever-changing. We have observed evidence of this every year—collared wolves that we thought would live ended up dying, wolves that we thought would stay with their pack ended up leaving. Yet, we still hoped this winter would be different.

The wolves had other plans.

In October 2022, both collared wolves from the Wiyapka Lake Pack left the pack and dispersed. One wolf is currently on the shores of Lake Vermillion and the other in north-central Wisconsin! Both are still lone wolves, presumably wandering in search of a mate and a place to settle down.

A few months later, both collared wolves in the Bluebird Lake Pack, which was only 3 wolves to begin with, were

killed by other wolves within a 1-week period in late January. The collared wolves were the breeding male and female of the pack, and once they were killed, the pack was effectively ended. Their territory was promptly taken over by a new pack that we named the “Clearcut Pack”. At the same time, Wolf Y1T, the breeding male of the Blood Moon Pack, started wandering south of his territory with his mate—the pack is only these two wolves. The pair spent most of the winter rambling around the remote country between Nett and Ash Lake and have yet to return to their territory for good. We are not sure why yet.

Then in March, we lost contact with the Lightfoot Pack. One collared wolf in the Lightfoot Pack decided to hit the open road and head north to Canada. About the same time, the collar on the only other collared wolf in the pack stopped working—an unfortunate technological failure!

All said and done, in a matter of 6 months, we went from 8 packs with collared wolves to 4. As I alluded to earlier,

this pattern is not entirely unusual for us but we are always optimistic we might get lucky. However, this highlights why studying wolves in densely-forested environments can be so challenging and difficult.

We will start trying to collar wolves in late April and early May. If we have a good start, like we did last year, we might be able to get functional collars on several other packs before the end of May. We typically aim to collar 1-2 wolves in the majority of packs we study. And while that rarely happens, it is what we aspire to.

Regardless, we are excited to study the pup-rearing behavior of the 4 packs that do have GPS-collared wolves in. During the first two weeks of May, we will visit the dens of each of these packs to count the number of pups and to tag each pup. To do this, we briefly remove pups from dens so that we can sex pups, take measurements, collect genetic samples, and insert small micro-chips that will allow us to identify pups as adults.

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This information is critical to answering the most important question regarding wolf pups: how many survive their first year? For over 50 years, biologists studying wolves in forested ecosystems have wondered about pup survival rates yet studying pup survival in ecosystems where you cannot readily observe wolf pups had made this challenging. As a result, some have stated that wolf pup survival is “probably the single greatest enigma in wolf biology today”.

Yet, recent technological advances have provided new tools to estimate wolf pup survival rates in forested ecosystems and we on the Voyageurs Wolf Project are using all of these new tools in a concerted effort to reveal this aspect of wolf biology that has remained poorly understood.

Our main approach is to count the number of pups in dens so we know how many are born, which is crucial for determining what percent actually survive. We then use remote cameras scattered about pack territories to get video footage of pups as they get older to determine how many pups are still alive as summer progresses to fall and then winter.

So far, we have found some interesting results: pup survival from year to year appears highly variable. For example, we estimated that only 7% of pups survived till their first birthday in 2020-2021. That stands in stark contrast to the following year (2021-2022) when 53% of pups survived to adulthood.

For context, the typical litter in the Voyageurs area consists of 5.1 pups based on data from 29 litters. Thus, in 2020-2021, an average of only 0.4 pups per pack survived compared to 2.7 pups per pack just one year later.

Such variation in survival rates is fascinating and intriguing, or at least we think so. How could survival change so drastically from one year to the next? We have some strong suspicions but do not know for sure yet. Ultimately, we need several more years of data to have a large enough sample size to examine this topic robustly because there are a lot of variables to account for and we only add a few data points each year!

But, we are optimistic that we will be able to understand what drives wolf pup survival, and in turn wolf population change, if we can keep the Voyageurs Wolf Project going long-term, which is our dream!



How we found the breeding male of the Bluebird Lake Pack in late January 2023. The breeding male had been killed by other wolves just 6 days after his mate was also killed by other wolves. This male's death marked the end of the Bluebird Lake Pack.



