

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

789

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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.

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Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Kenney Lake Overlook

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: On Minnesota Highway 18, 900 feet southeast of North Kenney Lake Lane

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

Not For Publication N/A Vicinity: Garrison

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

<p><u>Barbara Mitchell Howard</u></p> <p>Signature of certifying official/Title: Barbara Mitchell Howard, Deputy SHPO, MNHS</p> <p>_____</p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p><u>September 29, 2015</u></p> <p>Date</p>
<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>Signature of commenting official:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Title :</p>	<p>Date</p> <p>_____</p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

Kenney Lake Overlook
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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:)

Jan Colson H. Beall 11-16-15
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

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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

Kenney Lake Overlook is a 2-acre highway wayside rest located on Kenney Lake on the southwest side of Minnesota Highway 18 in Garrison Township. The site is about 2.5 miles northwest of the small town of Garrison, a popular resort community on the northwestern shore of Mille Lacs Lake. The wayside rest was designed in the National Park Service (NPS) Rustic Style. The property's principal resource is an approximately 250-foot-long stone overlook wall built of locally-quarried granite. The property was developed in 1939 by a company of the Veterans Division of the Civilian Conservation Corps (often called the Veterans Conservation Corps) in cooperation with the NPS and the Roadside Development Division of the Minnesota Department of Highways (MHD). The design team was led by architect H. O. Skooglun of the NPS who worked in collaboration with prominent Minnesota landscape architect Arthur R. Nichols (Consulting Landscape Architect for the MHD) and engineer Harold E. Olson (head of the MHD Roadside Development Division). The property retains good historic integrity. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) still owns and operates the wayside rest

Narrative Description

See Continuation Sheet.

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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.)

- 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.
- 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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1939

Significant Dates

1939

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

See Continuation Sheet

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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.)

Kenney Lake Overlook, a state highway wayside rest built in 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. The property meets the registration requirements of the "Waysides and Overlooks" subsection of "Social and Recreational Facilities" in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) entitled "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941." Kenney Lake Overlook is historically significant as a leading component of the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan, was the most extensive CCC-built state highway improvement project in the state and the MHD Roadside Development Division's single largest project. The property represents the work of the VCC or Veterans Division of the CCC. It is one of two roadside development structures in the state known to have been built by the VCC. Kenney Lake Overlook is also an excellent example of the first generation of facilities built by the Roadside Development Division. Kenney Lake Overlook possesses design significance as an excellent example of the National Park Service Rustic Style applied to a highway wayside rest. It has high artistic merit. The property represents the work of highly skilled craftsmen and displays the distinctive use of indigenous materials. Kenney Lake Overlook has a state level of significance. The period of significance is defined as 1939, the year the wayside rest was built.

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

See Continuation Sheet.

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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
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Minnesota Dept. of Transportation, St. Paul

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): CW-GRT-003

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 2 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):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 15 | Easting: 435129 | Northing: 5130541 |
| 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 8, which is a sketch map of the site. The east/northeast boundary follows a line drawn 20' southwest of the centerline of Minnesota Highway 18. (The centerline has not changed historically.) The west/southwest boundary follows the historic and current MnDOT right-of-way line, which roughly follows the shoreline of Kenney Lake. The northwest and southeast boundaries are drawn 300 feet northwest and 300 feet southeast of the midpoint of the overlook wall and traffic island and meet the historic and current right-of-way line at the shore.

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the parcel of land historically associated with the wayside rest. The east/northeast line is drawn to include the traffic island and granite curbing. The northwest and southeast lines are drawn symmetrically 300 feet from the site's midpoint to include highway right-of-way landscaped by the CCC; this highway right-of-way is intentionally wide at this location to include extra shoreline at the northeast end of Kenney Lake.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Susan Granger and Scott Kelly
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: May 2015

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.)

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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: Kenney Lake Overlook
City or Vicinity: Garrison Township
County: Crow Wing State: MN
Photographer: Scott Kelly
Date Photographed: October 2014

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

Photo #1 of 11

Kenney Lake Overlook with Highway 18 in the foreground (camera facing west-northwest).

Photo #2 of 11

The traffic island edged with granite curbing (camera facing northwest).

Photo #3 of 11

The overlook wall with the terrace at left center. In the foreground is the open picnic area (camera facing northwest).

Photo #4 of 11

The overlook wall's 165-foot-long central section with adjacent walkway and granite curbing (camera facing southeast).

Photo #5 of 11

The terrace area at the southeast end of the overlook wall (camera facing south-southeast).

Photo #6 of 11

The granite staircase leading from the terrace down to the lakeshore (camera facing north).

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Photo #7 of 11

Steps leading from the sunken terrace to center of the overlook wall and the parking area (camera facing northwest).

Photo #8 of 11

The rounded seating area at the northwest end of the overlook wall, labeled "niche" on the original plans. Two curved concrete and stone benches originally rested against the wall on the turf floor. In the foreground and at center right are portions of the site's granite curbing (camera facing northwest).

Photo #9 of 11

A drainage outlet on the side of the niche designed to resemble a castle's defensive arrow slit (camera facing southeast).

Photo #10 of 11

The lake side of the northwest end of the wall (camera facing southeast).

Photo #11 of 11

The northwest end of the parking area with Highway 18 in the foreground (camera facing south-southeast).

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.

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Kenney Lake Overlook
Name of Property
Crow Wing County, MN
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Federal Relief Construction in MN, 1933-1941
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

DESCRIPTION

Kenney Lake Overlook, built in 1939, is a two-acre, 600-foot-long state highway wayside rest located on the southwest side of Minnesota Highway 18 and the northeast shore of Kenney Lake (Figure 1). The property is located in a popular recreational area about 2.5 miles northwest of Garrison, Minnesota, which is on the northwest shore of Mille Lacs Lake, and about 15 miles east of Brainerd. Kenney Lake Overlook was developed by the Minnesota Department of Highways, also called the Minnesota Highway Department (MHD), today known as the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). The wayside rest retains essential historic integrity and still serves its original function.

The property is a designed historic landscape in an aesthetic tradition known as the National Park Service (NPS) Rustic Style combined. The principal structure is a scenic overlook wall with a sophisticated design and well crafted masonry construction. Kenney Lake Overlook was designed by a team consisting of architect Howard O. Sloogun who was employed by the NPS, Minnesota landscape architect Arthur R. (A. R.) Nichols who was serving as Consulting Landscape Architect for the MHD, and civil engineer Harold E. Olson who was head of the MHD's Roadside Development Division. The property was built by Company 2713-V of the Veterans Division of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) – sometimes called the Veterans Conservation Corps or VCC – working in cooperation with the MHD.

Kenney Lake Overlook includes three principal resources (Figures 8 and 9). The first is a site, which is the designed landscape itself. The second and third are structures: the granite overlook wall and the site's parking area with traffic island and extensive granite curbing. Other landscape elements such as an open picnic area south/southeast of the overlook wall and the site's plantings are not individually counted per National Register guidelines. Also on the site are two wooden utility poles that date from the period of significance (or are in-kind replacements of poles that date from the period). The first stands about 20 feet northwest of the overlook wall (Photos 4 and 10). It is indicated on the original plans as an existing pole. The second pole stands about 50 feet southeast of the overlook wall near the southeast boundary of the nominated property. It represents a relocation, during construction, of a pole that was standing in the space that became the open picnic area south of the overlook wall (Figure 2).

There are two original elements known to be missing from the property. The first is a pair of curved concrete and stone benches, described below, originally located in the overlook's rounded niche. The second element is a timber hanging-arm entrance sign mounted in the center of the traffic island. A standard Roadside Development design used statewide, the sign was painted dark brown and had routed letters reading "Roadside Parking Area." Today there is a green metal MnDOT sign reading "Kenney Lake" standing on the traffic island.

Kenney Lake Overlook was almost certainly also furnished with two or three portable picnic tables placed on the level picnic area south/southeast of the parking area. Also a standard design used on wayside rests across the state, the tables had peeled log supports and a tabletop and bench seats made of planks (Figure 7). Most of the tables were built for the Division by young men employed by the National Youth Administration (NYA) at one of the NYA's vocational woodworking shops. The tables

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were often accompanied by low picnic fireplaces composed of steel fire boxes (e.g., 1 foot by 2 foot) that rested on the ground and had grates for cooking. Most of the MHD's fire boxes of the period were also built by the NYA.¹

The original plans also specify five other log benches that may not have been built. They were to be located along and near the lakeshore west and southeast of the overlook wall (right center in Figure 2). Some of the locations are quite steep and one bench drawn close to the water would have been inundated during normal years. (The site was developed during drought in the 1930s.) The original plans also indicate a "future wood dock" at the base of the granite staircase that may not have been built.

By 1961, according to a Roadside Development Division inventory list, the site had an approach marker, entrance marker, well water (likely a hand pump supplying drinking water), three picnic tables, two fireplaces, two refuse containers, and two privies.² The well water and privies were probably added after World War II. The privies were probably simple wooden structures. Most refuse containers on early MHD wayside rests were steel 50-gallon drums.³

The character-defining features of the property include but are not limited to the property's proximity to Kenney Lake and to the highway; its National Park Service Rustic Style design; a symmetrical plan; an unusual granite overlook wall displaying a high level of craftsmanship (including two missing benches); a parking area separated from the highway by a traffic island; an open picnic area near the southeast end of the wall; and naturalistic plantings that include turf grass and native deciduous and coniferous trees.

Setting

The 2-acre wayside rest is located on the southwest side of Highway 18. Highway 18 is a two-lane state highway that historically and currently serves recreational and commercial traffic by linking Brainerd, about 15 miles west of Kenney Lake, with Garrison and Mille Lacs Lake, about 2.5 miles east of the site. At Garrison, Highway 18 intersects with Highway 169, historically an important regional route linking the Twin Cities (about 100 miles to the southeast) with the city of Grand Rapids and the Minnesota Iron Range (about 65 miles to the north). Both Mille Lacs Lake and the Brainerd lakes became popular resort areas in the early 20th century when all-weather roads and personal automobiles made traveling to the region a trip of reasonable length for Twin Cities residents.

