An Investigation of Historic Landscape Occupation, Transformation, and Interpretation at Windigo, Isle Royale National Park

Marley Chynoweth

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AN INVESTIGATION OF HISTORIC LANDSCAPE OCCUPATION, TRANSFORMATION, AND INTERPRETATION AT WINDIGO, ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my great grandfather, Benjamin Raymond Chynoweth. Though we never met, I have felt a deep connection through our shared devotion to Isle Royale. His manuscript, donated archival material, and hours spent studying all things Isle Royale aided my research for this thesis and bolstered my emotional bond to the island. I am sincerely grateful for his profound admiration for Isle Royale and commitment to telling its story; a trait which we both share. I only wish we could have the opportunity to reminisce about our island together.
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This thesis would not have been possible without the support of my committee, colleagues, friends, and family. First I would like to thank my advisor, Tim Scarlett, for his guidance. He never lost focus of the big picture and my future success beyond this thesis. Words cannot properly express my gratitude for my committee member and mentor, Seth DePasqual. Working with him has been a wonderful opportunity and his dedication to my work went above and beyond expectations. I also owe my most sincere thanks to Pat Martin for encouraging me to join the Industrial Archaeology program, providing a great foundation for learning about the field, and serving on my committee.

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I have the most profound appreciation for my companion, Fred, who supported me from the beginning of this adventure. No amount of thanks can represent my gratitude for his devotion to my education, career, and personal wellbeing.

Lastly, I thank Isle Royale for the experiences I never dreamed of having, both difficult and inspiring, and all memorable. My heart belongs somewhere along its ridgelines and Lake Superior shores. Until next time.
Abstract

Windigo Ranger Station, Isle Royale National Park, is an historic landscape that provides a gateway to wilderness at one of America’s least visited national parks. Aspects of isolation have helped preserve Isle Royale’s extensive natural and cultural resources, making it an enticing setting for researchers and outdoor enthusiasts. This thesis combines information gathered from archaeological fieldwork and archival research to construct a narrative of landscape transformation at Windigo, Isle Royale National Park. From historic industrial townsite to contemporary NPS visitor port, this narrative highlights three prominent eras of landscape occupation headlined by the Wendigo Copper Company, Washington Club, and a combination of the early National Park Service and Civilian Conservation Corps. Using the historic narrative as a foundation, an exploration of NPS cultural resource interpretation sets the stage for a discussion of interpretive methods used at Isle Royale National Park. I assess current interpretive strategies used at Windigo, by providing suggestions for enhancement of non-personal interpretation.
Chapter 1: Research Design

Isle Royale National Park is a small gem among the National Park system. As the largest island in Lake Superior, it boasts elements of natural splendor and human significance. Isle Royale was well known for its wide and varied resources long before it was designated as a national park. Windigo Ranger Station is one of two locations at Isle Royale National Park that provides visitors with interpretive programming in which they might learn about the history of Isle Royale and the Windigo area. Both natural and cultural resources are abundant at Windigo, as is the enthusiasm of interpretive staff. In this thesis, I seek to analyze and record improvements for interpretation strategies of cultural resources at Windigo. To achieve this, I lay out the cultural history of this area to guide possibilities. The story of Windigo concerns the use of the land as the setting for industrial, residential, and recreational activities, similar to other places on the island but with a different set of features. Intensive land use began in 1889 with the Wendigo Copper Company and continued with the arrival of National Park Service management. An overview of the utilization and transformation of the Windigo landscape provides the background for understanding how Isle Royale National Park interprets one of their most popular areas.

The two primary goals of the National Park Service are to preserve and interpret significant resources in the United States. The abundance of natural and cultural resources on Isle Royale makes it a “complete package” as a National Park. The spectacular natural features of the island include a boreal ecosystem, miles of Lake Superior coastline, numerous inland lakes, and countless streams. Extensive trail networks that crisscross over the Island’s two main ridgelines, the Greenstone and the Minong, offer multiple vistas. The cultural elements of Isle Royale are diverse and, at times, as elusive as some of the natural components. Reminders of the Island’s historic industries of fishing, logging, and mining remain on the landscape in many forms. Leftover structures, stratification of forest growth, mine shafts, poor rock piles, and drill holes speak to the history of human use of the land. The site of Windigo on the west end
of Isle Royale is an example where elements of industrial activities blend with those related to recreation endeavors.