A Windsong pup in the pack's den in Spring 2022. The den was just a dug out area underneath the roots of a conifer. Photo: Anthony Souffle.



A wolf pup from the Windsong Pack in Spring 2022. Five pups from the Windsong Pack survived to their first birthday, which is quite extraordinary for wolves in the Voyageurs area. Photo: Anthony Souffle.

Written by *Tom Gable*, Voyageurs Wolf Project 

PROJECT UPDATE:

CRANE LAKE PARTNERSHIP VISITOR CENTER

COMING 2024-25

LEFT IMAGE: Justin Graddy
RIGHT IMAGE: Annette S. Lee, Native Skywatchers

Crane Lake, the eastern gateway to Voyageurs National Park, and the only major entry point without a visitor center, will soon have a space to welcome and educate park visitors.

Voyageurs Conservancy and the National Park Service are designing and fabricating 1,500 square feet of exhibit space in the new Crane Lake Partnership Visitor Center. The new exhibits will share Indigenous stories, Dark Sky preservation and enjoyment, recreational opportunities, and the cultural history of the area's waterways.

The Crane Lake Partnership Visitor Center is a community-led effort championed by the Crane Lake Township who garnered \$3.2 million for a municipal campground, and \$2.6 million for the community building through the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

“Crane Lake Township is a gateway to northern Minnesota's natural beauty and a major entry point to Voyageurs National Park. Visitor centers are public spaces critical for sharing the rich cultural and natural history of the area,” shared Gretchen Janssen, Deputy Clerk and committee co-chair of the Crane Lake Township.

The design of the new education exhibits will be curated in partnership with Voyageurs Conservancy, the National Park Service, Crane Lake Township, and Native Skywatchers Design studio, who will lead the process for stakeholder input, tribal input, and development of a research-based exhibit design plan. For fourteen years, Native Skywatchers' nonprofit division has been leading Indigenous astronomy revitalization efforts and has garnered international recognition for their effort in “building community around the native star knowledge.” This project will help establish Voyageurs National Park as a space for cultural understanding and a model for Indigenous-led interpretation in our parks.

“We are looking forward to working together on this design project to help meet the need of welcoming visitors to our area. As well as showcasing the historical culture and to provide our guests with a collection of educational experiences and exhibits for generations to come,” says Jessa Quam with the Crane Lake Visitor and Tourism Bureau.

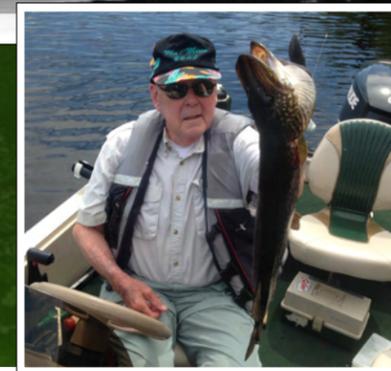
Voyageurs Conservancy supporters make the Crane Lake Partnership Visitor Center possible. Because of your support, visitors will soon see the starry skies and experience the cultural heritage of the region in a way they never have before. We will continue to keep our community updated on this landmark project happening at Voyageurs National Park.

SUPPORT THIS PROJECT

You can stay up to date on the Crane Lake Partnership Visitor Center & support the project with a donation at VOYAGEURS.ORG/CRANELAKE



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: BOB AND MARVEEN MINISH



(Left Image) Postcard featuring the Allens, Marveen's family, at Pine Cove Lodge on Namakan Lake. (Center Image) Bob Minish holding a Northern near Grassy Bay. (Right Image): I.W. Stevens snowshoeing near his Pine Cove Resort.

Nestled between towering birch and red pines lies the cabin of Ingvald Walter (I.W.) Stevens. Perhaps one of the best-known historic sites in Voyageurs National Park, visitors travel to the preserved cabins on Stevens Island in Namakan Lake to take-in the rugged northwoods beauty, untouched by logging that impacted much of the surrounding area.

