

Community Check-in for April 2023

Superintendent's Office

Here you will find information from our various teams for the month of April. We are working on making improvements to the monthly check-in and website in the coming year and will be continuing to use the monthly check-in to keep our communities in the loop on all things Voyageurs. For updates go to: <https://www.nps.gov/voya/learn/management/stateofthepark.htm>

Thank you to Mark Denker who came to Voyageurs from St. Croix National Scenic Riverway for the months of January through April on a detail as our Lead Facilities Manager. He did a great job assisting our new supervisors, Chad Nevalainen and Steve Schultz, with understanding the various facility related programs and processes. Chad and Steve will be jointly acting as the Leads for Facilities through early May as we await the arrival of our new permanent lead, Laura Bellasalma. Laura will be transferring to Voyageurs from Crater Lake National Park in Oregon.

We have been watching weather and water levels closely, in cooperation with other area agencies, for the potential of flooding. Thankfully, with the snow melt and spring precipitation the potential for flooding seems averted.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the open houses related to the Frozen Lake Plan preliminary proposal. The comment period is open through June 3. You can submit comments electronically at:

<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=169&projectID=84972&documentID=127517> or mail them to Frozen Lake Surface Access and Use Plan, Voyageurs National Park, 360 Hwy 11 East, International Falls, MN 56649.

We know some of you have followed the news about last year's law enforcement incident at the park. We received requests for records relating to this interaction. Information related to the initial request has been released to the requester by the National Park Service Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Office.

Employee Spotlight

Each month the park will spotlight a different employee. April's spotlight is Isa Teisberg, Administrative Support Assistant.

Isa started at the National Park Service when she graduated from college, in 2019. She worked at Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, in Wisconsin, as a seasonal employee. She joined Voyageurs in 2021, in her current position as an Administrative Support Assistant. The position serves Apostles and Voyageurs because the two parks share an administrative staff.

Besides her work for the park service, she's also served as a volunteer municipal EMT and firefighter, worked for state and Ojibwe governments, and in the service industry.



Isa processes payroll and assists with Voyageurs' employee travel, such as booking plane tickets and hotel rooms. Her position is based at Apostle Islands National Seashore with half of work hours dedicated to Voyageurs National Park. She was able to visit the park last May to assist with welcoming and orientation for a group of new seasonal employees.

Isa doesn't have an office at Voyageur but schedules availability with staff every week. She provides customer service to employees in every division of the park.

For Apostle Islands, many of her responsibilities are the same as for Voyageurs, but she does fewer online tasks and additional in-person tasks; Distributing mail, processing government vehicle expenses, and assisting with employee identifications. In her free time, Isa likes cross country skiing and spending time with her husband.

Isa Teisberg, Photo Credit: Becky Olson

Administration and Business Services Team

Besides staying on top of hiring, managing the budget, assisting with contracting and agreements, and a variety of other business services, the Administrative Team has been preparing for seasonal staff onboarding that takes place in late April, May, and June. They assist Interpretation, Resource Management, and Facilitates for the arrival of new seasonals, volunteers, and interns. The team is also taking the lead on facilitating the All-Employee Meeting and meet and greet that will be held in late May.

To date, summer staffing for the park includes a total of 18 seasonals and 9 volunteers in Interpretation; 19 seasonals in Facilities; and, 7 seasonals and 3 volunteers in Resource Management.

Interpretation, Education, and Recreational Overnight Permits Team

Voyageurs National Park was highlighted on FOX Weather during National Park Week (4/22 – 30). Watch it at [Minnesota's Voyageurs National Park offers beautiful landscapes to explore](#).

The park's three visitor centers, Rainy Lake, Kabetogama Lake, and Ash River will open on Friday, May 26 with hours being 9:00 am to 5:00 pm daily.

Boat tours start the week of June 11 and North Canoe Voyages June 18. Reservations are highly recommended and may be booked by going to www.recreation.gov. A full range of tours are offered on Rainy Lake and Namakan Lake this summer. Ellsworth Rock Garden tours depart from the Kabetogama Lake Visitor Center through July. Please pay special attention to tour departure areas.

The park's joint education program has a full calendar of environmental education programs for students in first through sixth grade this spring. If you would like to get a spot for your class, please check out the link: [Voyageurs Classroom — Voyageurs Conservancy](#).

Reservations made as of April 1 for this summer:			
	2021	2022	2023
Camping Reservations	2264	1369	2432
Camping Visitors	12550	7355	12990
Houseboat Reservations	313	273	222
Houseboat Visitors	1904	1686	1330

Visitor and Resource Protection Team

The team is working with International Falls Elementary to coordinate involvement on water safety in the annual Outdoor Education Days that will take place on June 1.

Rangers responded to a snowmobile through the ice incident with assistance from the Facilities Team. No injuries, and the snowmobile was recovered with no problems. They also assisted with a search and rescue incident in Koochiching County.

The crew has been preparing winter equipment to be stored for the summer and starting to prepare for buoy placement once conditions allow. They also assisted Facilities with pulling stakes on snowmobile trails as the season wrapped up.

They are working to develop early season boat inspections in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Our Collections Management staff is working to receive a historic pipe organ that was Lydia Torrey's. The organ will be displayed at the Ash River Visitor Center once it arrives. Lydia lived on Kubal Island for years alone after her husband passed away. She often played the organ to all who visited her.

The wetlands restoration project crew was able to work with our fire staff to get one prescribed fire project completed prior to the loss of snow. The mission focused on burning a cattail stand near the Rainy Lake Visitor Center. The burn was nominal, but will aid in reducing overall mechanical removal costs during the summer.

In late April, some closures were announced in relation to eagle nest activity. You can find information at - [2023 Bald eagle nesting areas protected in voyageurs national park](#). These closures are in-line with guidance on eagle protection outlined as part of the Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle Management Act.

Facilities Team

Through April, staff are working on floating dock projects and preparing to place the docks at campsite as time allows. Currently, the staff are completing a renovation of the Ash River Visitor Center boat launch ramp dock.

The maintenance shops have been working to prepare park boats to be put in the water as soon as possible. Staff are also working on preparing the visitor centers for opening on May 26.

Acting Facilities Lead Mark Denker participated in the Kabetogama Lake Associations Meeting in late April and presented the Kabetogama Lake Boat Launch ramp renovation project.