NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

**United States Department of the Interior**
National Park Service

882

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

**1. Name of Property**

Historic name: Garrison Concourse

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:
"Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941"

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

**2. Location**

Street & number: Junction of Minnesota Highways 169 and 18

City or town: Garrison State: MN County: Crow Wing

Not For Publication N/A Vicinity: N/A

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___**national** X **statewide** ___**local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X **A** ___**B** X **C** ___**D**

Barbara Howard September 23, 2013

**Signature of certifying official/Title:** Deputy SHPO, MHS **Date**

**State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

**Signature of commenting official:** **Date**

**Title :** **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Joe Edson for Beall 12-3-13

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: ☐

Public – Local ☐

Public – State ☒

Public – Federal ☐

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) ☐

District ☐

Site ☒

Structure ☐

Object ☐

Garrison Concourse
Name of Property

Crow Wing Co., MN
County and State

**Number of Resources within Property**
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|---|---|---|
| | 1 | buildings |
| 1 | | sites |
| 3 | | structures |
| | 1 | objects |
| 4 | 2 | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

**6. Function or Use**
**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
LANDSCAPE/park

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
LANDSCAPE/park

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Other: NPS Rustic Style

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE

**Narrative Description**
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

**Summary Paragraph**

The Garrison Concourse is a 6.3-acre highway wayside rest located at the junction of Minnesota Highways 169 and 18 in the town of Garrison in a popular resort area on the northwestern shore of Mille Lacs Lake. The largest of the property's six principal resources is a massive stone overlook wall that projects about 160' into the lake. The property was developed in 1936-1939 by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in cooperation with the Roadside Development Division of the Minnesota Department of Highways (MHD) and the National Park Service (NPS). The design represents a blend of classically-inspired formalism and the National Park Service Rustic Style. The design team was led by architect Edward W. Barber (Chief of the NPS's Minnesota Central Design Office), prominent Minnesota landscape architect Arthur R. Nichols (Consulting Landscape Architect for the MHD), and engineer Harold E. Olson (Roadside Development Engineer for the MHD). The property retains good historic integrity and is being rehabilitated by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, which still owns and operates the wayside rest.

**Narrative Description**

See Continuation Sheet.

## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria**
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

[X] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[X] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

[ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

[ ] B. Removed from its original location

[ ] C. A birthplace or grave

[ ] D. A cemetery

[ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure

[ ] F. A commemorative property

[ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**
1939-1955

**Significant Dates**
1936
1939

**Significant Person**
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**
N/A

**Architect/Builder**
See Continuation Sheet

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Garrison Concourse, a state highway wayside rest built in 1936-1939, is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A, significance to the broad patterns of our history, and Criterion C, design significance, in the areas of Politics/Government and Landscape Architecture. It meets Registration Requirements 2 and 4 of the "Waysides and Overlooks" subsection of the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) entitled "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941." The Garrison Concourse was the centerpiece of the most extensive state highway roadside development project built by the Minnesota Department of Highways (MHD) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Most labor was provided by enrollees of a CCC camp in Garrison known as the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Wayside Camp. The Garrison Concourse was one of the first and most important roadside development facilities built by the MHD Roadside Development Division and embodies early agency goals including increasing highway safety and promoting automobile tourism. The concourse is an excellent, well-preserved blend of classically-inspired formalism and the National Park Service Rustic Style. It is well built with a high level of hand-craftsmanship. The concourse is one of the most physically impressive of Minnesota's roadside scenic overlooks and a distinctive example of the work of the National Park Service's Minnesota Central Design Office working with prominent landscape architect A. R. Nichols, who was Consulting Landscape Architect for the MHD. The concourse became a major destination for visitors to Mille Lacs Lake and for recreational travelers on Highways 169 and 18, as it remains today. The Garrison Concourse is significant on a statewide level. The period of significance begins in 1939 when construction was completed. It ends in 1955, which was the approximate end of the MHD Roadside Development Division's formative period during which Minnesota's first generation of state highway wayside rests was designed and built.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

See Continuation Sheet.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

See Continuation Sheet.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

**Primary location of additional data:**

____ State Historic Preservation Office
_X_ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: Minnesota Dept. of Transportation (MnDOT), St. Paul

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** CW-GRC-001

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** approx. 6.3 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: Longitude:
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

**Or**
**UTM References**
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

[X] NAD 1927 or [ ] NAD 1983

1. Zone: 15 Easting: 436550 Northing: 5126840
2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the nominated property is shown by the dashed line on Figure 10, which is a sketch map of the site. This map was prepared using a Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) right-of-way map and a MnDOT aerial photo taken in 1999. The eastern boundary follows the historic (and current) MnDOT right-of-way line on the shore of Mille Lacs Lake. The western boundary follows the western side of the eastern curbline of Highway 169 and Highway 169/18. The highway curb itself is included within the nominated property. The southern boundary of the nominated property is an east-west line located 720' southwest of the southwestern corner of the stone overlook wall, measured along the Highway

169 curb. The northern boundary is an east-west line located 720' north of the northwestern corner of the overlook wall, again measured along the curbline.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The southern boundary of the nominated property, located 720' south of the southwestern corner overlook wall, was drawn to include 475' of granite curbing along the eastern edge of Highway 169. The curbing begins at a point on the eastern curb line of Highway 169 about 245' southwest of the southwestern corner of the overlook wall and extends southward. The southern boundary is drawn where the granite curbing ends at the northern edge of a lakeshore access point. (The access provides a place for vehicles, boat trailers, ice houses, and other equipment to reach the lake. South of this access, the granite curbing extends another 500' southward; the southern 500' of curbing is outside of the boundary of the nominated property.) The northern boundary of the nominated property was drawn 720' north of the northwestern corner of the overlook wall – a distance equal to the southern boundary – to preserve the symmetry of the site design. Outside of the northern and southern boundaries, the Highway 169 roadway moves fairly close to the water's edge, which reduces the lakeshore's recreational use. The western boundary of the nominated property is drawn to exclude the roadway but include the curb along the highway's eastern edge which contains the granite curb stones. The eastern boundary of the nominated property follows the state highway right-of-way line on the shore of Mille Lacs Lake as drawn on MnDOT right-of-way maps. This right-of-way line has not changed since the 1930s.

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Susan Granger, Scott Kelly, and Liz Morrison
organization: Gemini Research
street & number: 15 East 9th St
city or town: Morris state: MN zip code: 56267
e-mail gemres@info-link.net
telephone: 320-589-3846
date: March 2013

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

## Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

## Photo Log

Name of Property: Garrison Concourse

City or Vicinity: Garrison

County: Crow Wing State: MN

Photographer: Scott Kelly

Date Photographed: December 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

**Photo #1 of 7**
The Garrison Concourse from the south. The streetlight at the left edge of the photo stands close to the western boundary of the nominated property, which is the western edge of the Highway 169 curb. To the right of the lamp, partly obscured by trees, is the

small wooden information booth. Near the center of the photo is the fiberglass walleye statue. To the right of the fish is the flagpole with its stone base (and flag flying). Many of the property's green ash, birch, pine, and spruce trees appear in the photo, as do nine original spirea shrubs near the flagpole (camera facing northeast).

**Photo #2 of 7**
The overlook wall from the north. The headstone-like Tauer Monument stands in the turf near the green ash trees at center right (camera facing southeast).

**Photo #3 of 7**
Return wall which forms one side of the rectangular lookout bay at the northwestern corner of the overlook wall. The bay originally contained two rectangular benches with poured concrete slabs and granite legs. The concourse's bituminous drive is at right (camera facing east).

**Photo #4 of 7**
Northern end of the eastern lookout bay (just north of the overlook's north-south midpoint). The flagstone walkway, which was replaced with (or covered by) poured concrete, is scheduled to be restored in the 2013 construction season (camera facing north).

**Photo #5 of 7**
Southern battered wall of the massive stone overlook. The level of Mille Lacs Lake was unusually low in 2012 when these photographs were taken. In normal years the water laps at the base of the wall (camera facing east).

**Photo #6 of 7**
The central island with its granite curbstones. In the center is the flagpole whose low buttresses and stepped top are inspired by the Art Deco style. Around the flagpole is an original 16'-square flagstone plaza. The flagpole's stone veneer, flagstone plaza, and metal pole were restored in 2011. At the corners of the plaza are four, modern circular concrete planters. The concrete walk in the center of the photo replaces an original gravel walkway. To the left of the flagpole is one of the site's two original curved granite and concrete benches. To the right of the flagpole is the wooden information booth. Immediately behind the flagpole (partly obscured) is the fiberglass walleye statue. The concourse island (including curbing, paths, benches, plantings, and other elements) is scheduled to be rehabilitated in 2013 (camera facing west).

**Photo #7 of 7**
The central island with the southern wall of the overlook in the distance. In the foreground is one of the original curved benches. The bench originally had two legs; the middle leg seen in the photo is a remnant of another of the island's benches that was temporarily set in place by MnDOT to support the cracked concrete seat. Behind the flagpole are several original spirea shrubs (camera facing south).

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
**Estimated Burden Statement**: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

## DESCRIPTION

The Garrison Concourse, built in 1936-1939, is a 6.3-acre state highway wayside rest located on the northwestern shore of Mille Lacs Lake – Minnesota's second-largest body of water. The concourse is on the eastern side of the junction of the two highways it was designed to serve – Minnesota Highways 169 and 18 (Figures 1, 3, 8, 10). The property is located within the small city of Garrison (population 210) whose one-story downtown commercial buildings are located across Highway 169 to the west. Land uses around the concourse have not changed significantly since the 1930s. The Garrison Concourse still serves its original function and is still owned by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT).

The Garrison Concourse was given the name by its original designers. In the field of landscape design, the term "concourse" often refers to a sizable, open (often flat) area designed to accommodate a large number of people and/or vehicles. A concourse sometimes presents a wide or panoramic view. The term can also denote a hub where several paths or roads come together.

The Garrison Concourse was built in 1936-1939 by the enrollees of a 200-man Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp located near the southern edge of Garrison. The concourse is extremely well-built and the level of craftsmanship very high.

The design of the concourse represents a blend of classically inspired formalism and the National Park Service Rustic Style. The design team was led by architect Edward W. Barber (Chief of the National Park Service's Minnesota Central Design Office), prominent Minnesota landscape architect Arthur R. (A. R.) Nichols (Consulting Landscape Architect for the Minnesota Department of Highways or MHD), and civic engineer Harold E. Olson (Roadside Development Engineer for the MHD). The team included other landscape architects and engineers, primarily employed by the National Park Service (NPS).