Just before the wayside rest was built, the highway had been graded to about 40 feet and was surfaced with oil-treated gravel (a bituminous precursor) to a width of 26 feet. The highway had two driving lanes and narrow gravel shoulders. Today the bituminous paving is about 40 feet wide encompassing two 12-foot lanes and two 8-foot shoulders. Today there are two 200-foot segments of modern steel post-

¹ Susan Granger et al., *Historic Roadside Development Structures on Minnesota Trunk Highways*, prepared for MnDOT by Gemini Research, Dec. 1998.

² "State of Minnesota Department of Highways Roadside Development Projects," typescript chart of roadside development properties, Dec. 31, 1961.

³ Granger et al. 1998.

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and-cable guardrail installed 20 feet from the centerline along the edge of the highway (Photo 11, Figure 8). The guardrail stands on the boundary of the nominated property. Northwest of the overlook wall the guardrail extends 20 feet northwest of the nominated property, and southeast of the overlook wall the guardrail extends 100 feet past the boundary.

The site is surrounded by Kenney Lake on the west; Highway 18, a residence, and a forested area to the east; and land along Highway 18 that is largely forested with some open wetlands. Kenney Lake's shores are mostly wooded and dotted with seasonal and year-round homes that are partly screened by trees. Land uses around the property have not changed significantly since the 1930s.

Site Topography, Spatial Organization, and Circulation

The site was designed to provide a scenic overlook and picnic area on the shore of Kenney Lake, with an inviting set of granite steps leading to the lakeshore for fishing and swimming. Visitors could climb and sit on top of the granite wall, sit on benches in the rounded niche, picnic on a flat lawn area southeast of the wall, and explore the lakeshore. The site's spatial organization, topography, and circulation patterns have not changed significantly since the 1930s although picnic tables are no longer provided and the lakeshore is overgrown.

The overlook wall, parking area, and picnic area south of the wall are situated on a plateau about 12 feet above the elevation of the lake. These elements are at approximately the same elevation as the highway. At the ends of the overlook wall the land descends fairly quickly to the water's edge. The lakeshore consists of a small sandy, rocky beach whose width varies with the water level.

The site's vehicular entrance and parking area is described under Structures below. Pedestrian circulation includes a 6-foot wide walkway along the inner side of the overlook wall. The plans specify it be surfaced with tarvia (oil-treated gravel) studded with crushed rock but it is not known whether this was carried out. At least one historic photo (Figure 3) shows gravel on the walkway. Today the walkway is surfaced with turf.

The site also has a narrow footpath that curves around the northwest end of the overlook wall and descends due south to the lakeshore (Figure 9). The path is labeled on the original plans and visible in an historic photo (Figure 6) but is partly overgrown today.

Site Vegetation

The plantings at Kenney Lake Overlook were typical of many MHD wayside rests of the period located in northcentral and northeastern Minnesota. Consistent with NPS directive and the precepts of the Rustic Style, existing plants were preserved where possible and new plants (preferably native transplants) were chosen to blend the rest area with its natural setting. Original plans and historic photos indicate that an existing 10-inch-diameter oak tree (*Quercus* sp.) was preserved within the rounded niche (Figure 5). The plans also specify the preservation of specific oaks, Norway or red pines (*Pinus resinosa*), birches (*Betula* sp.), and other trees. According to the plans, three new elm trees (*Ulmus americana*), a group of birches, and a spruce (*Picea* sp.) were to be added to the site. Turf was

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to be planted northwest and southeast of the wall, within the niche, and on the traffic island. A note on the plans indicates the elms, birches, and spruce were to be transplanted from the area. A photograph taken around November 1939 (Figure 3) shows that the overlook’s new plants varied slightly from the original plans (see photo caption for details). The MHD’s annual report on trunk highway roadside development for 1939 indicates Kenney Lake Overlook and the adjacent right-of-way were planted with 21 evergreen trees, 276 evergreen shrubs, 53 deciduous trees, and sod.⁴

Today’s vegetation is largely consistent with the original design intent, although the site has fewer trees than intended and the lakeshore is overgrown. Today there are three mature trees – an oak immediately west of the niche (Photos 10 and 11), a Norway pine below the wall near the site’s midpoint (Photo 1), and a Norway pine at the southeast end of the wall (Photo 5) – standing in positions indicated for those species on the original plans. Several other trees indicated on the original plans have been lost. Volunteers such as green ash trees (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), smooth sumac shrubs (*Rhus glabra*), and other saplings and shrubs has filled the space between the overlook wall and the shoreline (Photo 5). While vegetation is periodically cut to preserve views of the lake, it is currently crowding the overlook wall and obscuring views of the stonework and use of the shore. The area around the overlook wall is maintained as mowed turf, as specified on the original plans, while the northwest and southeast ends of the site have filled with naturalized trees and shrubs.

Structures and Furnishings

Parking Area with Island and Curbing (One Contributing Structure). Vehicles enter the site from Highway 18 via entrances at opposing ends of an oblong-shaped entrance drive-parking area. It is about 150 feet long with parking for about eight cars. Separating the parking area from the highway shoulder is a 90-foot-long oval traffic island that was originally surrounded by granite curbing. The island retains its original length (Photo 2). It was originally 15 feet wide but was reduced to 10 feet circa 1982 when the highway shoulder was expanded from about 3 to 8 feet. The parking area is paved with bituminous, as is the adjacent highway. The original plans specify that both be paved with tarvia, which was a bituminous precursor made of coal tar applied to gravel or crushed rock. MHD documents and maps indicate the highway was surfaced as planned, but it is not known if the parking area was similarly treated.

Both the parking area and the island are lined with extensive granite curbing (Photos 4 and 8). The curbing is built of the same speckled gray granite as the overlook wall but has more roughly-cut texture. Many of the stones measure 10 inches wide by 20 to 30 inches long and are about 14 inches thick (about 8 inches of which is buried). It was intended the curbing have a 6 inch exposure, but successive bituminous overlays have reduced its effective height. Today the site has about 345 feet of curbing. It is located along the west side of the traffic island and along the outside edge of the parking area. The parking area curbing continues along the edge of the highway shoulder 35 feet to the northwest and 15 feet to the southeast of the parking area. Originally the site had 858 feet of granite curbing. About 90 feet of curbing has been lost from the east side of the traffic island, about 165 feet from the highway

⁴ *Annual Report of the Accomplishments of Roadside Development Along the Trunk Highways in Minnesota*, Minnesota Dept. of Highways, 1939, p. 8.

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edge northwest of the parking area, and about 235 feet from the highway edge southeast of the parking area. (The curbing gave Kenney Lake Overlook a total length of 600 feet measured along the highway.) It is believed most of the missing curbing was lost circa 1982 when the highway shoulders were expanded from 3 to 8 feet and paved with bituminous. At that time the traffic island was narrowed by 5 feet and the curbing which was retained northwest and southeast of the parking area was relocated 5 feet farther from the highway centerline to accommodate the wider shoulder (right center in Photo 8).

Stone Overlook Wall (One Contributing Structure). The site's principal feature is an approximately 250-foot-long stone overlook wall built of large blocks of rockfaced light gray granite. The wall is beautifully crafted. It is about 18 inches thick, 2 feet tall on the inside, and about 9 feet tall (exposed) at its tallest point on the lake side near the northwest end. The wall is anchored at about 24-foot intervals by piers that project 6 inches above and out from the rest of the wall giving the structure a battlement-like quality (Photo 4). Most of the overlook wall is constructed of large, rockfaced blocks of speckled light gray granite laid over a stone rubble core. The stones were laid in a random pattern with fairly wide mortar joints. Some blocks display drill marks from blast quarrying.

The overlook wall's central section is a 165-foot-long curve that provides a panoramic view of Kenney Lake. Symmetrically placed at the ends of the curve are a rounded seating area labeled the "niche" on the original plans, and a terrace and steps leading down to the shoreline. The niche is designed on a 12-foot radius curve and appears from some angles to resemble a squat medieval tower (Photo 8). Designed around an existing oak which was carefully preserved (Figure 5), the niche has a turf floor located about 1 foot lower than the elevation of the parking area, which gives the spot an intimate feel. Three shallow steps lead from the overlook wall's walkway to the floor of the niche. At the northwest end of the niche is a drainage outlet designed to resemble a defensive arrow slit or loophole (Photo 9). The niche was built with two curved concrete and stone benches which have been removed. The benches had concrete slab seats (about 9 feet long and 18 inches wide) resting on block-like granite feet. The bench locations are marked on the original plans (but the plans specify log seats). One of the stone and concrete benches was extant in 1998 but was the seat was broken.⁵

The terrace and staircase at the opposite end of the overlook is an equally interesting element (Figure 2). It is a 55-foot-wide area located three steps lower than the overlook wall's walkway (Photos 5 and 7). It has two 16-foot-long sections of walkway (now turf, specified on the plans as tarvia and crushed rock) that are edged on the east side with a line of flagstones that are now partly obscured by turf. The walkways flank a flagstone landing located three steps lower than the walkways. The landing measures about 14 feet by 8 feet 6 inches and is paved with granite flagstone in shades of pink and gray. Descending from the landing is a granite staircase (Figure 4 and Photo 5). The steps are built of slabs of pink and gray granite installed to create 15-inch treads and 5-inch risers. Midway down the staircase is a second landing that measures about 15 feet by 4 feet. The sides of the steps are enclosed with light gray granite.

⁵ Susan Granger and Scott Kelly, "Kenney Lake Overlook," MnDOT Historic Roadside Development Structures Inventory form, Dec. 1998.

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The original plans indicate the stones for the overlook wall and curbing were to be obtained from “the quarries at the south end of Mille Lacs Lake.” This is a reference to a quarry five miles south of Isle (in Sec. 2, T41N, R25W) that in the 1930s was owned and operated by the Cold Spring Granite Company. A University of Minnesota publication from 1935 indicates the quarry produced light gray granite of uniform color and texture that was marketed under the trade names “Isle” and “Cold Spring Pearl White.” The 1935 text notes, “Its porosity is low and consequently it is quite impervious to solutions that produce stains and discolorations. Cut finishes such as sawed, axed, or hammered surfaces leave the stone nearly white.”⁶ The original plans indicate the granite for the flagstone landing and steps was to be obtained from quarries near St. Cloud.