Many park-goers are captivated by Stevens' independence and self-sufficiency as he lived on the remote island on Namakan Lake for over four decades. Stevens opened the Pine Cove Resort on the island in 1937 and operated the business until 1959, at the age of 74. Over the years, Steve entertained many family and friends until he left the island in 1979. One of these friends, Marveen Minish, grew up visiting Stevens at his cabin on the point.

"A fussy, old Norwegian bachelor," Marveen laughs as she describes Stevens.

Marveen has been visiting the area that is now Voyageurs National Park since her childhood in 1945, and her connection to I.W. Stevens is woven into her family history. Her grandmother was an avid fisherman and longtime friend of Stevens. Marveen's father provided dental care for the lone resort owner. Some of her fondest memories include staying at I.W. Stevens' cabin on the point. She recalls Stevens singing during his morning chores and hauling ice blocks in his wheelbarrow to provide his guests with fresh water.

"I remember Steve showing us his 'Winter Throne,'" recalls Marveen, "He had a chair mounted on stilts to hold it above the floor. Beside him was a tall stack of National Geographic magazines that he would read in the wintertime - his resting season"

Marveen's husband, Bob Minish, first visited the park with her family in the summer of 1960 and was quickly captivated by the area. The Minishes continued visiting their family cabin on Sand Point Lake and Bob would later become the president of the Canadian Sandpoint Power Association, a group critical to bringing electricity to the cabins in the area.

Marveen shares the serene nature of Voyageurs that sticks with her: "My favorite memories from childhood are visiting Steve's log cabin on the point, sitting there with all of the northwoods around and looking for blueberries. That's where I gained all of my blueberry hunting skills."

Bob has felt the magic of Voyageurs National Park over the course of decades, but one experience stands out to him. Sitting around the campfire in late September, Bob looked up to the night sky and watched the space station zoom over his head. Then, a wolf let out a long howl and the chilling call of a loon echoed from the lake. "What an incredible experience to have in the span of just a half hour," Bob reminisces.

To someone who has never visited Voyageurs National Park before, Bob explains you don't want to miss the park after dark: "One experience is to be there at night with a clear sky. Being able to see the Milky Way, seeing the stars like you'll never see them anywhere else and listening to the wolves howl," says Bob.

Bob and Marveen are longtime supporters of Voyageurs Conservancy and recognize the importance of giving back to the woods and waterways that have brought them so many fond memories over the decades. "When you love something, you have to keep it alive. You can't just keep taking, you need to give back," says Marveen.

For Bob, he finds joy seeing others recreating in Voyageurs and enjoying all the unique experiences Minnesota's national park has to offer. He recalls conversing with a group of young college students enjoying a summer day at the Mukooda campground - swimming, fishing, and enjoying the fresh water: "It was a delight to see the park being utilized and appreciated by others." The support of Conservancy members like Bob and Marveen ensure these experiences live on.

The extensive connections between the Minishes and Voyageurs National Park could stretch across pages. Bob and Marveen have generously donated many of their historical belongings to the park's archives, including a Christmas card and letter written from I.W. Stevens to Marveen's grandmother. Marveen is grateful there is a place to preserve the pieces of history that shaped her upbringing and the early days of Voyageurs National Park: "I hope through this, future generations feel connected and have knowledge about what shaped the park."



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Front Cover Photo by Jonathan Beyer

NEW This Summer!

Be on the lookout for our Voyageurs Mobile Classroom as we bring you engaging programs throughout the park and neighboring communities