The nominated property includes six principal resources – one building, three structures, one object, and one site (Figures 10-11). The building, which is Noncontributing, is a small modern visitor information booth. The three structures, all Contributing, are a large scenic overlook wall, a tall stone flagpole base that doubles as an interpretive marker, and a substantial amount of granite curbing. The object, which is Noncontributing, is a large fiberglass walleye sculpture. The site, which is Contributing, is the designed landscape itself. It includes original resources such as a drive-parking area, two curved benches, the Tauer Monument, and plantings. These resources are not individually counted per National Register guidelines.

The character-defining features of the property include (but are not limited to) its stylistic blend of the National Park Service Rustic Style and traditional formalism; the property's proximity to a highway; a symmetrical site design; a massive granite overlook wall that projects into Mille Lacs Lake and provides a panoramic view; long stretches of undeveloped shoreline north and south of the structure; a flat concourse on which cars can drive and park; an oblong central island designed with a formal layout; a central granite flagpole base with interpretive plaque; extensive granite curbing; and plantings that include turf grass and deciduous and coniferous trees and shrubs planted in a formal arrangement on the island and in naturalistic patterns around the site's central structures.

***Setting***

The Garrison Concourse was built as a rest stop on Minnesota Highway 169, historically an important regional route linking the Twin Cities (on the south) with the Minnesota's Iron Range near Grand Rapids (on the north). About 100 miles north of Minneapolis, Highway 169 reaches the southern shore of Mille Lacs Lake, a popular resort area and one of the state's best fishing grounds. Highway 169 follows the western shore of the lake for 20 miles before reaching the small town of Garrison near the lake's northwestern corner. A few miles north of Garrison, the highway leaves the lakeshore and strikes north toward Grand Rapids. In the center of Garrison, adjacent to the concourse, travelers have the option of turning west on Minnesota Highway 18 and heading to the Brainerd lakes region, another popular recreational area.

Prior to construction of the Garrison Concourse, the sandy shoreline site was occupied by the boats and long wooden dock of the Midland Hotel. The hotel, owned by William Tauer, stood a short distance to the west, facing Garrison's Central Avenue. In June of 1927 during one of Mille Lacs Lake's record-setting storms, William Tauer drowned while trying to rescue fishermen who were caught out in the storm in boats. (A total of six men died.) A short time later, a granite monument to Tauer was erected near the hotel dock on the future concourse site (see Tauer Monument under Structures and Furnishings below). When site preparation for the Garrison Concourse began, the CCC moved the monument a short distance to the north to make way for the overlook wall.

In 1932-1933, a few years prior to construction of the concourse, Highway 18 immediately to the west was realigned. The highway had jogged through Garrison on the village's east-west Central Avenue (Figure 1), which intersected Highway 169 at a 90-degree angle immediately west of the future concourse. Central Avenue was Garrison's main commercial street, and its small cluster of commercial buildings flanked it, most facing north or south. The 1932-1933 realignment shifted Highway 18 northward and at an angle so that it intersected Highway 169 in a "Y" junction. Deprived of highway traffic on Central Avenue, most of Garrison's businesses gravitated to new locations facing east toward Highway 169 and the Garrison Concourse.

The Garrison Concourse was built as part of a large state highway roadside development project known as the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan. (See Section 8 for more information.) The recently built "Y" intersection immediately west of the concourse was redesigned and landscaped as part of the same project (Figure 8). The redesigned intersection included generous traffic islands to safely channel vehicles through the junction and to help the highway blend with the natural setting. As traffic increased through the decades, the intersection was altered in the 1960s and again in the 1980s. The number of driving lanes was increased, the islands trimmed, and a long curving concrete median was added west of the concourse. When the islands were altered, most of their granite curbing was replaced with modern concrete curbing and most of the plantings were removed.

***Topography, Spatial Organization, and Circulation***

The topography of the Garrison Concourse is basically flat except at the eastern edge of the property where the shore slopes down to the water. The concourse was built on a plane of gravel, clay, and stone fill. A construction plan sheet dated Sept. 12, 1937, indicates "material for fill to be pit-run gravel

topped with one foot of clay and then 6 inches of gravel surfacing. Black-top will be placed by the Highway Department after settlement complete."

The site is entered from Highway 169 via a short east-west entrance drive that is aligned with Central Avenue. The concourse entrance drive was originally wide, with an oblong island or median that separated traffic entering and leaving the site (Figure 8). In 1982 the island was removed and the entrance drive narrowed to its current width of 44' (Figures 10-11).

After the drive enters the concourse, it loops around the central island. Cars often pause or informally park near the eastern side of the overlook wall. There is a more formal parking area on the western side of the island in a rectangular parking bay. The length of the parking bay mirrors the length of the overlook's eastern lookout bay. The concourse drive has been surfaced with bituminous since 1940.

Sandy beach areas both north and south of the overlook wall are included within the boundaries of the nominated property (Figure 10). Both were used by concourse visitors. The southern beach area predates development of the site and its sloping sands were probably a natural occurrence. North of the overlook wall, the CCC developed a 350'-long sandy beach during the 1937 construction season, clearing the shore and hauling in sand. The new beach is clearly visible on 1939 aerial photos. Its southern end was about 225' north of the northwestern corner of the overlook wall and it extended about 350' northward. (No documents explaining the need for a second beach area have been uncovered. A northern beach would have been exposed to less traffic than the southern area; perhaps traffic and visitor safety led to the construction of the northern beach.)

Today, within the nominated property, the lakeshore north and south of the overlook wall is sandy, pebbly, and unimproved. The shore both north and south of the overlook wall is used for occasional swimming, temporary boat parking, snowmobiling, lake access for fishing (including ice fishing), and special community events. Today there is a modern stormwater drainage outlet at each end of the man-made northern beach and the beach itself is no longer discernable.

***Structures and Furnishings***

Stone Overlook Wall and Central Island (One Contributing Structure). Built 1936-1939. The principal feature of the Garrison Concourse is a massive C-shaped stone overlook wall encompassing a drive and landscaped island (Photos 1-4). The overlook wall measures about 335' north-south and 190' east-west. It projects about 160' into the lake, but was built during drought in the mid-1930s when the lake level was extremely low; the concourse was built on dry ground with the knowledge that the water level would eventually return to normal (Figure 4).

The overlook wall is constructed of large, roughly cut granite boulders laid over a stone rubble core. Much of the granite is pinkish-gray. The stones were laid in a random pattern with fairly wide mortar joints, and some of the blocks were placed to display drill marks from blast quarrying. The source of the granite has not been identified but it may have come from quarries near the town of Isle on the southern shore of the lake. The granite for the overlook wall's flagstone walkway was hauled from a quarry near St. Cloud (Progress Reports).

The upper sides of the overlook wall are about 2' thick and 3' tall and anchored at intervals with 3'-square piers. The upper walls rise above the structure's powerful 16'-tall battered stone base (Photo 5). Construction plans specify footings at least 4' deep beneath the base stone.

The overlook is generally curved, but has three symmetrically placed rectangular bays: a 120'-long bay on the eastern side and 70'-long bays near the northwestern and southwestern corners (Photo 3). There were originally seven 8'-long benches in the bays (visible in the background of the photo labeled Figure 6) that are now missing. The benches had rectangular poured concrete seats and rough-cut granite legs. The benches are scheduled to be replaced in 2013 with new concrete and granite benches designed using historic plans and photos to match the originals. (See Rehabilitation of the Concourse below.)

The inner side of the overlook wall was originally lined with an approximately 6'-wide granite flagstone walkway, edged with a granite curb. The walkway widened within the lookout bays to form broad flagstone plazas. Sometime after circa 1990 the flagstones were covered with, or replaced by, poured concrete (Photo 4). The flagstone and curbing will be restored in-kind in 2013. (See Rehabilitation below.)

The central island was originally crossed by a formal grid of gravel paths that led to the island's central flagpole (Figure 6). The paths eventually became overgrown with turf, and circa 1990 the east-central path was replaced by a 30'-long poured concrete sidewalk leading to the flagpole (Photo 6). Near the ends of the island adjacent to the paths, there were originally four, curved, 8'-long benches with poured concrete seats and rough-cut granite legs (Figures 6-7; Photo 7). Two of the benches still stand somewhat near their original positions (Figure 11) and two have been lost and are scheduled to be replaced in-kind in 2013. (See Rehabilitation below.) On the western side of the island is a colossal fiberglass walleye statue that was erected circa 1980 (see description below). For the island plantings, see Vegetation below.

Stone Flagpole Base-Interpretive Marker (One Contributing Structure). Built 1938-1939. In the middle of the concourse's large central island is a tall stone structure built as a combined flagpole base and interpretive marker (Figures 6-7, Photos 6-7). It is surrounded by a 16'-square, at-grade flagstone plaza. The flagpole base is built of roughly cut, pink and gray granite laid over a rubble core. The stone was laid in a random pattern with fairly wide mortar joints. The structure is square in cross-section and has low buttresses and a stepped top, a form evidently inspired by the Art Deco style. The pole itself is metal. Mounted on the eastern face of the base is a rectangular bronze plaque whose text reads:

> Mille Lacs Lake. Named from the fur traders' phrase 'The Thousand Lake Region,' this lake is 1250 feet above sea level and covers about 200 square miles. It formerly included much low ground and several adjacent lakes. When visited by Du Luth in 1679, Sioux Villages, now indicated by numerous mounds, lined the lakeshore.
>
> Concourse designed and constructed by Minnesota Department of Highways, National Park Service, Village of Garrison, Civilian Conservation Corps.

The flagpole base and stone plaza were restored in 2011. (See Rehabilitation below.)

Stone Curbing (One Contributing Structure). Built 1937-1939. Substantial amounts of 6"-tall granite curbing appear in two places at the Garrison Concourse: around the central island and along the eastern edge of Highway 169 at the southern end of the site (Figures 6-7; Photo 6). The curbing in the rest of the nominated property consists of poured concrete curbing that postdates the 1960s and replaces original granite curb stones. The granite curbing along the eastern edge of Highway 169 within the nominated property begins at a point on the edge of Highway 169 about 245' southwest of the southwestern corner of the overlook wall and extends 475' southward (Figure 10; see also Boundary Justification in Section 10). (Outside of the nominated property, the junction of Highways 169 and 18 retains some additional remnants of granite curbing. About 500' feet of granite curbing extends south of the nominated property on the eastern side of Highway 169, and about 1,340' of granite curbing is located on both sides of Highway 18 about 200' west of the nominated property.)

Most of the granite curb stones within the nominated property are roughly cut and have a pinkish-gray tone. Some of the granite is speckled. Most of the stones measure between 12" to 30" long and they are evidently at least 18" tall – original plans specify that they should project 6" above ground and extend 12" to 15" below grade as a firm anchor. Some of the stones were placed so their blasting drill marks are clearly visible. The curbing around the central island was restored in 2011, and the curbing along the overlook wall's inner walkway is scheduled to be replaced in-kind in 2013. (See Rehabilitation below.)