The overlook wall has experienced minor alterations. The niche is missing its two benches. The overlook’s walkways are now covered with turf; an historic photo shows a gravel surface and the original plans specify tarvia and crushed rock. In circa 1982 about 500 feet of granite curbing was removed from the edge of the highway and the traffic island narrowed by 5 feet. While the amount of curbing removed was substantial, all curbing in the critical central portion of the site remains. In 1999 an approximately 2-inch-thick coating of concrete mortar was applied to the upper surfaces of the overlook wall.⁷

Historic Integrity

In general Kenney Lake Overlook retains good integrity of location, design, setting materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Alterations to the property, all fairly minor, are described in the text above.

⁶ George A. Thiel and Carl E. Dutton, *The Architectural, Structural, and Monumental Stones of Minnesota*, Minnesota Geological Survey Bulletin 25 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1935), pp. 102-104.

⁷ It is MnDOT’s intention to remove the concrete coating when the overlook wall is rehabilitated in the not-too-distant future.

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ARCHITECT/BUILDER

Skooglun, Howard O. (Architect)
Nichols, Arthur Richardson (Landscape Architect)
Olson, Harold E. (Engineer)
Civilian Conservation Corps – Veterans Division (Builder)
Beckman, Henry (Stonemason)
Minnesota Department of Highways (Builder)

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

Kenney Lake Overlook was constructed in 1939 by the Veterans Division of the CCC (sometimes called the Veterans Conservation Corps or VCC) working in cooperation with the MHD and the NPS. Company 2713-V was headquartered at a CCC camp at the south edge of Garrison near the shore of Mille Lacs Lake. The camp was sponsored by the MHD, supervised by the NPS, and operated by the US Army.

The National Register eligibility of Kenney Lake Overlook 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 within the property type "Social and Recreational Facilities" in Section F of the MPDF.¹

Kenney Lake Overlook is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C, as follows:

Criterion A. According to National Register evaluation criteria, a property eligible under Criterion A must be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The property must also possess sufficient historic integrity to convey its historic character, significance, and design intent. The registration requirements of the "Waysides and Overlooks" subsection of the MPDF indicate a property must meet one of the following three requirements to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A:

1. the property must have important federal relief associations by, for example, being significantly associated with a particularly large or important federal relief project, or a project that employed a particular category of workers. The property could also be a rare example of a roadside development project built by a specific work program.

¹ The MPDF is Rolf T. Anderson, "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF), Oct. 9, 1990; amended by Anderson Aug. 30, 1993; amended by Gemini Research 2002, cited hereafter as Anderson 1990/1993/2002. A related MPDF is Rolf T. Anderson, "Minnesota State Park CCC/WPA/Rustic Style Historic Resources," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF), Sept. 3, 1988, cited hereafter as Anderson 1988. While it only encompasses Rustic Style resources within Minnesota state parks, it provides good contextual information on the work of the CCC and National Park Service (NPS) in Minnesota and on the NPS Rustic Style.

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2. the property must be associated with a significant trend in the history of roadside development in Minnesota. For example, the property might be associated with the earliest roadside development activities in the state, or be associated with a particularly important accomplishment of the MHD Roadside Development Division.
3. the property must have made an unusually significant contribution to the local community by, for example, providing an important facility previously unavailable or a property particularly important to local tourism.²

Kenney Lake Overlook meets Requirement 1 by representing a significant accomplishment of the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan, which was the most extensive CCC-built state highway improvement project in the state, and by representing the work of the VCC or Veterans Division of the CCC. It is one of two roadside development structures in the state known to have been built by the VCC, the other being Whitefish Creek Bridge (Bridge 3355, NRHP listed). Kenney Lake Overlook also meets Requirement 2 by being an intact example of the first generation of facilities built by the MHD Roadside Development Division and by being a key element in the Division's single largest Depression-era project, the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan.

Criterion C. According to National Register evaluation criteria, a property eligible under Criterion C must embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. The property must also possess sufficient historic integrity to convey its historic character, significance, and design intent. According to Registration Requirement 4 in the "Waysides and Overlooks" subsection of the MPDF, a roadside development property eligible for the National Register under Criterion C must meet one of three sub-requirements:

- a) It "must be a noteworthy example of the National Park Service Rustic Style or another specific design tradition, or be associated with a significant movement or trend in landscape architecture, or be noteworthy for a particular innovation in landscape design or roadside development design. The design of the site may have superior artistic value. The property may represent one of the few known or few remaining examples of a particular type of structure or category of roadside development property."
- b) "the property must represent the work of highly skilled craftsmen, or display the distinctive use of indigenous materials, or be built using a distinctive or innovative construction or engineering method."
- c) "the design of the property must be noteworthy within the body of work of an important landscape architect, artist, architect, engineer, or horticulturist."³

² Anderson 1990/1993/2002, pp. F.41-F.42.

³ Anderson 1990/1993/2002, p. F.42

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Kenney Lake Overlook meets sub-requirement "a" by being a noteworthy example of the National Park Service Rustic Style, particularly as applied to a highway wayside rest, and by possessing high artistic merit. It meets sub-requirement "b" by representing the work of highly skilled craftsmen and displaying the distinctive use of indigenous materials.

Design and Construction of Kenney Lake Overlook

Kenney Lake Overlook was built in 1939 by Company 2713-V of VCC which occupied the Mille Lacs CCC camp at Garrison (Camp SP-15) from July 1939 to April 1940 when the camp closed. (See Veterans Division of the CCC (VCC) below.) Prior to being occupied by Company 2713-V, the camp was headquarters for companies of the regular CCC.

Kenney Lake Overlook was built only seven years after the MHD 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 designers and project overseers. Kenney Lake Overlook 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. The facility helped the MHD 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.⁴

Kenney Lake Overlook was designed by Howard O. Skooglun, an architect with the NPS, who worked in cooperation with A. R. Nichols and Harold E. Olson. All three men worked on all of the CCC-built roadside development properties built by the Mille Lacs CCC camp. (See Designers and Craftsmen below.)

Kenney Lake Overlook was built as part of the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan, a master plan for state highway roadside development near Mille Lacs Lake created by the NPS and the MHD. Both Kenney Lake Overlook and the adjacent highway landscaping are drawn on a set of plan sheets drawn in April 1938 for roadside development work on and near Mille Lacs Lake. (See Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan below.)

The highway past Kenney Lake Overlook had been built in 1932-1933 as part of a 6-mile realignment of Highway 18 northwest of Garrison. Prior to this time, the road traveled straight west out of Garrison and repeatedly jogged north and west before reaching a straight segment that continued west to Brainerd. The realignment shortened the road by angling northwest from Garrison and past Kenney Lake to reach the straight stretch. In 1935 the new highway was surfaced with oil-treated gravel, a bituminous precursor, to a width of 24 feet. In 1938-1939 the VCC landscaped approximately 3.5 miles of Highway 18 northwest of Garrison and built Kenney Lake Overlook. In the next several decades Highway 18 was periodically paved and repaved with bituminous. In 1957 the highway was regraded, retaining its 1930s width, and paved with bituminous to a width of 26 feet. The highway's 3-foot gravel shoulders were paved with bituminous to their current width of 8 feet in about 1982.⁵

⁴ See Anderson 1990/1993/2002, pages E.96-E.97 and F.39-F.40, for information on the purpose and goals of the MHD roadside development program and the way highway rest areas helped meet those goals.

⁵ Construction Project Log Record for Trunk Highway 18, State of Minnesota Department of Highways Road Life Studies,

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Original Plans. One detailed plan sheet for the highway landscaping near Kenney Lake has survived. It bears the notation "drawn by Abe Sperling" (NPS engineer assigned to the Garrison camp) and was signed in July 1938 by the same officials who signed the plans for Kenney Lake Overlook (see below). Much of the CCC's highway landscaping in the Garrison area involved removing stumps and rocks, smoothing slopes and ditches, and establishing native vegetation to reduce erosion and blend the highway with its setting. The plans for Kenney Lake indicate a principal task along the 200-foot right-of-way was to recontour steep back slopes to bring them to a more gentle 3:1 slope, and fill and round the sharp edges of the ditches. A borrow pit on the south side of the highway immediately southeast of Kenney Lake was obliterated and recontoured. The MHD's annual roadside development reports for 1938 and 1939 include brief statistics on the highway landscaping.⁶

Original construction plans for Kenney Lake Overlook itself comprise two sheets. They were signed in May 1939 by four officials from the MHD – Harold E. Olson, A. R. Nichols, A. W. Moulster (District Engineer), and O. L. Kipp (Construction Engineer). The sheets were also signed by Harold W. Lathrop (Director of State Parks for the Minnesota Department of Conservation, now MnDNR) and three NPS officials – Aage Thompson (Superintendent of the CCC Camp), Ed Lasey (Inspector), and Udert W. Hella (Regional Inspector).

Construction. In July 1939, the month Company 2713-V moved into the Garrison CCC camp, the company's camp newspaper *Vet's Call* reported, "We are now working on the following jobs: (1) a trunk highway bridge over Whitefish Creek; (2) a park road [south of Garrison] which includes a large amount of grading, seeding, sodding, and curbing; and (3) a parking overlook at Kenney Lake which consists of a stone wall, stone curbing, and the sloping of an adjacent bank. Jobs contemplated for the near future consist of a water level gage and shelter at Mille Lacs Lake south of camp; several more highway bridges; another parking overlook; and guardrails along the trunk highway and park roads."⁷

Construction of the overlook was supervised by the Harold Dickinson who was the NPS Junior Foreman at the CCC camp and "master stonemason" Henry Beckman who was one of two experienced masons hired by the NPS to serve as local experienced men (LEMs) for the camp. In July 1939 the camp's progress was inspected by out-of-state officials from the CCC, the NPS, and the U.S. Bureau of Roads (later Federal Highway Administration), as well as officials of MHD. In September five crews of men were at work laying the stone while additional men and a steam shovel worked on the adjacent roadside landscaping. During the same period, the camp's other major projects included building a storage shed at the CCC camp, working on the granite-faced Whitefish Creek Bridge, working on road construction south of Garrison, and surveying for a new state park proposed for Garrison.⁸

In September 1939 the camp paper estimated the stone overlook wall and landscaping would be completed in October, but work was delayed when the men were called to fight two forest fires and to help the Crow Wing County sheriff search for a missing person. The stonework on both Kenney Lake Overlook and Whitefish Creek Bridge was completed in late October 1939, and the two LEMs, Henry

MnDOT, St. Paul.