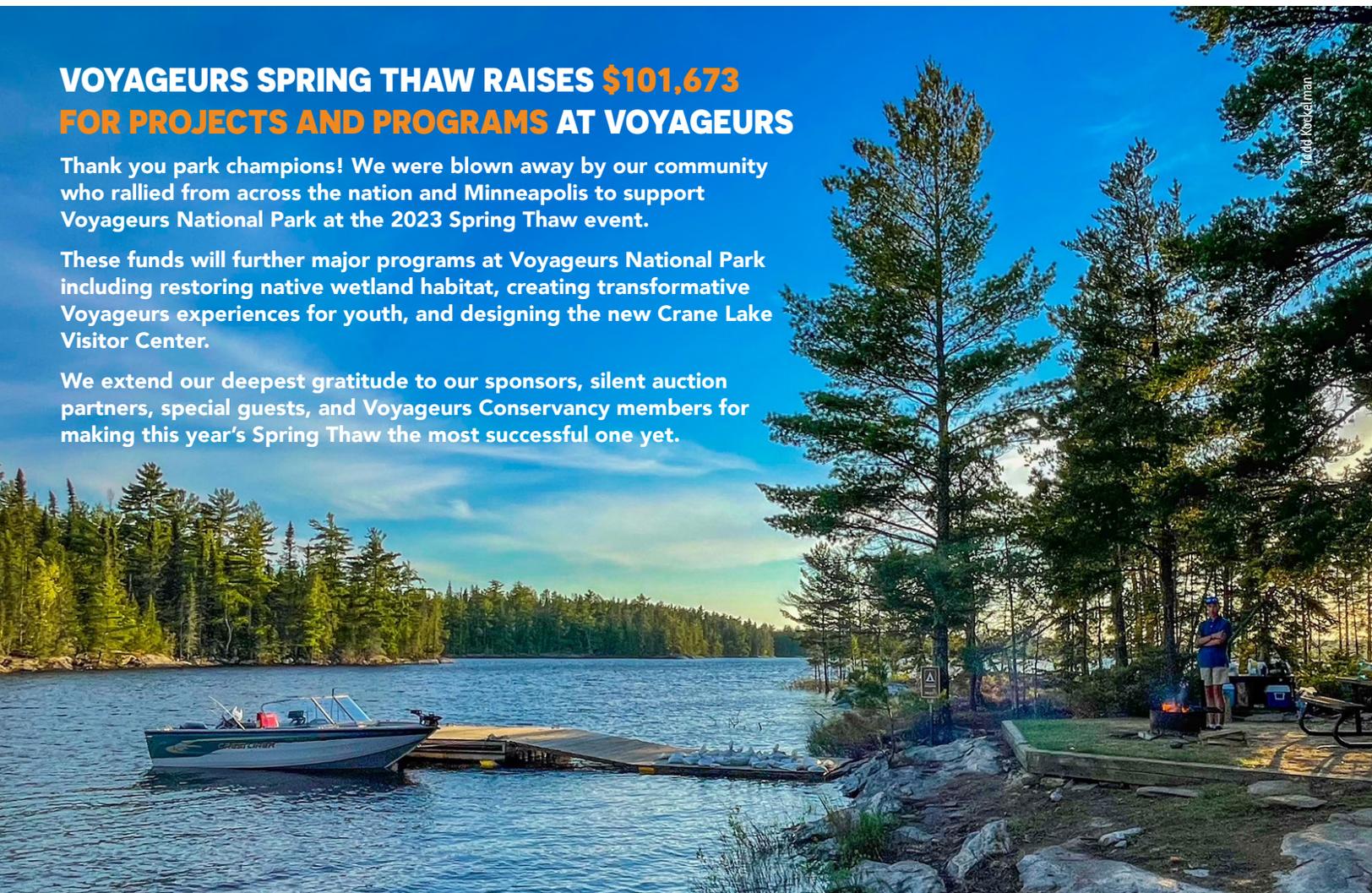


VOYAGEURS SPRING THAW RAISES \$101,673 FOR PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS AT VOYAGEURS

Thank you park champions! We were blown away by our community who rallied from across the nation and Minneapolis to support Voyageurs National Park at the 2023 Spring Thaw event.

These funds will further major programs at Voyageurs National Park including restoring native wetland habitat, creating transformative Voyageurs experiences for youth, and designing the new Crane Lake Visitor Center.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our sponsors, silent auction partners, special guests, and Voyageurs Conservancy members for making this year's Spring Thaw the most successful one yet.



Jacobs Koebelman