Fiberglass Fish (One Noncontributing Object). Erected ca. 1980; fabricated by Creative Displays of Sparta, Wisconsin. A relatively recent (and very popular) component of the Garrison Concourse site is a large fiberglass statue of a walleye that was installed circa 1980 on the central island. It stands immediately west of the stone flagpole base (Photos 6-7). The fish is elevated on a steel framework above a 17' x 28' concrete pad. The structure has a low wooden base with modest signage that includes a board reading "Welcome to Garrison." In 2013 the concrete pad will be removed and replaced with turf, and the walleye will be moved to a new location just south of the concourse entrance drive (about 60' northwest of the southwest corner of the overlook wall, within the nominated property). (See Rehabilitation below.)

Visitor Information Booth (One Noncontributing Building). Built ca. 1990 for the Garrison Commercial Club. A small polygonal woodframe information booth (about 12' across) stands on a concrete pad immediately north of the concourse entrance (Photo 6). In 2013 the booth will be moved to a new position just south of the concourse entrance drive (about 50' northwest of the southwest corner of the overlook wall, within the nominated property). (See Rehabilitation below.)

Tauer Monument. Not included in Contributing/Noncontributing count due to small scale. Erected in 1927; moved to current position in spring 1936. The Tauer Monument was originally erected on the future site of the concourse in 1927, nine years before construction of the concourse began. The concourse designers (i.e., either NPS designers or A. R. Nichols of the MHD) essentially incorporated the preexisting monument into the new site; when the CCC began to prepare the site in the spring of 1936, the crew moved the monument to its current position about 85' north of the future overlook wall, presumably at the designers' direction (Photo 2; Figure 11). At its new position just north of the overlook, the monument would have been encountered by visitors as they moved between the overlook wall and the beach. The Tauer Monument remembers William Tauer, one of six men from the Garrison area who drowned in June 1927 in one of Mille Lacs Lake's most infamous storms. At the time of Tauer's death, he was proprietor of Garrison's Midland Hotel and the hotel dock and boats were located on the future concourse site (Jenstad 2001; Krebs 2003; Hemmingsen 2006). The monument is a rockfaced, gray granite, headstone-like structure. On its western face is a smooth rectangular text

area with incised lettering that reads: "This memorial erected in honor of William A. Tauer who sacrificed his life to save others during the storm on Mille Lacs Lake June 10, 1927 by the people of Morgan, Minn."

***Vegetation***

All of the plantings within and near the Garrison Concourse were designed by landscape architect A. R. Nichols. The plants were installed in the fall of 1938 and during the 1939 construction season (Progress Reports; Historic Photos). The planting design for the concourse's central island was formal. Nichols planned the surrounding site and greater highway right-of-way to be informal, which was more typical of the National Park Service Rustic Style. Outside of the concourse island, the planting plan retained existing trees, particularly along the lakeshore, and added new trees, shrubs, and turf. The vegetation was chosen to withstand high winds, subzero temperatures, no supplemental irrigation, and little other maintenance, and included Minnesota natives transplanted from the surrounding area.

Nichols's plan for the central island specifies turf, eight shade trees, and a formal arrangement of more than 200 deciduous shrubs (Figures 6-8). The shrubs consisted of lines of Morrows honeysuckle (*Lonicera morrowi*) installed in a rectilinear pattern around the central flagpole base, and dozens of garland or bridalwreath spirea (*Spirea x arguta*) and red osier dogwoods (*Cornus stolonifera*) planted in curves around the curved benches near the outer ends of the island. The honeysuckle, spirea, and dogwood shrubs would have provided spring flowers, summer and fall berries, and winter stem color. The eight deciduous shade trees were American elms (*Ulmus americana*), which is a vase-shaped, 60'-70'-tall native tree that would have provided welcome summer shade. Today the island retains about nine of the original spirea shrubs as well as two mature ash trees planted as replacements for some of the elms (most of which were lost to Dutch elm disease) (Photos 1 and 7). In circa 1980 four circular flower pots were added near the center of the island. The island's vegetation will be rehabilitated in 2013. (See Rehabilitation below.)

Nichols's final plan for the site outside of the island has not been located. A surviving preliminary plan, signed by Nichols and approved April 1937, may have served as the final plan. It specifies that scattered groups of American elm, sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), and white spruce (*Picea canadensis*) trees be planted north, south and west of the overlook wall. Native shrubs including red osier dogwoods, common elderberry (*Sambacus canadensis*), scarlet elderberry (*Sambacus pubens*), smooth sumac (*Rhus glabra*), and serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*) were to be planted in groups along the lakeshore. According to the plan, vegetation in the concourse vicinity was to be "informal and natural in arrangement, avoiding straight lines." A 1937 perspective drawing by an MHD artist (Figure 3) shows robust stands of mature trees and many shrubs, confirming the design intent. Historic photos suggest many of the plants were installed as planned (e.g., Figures 6-8).

Most of the site's original trees and shrubs have been lost through the years to natural forces such as storms, disease, and old age. Some replacement trees were planted in the 1970s. Today within the boundaries of the nominated property there are mowed turf and scattered trees and shrubs including a few mature spruce and pine trees (*Picea* sp. and *Pinus resinosa*), two mature oaks (*Quercus* sp.), a mature paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*), green ash trees (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), and American linden or basswood trees (*Tilia americana*), as well as the spirea shrubs and two green ash trees on the

central island. Today the lakeshore north and south of the concourse consists of unmaintained sandy, rocky beach.

***Rehabilitation of the Concourse***

In 2011 MnDOT restored the combined flagpole-marker and the large overlook wall (with the exception of the overlook wall's flagstone walkway and stone curb) in the first of a two-phase rehabilitation of the property. Restoring the flagpole structure and its surrounding plaza involved resetting loose stones, replacing missing stones in-kind, complete tuckpointing, and replacing the aged metal flagpole in-kind. Repairing the overlook wall required a complicated process of erecting a sheet-pile barrier and pumping out the lake water so structural damage caused by ice and wave action could be repaired. A number of fallen stones were salvaged from the lake bottom. The battered stone base was rebuilt. Throughout the structure, loose stones were reset, missing stones replaced in-kind, and mortar joints painstakingly tuckpointed. A thin veneer of concrete that had been added to the upper surface of the upper walls circa 1990 (in an effort to seal cracked joints) was removed. The project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. (Historical architect was MacDonald and Mack Architects of Minneapolis, with Todd Grover, AIA, as lead designer, and the builder was Environmental Associates of Willmar, with Ray Stenglein as project manager and Bill Kack as head stonemason.)

During the 2013 construction season MnDOT will embark on a second phase of rehabilitation that also meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. On the inner side of the overlook wall, the flagstone walkway and its granite curbing will be restored and/or reconstructed. The modern concrete walk will be removed, flagstones that may lie beneath the concrete salvaged as possible, the flagstone and curbing restored using in-kind replacement stones as needed, and the lower part of the overlook wall adjacent to the walkway repaired and tuckpointed. The rectangular benches that originally rested on the overlook wall will be replaced in-kind.

The central island will also be rehabilitated during this phase. The island's granite curbing will be removed and reset. The two surviving curved benches will be restored, the two missing benches replaced in-kind, and all four benches placed in original positions. The island's original paths will be reproduced using stabilized aggregate – a material that will create walkways that resemble the original gravel paths but have a harder, more stable surface for greater accessibility. The fiberglass walleye will be moved to a less central location about 80' south of the centerline of the entrance drive. It will be placed on a new concrete pad and the concrete pad on the island removed. Rehabilitation of the island's vegetation will involve installing new shrubs in positions specified on the original plans. The new shrubs – 'Alleman's compact' dogwood (*Cornus sericea* 'Alleman's compact'), 'Fairy Queen' spirea (*Spirea trilobata* 'Fairy Queen'), and 'Marleen' snowberry hedges (*Symphoricarpos x doorenbosii* 'Marleen') – will resemble the original shrubs in size, shape, and texture, and will be equally hardy but will require less trimming. The snowberry is being substituted for Morrow's honeysuckle, which has become invasive in Minnesota. The island's two ash trees and four circular planters will be removed. Eight disease-resistant 'Princeton' American elms (*Ulmus americana* 'Princeton') will be planted on the island in locations specified on the original plans and verified in historic photos.

Also in 2013, the property's wooden visitor information booth will be moved to a new position near the relocated fish, immediately south of the entrance drive.

***Historic Integrity***

The historic physical integrity of the Garrison Concourse was assessed using the guidelines established in the "Waysides and Overlooks" subsection of the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) entitled "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941." The nominated property retains a high level of all seven aspects of integrity: Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association. The principal alteration to the overlook wall has been loss of the flagstone walkway and the seven benches that rested in the lookout bays. (Both alterations are scheduled to be reversed in 2013.) The principal alterations to the central island and elsewhere on the site have been the addition of the fiberglass walleye and information booth, loss and alteration of the island's walkways, loss of two of the island's curved benches, loss of original vegetation, and the planting of replacement trees in the 1970s. (See above for 2013 rehabilitation activities.)

Regarding historic vegetation, the guidelines for Waysides and Overlooks in the MPDF state, "Character-defining vegetation need not be entirely intact for a property to retain Integrity of Design, Materials, and Workmanship." The MPDF explains that, because vegetation is particularly sensitive to natural forces such as age and disease, "Changes to vegetation and similar landscape features are often expected, and are sometimes considered reversible in the same way that the physical condition of a building may be reversible." According to the National Register Bulletin on Designed Historic Landscapes (Bulletin 18), "Vegetation, another important feature of most landscapes, is not stable. It is always changing – by seasonal cycle, maturation, pruning, removal, neglect, and other forces. If one first determines that the more stable elements of the designed landscape [e.g., structures, objects] are sufficiently intact to represent the original design intent, then it can be determined whether the existing vegetation taken as a whole reinforces or supports the original design intent. . . . Originality of plant materials can increase integrity but absence of original materials does not automatically disqualify a designed landscape" (Keller and Keller 1989: 7).

In summary, the overall historic integrity of the Garrison Concourse is strong. Character-defining elements are without major alteration and able to convey their historic character and design intent. The property's integrity allows it to, as the MPDF Waysides and Overlooks guidelines state, "maintain a perceptible link with the events, trends, needs, or social or artistic forces that created and shaped it" (Anderson 1990/1993/2002: F.43-F.44).