⁶ *Annual Report of the Accomplishments of Roadside Development Along the Trunk Highways in Minnesota*, Minnesota Dept. of Highways, 1938, p. 21, and 1939, pp. 7-8.

⁷ *Vet's Call*, July 1939, p.8.

⁸ *Vet's Call*, Aug. 1939, p. 14, and Sept. 1939, p. 14.

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Beckman and James Haskell, left the camp and returned home. The landscaping at Kenney Lake Overlook was finalized in November 1939, bringing the job to completion. The MHD's annual report on roadside development for 1939 indicates the project's final materials included 137 cubic yards of masonry wall, 858 feet of granite curbing, and 504 square feet of flagstone walkway and steps. The total cost to the State of Minnesota was about \$8,600 in 2013 dollars.⁹

In October 1939 a new contingent of 19 men joined Company 2713-V, as they did every few months. In November 1939 the camp newspaper reported the company would likely be moving to St. Croix State Park in the spring but that, in the meantime, winter projects would include building a scenic overlook on the north shore of Mille Lacs Lake (never built) and new bridge work. Plans by the Department of Conservation and MHD for a new state park and a substantial bathhouse at Garrison Rest Area were not mentioned in the article and never realized. During the winter of 1939-1940 VCC crews continued roadwork on Highway 169 about 6 miles south of Garrison at Wigwam Bay (near Whitefish Creek). In December it was expected the crew would build a stone-faced bridge on Highway 169 near the south edge of Garrison to serve as a companion to the Garrison Pedestrian Underpass (Bridge 5265) built by the CCC in 1938, but these plans were evidently dropped as well.¹⁰

In March 1940 the camp newspaper characterized the work near Mille Lacs as "done" and indicated the Garrison camp would be dismantled when the men left in April. On March 27 the community of Garrison held a farewell banquet, dance, and card party for the VCC attended by the entire population of the village, the CCC crew, and state and federal officials.¹¹

National Park Service Rustic Style. Kenney Lake Overlook is an excellent example of the National Park Service Rustic Style, particularly as applied to a roadside scenic overlook or wayside rest. In a detailed study of National Park Service landscape design during the years 1916-1942, Linda Flint McClelland traces the development of the NPS Rustic Style and describes its use in state and local parks across the country during the New Deal. She describes scenic overlooks developed in national parks in the late 1920s and early 1930s, explaining:

Overlooks were an important feature of park roads, providing a stopping and resting place and affording visitors spectacular, often panoramic, views. They ranged from simple widened areas along the road where traffic could pull over and stop to larger terraces accommodating sizable parking areas with curbing, sidewalks, and protective guardrails. . . . [These] terraces offered designers endless possibilities for presenting views to the best advantage. [Influential landscape architect Henry] Hubbard urged landscape designers to explore this form, drawing attention to the retaining wall or bank that created a boundary between the structure and its surroundings and allowed a rise in elevation that could command a view over the surrounding area and 'perhaps much further afield.'

According to McClelland, overlooks could either follow the natural contours of a site or, like Kenney Lake Overlook, be built on fill to create a wide flat surface. Some terraces were supported by gradual slopes, planted with vegetation, while others were supported by battered stone retaining walls that

⁹ *Vet's Call*, Aug. 1939, p. 14, and Sept. 1939, pp. 4, 14; *Annual Report 1938*.

¹⁰ *Vet's Call*, Nov. 1939, pp. 1, 6, and Dec. 1939, p. 8.

¹¹ *Vet's Call*, March 1940, p. 1, and April 1940, p.1.

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often rose to create a parapet (similar to a stone guardrail). Parapets and guardrails were interrupted by “crenulating piers” to avoid monotony. Some overlooks were “equipped with viewing bays, water fountains, and dust-free walkways” that led to nearby use areas. Terraces were separated from the roadway by planted islands that helped control the flow of traffic. The islands were often edged with roughly cut curb stones.¹²

Kenney Lake Overlook, in addition to exemplifying a NPS Rustic Style scenic overlook, also provides a fine illustration of many of the overall defining characteristics of the NPS Rustic Style. One of the most important tenets of this design tradition was that manmade structures were inherently disruptive and should therefore be designed to harmonize with the environment as much as possible. Rustic Style designers used historic or “primitive” associations, low profiles, appropriately scaled spaces, neutral colors, roughly textured surfaces, local building materials, hand-craftsmanship, and native plants to help achieve this compatibility.¹³ All are present in Kenney Lake Overlook.

Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan and Garrison CCC Camp SP-15

Kenney Lake Overlook was built as part of the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan, a master plan for state highway roadside development near Mille Lacs Lake created by the NPS and the MHD. Initiated in 1935 and updated occasionally through 1940, the Development Plan was the equivalent of master plans developed by the NPS and the Minnesota Department of Conservation for the New Deal development of nearly two dozen Minnesota state parks.

The Development Plan focused on Mille Lacs Lake which was, in the words of Minnesota’s first statewide park and recreation master plan (1939), “truly the heart of the state from a recreational viewpoint.”¹⁴ Brainerd, another recreational center, was located 20 miles west of Mille Lacs. From modest beginnings during the railroad era, tourism in the Mille Lacs and Brainerd region increased dramatically when automobiles became affordable for the middle class and all-weather roads were built. With reasonable roads and a reliable car, weekend trips became possible, and the Mille Lacs and Brainerd areas became popular destinations for residents of the Twin Cities and elsewhere. The principal road to Mille Lacs Lake and Brainerd from the Twin Cities was the Minnesota Scenic Highway which, when designated in 1917, became one of Minnesota’s earliest and most well known “blazed” auto trails or tourist routes. The Minnesota Scenic Highway was a 1,000-mile route that began in the Twin Cities and circled through north central and northwestern Minnesota. The segment from the Twin Cities to Mille Lacs and Brainerd followed the route of present-day Highways 169 and 18.¹⁵ Prior to the modern highway system, auto trails like the Minnesota Scenic Highway provided the only marked and mapped overland auto roads in many parts of the state. They were identified, marked, and publicized by local and statewide groups, in this case the Minnesota Scenic Highway Association, both to aid the traveler and promote economic development. When the state trunk highway system was established

¹² Linda Flint McClelland, *Presenting Nature: The Historic Landscape Design of the National Park Service, 1916-1942* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1993), pp. 124-125, 190.

¹³ See also Anderson 1988 for discussion of the NPS Rustic Style.

¹⁴ *Minnesota State Park and Recreational Area Plan*, Minnesota Department of Conservation, Division of State Parks, March 1939, p. 125.

¹⁵ *The Minnesota Scenic Highway* (Minnesota Scenic Highway Association, 1918).

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by voters in 1920, many segments of the Minnesota Scenic Highway became part of newly designated trunk highways.

The Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan envisioned a scenic highway or parkway that would encircle Mille Lacs Lake. Scenic overlooks and other amenities were to be strategically placed along the road. Ultimately the CCC and MHD improved about ten miles of highway and built three wayside rests and four stone-faced bridges. The work was concentrated on the west and northwest shores of Mille Lacs and on the road to Brainerd where the Minnesota Scenic Highway was already bringing travelers. The Development Plan’s schemes for the less-populated north, east, and south shores of Mille Lacs Lake were never implemented.

The Development Plan was the principal agenda of CCC Camp SP-15, also known as the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Wayside Camp or the Garrison Camp, one of four CCC camps cosponsored by the MHD and the NPS and devoted exclusively to state highway roadside development work. The Garrison camp was the longest-lived of the four highway camps and its accomplishments were the most extensive.¹⁶

The roadside development properties built as part of the Development Plan are listed below. All project components are extant although their historic integrity varies.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Built</u>	<u>Location From Junction Hwys 169 & 18 in Garrison</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Hwy 169 roadside landscaping	1935-40	from jct to 6 miles south	Altered somewhat
Garrison Concourse	1936-39	at junction	Listed in NRHP
Garrison Rest Area	1936-39	.6 mile south	Altered significantly
Bridge 5266 (Garrison Creek)	1937-38	1 mile north	Altered significantly
Bridge 5265 (Garrison Underpass)	1938	.5 mile south	Listed in NRHP*
St. Alban’s Bay Culvert	1938-39	1.5 miles south	Recommended NRHP elig**
Hwy 18 roadside landscaping	1938-39	from jct to 3.5 miles west	Altered somewhat
Kenney Lake Overlook on Hwy 18	1939	2.5 miles west	Recommended NRHP elig**
Bridge 3355 (Whitefish Creek)	1939	6 miles south	Listed in NRHP*

*Listed in the NRHP as part of a Minnesota statewide historic bridge study completed in the late 1990s by MnDOT and the State Historic Preservation Office.

**Recommended eligible for the NRHP as part of a 1998 statewide inventory of pre-1960 roadside development properties.

A June 1940 report providing NPS expenditures for the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Wayside Camp indicates a total of \$114,063 in federal funds was spent on materials and skilled labor – the equivalent of about \$1.9 million in 2013 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.¹⁷

Garrison CCC Camp (Camp SP-15). CCC Camp SP-15 at Garrison (also known as the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Wayside Camp) was built in September 1935 and vacated in April 1940. At the time

¹⁶ See Anderson 1990/1993/2002, pages E98-E99, for information on the four highway CCC camps.

¹⁷ Susan Granger et al., "Garrison Concourse," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, March 2013, p.8.11.

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Kenney Lake Overlook was built, the camp was one of 42 CCC camps operating in Minnesota. It was a typical camp, equipped and operated by the U.S. Army, accommodating 200 men, and comprising about 15 buildings. The NPS furnished the program staff which in 1939 consisted of Aage Thompson (camp superintendent), Howard O. Skooglun (architect), Abe J. Sperling (engineer), Harold J. Grutsch (foreman), Harold E. Dickinson (junior foreman), Homer T. Lane (junior foreman), George A. Menard (blacksmith), and William J. Treloar (mechanic).¹⁸ Because the CCC camp at Garrison was designed a state park camp (hence the letters "SP" in its name), the camp's agenda was also coordinated with the Minnesota Department of Conservation.

