



# Cultural Resources Management Plan

## Newsletter 1: Summary of Open Comment Period

Dear Friend of Isle Royale,

Last winter, the National Park Service held public listening sessions in Minneapolis, Duluth, Houghton and Ann Arbor to initiate the Isle Royale Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP). These listening sessions provided attendees an opportunity to meet with Park managers, learn about the planning process, and share comments, concerns and ideas related to possible options for the future management of cultural resources at Isle Royale National Park. This newsletter provides a summary of public comments, an update on plan progress to date, the project schedule, next steps in the process and future public involvement opportunities.

As explained at the winter public listening sessions, this plan will supplement and build upon the 1998 General Management Plan (GMP) and the 2011 Wilderness and Backcountry Management Plan (WBMP) by providing specific long-range guidance for the future preservation, management and use of Park cultural resources. The general desired resource and visitor experience conditions described in the GMP were expanded in the WBMP to include conditions directly related to wilderness and backcountry use, but cultural resources were deliberately sidelined to be considered in this plan. The CRMP will update and complete desired resource conditions made in both the GMP and WBMP, it will outline a process to determine specific



Rock Harbor Lighthouse photographed in 1889 by William W. Stockley, Mine Engineer for the Wendigo Copper Company (Isle Royale National Park archives).

tools and techniques that will be used for management of cultural resources and will provide strategies for managing associated uses and visitor use levels.

The planning team has begun outlining possible future management options based on public comments, issues and future opportunities identified to date and will present these options to the public for further review and comment this summer and fall. As part of this comprehensive planning effort, the National Park Service has also been preparing a draft Foundation Statement that will identify and describe fundamental resources and values related to the purpose and significance of Isle Royale National Park. This "Foundation" will serve as

an update to the 1998 GMP, integrating all existing Park management plans and providing guidance for all future management plans. The Foundation Statement will be available for public review and comment this fall.

We look forward to working with you as part of this planning process and appreciate your continued interest in the future of Isle Royale National Park.

Phyllis A. Green  
Superintendent  
Isle Royale National Park

# What We Heard During the First Open Comment Period

The public involvement efforts of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) are intended to gather information and ideas from the public on proposed actions in order to help decision-makers make better decisions. It is the reasons for people's concerns, preferences, and criticisms that are sought. These public comments and concerns will be considered as the planning team moves through the next steps in the process. It is important to note that the analysis of public comment is not based on vote counting.

We received 95 responses to Public Scoping Period No. 1, commenting on various cultural resource topics and related issues. Many who commented have long-term associations with Isle Royale, such as life leases and/or memberships in organizations working with the park. Throughout the comments, there was broad appreciation for all cultural resources, spanning from the prehistoric era to those more recent. There was broad support for maintaining historic structures, particularly those related to fishing lifeways and summer residences.

Some of the common responses were:

- value the history of cultural resources
- value the visitor opportunities to experience cultural resources
- support for allowing families to stay under permit/lease/volunteer arrangements
- life-lease and VIP families should not be allowed to stay after leases expire
- allowing use of historic cabins by the public
- commentary about NPS methodology and assumptions
- need for a balance between cultural resources and wilderness
- suggestions that the Park should develop partnerships with public groups
- importance of summer home histories and commercial fishing histories
- maritime resources are important
- natural resources are important
- ethnographic resources could be affected by the plan
- native use (prehistory and more recent) is important
- mining history is important
- concerns about Park management
- concern over irretrievable impacts to resources
- possible threats to cultural resources
- support for continuation of historic commercial fisheries
- resort history is important
- potential effects on archaeological resources
- concern about protecting sacred sites
- concerns about visitor use and experiences
- concerns about socioeconomic issues.



Ghyllbank settlement in winter of 1892. Today the location is known as Windigo. Photographed by Alfred C. Lane, Assistant State Geologist (Fisher Collection - Michigan Technological University archives).

# Introduction to Park Foundation Statements

The Foundation Statement is based on the enabling legislation that established Isle Royale as a National Park and documents the park purpose, significance, fundamental resources and values, and primary interpretive themes. Because the Isle Royale CRMP will update and complete several aspects of the GMP and WBMP, it is important to review Congressional designation, legislative history and other special mandates to verify the formal intent for establishing this National Park.

Purpose statements define the reason the Park was established and help provide guidance for future Park management, administration and use, and provide a rationale against which all proposed actions can be measured. Purpose statements help visitors, cooperating agencies, partners, community members, and other users understand the framework in which Park management decisions are made.

Significance statements describe the distinctive aspects that help to place Isle Royale in the regional, national, and

international context. Defining significance helps managers and administrators set priorities, make decisions and focus their efforts and funding on preserving the resources and values necessary to accomplish the Park's purpose.

Fundamental resources and values are closely related to purpose and significance and serve as specific reference indicators to help focus planning and management on the vitally important attributes that must be maintained in an unimpaired condition. Primary interpretive themes are the most important stories, concepts, and ideas communicated to the public about the Park and serve as the core of all educational programs and media provided to visitors.



1870's-era steam engine for a mine hoist at Island Mine location. Seth DePasqual, 2010.

The planning team has been working with Park managers and the NPS regional office to prepare and compile a draft Foundation Statement that will be used to help guide the decision making process for this Cultural Resources Management Plan. The draft Foundation Statement will be made available for public review and comment this fall.

## The Planning Process

<i>Step and Timeframe</i>	<i>Planning Activity</i>	<i>Participation Opportunities</i>
1. Fall/Winter 2010/2011	Plan Initiated and Public Scoping	Provide your ideas and comments
2. Spring/Summer 2011	Comment Review and Summary, Draft Preliminary Foundation Statement; <b>Newsletter 1:</b> Summary of Open Comment Period; Develop Issues and Opportunities; Draft Preliminary Options/ Alternatives	Continue to provide your ideas and comments, and Read Newsletter #1
3. Fall/Winter 2011	<b>Newsletter #2:</b> Draft Foundation Statement; Agency, Tribal & Consulting Party Consultation; <b>Newsletter #3:</b> Preliminary Options/Alternatives; Public Meetings/Workshops on Draft Options/Alternatives; Refine and Adjust Alternatives	Visit the project website and comment on the CRMP; Read Newsletters #2 & #3; Review preliminary options and alternatives; Attend public meetings
4. Winter/Spring 2012	Conduct Environmental Analysis of Refined Alternatives; Prepare Draft CRMP/Environmental Impact Statement	Visit project website for updates
5. Summer/Fall 2012	Agency, Tribal, & Consulting Party Consultation, Public Release & Review of Draft Plan/EIS	Read the draft CRMP/EIS and provide your ideas and comments



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Isle Royale National Park  
800 East Lakeshore Drive  
Houghton, MI 49931

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## EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The public is encouraged to follow the planning process and register to receive updates, as well as, at designated times, submit comments digitally on the project website:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ISROcrmp>.

### Address

Superintendent  
Isle Royale National Park  
800 East Lakeshore Drive  
Houghton, MI 49931

Liz Valencia  
Chief of Interpretation/Cultural Resources  
906.487.7153  
liz\_valencia@nps.gov

Seth DePasqual  
Cultural Resource Manager  
906.487.7146  
seth\_c\_depasqual@nps.gov

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



**Captain John F. Johns Commercial Fishing Enterprise, circa 1889. Photographed by Alfred C. Lane (Fisher Collection - Michigan Technological University).**