

Climate Change Communication Strategy

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Background

Lake Superior's five National Park units, Grand Portage National Monument, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, Isle Royale National Park, Keweenaw National Historic Park, and Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore protect over 1,120 square miles of unique natural and cultural heritage. These places are at risk from the impacts of climate change. Projected changes include warming lake temperatures, falling lake levels, increased severe storm activity, hotter drier summers and warmer wetter winters, increased vector borne diseases, increased invasions of exotic species, and other impacts.

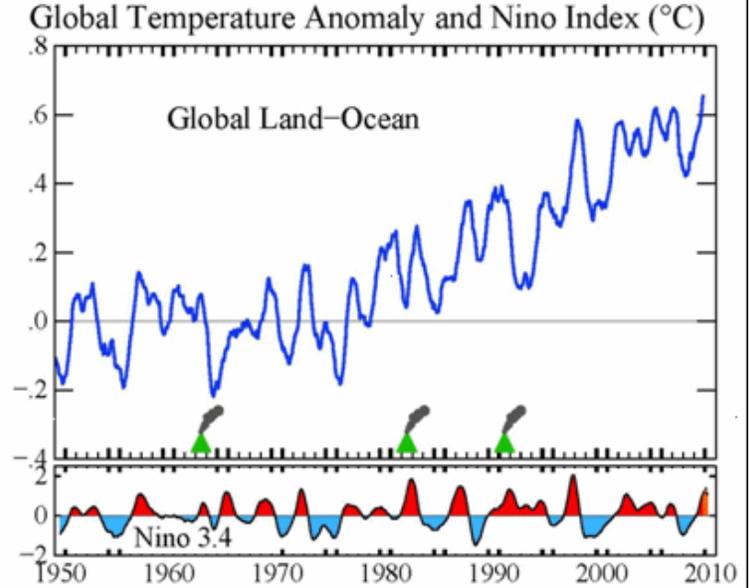
Though uncertainty remains as to how climate change will manifest itself, and how the flora and fauna native to the area will respond, it is clear that the Great Lakes Region is vulnerable. An integral component of planning for climate change is an effective communication strategy.



Approach

Our goal is to reach a wide audience extending from policy-makers to local and visiting public, from scientists to students. The need to communicate to a variety of audiences the challenge of protecting the resources of Lake Superior parks under changing climatic conditions is informed by the National Park Service Climate Change Strategy. Key messages include:

- ❖ *Climate change is happening and human activities are contributing to and accelerating it.*
- ❖ *Changing climate has consequences for parks, people, and the planet.*
- ❖ *The NPS is responding with practices that address climate change.*
- ❖ *The choices we make now may help to avoid catastrophic impacts in the future.*



Climate change, and our response to it, will occur over a long period of time. As climate change and the response of local ecosystems become better understood, management strategies will adapt. Details of the information communicated to our audiences will change, and we will likely use different communication styles and approaches over time.

Because climate change by its very nature is regional in scope, the consequences will not be limited by political boundaries. Monitoring, mitigation, and adaptation techniques will therefore require cross-boundary and inter-governmental approaches. National Park Service sites on Lake Superior will act in concert with other federal, state, and local partners develop and communicate a coordinated climate change message.

Accomplishments

- ✓ Participate in the National Park Service / Environmental Protection Agency Climate Friendly Parks Program.
- ✓ Incorporate climate change issues in the Lakeshore's Long Range Interpretive Plan.
- ✓ Incorporate climate change in education outreach programming.
 - Modify all K-12 curricula to include climate change information at all grade levels
 - Conduct teacher workshops on climate change and "Green Schools" curricula
 - Incorporate climate change in the Lakeshore Junior Ranger program
- ✓ Incorporate climate change in off-site programming.

- Regional service group presentations
- Collaborating agency presentations
- Engage and enlist collaborator support (e.g. tribes, agencies) in discussing climate change and developing adaptive strategies
- Develop and present climate change presentations at appropriate conferences within the region.

Present climate change topics at on-site programming.

- Pictured Rocks Boat Cruises
- Summer campground programs
- Fireside Chat series



Develop and distribute “Ten Things We Can Do” packet for distribution to park Community Partners regarding sustainable practices.

Develop and post climate change information and articles on park website. <http://www.nps.gov/piro/naturescience/climate-change.htm>

Continue to support funding initiatives for diesel-electric hybrid bus for Lakehore ALTRAN passengers.

Distribute Great Lakes and National Park Service climate change brochures.



Facilitate “Alger Energy Savers” program through Superior Watershed Partnership to reduce area resident’s carbon footprint and utility bills - a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative project.



Develop articles in park summer Superior Wildlands newspaper.

Post climate change information on park bulletin boards.

Include climate change discussions and actions through Lakeshore “Green Team” and “Environmental Management System” activities.

Assist with implementation of Climate Friendly Park Action Plan.

Install two climate change wayside exhibits.

Keep up to date and communicate impacts and adaptation strategies as data is collected in Great Lakes parks.

Encourage conversion of Lakeshore utility systems to solar and wind generated power as appropriate.

Communicate internally and externally mitigation gains in sustainable activities.

- Electric usage via T-8 and compact fluorescents
- Impact of conversion to B-100 diesel
- Photovoltaic systems
- Other sustainable activities including recycling paper, batteries, etc.

Encourage purchase of “carbon offsets” for Lakeshore official and visitor travel.

For More Information

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