Men enrolled in the CCC received wages of \$30 per month (about \$500 in 2013 dollars), most of which was sent home to their dependents. They also received occupational or other training. Classes at the Mille Lacs camp included such topics as civics; leadership training; journalism; health; blacksmithing; carpentry or woodworking; auto mechanics; mathematics, drafting, surveying, and blueprint reading; nature and conservation; landscape gardening and park development; poultry husbandry; and baking.¹⁹

The federal census of 1940, taken in late March just before the veterans company left Garrison, provides a snapshot of the CCC camp population. According to the census, about 175 men were living at the camp and another 15 project officials and staff lived with their families outside camp boundaries. This total of nearly 200 people increased Garrison's population by a factor of nine. All but three of the camp residents were men in their 40s and early 50s. Most of the men had been born in Minnesota but a large number were immigrants from Scandinavia or elsewhere in Europe. About one-quarter of the enrollees were married. Eight men reported their job as stonemason and likely worked on Kenney Lake Overlook: Eugene M. Adams, John Hauser, Henry J. Hubert, Lloyd D. Mueser, Lewis H. Packert, Chester Roy, and Oscar Wallin. Another man, Nat Lubonski, was listed as a stone quarry laborer.²⁰

Veterans Division of the CCC or VCC

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 chronically poor, and increasing the men's self-confidence and skills. Equally important goals included conserving natural resources such as forest-, park-, and farmland, and improving the nation's recreational opportunities, in large part by developing the national parks and enlarging state park systems.²¹

The Veterans Division of the CCC, also called the Veterans Conservation Corps (VCC or V-CCC), was created in May 1933 two months after the regular CCC was established. It was one of very few special divisions of the CCC, another being organized for Native Americans. The VCC was created in large part as a federal response to a broad protest movement among veterans of World War I (1914-1918) who suffered disproportionately during the early years of the Great Depression. Many of the veterans were unemployed and impoverished due to disability – both physical and psychological – resulting from their combat service.

¹⁸ *Vet's Call*, scattered issues July 1939-March 1940.

¹⁹ *Vet's Call*, Feb. 1940, p. 11.

²⁰ Federal Population Census of the United States, 1940.

²¹ See Anderson 1990/1993/2002 for an overview of the CCC.

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As the Depression deepened in the winter of 1931-1932, President Herbert Hoover's administration proposed severe cuts to veterans benefits as a way to reduce federal deficits. In May 1932, 12,000 World War I veterans, family members, and supporters converged on Washington, DC in protest. By June the encamped crowd had swelled to 20,000. A key demand of this so-called "Bonus Army" was the veterans' ability to redeem certificates for bonus discharge pay. Congress had awarded the bonuses to veterans in 1924 but they were not allowed to legally redeem the certificates until 1945. The maximum payment amount was about \$625 (\$8,500 in 2013 dollars) – money many veterans and their families were desperate to receive. The Hoover administration was generally unresponsive and ordered the veterans to leave government property. While trying to enforce the order, police shot two veterans in the chaos and they later died from their wounds. Then, on July 28, Army troops and tanks dramatically cleared and burned the encampment and forced the crowds to disperse. Hundreds of people were injured, negative publicity was widespread, and the brutal incident played a role in Hoover's reelection loss. When the new president Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) was inaugurated nine months later in March 1933, veterans groups immediately began lobbying for the preservation of benefits. Roosevelt's sweeping Economy Act of March 20, 1933, however, slashed veterans benefits by nearly 50% including those for the disabled. The action was decried as cruel and led many Congressional Democrats to oppose the bill. In protest, thousands of veterans again gathered in Washington in May 1933. This time FDR attempted to defuse the situation by providing a campsite and meals, sending Eleanor Roosevelt to visit the camp, and agreeing to add a Veterans Division to the new CCC with immediate slots for 25,000 men. The offer to create a separate VCC was seen as a weak gesture by many, and protests against the treatment of veterans continued for several years. The movement strengthened the political power of veterans groups such as the American Legion and Veterans for Foreign Wars, and helped lay the groundwork for the G.I. Bill of 1944 which established a broad set of benefits at the end of World War II with far-reaching effects on the nation's postwar history.²²

The Veterans Administration, which had lobbied for creation of the VCC, screened applicants for the new program. VCC rules differed from those of the regular CCC by accommodating both married men and men older than age 25. At first the maximum enrollment period was set at six months but this was extended to nine months at the end of 1933. When veterans threatened another march on Washington, the enrollment period was extended to one year in March 1934 and in June 1934 the enrollment limit was entirely removed.²³ (Men in the regular CCC were limited to four six-month stints.)

Historian John A. Salmond writes, "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." According to Salmond, the veterans "became, in a very real sense, the career men of the CCC." He writes, "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

²² Stephen R. Ortiz, "The 'New Deal' for Veterans: The Economy Act, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Origins of New Deal Dissent," *Journal of Military History*, 70 (April 2006), pp. 415-438.

²³ Thomas W. Patton, "When the Veterans Came to Vermont: The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Winooski River Flood Control Project," *Vermont History* 73 (2005), pp. 164-165.

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confidence they needed to earn a decent living. For others, it was a permanent home."²⁴
Approximately 225,000 men served in the VCC during the CCC's nine-year existence.

Veterans were generally grouped into 200-man veterans-only companies. Camp work agendas and educational programs were somewhat tailored to their physical abilities, interests, and needs. Often VCC companies included more skilled workers than did the younger companies of the regular CCC. Articles and editorials in camp newspapers like the *Vet's Call* allude to mental health difficulties, physical limitations, and age discrimination faced by veterans. The VCC program in Minnesota was evidently successful, as was the CCC at large. One account reports that the men of one Minnesota veterans company gained an average of 18 pounds during their first nine months, an indication of their undernourishment before joining.²⁵ Issues of the *Vet's Call* published before and during Company 2713-V's stay at Garrison express pride in the VCC and general satisfaction with the operation of the program and its camps. A January 1940 issue of the camp newspaper indicates that 273 veterans had recently applied to fill 70 vacancies in the company.²⁶

It is believed Minnesota had about six VCC companies among its more than 100 CCC companies. Little has been written about them. The first three veterans companies were established during the initial push to organize the CCC in Minnesota in the late spring and early summer of 1933. The other three companies were established one and two years later. Minnesota's VCC companies worked primarily on forest preservation, soil conservation, and state park development. Company 2713-V which built Kenney Lake Overlook worked on park development during its entire eight-year existence. Information on Minnesota's VCC companies is compiled below:

Company 1774-V was established in June 1933. Its first assignment was to build its headquarters – a CCC camp at Sand Lake about 14 miles north of Virginia. The company engaged in forest protection work until April 1934 when it was moved to a CCC camp at the county fairgrounds in Rochester and began soil conservation work. The company remained at Rochester until late spring 1939 when it moved to Bayport to establish a new camp, again working on erosion control until abolishment of the CCC in 1942.²⁷

Company 1775-V, established in June 1933, first built a CCC camp near Chisholm. In February 1934 the company was named the outstanding company in the Hibbing Subdistrict, one of Minnesota's three CCC subdivisions. In its first year the company reduced fire hazards, planted 850,000 seedlings, built roads, and erected 41 miles of forestry service telephone lines. In October 1935 the company built a new camp called Partridge River in St. Louis County called Partridge River.²⁸

Company 1785-V, also established in June 1933, referred to the VCC as "a brave, grim, determined body rising above discouragement and despair" in a brief company history written in 1934. The

²⁴ John A. Salmond, *The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1967), chp. 2.

²⁵ C. N. Alleger, comp., *Civilian Conservation Corps Minnesota District: That the Work of Young America May be Recorded* (Privately published, 1934), p. 94.

²⁶ *Vet's Call*, Jan. 1940 and others.

²⁷ Alleger, pp. 161-163; *Vet's Call*, Feb. 1940; Barbara W. Sommer, *Hard Work and a Good Deal: The Civilian Conservation Corps in Minnesota* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2008), pp. 136-137, 153-155.

²⁸ Alleger, pp. 92-95; Sommer, pp. 149-150.

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company included veterans of both the Spanish American War and World War I and was headed by officers decorated for bravery in World War I. Most of the men were married and some had large families. During the summer of 1933 the company built its first headquarters camp at Poplar Lake about half-way up the Gunflint Trail north of Grand Marais. The company worked on forest preservation and improved a segment of the Gunflint Trail. Commenting on 47-below-zero temperatures experienced the first winter, the 1934 publication noted "it takes a veteran to take it and well." In April 1934 the company moved to a CCC camp on the flank of Barn Bluff at Red Wing and began road building and soil conservation work.²⁹ In May 1935 the group was moved to Sibley State Park north of Willmar where it helped build that state park. In 1938 the company also manned a "side camp" that developed nearby Monson Lake State Park. In October 1938 the company moved to Itasca State Park, again to work on park development until the CCC was dismantled in 1942.³⁰

Company 2713-V, which built Kenney Lake Overlook, was established in August 1934. The company was based at a succession of state park CCC camps and worked entirely on projects directed by the National Park Service. The company was first stationed near Marshall where it helped build Camden State Park. In October 1936 the group moved to Fort Ridgely State Park near Fairfax where the men spent three years completing that park. In July 1939 the company moved to the CCC camp at Garrison to continued work on state highway roadside development projects begun in 1935. Near Mille Lacs Lake Company 2713-V built Kenney Lake Overlook and Whitefish Creek Bridge (NRHP listed). In April 1940 after work at Garrison wound down, the company moved to the St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area (RDA), later St. Croix State Park, where they established a new CCC camp (the park's second) and completed development of that park. The company was still at St. Croix RDA when the CCC was abolished in 1942.³¹

Company 2714-V was evidently short-lived. It was stationed at Fort Snelling from June to October 1935.³²

Company 3722-V was established in June 1935 and built a CCC camp at Cottonwood River (later Flandrau) State Park at New Ulm.³³

Designers and Craftsmen

The team that designed and built Kenney Lake Overlook consisted of an NPS-paid architect based at the CCC camp, a landscape architect and engineer from the MHD, and members of a Veterans CCC company. The masonry was directed by Henry Beckman, a camp LEM. The National Park Service's lead supervisor was Junior Foreman Harold Dickinson. The architect, Howard O. Skooglun, was employed by the NPS's Minnesota Central Design Office and assigned to the Garrison CCC camp.

