



The Journal of

VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATION

Summer / Fall 2006

Blazing Trails, Building Friendships

By Jim Hudson and Greg Seitz

On the weekend of May 20–22, 30 feet equaled five miles. How? The 30 feet were those of 15 volunteers; the five miles were those of the Kab-Ash Trail in Voyageurs National Park that the volunteers cleared during the inaugural Voyageurs Trail Clearing Weekend.

The project not only provided an important service to the Park and its visitors, but was an important step in forging real partnerships among VNPA, the Park, the Kabetogama Tourism Bureau and other Park stakeholders. There is perhaps no better way to cement a working relationship than with s'mores around a campfire after a day working together to protect and improve a treasured resource.

We need your feet!

Building on that tremendous success, volunteers are needed the weekend of September 29 through October 1 to continue the work begun last spring. The weekend will be a chance to visit the Park, enjoy the fall colors, meet some like-minded fans of Voyageurs and help with light trail work.

No previous trail maintenance experience is necessary; each trail crew will be guided and trained by an experienced leader. All work will be done with hand tools, which will be provided.



The Friday crew before heading out on the trail. (Photo by Peggy Franchot)

Volunteers should bring personal safety gear (work gloves, goggles, boots) and be physically fit for a four-mile round-trip hike and a moderate work day.

The weekend won't be all work, though. Ample time will be set aside for campfires, socializing and exploring the Park.

The Park Service is eager for our

help and the forest is always eager to reclaim sections of the Park's trail system. Please consider joining us for the fall trail weekend. It will be a great opportunity to simultaneously enjoy and help the Park. Interested volunteers should contact VNPA at (612) 333-5424 or vnpa@voyageurs.org for more information.

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“Blazing Trails”

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Hike the Kab-Ash Trail...tell a friend

Thanks to a Public Land Corps Grant the Park received in late spring, an energetic team from the Minnesota Conservation Corps continued the trail clearing work started by volunteers in May. Through these joint efforts, the entire 25 mile Kab-Ash Trail is again accessible and safe for hiking. The best way to maintain a trail in the long term is for visitors to experience its splendor, so share the news and plan to hike the Kab-Ash Trail on your next visit to Voyageurs National Park.

The Kab-Ash Trail runs primarily through recommended wilderness. Four separate access points and several loops give hikers the option of hiking the full length of the trail or shorter sections.



After a day on the trail, s'mores on the shores of Lake Kabetogama were a welcome reward for the crew. (Photo by Peggy Franchot)

VNP Fall Trail Weekend In Brief

Who: VNPA, the NPS, Kabetogama Tourism Bureau, Friends of Voyageurs National Park ... and you!

What: Trail clearing and maintenance, as well as socializing and enjoying the Park

Where: Voyageurs National Park foot trail system

When: September 29–October 1

Why: Because we love Voyageurs National Park

How: Call (612) 333-5424, e-mail vnpa@voyageurs.org

The Helping Hands

VNPA Executive Director Cory MacNulty was instrumental in making the spring project a success. The event was sponsored through a partnership with the Kabetogama Tourism Bureau, Voyageurs National Park and VNPA. The project was made possible through funding from the Quetico Superior Foundation and discounted accommodations provided by Arrowhead Lodge and Northern Lights Resort in Kabetogama, MN. Thank you to the many people without whom the project could not have been the success that it was:

Betsey Warrington (Kabetogama Tourism Bureau and Arrowhead Lodge)

Tyler Blindt (Driftwood Resort)

Peggy and Doug Franchot (VNPA)

Jo and Larry Kallemeyn (Friends of VNP)

Jim Hudson (VNPA)

Ruth Makinen and Jim Sandberg (VNPA)

Dave McRoberts (Arrowhead Lodge)

Harlan Schauer (Northern Lights Resort)

Michelle Yackel (VNPA)

Bruce Barrett (VNP)

Doug Bertilson (VNP)

Teri Tucker (VNP)

Russ Waldorf (VNP)

Pat Lehto (Bait n' Bite)

Dawn of a New Era?

Jim Hudson, Interim Executive Director



Are we witnessing the dawn of a new era of collaboration among many groups who value both the protection of Voyageurs National Park

and the development of a sustainable economy in northern Minnesota?

Some telltale signs that an age of brick-throwing may be receding into history include:

- Joint projects being undertaken by VNPA, the Park and gateway communities like Kabetogama;
- Efforts by new Park administration to reach out to residents of surrounding counties and communities to genuinely seek input;
- Collaboration between VNPA and International Falls on issues like keeping the border open for trade and tourism;
- Reigniting an effort to bring diverse stakeholders of northern Minnesota and Ontario together to discuss ways to create a sustainable economy compatible with protection of the region's natural resources; and
- Newspaper articles that are less critical of the Park, its administration and the Park Service

Perhaps this is just a flash of naïve optimism, but I'm getting a gut feeling that most people really

want to move beyond conflict and find ways to work together on common interests.