## ARCHITECT/BUILDER, CONTINUED

Barber, Edward W. (Architect)
Nichols, Arthur Richardson (Landscape Architect)
Olson, Harold E. (Roadside Development Engineer)
Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) (Builder)
Minnesota Department of Highways (Builder)

## NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

The National Register eligibility of the Garrison Concourse was evaluated using the registration requirements in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) entitled "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941" under the subsection "Waysides and Overlooks." Waysides and Overlooks is a subsection of the property type "Social and Recreational Facilities" in Section F of the MPDF. (Additional contextual information is available in the MPDF, which is cited herein as Anderson 1990/1993/2002.)

### *Significance Under Criterion A*

Registration Requirement 2 of the "Waysides and Overlooks" subsection of the MPDF addresses a property's significance to the history of roadside development in Minnesota. According to the requirement, a National Register-eligible roadside development property "must be associated with an event, trend, or project that is particularly significant to the history of roadside development work in Minnesota or nationwide. For example, a property may be eligible if it is associated with the earliest roadside development activities in the state or represents a particularly important accomplishment of the MHD Roadside Development Division (National Register Criterion A)" (Anderson 1990/1993/2002: F.41).

The Garrison Concourse fulfills this registration requirement in two ways, each outlined below.

*<u>The Garrison Concourse meets Registration Requirement 2</u> by being the premiere structure of the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan, which was the MHD Roadside Development Division's largest Depression-era project and the most extensive CCC-built highway development project in the state.*

The Garrison Concourse was the centerpiece of an expansive state highway roadside development project that was built from 1935-1940 by the NPS, the CCC, and the MHD Roadside Development Division, working in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Conservation. The roadside development project was designed by the NPS and the MHD (principally the Roadside Development Division). Federal funds paid for labor and materials. The work was approved and supervised by the four federal and state agencies.

Preliminary plans for the roadside development project called for a parkway completely circling Mille Lacs Lake. The final results, though less extensive, were still considerable. The project improved about 6.5 miles of Highway 169 in and south of Garrison; improved the junction of Highways 169 and 18 in Garrison; improved about three miles of Highway 18 in and west of Garrison; built three wayside rests (the Garrison Concourse being the most technically complex); and built four small bridges with

handsome granite-faced headwalls. (See Table 1 below.) Most project components are extant, although their historic integrity varies.

The 4½-year Mille Lacs Lake roadside development project was executed by one of four CCC camps in Minnesota devoted exclusively to state highway roadside development work. The Mille Lacs Lake Highway Wayside Camp (Camp SP-15), located about .3-mile south of the concourse, was the longest-running of the four highway camps and completed the greatest amount of work.

*The Garrison Concourse meets Registration Requirement 2 by being one of the earliest roadside development properties built by the MHD's Roadside Development Division and embodying the program's early goals.*

The Garrison Concourse was one of the largest structures owned and operated by the MHD Roadside Development Division during its first decades. When it was completed in 1939, the concourse was one of the division's most impressive facilities. Construction of the concourse began in 1936, only four years after the Roadside Development Division was created in 1932. The division's founding engineer, Harold E. Olson, and its first Consulting Landscape Architect, A. R. Nichols, were among the site's leading designers and project overseers. The Garrison Concourse is an excellent example of the state-owned roadside development properties of the 1930s and 1940s that are well-designed in terms of both aesthetics and function, and very well built. The Garrison Concourse helped the agency meet its early goals of improving highway safety and aesthetics, encouraging the state's automobile tourism industry, and providing roadside amenities for travelers in the years before gas stations and convenience stores became the norm.

***Significance Under Criterion C***

Registration Requirement 4 in the "Waysides and Overlooks" subsection of the MPDF addresses design significance. According to the requirement, a National Register-eligible roadside development property "must incorporate the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; or represent the work of an important designer or builder; or possess superior artistic value." The MPDF states that a property may meet this requirement by being "a noteworthy example of the National Park Service Rustic Style or another specific design tradition, or [by being] associated with a significant movement or trend in landscape architecture." A property may also meet the requirement by representing "the work of highly skilled craftsmen, or display[ing] the distinctive use of indigenous materials," or by being "noteworthy within the body of work of an important landscape architect, artist, architect, engineer, or horticulturalist" (National Register Criterion C) (Anderson 1990/1993/2002: F.42).

The Garrison Concourse fulfills this registration requirement in three ways, each outlined below.

*The Garrison Concourse meets Registration Requirement 4 by representing a skillful blend of classically inspired formalism (in vogue since the City Beautiful Movement of the turn of the 20th century) with the naturalism of the National Park Service Rustic Style.*

The design contrasts the symmetry, balance, and traditional forms of classical design with the National Park Service Rustic Style's emphasis on rugged, picturesque, naturalism achieved using local

materials, rough textures, hand-craftsmanship, and native plantings. The property retains a generally high degree of historic integrity.

*The Garrison Concourse meets Registration Requirement 4 as one of the most physically impressive of Minnesota's roadside scenic overlooks.*

At 335' across, the Garrison Concourse is the third-largest of the scenic overlooks built by the MHD and the only one that projects into a body of water. The designers and builders so successfully met the technical challenges inherent in such a structure that, despite the brutal forces of Mille Lacs Lake's crashing waves and shifting ice, the structure served more than 70 years with little maintenance before major repairs were undertaken in 2011.

*The Garrison Concourse meets Registration Requirement 4 by being a distinctive example of the work of a special design collaborative established during the Depression – the National Park Service's Minnesota Central Design Office – working with one of Minnesota's most prominent landscape architects, A. R. Nichols.*

The Minnesota Central Design Office was created by the NPS during the Depression to design buildings, structures, and landscapes for Minnesota state parks (and related properties) that would be built by federal relief crews such as the CCC. Most elements were designed in the National Park Service Rustic Style. Head architect Edward W. Barber and the office's other designers worked with the MHD's A. R. Nichols (Consulting Landscape Architect) and Harold E. Olson (Engineer of Roadside Development) to design the Garrison Concourse. The concourse is a monumental and well-preserved example of the team's roadside development work.

***Background Information and Development of the Site***

Mille Lacs Lake and Early Tourism

The Garrison Concourse was built on a strategic site in north-central Minnesota's famed lakes region. It was built when Minnesota, like the rest of the country, was experiencing its first large increase in the number of automobiles and trucks using the roads and as automobile tourism was emerging as one of the state's most important industries. The concourse was built at the tiny town of Garrison, population 25 in 1930. The concourse has drawn visitors to Garrison since its completion in 1939, and is still promoted by the Garrison Commercial Club as a distinctive local asset (Figure 9).

Mille Lacs Lake is Minnesota's second-largest lake and one of its most popular fishing grounds. The lake encompasses about 200 square miles and has nearly 150 miles of shoreline. The Mille Lacs area has a long tradition of Native American habitation. By the mid-1600s it was a critical religious and cultural center for the Dakota, and Mille Lacs later became the resource-rich homeland of the Ojibwe. The Ojibwe called the lake "minsi sagaigon," meaning "everywhere lakes" because of the many lakes located in the vicinity. French fur traders translated the Ojibwe name into "Mille Lacs" meaning "thousand lakes." The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe or Anishinabe is still headquartered on the lake's western shore. The band has about 2,800 members, most of whom live at Mille Lacs.

Mille Lacs Lake first became a popular destination for Euro-American tourists, especially from the Twin Cities, when the Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Sault Ste. Marie Railroad was built near the southern shore in 1908. In the 1910s real estate developers began to buy large parcels of shoreline on the southern and southwestern sides of the lake, and summer cabins, fishing camps, boat liveries, and launch services sprang up. Euro-American villages – most notably Isle, Wahkon, and Garrison – offered gas stations, small stores, and hotels. The nascent tourism industry provided welcome income for local residents who were struggling to make a living as seasonal workers in the region's declining timber industry or were operating small farms. Many Mille Lacs Objibwe also worked seasonally as fishing guides, filled jobs at local resorts, or sold artwork and handicrafts to summer visitors (Lund 1977).

Tourism at Mille Lacs Lake increased when automobiles became affordable for the middle class, and as all-weather roads were built. With reasonable roads and a reliable car, weekend trips became possible, and Mille Lacs became a popular destination for residents of the Twin Cities located a few hours south (Walsh 1994).

Mille Lacs Lake was an important destination on the Minnesota Scenic Highway, designated in 1917. The Minnesota Scenic Highway was one of the first, most well-known, and most popular of the state's "blazed" auto trails. These early routes were identified, marked, and promoted by coalitions of business and civic groups interested in local development and tourism – in this case the Minnesota Scenic Highway Association. Before the state trunk highway system was established in 1920 and during the system's first decades, auto trails like the Minnesota Scenic Highway provided the only marked and mapped overland auto roads across many parts of the state.

The Minnesota Scenic Highway was a 1,000-mile circular route that began in St. Paul and traveled north past Mille Lacs Lake, Brainerd, Cass Lake, and Leech Lake; then west along the Canadian border; south down the Red River Valley; and east past Alexandria and St. Cloud before returning to the Twin Cities. The route's initial leg from the Twin Cities to Mille Lacs and Garrison followed the path of present-day Highway 169. Mille Lacs was the first large lake encountered by motorists as they traveled north from St. Paul, and in the Scenic Highway Association's first guidebook (1918), more paragraphs are devoted to Mille Lacs Lake than to any other single feature in the introductory narrative section (*Minnesota Scenic* 1918: 3-5).

When the highway was designated, resorts, gas stations, cafes, and stores near Mille Lacs immediately began to reference the Scenic Highway in advertising and promotions. (The phrase "Minnesota Scenic Highway" was still used by some local businesses as late as the 1960s.) When the Minnesota trunk highway system was established in 1920, the first leg of the Scenic Highway between the Twin Cities and Garrison was numbered Minnesota Highway 18. The road became the major commercial and recreational route between the Twin Cities and the Mille Lacs-Brainerd-Aitkin resort region, and was identified in the MHD's 1927-1928 biennial report as the state's "most heavily traveled route" (Sluss 1997:6). The highway received a federal route number – U.S. Highway 169 – around 1931, and a few years later its Minnesota route number was changed from 18 to 169 to correspond with the federal number (Gemini Research 2001).

By 1938 when the Garrison Concourse was nearing completion, tourism had become Minnesota's third most profitable industry behind agriculture and manufacturing. Recreational travel increased even

further after World War II as cars became more common, the 40-hour work week gave people more leisure time, and a booming postwar economy raised family incomes.

MHD Roadside Development and Highway Wayside CCC Camps

The MHD's first generation of roadside development properties, including the Garrison Concourse, resulted from a series of partnerships between the Roadside Development Division and New Deal federal relief agencies. The MHD's collaboration with programs such as the CCC substantially advanced the state's roadside development program and created properties such as the Garrison Concourse whose high level of design quality and labor-intensive craftsmanship would probably not have been possible without the infusion of federal resources.