²⁹ Alleger, pp. 163-166.

³⁰ Sommer, pp. 145-146, 153, 156; "CCC Camps Minnesota," Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy website <www.ccclegacy.org>, accessed 2014. Groups of resources in Sibley State Park, Monson Lake State Park, and Itasca State Park are listed in the NRHP.

³¹ *Vet's Call* Sept. 1939, p. 3; Sommer, pp. 138-139, 154; Sommer indicates the company also worked in Scenic State Park but this is unconfirmed. Groups of resources in Camden State Park and Fort Ridgely State Park are listed in the NRHP. St. Croix RDA is a National Historic Landmark.

³² Sommer, p. 143.

³³ Sommer, p. 140. A group of resources in Flandrau State Park is listed in the NRHP.

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The Minnesota Central Design Office operated from 1933-1941. It was headquartered in St. Paul and headed by architect Edward W. Barber. The staff, including about three architects, a civil engineer, a landscape architect, a mechanical engineer, and clerical personnel, designed hundreds of Rustic style buildings and structures built in at least 22 Minnesota state parks.³⁴

Projects designed and built in Minnesota under the auspices of the National Park Service were subjected to a complex approval process and careful supervision. Historian Rolf Anderson explains that drawings for state park structures were approved by the superintendent of the park, by the Director of Minnesota State Parks (Harold W. Lathrop), by local and regional NPS inspectors, by the Omaha office of the NPS, and by the NPS Division of State Parks in Washington. Changes in the plans were similarly reviewed. Anderson also describes rigorous on-site supervision and inspection. Former NPS regional inspector Udert W. Hella (who signed the Kenney Lake Overlook plans) related to Anderson that he “once noticed a masonry wall at Itasca State Park with a continuous horizontal joint near the base. Although it had taken hours for the CCC enrollees to construct the stonework, Hella instructed the masons to raze the wall and begin again since the lengthy joint was not an acceptable element of rustic masonry.”³⁵

Key individuals who worked on Kenney Lake Overlook include:

Howard O. Skooglun was an architect with the NPS’s Minnesota Central Design Office in St. Paul and was stationed at state park CCC camps. He was lead designer for Kenney Lake Overlook and the four stone bridges built near Garrison: Garrison Pedestrian Underpass (Bridge 5265), the Garrison Creek Culvert (Bridge 5266), St. Alban’s Bay Culvert, and Whitefish Creek Bridge (Bridge 3355). Skooglun is also listed as draftsman on some of the plan sheets for the Garrison Concourse. He also designed physical improvements at the Garrison CCC camp. Skooglun lived near the CCC camp with his family. During the school year his wife and two daughters moved back to St. Paul so the children could attend school.³⁶

Skooglun was born in 1896 in St. Paul, the son of Swedish immigrants. Skooglun’s World War I 1918 draft registration card (1918) indicates he was studying architecture at a “state university,” probably the University of Minnesota. By the time of the 1920 census he was working as a draftsman for an architectural firm, believed to Cederberg and Van Kirk of St. Paul. At the time of the 1930 census Skooglun was living with his wife Harriet and two young daughters in Oak Park, Illinois, and working as a draftsman for a building contractor. He was about 36 years old in 1934 when he was first assigned to the CCC camp at Whitewater State Park as an architect and senior foreman. In November 1935 he was transferred to the CCC camp at Lake Vadnais (now Lake Vadnais Metropolitan Park) in St. Paul. In July 1937 he was moved to the CCC camp at Garrison where he remained until the camp closed in April 1940.³⁷ In 1944 Skooglun was listed in the St. Paul City Directory as a draftsman for Weyerhaeuser Lumber in St. Paul. The 1950 St. Paul City Directory lists him simply as a draftsman.

³⁴ For the work of the NPS Central Design Office in Minnesota and the origins and characteristics of the NPS Rustic Style, see Anderson 1990/1993/2002 as well as Anderson 1988.

³⁵ Anderson 1988, p. E.41.

³⁶ *Vet’s Call*, Sept. 1939, p. 9.

³⁷ *Vet’s Call*, July 1939, p. 9.

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Henry Beckman was the stonemason in charge of construction of Kenney Lake Overlook and was about 56 years old when the wayside rest was built. He was a LEM at the Garrison CCC camp from February 1937 through October 1939. Beckman was born in 1883 of Swedish immigrant parents and grew up in Onamia near the south shore of Mille Lacs Lake. The 1920, 1930, and 1940 federal census schedules list Beckman as farming in rural Onamia with his family. The 1930 census also indicates he worked as a bricklayer.³⁸

Harold Dickinson was the foreman in charge of Kenney Lake Overlook. He was appointed a junior foreman (a member of the NPS staff) at the Garrison CCC camp in September 1935. Prior to that he served nearly two years in the CCC himself, working on state park development. Dickinson was born in Iowa and lived in Winnebago, Minnesota, before the Depression. When Kenney Lake Overlook was built Dickinson was about age 31 and living in Garrison with his wife.³⁹ In 1948 Dickinson was working as a millwright in Minneapolis according to the Minneapolis City Directory.

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. He formed Morell and Nichols with partner Anthony Morell in 1909. Morell and Nichols became one of Minnesota's leading firms, designing parks, parkways, urban plans, estates, gardens, cemeteries, colleges, and country clubs. A. R. 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. He designed the grounds of dozens of state institutions and colleges. 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. Nichols retired in 1960 and passed away 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 and collaborated with A. R. Nichols on the design of most New Deal-era roadside development projects. Olson also worked closely with local, state, and federal agencies including the Minnesota Department of Conservation, NPS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service, and the Minnesota Bureau of Tourism. He served as the Roadside Development Division's liaison to business and civic groups concerned with highway design, safety, commerce, conservation, park development, and tourism. Olson retired from the Roadside Development Division in 1963 but continued to work for the MHD until January 1968.

Conclusion

Kenney Lake Overlook, built in 1939, is a National Park Service Rustic Style gem. It is a state highway wayside rest with a high level of design quality, outstanding craftsmanship, and good historic integrity. The property is an excellent example of the MHD Roadside Development Division's first set of wayside rests – facilities designed and built during the Depression to increase safety, enhance the experience of

³⁸ *Vet's Call*, July 1939, p. 9, and Oct. 1939, p. 8.

³⁹ *Vet's Call*, July 1939, p.9.

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travelers, and beautify the state's new trunk highways. Kenney Lake Overlook was a key accomplishment of the Mille Lacs Lake Highway Development Plan, a master plan for roadside development near Mille Lacs Lake developed by the NPS and MHD. Kenney Lake Overlook was designed by Howard O. Skooglun, an NPS architect, working in collaboration with A. R. Nichols and Harold E. Olson of the MHD. The wayside rest was built by CCC Company 2713-V, a company of World War I veterans based at a CCC camp in Garrison. The camp was one of four in the state cosponsored by the MHD to assist with roadside development. Company 2713-V was one of only six veterans companies known to exist among more than 100 companies that comprised the CCC in Minnesota. Kenney Lake Overlook is one of two structures in the Mille Lacs Lake area built by the company. They are the only two structures known to have been built by the VCC for the state highway department. Kenney Lake Overlook is still owned by the state highway department and continues to serve its original function.

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- Figure 2. Detail of the original construction plans for Kenney Lake Overlook, signed May 1939 (Site Development Unit, MnDOT, St. Paul).
- Figure 3. Kenney Lake Overlook nearing completion, photo likely taken in November 1939 (photo by the MHD, A. R. Nichols photo album, Vol. 7, Site Development Unit, MnDOT, St. Paul).
- Figure 4. The granite staircase descending to the lakeshore (1939 photo by the MHD, A. R. Nichols photo album, Vol. 5, Site Development Unit, MnDOT, St. Paul).
- Figure 5. The niche at the northwest end of the overlook wall (circa November 1939 photo by the MHD, Harold E. Olson photo album, Vol. 1, Site Development Unit, MnDOT, St. Paul).
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- Figure 7. Standard log and plank picnic table used by the Minnesota Department of Highways Roadside Development Division on state highway wayside rests of the 1930s (circa 1940 photo by the Minnesota Dept. of Highways, location unknown, Site Development Unit, MnDOT, St. Paul).
- Figure 8. Kenney Lake Overlook boundary and photograph facings map (sketch by Gemini Research; 2014 base map data: Google, DigitalGlobe, USDA Farm Service Agency).
- Figure 9. Kenney Lake Overlook general sketch map (sketch by Gemini Research; 2014 base map data: Google, DigitalGlobe, USDA Farm Service Agency).