That certainly does not mean that there won't be disagreements in the future. But when parties have worked together to make meaningful progress in some areas, chances are we will work harder to find creative solutions to future issues.

It has been an interesting and enjoyable summer working as interim executive director of VNPA while Cory MacNulty was on maternity leave. I have met many great people who are working in various ways to benefit northern Minnesota. We welcomed Cory back on August 14th.

A Fresh Face

Gregg Rutter joined VNPA in July 2006 as the Membership and Development Director.

Before coming to VNPA, Gregg worked as a development consultant and served as the development director for a national advocacy nonprofit where he created a year-round membership and fundraising plan, provided special event planning and management and board member recruitment and development, and created many partnerships and creative opportunities.



Gregg just completed seven years on the YMCA Camp Menogyn board, where he served as board chair and annual campaign chair. Previously, he worked in the financial services industry for 18 years, helping individuals and small companies meet their investment needs.

Gregg's passion for the outdoors, wilderness, and education combine with both his business and creative background to bring an energized focus to VNPA's membership and development activities. His belief that "we are all interconnected with each other and with our natural world" meshes perfectly with the mission of VNPA.

When Gregg is not working to further the mission of the Association he can be found at the University of St. Thomas where he is studying for his Masters of Arts in Teaching. He is a life-long outdoors enthusiast and advocate, an artist and poet, and enjoys children, animals, plants, trees, dogsledding, canoeing, skiing, photography, and writing. He is the father of three and is married to Beth Rutter who is the Resource Development Manager at Amherst H. Wilder Foundation in St. Paul.

Voyageurs National Park Community Trust Survey Results Released

By Paul Labovitz, Management Assistant, Voyageurs National Park

A series of public workshops on July 18–19 in International Falls, Crane Lake and Kabetogama opened the door to the future at Voyageurs National Park. These meetings delivered the findings from a University of Minnesota Community Trust Survey initiated through collaboration between Voyageurs National Park, Koochiching and St. Louis Counties, the City of International Falls, Friends of Voyageurs National Park and Voyageurs National Park Association.

The workshops were informal and scheduled in and around Park neighboring communities to provide everyone a chance to participate. Kind support by the Voyageurs National Park Association provided juice, coffee and cookies. Meeting locations were provided through generous assistance in each community.

Each meeting started with a welcome from Superintendent Kate Miller followed by each participant's self introduction. Dr. Dorothy Anderson from the University of Minnesota presented a slideshow summary of the survey findings, and the remainder of the time was spent gathering feedback to questions distilled from the survey results. Voyageurs National Park asked their neighbors, friends and skeptics to provide their views on these questions:

- What should the Park's role be in the economic and social future of the region?



Interim Executive Director Jim Hudson, Paul Labovitz and Board Chair Doug Franchot

- How can relations and communications be improved between the Park and the local communities?

All comments were recorded for consideration. The tone of the meetings was positive and supportive. These questions were developed to ask specifically how Voyageurs National Park can be a better listener.

Participants were quick to agree that there appears to be some mystery about how Voyageurs National Park operates. Folks wanted to know more about what issues face the Park and also what they could do to help.

Many comments were specific suggestions of ways for Voyageurs to provide information about the Park, its issues and people. All agreed that the Park is an important asset for the region.

There was agreement to look forward and work harder at

building relationships to keep growing trust. The workshops were more than a release of survey results. They were an important step in helping Voyageurs National Park listen to their neighbors, friends and supporters.

Survey Says...

According to a recent article in the *Tower Timberjay News*, survey respondents said:

- The Park complemented the area with the recreational opportunities and the environmental protections it provided, but the Park could do more to help the local economy.
- They have difficulty trusting the Park.
- They put economic interests and environmental concerns on equal footing.

Changing of the Board

Earlier this year, VNPA members elected Leni Darrow, Jim Hudson and Greg Seitz to the Board of Directors.

Leni Darrow is a fairly recent arrival in Minnesota from New York City. Leni spent more than 20 years as an investment banker in New York where she was Vice President of Corporate Finance and Real Estate at Salomon Brothers and Cushman & Wakefield.

She served as Treasurer of the Board of the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children and as their delegate to the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations body, where she was elected to the Executive Committee of NGOs. She served as Treasurer and then President of the Board of the New York Foundation for the Arts. She was also a board member of Social Accountability International and Arts Horizons and on the International Council for the New York Region of The Nature Conservancy.