The CCC, established at the outset of the New Deal in 1933, was one of the most successful and popular of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs. Its goals included building the health and morale of the nation's young unemployed men (many of whom were poor and chronically undernourished at the time) and increasing the men's self-confidence and skills. Secondary goals included conserving natural resources such as forest-, park-, and farmland, and improving recreational opportunities, in large part by developing the national parks and enlarging state park systems. According to historian John C. Paige, the CCC provided work for 5% of the total male population of the U.S. (Paige 1985). (Section E of the MPDF contains more information on the CCC.)

The MHD cosponsored four CCC camps in Minnesota, all devoted to state highway roadside development. By cosponsoring the camps, the MHD was able to harness a large labor force to improve significant stretches of scenic highway right-of-way and build roadside amenities. The four state highway camps operated between 1934 and 1940. They were cosponsored by the MHD and the NPS, in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Conservation. The four special camps were operated in conjunction with more than 20 Department of Conservation CCC camps located in Minnesota state parks. (Like the state park camps, the four MHD wayside camps were numbered with the prefix "SP" denoting State Park.)

The four MHD camps were among a total of about 120 CCC camps that operated in Minnesota in the state's national forests (about 50 camps), state forests (about 30 camps), state parks (about 22 camps), and erosion-prone areas targeted by the Soil Conservation Service (about 14 camps) (Anderson 1988; Anderson 1990/1993/2002).

The four highway CCC camps were located in some of the state's most scenic and popular recreational areas: one camp was at Mille Lacs Lake, one at Leech Lake in northern Minnesota, and two on Lake Superior's North Shore. The Leech Lake Wayside Camp (Camp SP-16) was located on the state's largest lake (which was another 60 miles north of Mille Lacs). The Leech Lake Camp only existed for six months and none of its work is known to have survived. The two camps on the North Shore, the Spruce Creek Highway Wayside Camp (Camp SP-13) and the Lakeshore Wayside Camp (Camp SP-19), improved and landscaped several miles of Highway 61 and built about three scenic overlooks, several small bridges, and miles of trails. The Spruce Creek Camp operated for 2 years and the Lakeshore Camp for 2½ years. One significant resource survives from the work of the Lakeshore Camp – the recently restored Buchanan or Knife River Historical Marker north of Duluth on Old Highway 61 (CSAH 61 or North Shore Scenic Drive). The Spruce Creek Camp's most important

accomplishments were the Cascade River Overlook (listed in the National Register or NRHP) and Highway 61 landscaping, much of which survives.

The Mille Lacs Lake Camp at Garrison was the camp closest to the Twin Cities. Operating for more than 4½ years, it was the most long-lived of the four highway wayside camps and its highway improvements were the most extensive.

The camp at Mille Lacs Lake was occupied from September 1935 through March 1940. The camp's principal agenda was the roadside development master plan known as the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan. The Garrison Concourse was the camp's most important accomplishment. Other components of the Development Plan are listed on Table 1 below. Enrollees of the camp also built a small dam near Milaca and a fire lookout tower near Isle (which was moved in 1981 to Mille Lacs Kathio State Park). The dam and fire tower were among the camp's few projects that were not related to highway development.

Mille Lacs Lake Highway Wayside Camp (Camp SP-15)

The Mille Lacs Lake Highway Wayside Camp was a typical CCC camp with 15 buildings and a capacity of 200 men. Like most CCC camps, the Mille Lacs camp was equipped and operated by the U.S. Army. The Army usually administered CCC camps with either reserve or civilian personnel in roles such as camp commander or administrator, supply sergeant, clerk, mess sergeant, cook, infirmary attendant, chaplain, and educational advisor. The work program of the Mille Lacs camp was developed and directed by the NPS. The NPS supplied a camp superintendent (separate from the Army's administrator or commander) who was in charge of project work tasks and project funds. The NPS also supplied foremen and technical staff including engineers and landscape architects. CCC camp foremen often included Local Experienced Men (LEMs) who were familiar with the local environment and natural resources and/or were experienced builders, stonemasons, or other tradesmen (Paige 1985).

Among the supervisors and foremen of the Mille Lacs camp were Aage Thompson (camp superintendent), Abe J. Sperling (chief engineer and senior foreman), Don G. Chapel (landscape architect), Conrad Molstad (senior foreman), W. G. Neal (cultural foreman or naturalist), Harold J. Grutsch (foreman), Melburn J. Schuft (foreman), Harold E. Dickinson (junior foreman), H. T. Lane (junior foreman), and William Bowers (blacksmith) (Figure 2). Also critical to a camp's success were traveling NPS inspectors U. W. Hella, Edward P. Lacey, and Reuben H. Law. NPS traveling inspectors "reviewed plans, helped direct the foremen, and inspected the camps' methods and progress to ensure a high degree of workmanship" (Anderson 1988). (See Designers and Other Officials below.)

Supervisory personnel at each CCC camp developed detailed construction plans and cost and labor estimates. The plans were reviewed by NPS officials at the state, regional, and federal level. CCC historian James C. Paige explains that projects and plans were reviewed for merit, technical feasibility, and aesthetic quality, as well as for their impact on natural resources and the environment. Alterations in the plans, and budget changes over $300, required high-level federal approval (Paige 1985). For the Garrison Concourse, surviving plans include many separate sheets (some dated many months apart) relating to the scenic overlook wall and its details, flagstone walkways, granite curbing, the layout and details of the central island, and plantings.

Men enrolled in the CCC received wages of $30 per month (about $480 in 2010 dollars), most of which was sent home to their dependents. They also received occupational or other training, which at the Mille Lacs camp included blacksmithing and carpentry; diesel mechanics; mathematics; drafting, surveying, and blueprint reading; conservation and park development; and landscape gardening (Progress Reports; "Mille Lacs Highway Wayside" 1937).

During its first several years the Mille Lacs camp had a typical group of enrollees – single men ages 18 to 25. However by late 1939 (possibly earlier), the camp was occupied entirely by World War I veterans in their 40s and early 50s. (The Mille Lacs camp was one of a handful of such veterans' camps in the state.) Veterans of World War I had been identified in 1933 as a population who would benefit from the CCC. Historian John A. Salmond writes, "A third special group, veterans of World War I, was soon to be inducted into the Corps. With an average age of 40 in 1933, often impaired in bodily health and mental stability by their war experiences, thousands of former soldiers had endured a long period of privation and hopelessness and were among those hardest hit by the Depression." Salmond explains that the head of the Veterans Administration approached President Roosevelt in May of 1933 suggesting that needy veterans be enrolled in the CCC and housed in special camps. Within weeks the President authorized their inclusion with relaxed requirements regarding age and marital status. According to Salmond:

> The veterans were selected on a state quota system by the Veterans Administration and became, in a very real sense, the career men of the CCC. . . . [During] the nine-year period of its existence the Corps employed more than 225,000 such men [nationwide]. They were housed in separate camps, and performed regular conservation work, modified to suit their age and physical condition. They too benefited from the education and medical programs. To many veterans, the CCC became a rehabilitation center, a place where they could regain health and self-respect. Here they received a second chance, an opportunity to gain the knowledge, skill, or confidence they needed to earn a decent living. For others, it was a permanent home. . . . (Salmond 1967).

The federal decennial census of 1940, which was taken in late March just before the Mille Lacs Lake Camp disbanded, provides a rare snapshot of the CCC camp population. The census-taker recorded about 175 men living at the camp and another 15 project officials and workers living with their families in Garrison outside camp boundaries. This total of nearly 200 people increased Garrison's population by a factor of nine.

According to the 1940 census, all but three of the CCC camp residents were men in their 40s and early 50s. (The three younger men were evidently NPS program staff.) Most camp residents were Minnesota natives, but a large number had been born in Scandinavia or other European countries such as Poland, Holland, Italy, and Russia. About one-quarter of the enrollees reported they were married. The camp residents included Superintendent Aage Thompson, four foremen, and five assistant foremen. Most enrollees were listed as laborers, but some were listed with jobs related to camp operations and maintenance (e.g., clerk, storekeeper, teacher, infirmary worker, watchman, cook, mess steward, baker, waiter, plumber, painter, electrician). Some were listed with project-related jobs such as stonemason, blacksmith, saw filer, truck driver, or truck repairman. Eight men were listed as stonemasons -- Eugene M. Adams, John Hauser, Henry J. Hubert, Lloyd D. Mueser, Lewis H. Packert,

Chester Roy, and Oscar Wallin – and another, Nat Lubonski, was listed as stone quarry laborer. The approximately 15 men living in Garrison outside the camp boundaries included engineer Abe J. Sperling, foreman Harold Dickinson, and foreman Harold Grutsch. (All three appear in Figure 2.)

Construction of the Garrison Concourse

The CCC worked on the Garrison Concourse for 3½ years. Site preparation began in the spring of 1936. By July the men were building a coffer dam to hold back lake water. Footings for the overlook wall were laid in July and August., and work on the superstructure began in August. Construction during the summer of 1936 proceeded slowly – the crew was hampered by extreme heat, and a large number of men were transferred temporarily to northern Minnesota where they helped fight forest fires raging near Aurora and Grand Marais. By the late fall of 1936, the Mille Lacs crew was building a 150'-long wood and canvas shelter that could be heated with stoves during frigid weather, allowing masonry work on the overlook wall to continue through the winter of 1936-1937 (Progress Reports; Anderson "Garrison Concourse" 1990).

During the warmer months of 1937 the men built most of the overlook wall, laid granite curbing in the adjacent intersection, and built the beach north of the concourse. Over the same period the men were working on the Garrison Rest Area's kitchen shelter, well, latrines, and picnic fireplaces, as well as on general highway landscaping in the vicinity (Progress Reports; "Mille Lacs Highway Wayside" 1937; Anderson "Garrison Concourse" 1990).

A November 1937 progress report indicates the CCC was hauling granite from St. Cloud to be cut into flagstones, and installing the stones on the walkway on the inner side of the overlook wall. During the same month, part of the crew was called away to fight a forest fire, and some men worked on granite curbing. The site's stone walkways and curbing were installed over a 2½-year period (summer 1936 to March 1939), with periodic trips to St. Cloud to obtain granite (Progress Reports).

In the spring and summer of 1938, the CCC worked on the large stone flagpole base in the central island. As of March 1939 the flagpole structure was nearly complete, but awaiting the metal pole. In 1939 the men installed stone and concrete benches on the site. During the fall of 1938 and throughout the 1939 season they prepared the soil, planted grass seed, and planted trees and shrubs at the concourse and near vicinity. The concourse was completed in late 1939 (with possibly some residual work in the first three months of 1940) (Progress Reports).