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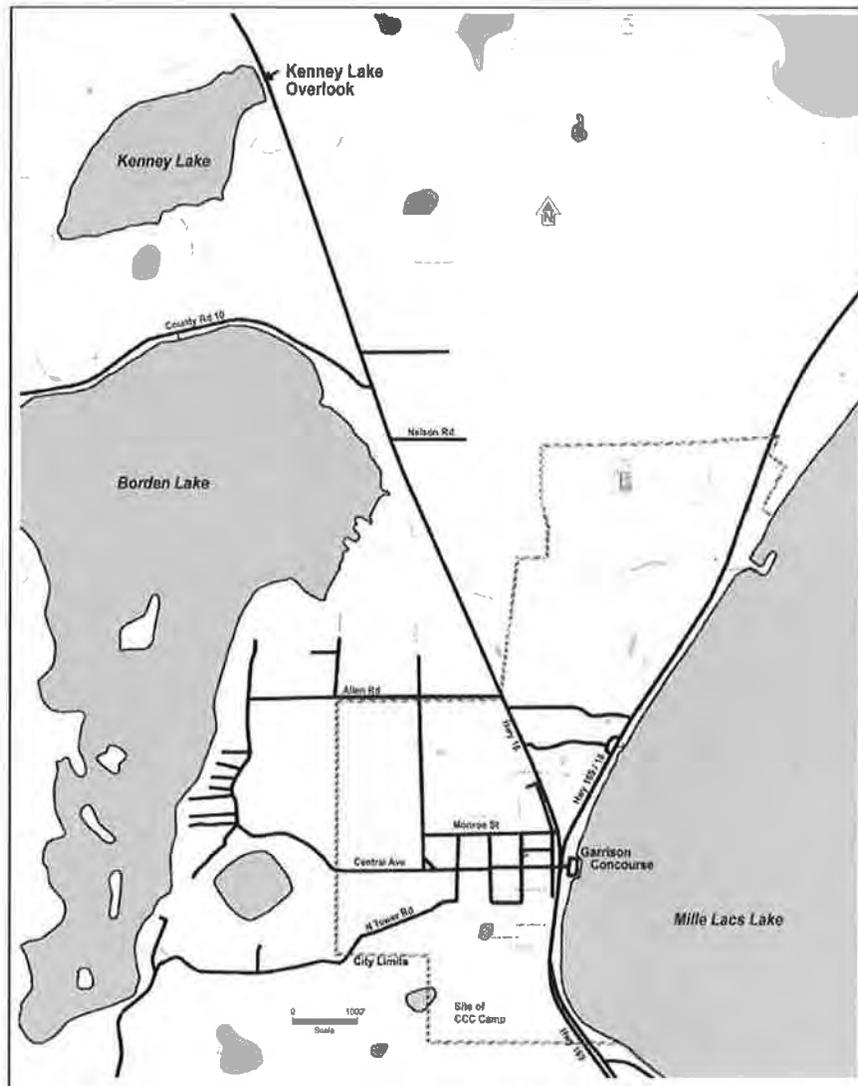


Figure 1. Kenney Lake Overlook vicinity map (Gemini Research 2014).

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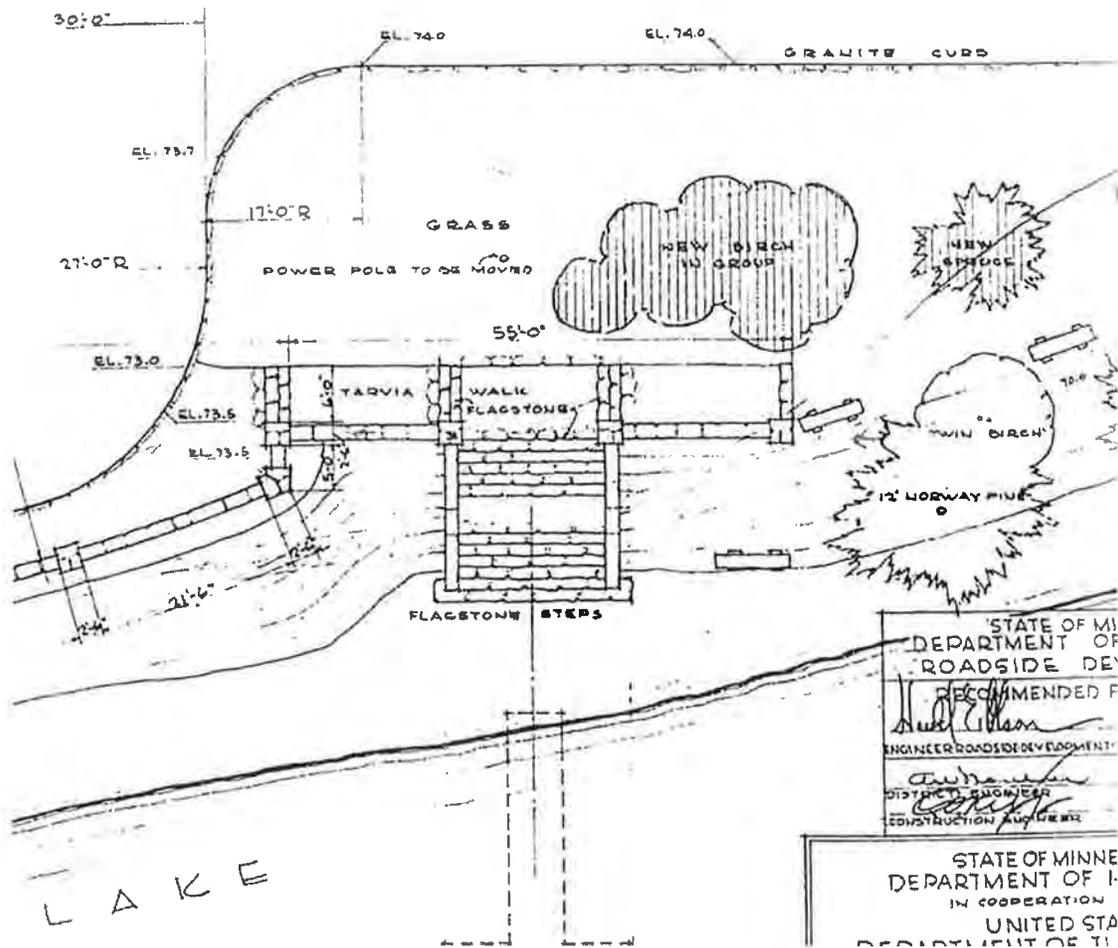


Figure 2. Detail of the original construction plans for Kenney Lake Overlook. The sheet was signed by officials from the state highway department, National Park Service, and Minnesota Department of Conservation in May 1939 (Site Development Unit, MnDOT, St. Paul).

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Figure 3. Kenney Lake Overlook nearing completion, probably taken in November 1939. In the photo the walkway and parking area appear to be surfaced with gravel, perhaps not yet covered with the tarvia treatment specified on the original plans, or the tarvia was never applied. The photo shows what appears to be an elm tree on the traffic island, as well as clumps of birches near the picnic area (center right), both specified on the original plans. The photo shows what appears to be a pine (lower right) where the plan specifies a spruce. The photo also shows some new trees and shrubs not drawn on the plans including several conifers (probably pines) on the lake side of the wall and a deciduous tree (probably an elm) near the new birches (center right). The clump of birches at lower left may also be newly planted (circa November 1939 photo by the Minnesota Dept. of Highways, A. R. Nichols photo album, Vol. 7, Site Development Unit, MnDOT, St. Paul).

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Figure 4. The granite staircase descending to the lakeshore. The photo was taken before the site was planted (1939 photo by the Minnesota Dept. of Highways, A. R. Nichols photo album, Vol. 5, Site Development Unit, MnDOT, St. Paul).

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Figure 5. The niche at the northwest end of the overlook wall. The original plans specify preservation of the 10-inch-diameter oak tree in the center of the niche. In the foreground is the granite curbing along the parking area (circa November 1939 photo by the Minnesota Dept. of Highways, Harold E. Olson photo album, Vol. 1, Site Development Unit, MnDOT, St. Paul).

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Figure 6. Northwest end of the overlook wall. Note the temporary construction shed. The narrow path emerging around the curved niche and crossing the photo from left to right (descending to the lake) is labeled "foot path" on the original plans (November 1939 photo by the Minnesota Dept. of Highways, Harold E. Olson photo album, Vol. 1, Site Development Unit, MnDOT, St. Paul).

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Figure 7. Standard log and plank picnic table used by the Minnesota Department of Highways Roadside Development Division on state highway wayside rests of the 1930s. Two or three of these tables were probably placed at Kenney Lake Overlook. Most of the tables were built for the Division by the National Youth Administration (circa 1940 photo by the Minnesota Dept. of Highways, location unknown, Site Development Unit, MnDOT, St. Paul.

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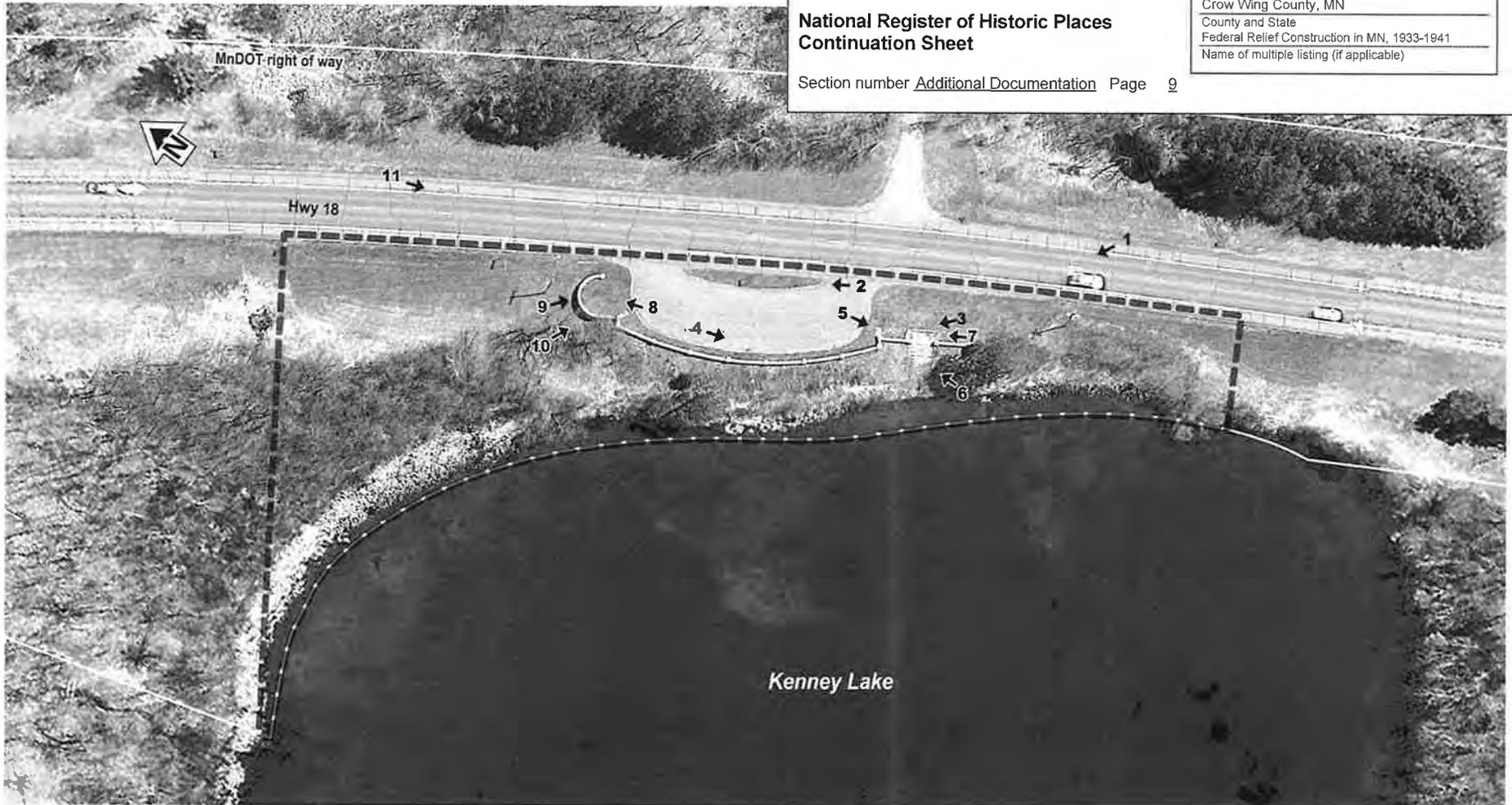