In Minneapolis, Leni is a Trustee of the Minnesota Zoo Foundation and a member of the board of the nonprofit art gallery The Soap Factory.

Jim Hudson has been serving as Chair of VNPA's membership committee for nearly a year. He is a Canadian citizen who has lived in Minnesota for the past 10 years. Jim worked in Information Technology and consulting industries for 30 years before returning to school to get his MBA. He recently completed his

thesis focused on environmental dispute resolution. Jim has served on a variety of nonprofit boards, including a current position with the Canada-Minnesota Business Council.

This summer, Jim stepped down temporarily from the board to serve as interim Executive Director while Cory MacNulty was on maternity leave. VNPA is very grateful to Jim for all of his help.

Greg Seitz received his bachelor's degree in English from the University of Minnesota. He lives in St. Paul and works in Eagan at Thomson West doing corporate communications, largely focused on employee communications and Web development. His experiences there make him a good fit for his new position as Chair of VNPA's Communications Committee.

Greg is an avid canoeist, camper, hiker and fly fisherman and enjoys anything that gets him outdoors.

Fond Farewell

While we were welcoming the new additions to the board, we said goodbye to several previous members:

Martin Kellogg, a founding member of VNPA and one of the leaders in the effort to create the Park, has been named an Honorary Director.

John Roth stepped down when he was appointed the new Executive Director of the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness.

Also leaving the board were:

- Dick Brown
- Allan Davisson
- Charlie Klein
- Joe Kotnik
- Ann Ladd
- Doug Logeland
- Laura Oberst
- Kristin Sankovitz

VNPA wishes to express our sincere and utmost gratitude for the help they have provided and we wish them well. We particularly recognize Ann Ladd for her extraordinary leadership as president of VNPA for the past three years. We are very pleased that many former board members are maintaining their involvement as volunteers.

A Report From the Birders' Rendezvous

By Don Nightingale, Treasurer

The first week of June, six VNPA members traveled to Voyageurs to participate in the annual Birders' Rendezvous that is traditionally held that weekend.

Early June is an ideal time to bird in the Park because the approximately 80 species that live in the area, at least part of the year, are augmented by about 160 more species that are migrating through on their spring journey north.

The event ran from late Friday afternoon through Sunday noon, and during this time there were a series of organized events to fill the plate of both serious and casual birders and Park visitors.

This year these events included 11 birding outings (some on foot, some on the water). The outings were led by extremely knowledgeable and experienced birders, including several Park personnel.

Friday evening featured a social hour and speaker event. On Saturday morning, the six of us did a forest walk on the Tilson Creek trail with about twelve other people plus two leaders.

The traditional Saturday lunch at Park headquarters provided another chance to meet more interesting people and compare notes on what everybody did and saw at their morning event.

After lunch, we joined Chris Holbeck, Chief of Resource Management, and a few others in visiting birding 'hot spots' in Rainy Lake via boat. Our hot

spots included:

- Bald Eagle eaglets on the nest
- A cormorant rookery island where these birds and Ring-billed Gulls, usually enemies, were raising their respective young close together during breeding season when they observe a cease fire toward each other. These observations were all made using binoculars from an appropriate distance.

At sunset on Saturday, we enjoyed a cruise on Rainy Lake. Other events this year included classes on birdcalls and wild edible plants.

Birding in the northern forest is largely a 'hearing event' where usually more birds are heard than seen. The one disappointment for this author was not hearing the Winter Wren. Our leaders and others on the walk often recognized and called out the bird from hearing its song. The House Wren, common in the Twin Cities, I know and love well, both by song and visual antics. However, at my current age (let's just say 60-plus years) my hearing "ain't what it use to be," and, not knowing the Winter Wren's song, when someone called out "there is a Winter Wren," I was not aware I was hearing anything other than the normal forest noises.

However, nobody fails a walk or class at the Birders' Rendezvous, and repeating from year to year is strongly encouraged and rewarded. So I will just have to go back and listen for my elusive wren.



Photo by Tawnya Schoewe, courtesy of VNP

Readers interested in the event should call or e-mail the VNPA office (612-333-5424, vnpa@voyageurs.org) to voice your interest and provide your name and contact information. VNPA will be happy to coordinate a trip again next June.

From the Archives:

The cover story in the August 1976 VNPA newsletter concerned the issue of float-plane landings on interior lakes of the Park.

A public hearing on the matter saw debate between pilots and proposal opponents who saw the landings and low flights as a threat to the wilderness nature of the Park.