The Mille Lacs Lake CCC Camp was closed March 31, 1940, soon after the concourse was finished. World War II had begun in Europe, the U.S. government was preparing for possible conflict, and American industries were hiring workers which reduced unemployment. When the camp closed, most remaining men were transferred to the CCC camp in eastern Minnesota's St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area (later St. Croix State Park, NRHP listed). When the Mille Lacs camp closed, parts of the Highway Development Plan remained unbuilt. For example, according to historian Rolf Anderson who interviewed architect Edward W. Barber, plans had been drawn but not executed for a small scenic overlook on the northern shore of the lake, and for a 100' x 50' combination building (with concessions, changing rooms, and rest rooms) for the Garrison Rest Area (Anderson "Garrison Concourse" 1990).

The Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan

Initial plans for the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan, which comprised the agenda of the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Wayside CCC Camp, included a parkway that encircled the lake and was studded with scenic overlooks and other amenities. The roadside development work was designed by the MHD in part to improve portions of Highway 169 and Highway 18 along and near Mille Lacs Lake that had recently been realigned, including the highway junction adjacent to the future Garrison Concourse (Construction Plans). Ultimately, the CCC improved about one dozen miles of highway and built three wayside rests and four bridges (see Table 1 below). The Garrison Concourse (one of the wayside rests) is the most important component.

Table 1. Components of the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan. All resources except the Kenney Lake Overlook are located on Highway 169.

| Name | Built | Location | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| CCC Camp Sp-15 | 1935 | .3 mi. S of concourse | Razed (site vacant) |
| Garrison Concourse | 1936-39 | center of Garrison | Recommended elig for NRHP |
| Hwy 169 roadside landscaping | 1935-39 | Garrison to 6 mi. south | Somewhat altered |
| Hwy 18 roadside landscaping | 1935-39 | concourse to 3 mi. west | Somewhat altered |
| Garrison Rest Area | 1936-39 | .4 mi. S of concourse | Significantly altered |
| Kenney Lake Overlook on Hwy 18 | 1938-39 | 2.7 mi. W of concourse | Recommended elig for NRHP |
| Bridge 5266 (Garrison Creek) | 1937-38 | 1 mi. N of concourse | Significantly altered |
| Bridge 5265 (Garrison Underpass) | 1938 | .4 mi. S of concourse | Listed in NRHP |
| Stone Culvert at St. Alban's Bay | 1939 | 1.5 mi. S of concourse | Recommended elig for NRHP |
| Bridge 3355 (Whitefish Creek) | 1939 | 6 mi. S of concourse | Listed in NRHP |

In addition to working on the sites listed above, enrollees of the CCC camp built wooden signs, picnic tables, and benches in the camp workshop that were installed at the Garrison Concourse and other project areas.

The highway landscaping, which occupied the camp during its entire 4½ years, included realigning a short section of Highway 169 south of Garrison; contouring ditches; clearing, shaping, and seeding roadside slopes; building short service roads; obliterating short sections of road; transplanting trees and shrubs; and installing granite curbs. The improvements were intended to eliminate deadfall (i.e., fuel for potential wildfires), reduce erosion, increase visibility and other safety factors, increase aesthetics, and help the roads blend into their forested lakeside setting. Most of the work was done by hand, although for brief periods some large equipment was available (Progress Reports).

The CCC began, but did not complete, realignment of a short section of Highway 169 about .4 mile south of the Garrison Concourse. The highway was moved from the water's edge to a new alignment on the other side of a wooded hill (a short distance to the west). Aerial photos from the fall of 1939 show the realignment far from complete, and a few months later in March of 1940 the Mille Lacs Lake Camp was closed. The MHD hired a private contractor, Phillippi brothers of Minneapolis, to complete the realignment during the 1940 construction season (Stebbins 1940). As part of the work the contractor evidently paved Highway 169 with bituminous along much of the lakeshore and through

Garrison, as well as paving the Garrison Concourse. In 1936-1939 the CCC developed the Garrison Rest Area on the wooded hillside between Highway 169's old and new alignments (Figure 1). The rest area included a stone and log kitchen shelter, hiking trails, picnic grounds, and a beach, among other improvements. (The rest area has been altered.)

The Garrison Concourse and Garrison Rest Area were underway when the following report appeared in the *Biennial Report of the Commissioner of Highways* for 1937-1938:

> [The National Park Service is] also furnishing a complete camp of 200 CCC boys at Garrison for roadside development, consisting of a stone masonry concourse overlooking Mille Lacs Lake, roadside parking area [Garrison Rest Area] with picnicking facilities and shelter, flattening and topsoiling of slopes and seeding or sodding of ground cover, landscaping along areas adjacent to the village, and construction of stone curbing through the corporate limits. They are now engaged in constructing about 1½ miles of divided roadway extending from Garrison southerly and are furnishing labor, a gasoline shovel, eight trucks and some material, whereas the State is furnishing some material and skilled labor (*Biennial Report* March 1, 1939).

The CCC built the third wayside rest, the Kenney Lake Overlook, in 1938-1939. It is located on the south side of Highway 18 about 2.7 miles west of the Garrison Concourse. It is a small site with a sophisticated granite overlook wall. Kenney Lake Overlook is recommended eligible for the NRHP within the context of New Deal-built roadside development properties in the state (Granger et al. 1998; Anderson 1990/1993/2002).

The CCC built the four stone-faced bridges on Highway 169 in 1937-1939. One is located just north of Garrison at Garrison Creek (Bridge 5266, altered); one is between the CCC camp and the Garrison Rest Area (Bridge 5265, NRHP listed); one is just south of the Garrison Rest Area (Culvert at St. Alban's Bay, NRHP eligible); and one is another 4.5 miles to the south at Whitefish Creek (Bridge 3355, NRHP listed). Bridges 5265 and 3355 were listed in the National Register as part of the statewide Minnesota Historic Bridge Study. The Culvert at St. Alban's Bay is recommended eligible for the NRHP in the context of New Deal roadside development in the state (Granger et al. 1998; Anderson 1990/1993/2002).

A June 1940 report providing NPS expenditures for the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Wayside Camp indicates a total of $114,063 was spent on materials and skilled labor – the equivalent of about $1.8 million in 2010 dollars. This amount was exceeded only by NPS-sponsored CCC camps in Itasca State Park and Gooseberry State Park, two of Minnesota's largest state parks (Anderson "Garrison Concourse" 1990).

Garrison Concourse Design Significance

The Garrison Concourse is very large – both to accommodate crowds of people and vehicles in a popular resort area, and also to appropriately match the scale of Mille Lacs Lake (a lake so large that a visitor cannot see the opposite shore). At 335' across, the concourse is the third-largest of more than 50 scenic overlooks built by the MHD during the Depression. Comparable structures include the MHD's Cascade River Overlook near Grand Marais (535' long, NRHP listed); Thompson Hill Overlook

in Duluth (440' long, altered); Gooseberry Falls Concourse near Two Harbors (300' long, NRHP listed); Willow Lake Roadside Parking Area near Remer (300' long, NRHP eligible); and Lake City Concourse in Lake City (about 225' across; NRHP eligible) (Granger et al. 1998; Granger et al. 2005). The Garrison Concourse also has the largest flagpole structure among the MHD's dozens of Depression-era wayside rests. The second-largest surviving flagpole is a stone-veneered structure at the Noyes Roadside Parking Area at a U.S.-Canadian border crossing in northwestern Minnesota (Granger et al. 2005: 7.3).

The Garrison Concourse is a well-preserved, sophisticated example of a blend of classically inspired formalism and the rugged naturalism of the National Park Service Rustic Style. Forms of classical design had been in vogue in the U.S. for decades, but were especially popular after the World's Columbian Exposition was held in Chicago in 1893. The world's fair launched the so-called City Beautiful Movement, which renewed interest in formal design principles and forms. Public buildings, streetscapes, civic malls, and parks were designed with strict symmetry, refined arrangements of evenly balanced (or identical) elements, and elaborate architectural details such as columns, pediments, and ornate entrances. Buildings were faced with light-colored, smoothly dressed stone, or painted white to simulate light-colored stone. Landscapes often featured straight rectilinear lines, 45-degree diagonals, and smooth radial curves. Straight paths or allees, prominent focal points, and closely controlled plant forms such as clipped hedges were common. At the Garrison Concourse this aesthetic is reflected in the site's symmetrical plan and central entrance; in the overlook walls' regular plan and profile, smooth curves, evenly spaced piers, and rectangular bays and return walls; and in the island's central flagpole, rectilinear paths, curved benches, and even rows of plantings.

The Garrison Concourse's formalism is contrasted with its National Park Service Rustic Style characteristics. The so-called Rustic Style of the late 19th century, which was influenced by the construction of wood and log resorts and camps in the remote Adirondack Mountains, was so completely embraced by the NPS in the early 20th century that its use in public parks is now characterized as the National Park Service Rustic Style. The aesthetic movement emphasized nature's picturesque and uncontrolled character. Manmade structures, which were considered necessary intrusions, were designed to blend with the environment through compatible scale, color, and texture. Structures were built of local stone and logs with simple forms, heavy or irregular textures, and hand-tooling or craftsmanship so they appeared to be primitive or ageless. Landscape designers preserved existing topography and vegetation, and added plants that were native to the area and were installed in natural-looking patterns.

The NPS, led by Edward W. Barber, evidently took the lead in the design of the stone overlook wall at the Garrison Concourse. A. R. Nichols, consulting for the MHD, designed the central island and its stone flagpole, as well as the plantings. Nichols and MHD engineer Harold E. Olson collaborated on the design of the Highway 169/18 intersection and the rest of the Mille Lacs highway landscaping.

Designers and Other Officials

Many of the architects, landscape architects, and engineers who worked on the Garrison Concourse had been in private practice before the Depression. When the economy crashed and private commissions disappeared, designers across the country began to work for agencies such as the NPS with salaries paid by New Deal programs.

According to Historian Rolf Anderson:

> In order to supervise hundreds of CCC camps conducting state park development [nationwide], the National Park Service was faced with an immediate need for the professional services of architects, landscape architects, engineers, foresters, naturalists, and geologists. The landscape architects in particular had a significant effect on the quality of state park development. Landscape architects were usually chosen as traveling inspectors to oversee the work in the state park camps and, in addition, an effort was made to have at least one landscape architect in the supervisory personnel in every state park. Their purpose was to develop use areas that were thoughtfully designed and to discourage undertaking that would adversely effect the natural character of the park. During this period, the National Park Service became the largest employer of landscape architects in the history of the profession (Anderson Sept. 1988: E.5).