Figure 8. Boundary and photograph facings map (sketch by Gemini Research; 2014 base map data: Google, DigitalGlobe, USDA Farm Service Agency).



- Boundary of nominated property
- ← Camera facings

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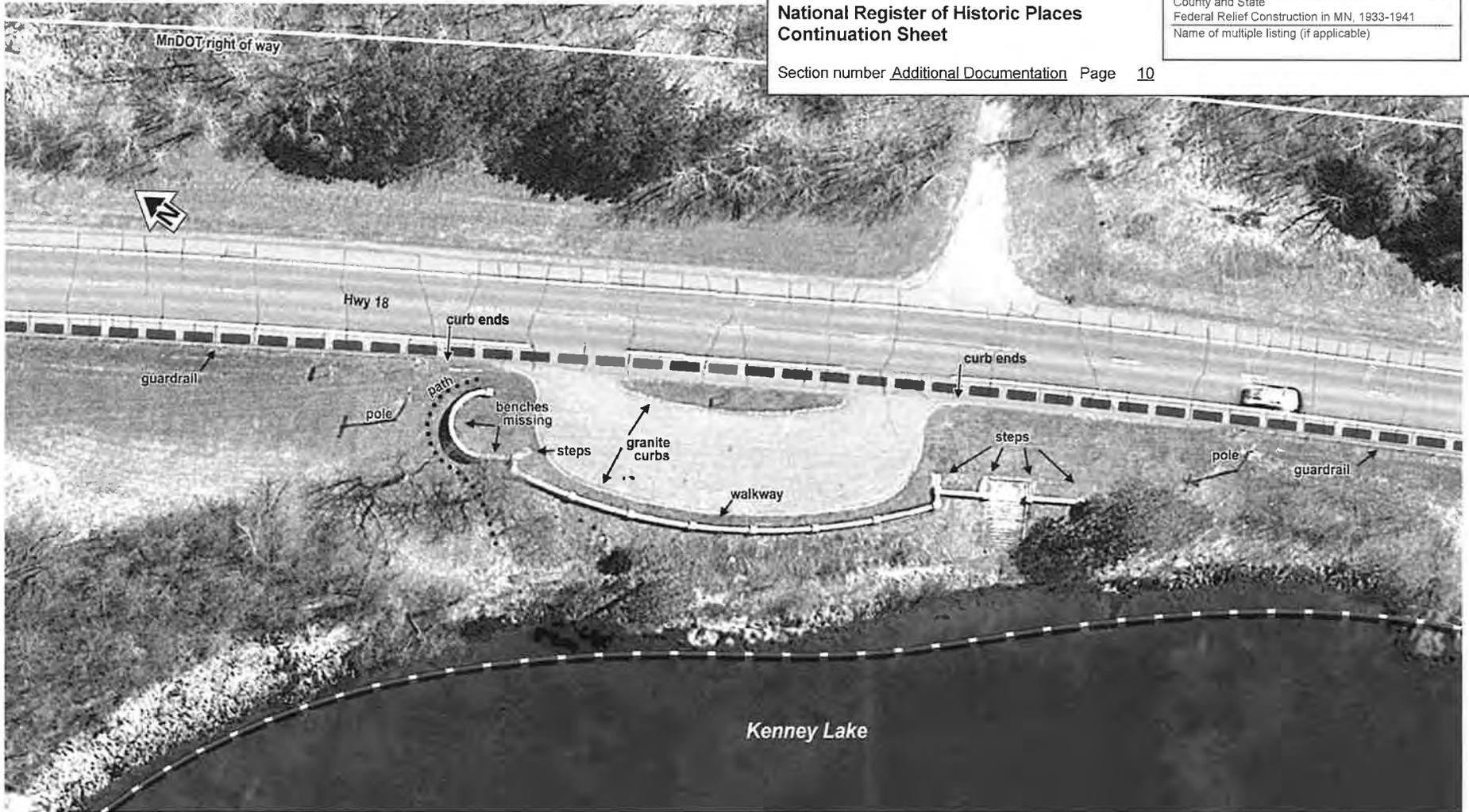


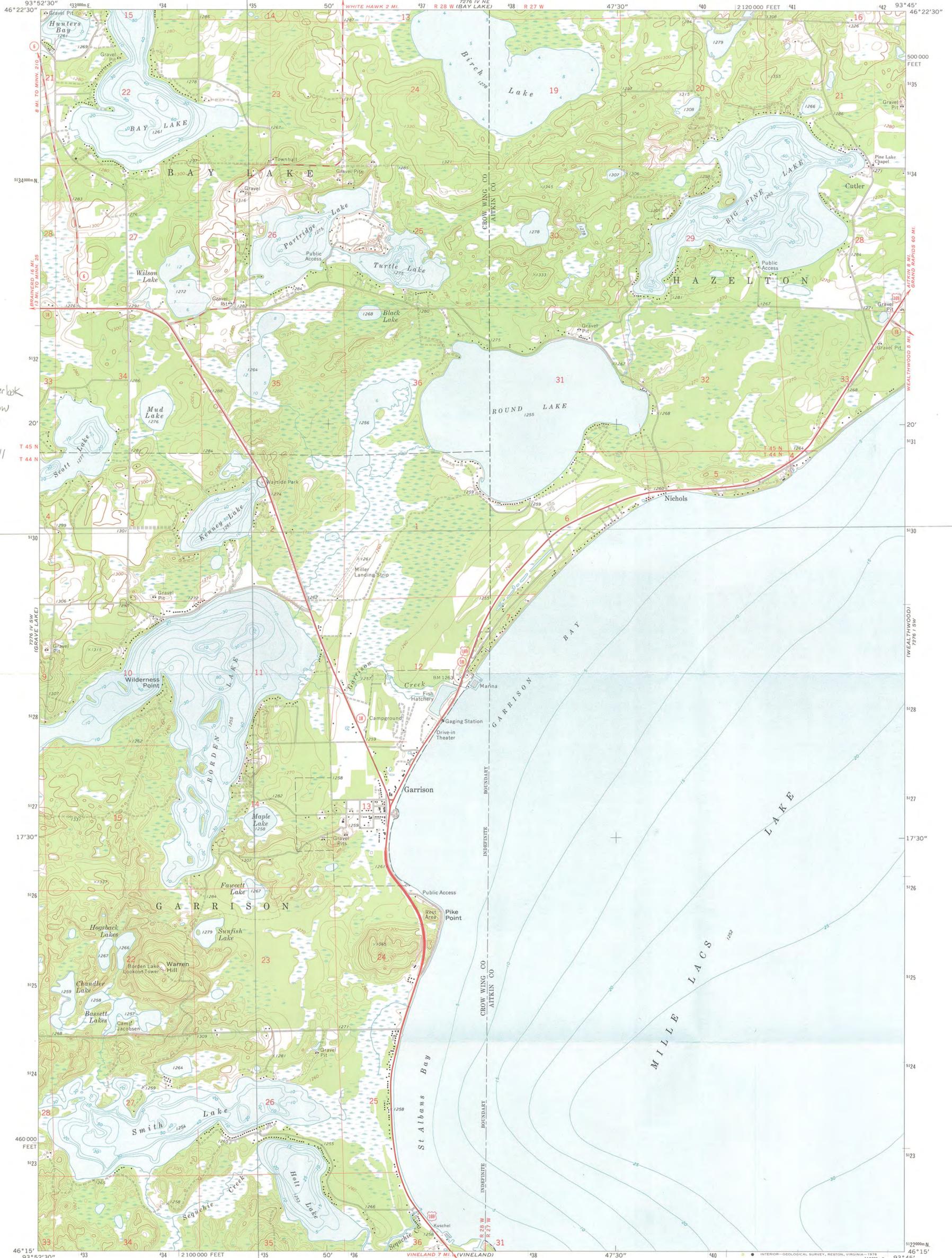
Figure 9. General sketch map (sketch by Gemini Research; 2014 base map data: Google, DigitalGlobe, USDA Farm Service Agency).



Boundary of nominated property

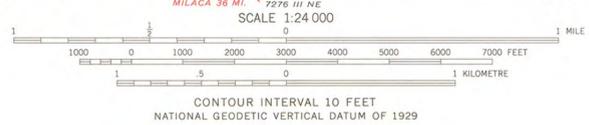
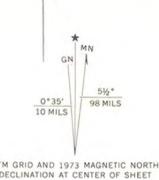
7276 IV NW
(CROSBY)

7276 I NW
(SPIRIT LAKE)



Kenney Lake Overlook
Garrison Twp, Crow
Wing Co., MN
15/435129/5130541

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



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



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

GARRISON, MINN.
SE/4 DEERWOOD 15' QUADRANGLE
N4615-W9345/7.5
1973
AMS 7276 IV SE—SERIES V872

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