The 2001 general management plan set Park policy regarding the use of fixed-wing aircraft in Voyageurs. Private aircraft are allowed on the four major lakes and seven interior lakes including Locator, War Club, Quill, Loiten, Shoepack, Little Trout and Mukooda.

Spiny Waterfleas Found in Rainy Lake

The invasive species called spiny waterfleas (*Bythotrephes longimanus*) were found in Rainy Lake in late July.

Spiny waterfleas can spread when boats and fishing gear become contaminated with egg-laden females. Although the females might die between fishing trips, they might be carrying resting eggs that can begin a new infestation.

Spiny waterfleas can foul angling gear, causing anglers to lose hooked fish. They also compete with small fish for the same zooplankton; small fish generally do not eat them due to their long spiny tails; and they can shift the natural balance of a lake's plankton community, disrupting food web dynamics.

Before leaving the water access, boaters and anglers should:

- Learn to recognize spiny waterfleas
- Inspect and remove aquatic plants and animals
- Drain water from livewells, bait containers, and bilge
- Dispose of unwanted live bait in the trash
- Spray with high pressure or hot tap water
- Report new sightings

The Minnesota DNR is working to designate Rainy Lake as an infested water. The designation means it will be illegal to transport water or harvest bait from the lake, similar to zebra mussel-infested waters.

This article is based on a press release provided by the National Park Service.

VNPA Sponsors Walkin' Jim Stoltz

VNPA is a co-host of "Forever Wild - 2006," Walkin' Jim Stoltz's award-winning multimedia concert.

Date: Friday, Sept. 15 at 7:30 pm

Place: St. Joan of Arc Church, 46th St. and 3rd Ave., Minneapolis

Cost: Free!

www.foreverwild-mn.org

The evening will feature photography, live music, and stories from 26,000 miles of wilderness walking. Jim's intimate connection with the natural world makes him a genuine and effective advocate for the protection of America's last remaining wilderness areas.

VNPA has free tickets to distribute. Please call or e-mail the office (612-333-5424, vnpa@voyageurs.org) with your name, address, phone and e-mail.

<i>Voyageurs National Park Association</i>	Membership Form	Member Level:
Name(s) _____	Student (new!) <input type="checkbox"/> \$10	(E-mail newsletter)
Address _____	Senior <input type="checkbox"/> \$25	} (Quarterly newsletter, notices and invitations to member events)
City, State, Zip _____	Individual <input type="checkbox"/> \$35	
Phone _____	Family <input type="checkbox"/> \$50	(Free set of note cards)
E-mail Address _____	Sustaining <input type="checkbox"/> \$100	(1 VNP map)
My volunteer interests include: _____	Circle map choice (West, Central, East)	
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Please email VNPA news to save paper. Yes / No	Please send me:	
<i>Thank you! Your contribution is tax deductible.</i>	<i>Birds of Voyageurs National Park</i> \$18	
<i>Please send to: VNPA, 126 N. Third St., Suite 400, Minneapolis, MN 55401</i>	Note card sampler \$8	
	Total enclosed: _____	

Voyageurs National Park Association

Protecting and promoting the
natural, recreational and
historic resources of
Voyageurs National Park

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Calendar of Summer & Fall 2006 Events:

Aug. 14–Sept. 17 **Discovery Cruise**

View Kabetogama Lake's islands and scenic bays by day. Observe loons, eagles and other Park wildlife. Enjoy unique sculptures while exploring the winding paths during a half-hour stop at the Ellsworth Rock Gardens.

Sept. 15 **Forever Wild Event with Walkin' Jim Stoltz ***

Free tickets available from VNPA. See information on page 7.

Sept. 16 **Envision Minnesota Debate and Conference**

Gubernatorial candidate debate on environmental issues.
Halenbeck Hall, St. Cloud State University, www.envisionminnesota.org

Sept. 17 **Headwaters Foundation Walk for Justice**

Support the MN Environmental Fund and the VNPA Team – make a pledge today! www.WalkForJustice.org

Sept. 29–Oct. 1 **Voyageurs National Park Trail Weekend**

See cover story to learn more about this exciting opportunity to help maintain the Park's foot trail system and explore the Park. Volunteers will be based in Kabetogama, MN.

Nov. 10–12 **Winter Outdoor Adventure Expo ***

Fri 4-9 pm, Sat 9 am-6 pm, Sun 11 am-5 pm at Midwest Mountaineering, Minneapolis, MN. www.outdooradventureexpo.com

Jan. 8–Mar. 26 **Winter Rendezvous**

A series of one-day weekend events that provide the opportunity to see and explore the Park from a perspective that is different from the summer months.

* Look for the Voyageurs National Park Association display and volunteers at these events.



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