Several of the designers who contributed to the Garrison Concourse worked out of the NPS's Minnesota Central Design Office which was established in St. Paul in the spring of 1933 to create plans for New Deal improvements to Minnesota state parks. The office was led by architect Edward W. Barber and had "a crew of about eight, consisting of two other architects, a highway engineer, landscape engineer, and a heating/electrical engineer along with a clerical staff of three" (Thoma 1994). Among the staff were Barber (architect), Don G. Chapel (landscape architect), Howard O. Skooglun (architect), V. C. Martin (architect), N. H. Averill (landscape architect), and Oscar Newstrom (engineer) (Anderson Sept. 1988; Thoma 1994). Hundreds of buildings and structures designed by the staff were built in at least 22 Minnesota state parks. Many of the properties are listed in the NRHP. The office was disbanded in December 1941 (Thoma 1994).

The men who worked on the Garrison Concourse included:

Edward W. Barber was chief architect of the NPS Minnesota Central Design Office and, according to Anderson, "clearly the major design influence" in the office (Anderson Sept. 1988: E. 10, E.41). Barber was a Duluth native and architectural engineering graduate of the University of Minnesota. His early architectural career was curtailed by the Depression. Barber worked for the NPS as head of the Minnesota Central Design Office from 1933-1941 and for the Department of Defense (U.S. Army) from 1941-1945. After the war Barber established his own architectural firm in Lake City, Minnesota (Thoma 1994). He designed many of the pivotal stone and log buildings constructed in Minnesota state parks during the Depression. Some construction plan sheets for the Garrison Concourse overlook wall contain the notation "Checked by EAB."

Don G. Chapel was a landscape architect with the Minnesota Central Design Office and on the supervisory staff of the Mille Lacs Lake CCC Camp (Figure 2). Some Garrison Concourse plan sheets list Chapel as draftsman, including a 1936 sheet that contains an elevation drawing of the proposed concourse from the perspective of a boat on the lake.

Udert W. Hella, an engineer with the MHD before the Depression, was the first Northern District Supervisor for the State Parks Division of the Minnesota Department of Conservation. In this NPS-

funded role he inspected the work of CCC and other federal relief crews in state parks. Hella wrote some of the progress reports that chronicle the work of the Mille Lacs Lake Camp. He was civil engineering foreman for the Scenic State Park CCC Camp, supervisor of the Sibley State Park CCC Camp, and then supervisor of the Spruce Creek Highway Wayside Camp. Later in his career Hella headed the Minnesota Department of Conservation's State Parks Division for 20 years from 1953-1973 (Anderson Sept. 1988:E10-E11, E15-E16; Meyer 1991:178-179; Granger et al 1998: 3.27).

Edward P. Lacey was also a NPS inspector for the work of CCC camps in Minnesota. Lacey signed most construction plan sheets for the Garrison-area roadside development work. Many surviving photographs of MHD Depression-era roadside development work were taken by Lacey (Granger et al. 1998). The 1940 federal census lists Lacey, age 47, as living in Lansing, Michigan, and working as an inspector for the National Park Service.

Harold W. Lathrop was appointed supervisor for CCC state park work in Minnesota by the NPS in 1934. He wrote some of the progress reports detailing the Mille Lacs camp's work and signed most of the Garrison Concourse plan sheets. Lathrop began working on federal relief park projects when the New Deal was launched in 1933, first as a consultant for the State Emergency Relief Administration. In 1935 when the Minnesota Department of Conservation was reorganized with a Division of State Parks, Lathrop was appointed the first director, with his salary initially paid by the NPS. He held this position until 1946. Lathrop had been an apprentice to Theodore Wirth, superintendent of the Minneapolis park system. He attended Dunwoody Industrial Institute and the University of Minnesota. Lathrop signed for the Mille Lacs Lake roadside development work (Sommer 2008: 99-100; Meyer 1991: 142; Granger et al. 1998: 3.28).

Reuben W. Law was a landscape architect employed as Southern District inspector for NPS-assisted work in Minnesota state parks (Anderson Sept. 1988: E.16). Law prepared a number of the progress reports outlining the work of the Mille Lacs camp. He had been a landscape architect with Morell and Nichols before the Depression, and later became a partner in the company. Many surviving photographs of MHD Depression-era roadside development work were taken by Law (Granger et al. 1998).

Arthur R. Nichols was a prominent Minnesota landscape architect who served from 1932 to about 1942 as the first Consulting Landscape Architect for the MHD Roadside Development Division. Nichols studied engineering, architecture, and landscape design at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and in 1902 was the first person to graduate from MIT's newly created landscape architecture program. During his early career he worked in the New York office of landscape architect Charles W. Leavitt, Jr. Nichols and a fellow Leavitt designer, Anthony Morell, were sent to Duluth, Minnesota, to work on Leavitt's landscape for Chester A. Congdon's mansion "Glensheen." In 1909 the pair moved to Minnesota and established their own firm, Morell and Nichols. Morell and Nichols became one of the state's leading firms, designing parks, parkways, urban plans, estates, gardens, cemeteries, colleges, and country clubs. A. R. Nichols led the firm after his partner's early death in 1924. Nichols played an important role in establishing the field of landscape architecture in Minnesota and over a long career was one of the state's most prolific designers. As consulting landscape architect to the State Board of Control and the University of Minnesota, Nichols designed the grounds of dozens of state institutions. After World War II Nichols worked with the Department of Conservation on postwar improvements to

Minnesota state parks. In 1944-1950 he redesigned the Minnesota State Capitol Approach, one of his last large projects. In 1960, at the age of 80, A. R. Nichols retired; he died in 1970.

Harold E. Olson had been an engineer for the state highway department for 10 years when, in 1932, he was asked to organize the MHD's new Roadside Development Division. Olson led the division for the next 30 years. He worked closely with local governments and state and federal agencies such as the NPS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Forest Service, the Minnesota Department of Conservation, and the Minnesota Bureau of Tourism. He served as the Roadside Development Division's primary liaison to business and civic groups concerned with highway design, safety, commerce, conservation, park development, and tourism. Olson was a national leader in the establishment of the Mississippi River Parkway, now called the Great River Road. He retired from the Roadside Development Division in 1963 but continued to work for the MHD until January 1968.

Howard O. Skooglun was an architect with the NPS's Minnesota Central Design Office in St. Paul. He is listed as draftsman on some Garrison Concourse plan sheets, and was lead designer for the four stone bridges and Kenney Lake Overlook built by the CCC camp in the Garrison area (Granger et al. 1998). Before he Depression Skooglun was a draftsman and architect in St. Paul, working part of the time with the firm Cederberg and Van Kirk.

Abe J. Sperling, a 1927 civil engineering graduate of the University of Minnesota, was chief engineer and foreman for the Mille Lacs Lake CCC Camp (Figure 2). Some Garrison Concourse plan sheets list Sperling as draftsman. The 1940 federal census lists Sperling living in the village of Garrison with his wife Frieda and three daughters. In the 1950s Sperling was a supervising engineer with Toltz, King, Duvall, and Anderson of St. Paul.

Aage Thompson was superintendent of the Mille Lacs Lake CCC Camp. He had been born in Denmark, immigrated in 1909, and was 47 years old in 1940. Thompson evidently had a horticulture background – in the 1920s and early 1930s he worked for Holm and Olson, one of St. Paul's leading greenhouse and florist businesses. Thompson signed most construction plan sheets for the Garrison projects.

Garrison Concourse After Completion

The Garrison Concourse remained one of the MHD's most popular roadside development properties. One year after the Garrison Concourse was completed, A. R. Nichols wrote in *Landscape Architecture* that, given increasing use of the highways, "[it is] more and more imperative to provide turnouts, overlooks, and roadside parking areas where the tourist may rest and enjoy the scenery with a full degree of safety." He may have been describing the Garrison Concourse when he wrote that roadside development facilities "when carefully planned and developed, can be convenient, restful, and impressive. They become an asset to the traveling public" (Nichols 1940:4).

A 1948 article in the *Brainerd Dispatch* credited the CCC and the highway department with transforming Garrison from a "wide spot in the road" to "perhaps one of the most popular summer stopping places in the state" ("Garrison, CCC Founded"). The concourse became a landmark on the western side of the lake. In June of 1954 the owners of the Headquarters Lodge resort announced

plans for "daily and evening excursions" from the resort to the Garrison Concourse and back in a newly-renovated excursion boat (Wallace 1954).

Highway traffic continued to increase after the war as more Americans took regular family vacations and tourist travel in Minnesota "became a cultural norm of significant economic impact" (Walsh 1994:60-61). According to the Minnesota Highway Commissioner's 1950-1952 *Biennial Report*, "The state's tourist business, constituting as it does one of Minnesota's largest and most widely distributed industries with a valuation placed at some $200 million a year, is virtually 100 per cent dependent upon the serviceability and dependability of the highways it travels" (Granger et al. 1998: 3.18).

Despite the need to accommodate growing numbers of motorists, however, the MHD built very few new roadside development properties after the war, in part because in 1946 the federal government suspended its requirement that a portion of all federal highway funds be spent on roadside development. The highway department shifted most of its resources to repairing and improving a trunk highway system that was still under construction (some highways were still gravel) but was expected to carry ever-increasing number of cars and trucks. Some of the few MHD-built wayside rests of the 1940s and early 1950s were patterned after the Depression-era sites, and, in fact, some were built from plans that had been drawn by A. R. Nichols before the war but shelved. Most waysides, however, were much simpler and more standardized than the Depression-era sites. It was not until roadside development facilities were added to the new federally-funded interstate highway system in the 1960s that the MHD again began to design and build rest areas with substantial structures and well-developed landscape designs.

**Conclusion**

The Garrison Concourse is located on Mille Lacs Lake, a popular Minnesota resort area since the 1910s. It is a monumental example of an early state highway wayside rest, providing travelers with a place to stretch their legs, read a historic marker, admire the view, and take a swim. The property was designed by the National Park Service (NPS) and the Minnesota Department of Highways (MHD) and built in 1936-1939 through a collaboration of the NPS, MHD, and the Civilian Conservation Corps, all working in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Conservation. The technically challenging project was the centerpiece of the largest roadside development project undertaken in Minnesota by the MHD working with the CCC and is an excellent example of New Deal public works. The concourse is one of Minnesota's largest scenic overlooks, a well preserved model of its specific design tradition, and an important surviving example of the partnership of Minnesota landscape architect A. R. Nichols and the designers of the NPS Minnesota Central Design Office. A popular state highway wayside rest for more than 70 years, the Garrison Concourse continues to draw visitors to the northwestern shore of Mille Lacs Lake and to the town of Garrison.

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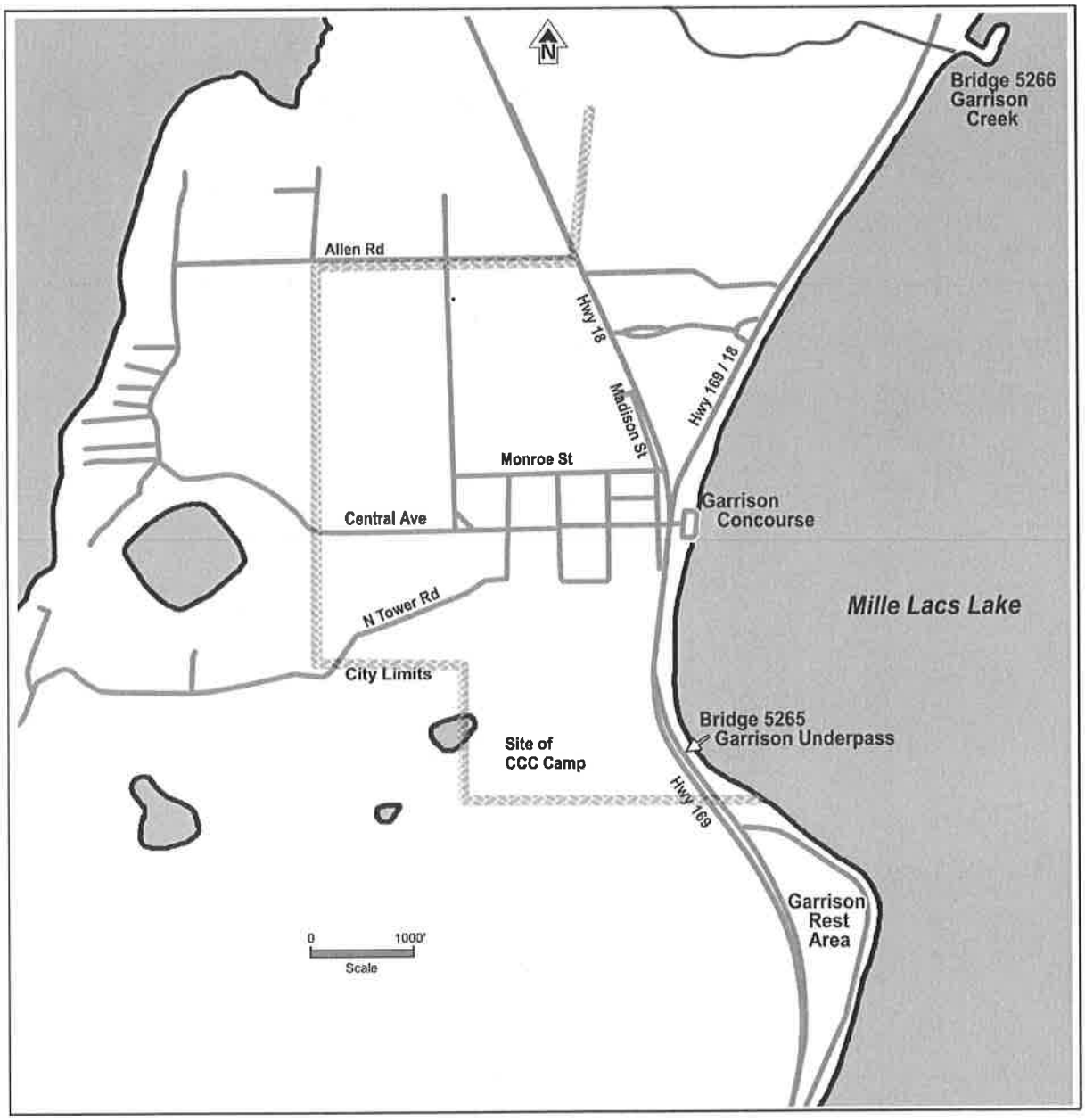


Figure 1. Garrison Concourse vicinity map (Gemini Research drawing 2012).

Figure 2. CCC officials and Local Experienced Men (LEMs) in front of the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Wayside CCC Camp office, part of the 15-building CCC camp located about .3-mile south of Garrison Concourse. Left to right: W. G. Neal (cultural foreman or naturalist), Don G. Chapel (landscape architect), Abe J. Sperling (chief engineer and senior foreman), Conrad Molstad (senior foreman), Harold J. Grutsch (foreman), Melburn J. Schuft (foreman), Harold E. Dickinson (junior foreman), H. T. Lane (junior foreman), and William Bowers (blacksmith). The sign board near the office door lists the men's names and positions (circa 1940, camera possibly facing northeast, Minnesota Historical Society).

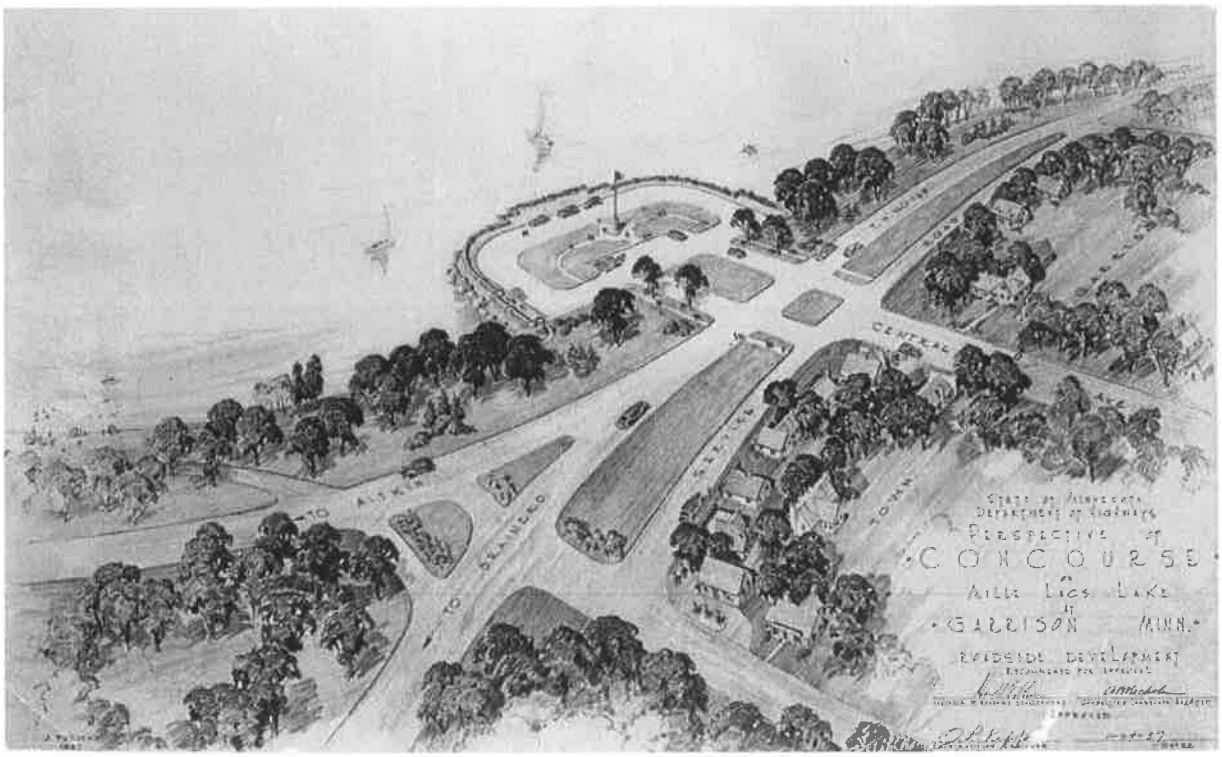


Figure 3. Perspective of the Garrison Concourse and associated intersection by MHD artist John N. Polivka. The drawing shows an early iteration of the design for the central island (as well as for the traffic islands). The drawing was approved in January 1937 by Engineer Harold E. Olson and Landscape Architect A. R. Nichols of the MHD Roadside Development Division, and an MHD official, Construction Engineer O. L. Kipp. Polivka worked for the MHD as an engineer, designer, and illustrator in the 1930s, and in the 1940s began an illustrious career as an industrial designer in the Twin Cities (Dept. of Transportation Collection, Minnesota Historical Society).

Figure 4. CCC workers building the stone overlook wall. Construction could occur on dry land because drought in the 1930s had lowered the level of the lake. During years of normal rainfall and lake levels, the water laps at the base of the stonework (photo by Minnesota Dept. of Highways, probably summer 1937, camera facing northwest, Dept. of Transportation Collection, Minnesota Historical Society).

Figure 5. The concourse under construction (photo by A. R. Nichols for the Minnesota Dept. of Highways, probably summer 1937, camera facing east, Dept. of Transportation Collection, Minnesota Historical Society).

Figure 6. The concourse nearing completion. The central island has a stone flagpole base approached by a grid of gravel walkways. The granite curbing and curved benches have been built, but the metal flagpole has not yet been installed and the shrubs have not been planted (photo by Minnesota Dept. of Highways, probably summer or fall 1939, camera facing north, Dept. of Transportation Collection, Minnesota Historical Society).

Figure 7. The site (with maturing plantings) about 12 years after completion (photo by Kenneth Wright, summer 1951, facing northeast, Dept. of Transportation Collection, Minnesota Historical Society).

Figure 8. Aerial view taken about the same time as the previous photo (circa 1950, camera facing west, Dept. of Transportation Collection, Minnesota Historical Society).

Figure 9. Since its completion in 1939, the Garrison Concourse has drawn visitors to this small community on the northwestern shore of Mille Lacs Lake. This recent photo is prominently displayed on the front page of the Garrison Commercial Club's web site (circa 2009, Garrison Commercial Club photo).

Figure 10. General Sketch Map (Gemini Research; base map is a Spring 1999 MnDOT aerial photo).

0 140'
Scale

Boundary of nominated property
Camera facings

0 70'
Scale

Boundary of nominated property

Figure 11. Sketch Map of the center of the site (Gemini Research; base map is a Spring 1999 MnDOT aerial photo).

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

STATE OF MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

# GARRISON QUADRANGLE
MINNESOTA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SE/4 DEERWOOD 15' QUADRANGLE

Garrison Concourse
Zone 15 27
E 436 550
N 5126 840

Garrison Concourse
GARRISON, CROW WING CO.,
MINNESOTA
GARRISON QUAD

15/436550/5126840

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1973. Field checked 1973

Hydrography compiled from information furnished by Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Minnesota coordinate system, central zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue. 1927 North American datum

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs
This information is unchecked

UTM GRID AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET
(0°35' / 10 MILS; 5½° / 98 MILS)

SCALE 1:24 000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1976

GARRISON, MINN.
SE/4 DEERWOOD 15' QUADRANGLE
N4615—W9345/7.5

1973

AMS 7276 IV SE—SERIES V872

210D

HARDWARE