This document provides a comprehensive overview of the history of the immediate Windigo area. Previous publications involving Windigo’s history were part of larger island narratives. Such documents have offered narrow overviews of Windigo in context with broader themes of historic mining, recreation, and early NPS efforts. For example, the Wendigo Copper Company’s mining efforts concluded half a century of historic mining on Isle Royale and yet we hear relatively little about their time in comparison to more productive locations such as the Minong or Siskowit mines. The Washington Club maintained their private sportsmen’s club during the boom of the resort era on the island, but did not draw the public’s attention as intensively as the popular Park Place and Belle Isle resorts did, due to their closed membership. The Civilian Conservation Corp Camp Windigo was the most short-lived of the CCC camps that contributed to the creation of Isle Royale National Park, yet it produced miles of trail and updated infrastructure for the Windigo Ranger Station and Visitor Center. As pieces of the grand Isle Royale picture, Windigo may not shine as brightly as other prominent examples. However, the historic narrative of landscape occupation and transformation of Windigo is an excellent example of how each entity has contributed to a lasting legacy that is interpreted to this day. The goal of this project is to highlight the significant historic narrative and potential areas for enhancement of cultural resource interpretation at Windigo.

Fieldwork Research Questions and Goals

Human manipulation of the Windigo landscape has been nearly continuous since the National Park Service formally opened Isle Royale National Park to the public in 1940. Recent plans to construct a new concessionaire’s store and other subsequent landscape changes in the Windigo area prompted the need for archaeological survey. The 2016 Ghyllbank Townsite Survey was the most extensive archaeological project conducted on site of Wendigo Copper Company’s 1890 wharf town. Prior to this survey, Windigo-based archaeological work was limited. Since the 1960s, archaeologists have
been surveying elsewhere in the Windigo area, focusing specifically on interior features such as Wendigo Copper Company’s exploratory diggings and a more remote staging camp known as Wendigo. It was not until the mid-1980s that the Ghyllbank townsite itself received attention from archaeologists. Archaeological testing and shovel test pit surveys performed by Michigan Technological University (MTU) and the Midwest Archaeological Center (MWAC) examined archaeological resources associated with the three distinct historic eras of landscape occupation at Ghyllbank: Wendigo Copper Company, Washington Club, and Civilian Conservation Corps/National Park Service. Surveys within the Ghyllbank townsite, Camp Windigo, and NPS lodges and visitor center areas yielded results that impacted the decisions regarding new construction on this landscape. The goal of the 2016 survey was similar to those performed earlier: however, in this instance about one half of the Ghyllbank townsite was examined by pedestrian and metal detector surveys, shovel test pits, and a single trench excavation. Chynoweth and Scarlett (2017) reported the survey results along with specific recommendations for the site. This study was guided by the following research questions:

- What landscape transformations are visible on the contemporary Ghyllbank townsite?
- What cultural remnants of the three eras of historic landscape occupation are well suited for public interpretation for Windigo visitors?
- What areas of Ghyllbank’s landscape have potential for future archaeological investigation?

Archival Research

Building on the data acquired through archaeological fieldwork, I conducted extensive archival research relating to the Windigo area and the themes of historic mining, recreation, and creation of the park. Multiple archival resources provided material on Windigo landscape occupation and transformation. The Michigan Tech Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections house manuscript collections with first person accounts of life and the Wendigo Copper Company wharf at Washington Harbor that offer an understanding of life at Windigo over multiple eras. In particular, the
Coughlin and Gray Family Papers and Dr. Scott’s Reminiscences in the Ben R. Chynoweth Collection provided useful insight on lifestyles of different people living in the frontier town. These two manuscript collections also provided rare and prominent images of Ghyllbank, as well as tourist brochures from the early NPS era. The archives at Isle Royale National Park contains Wendigo Copper Company drill records and employee information, National Park Service purchase records of the Washington Club land, and correspondence between Washington Club and Isle Royale National Park Commission representatives. A 1940s aerial photograph within the archive proved useful when determining locations for previous Ghyllbank structures. Likewise, photos from the Fisher and Rakestraw Collections revealed images of Ghyllbank that were useful when conceptualizing how the landscape was used previously. Photos of CCC Camp Windigo from the Stellman Collection at Isle Royale NP Archives provided details on the landscape transformations that occurred just prior to the opening of Isle Royale National Park in 1940. The Bentley Historic Library at the University of Michigan also provided landscape photos of the Washington Club from 1929 and personal letters from Jacob Houghton about his explorations of the area. Additional photos of the Windigo CCC Camp and crew by the *Detroit News* were insightful to the nature of Camp Windigo projects and crew members. This project would not have been possible without the contributions of these sources.

**Purpose**

This thesis has three purposes. The first concerns a full landscape narrative presented in four chapters. Chapter 2 provides a basic chronological narrative of the creation of the island archipelago, followed by the humans that occupied and utilized the landscape up through the industrialization of Isle Royale during the 19th century. Chapters 3-5 combine information gathered from archaeological fieldwork and archival research to construct a detailed narrative of the history of the Windigo area beginning in 1889. This narrative includes three significant eras of occupation that range from industrial to recreational with a focus on activities of the Wendigo Copper Company (Chapter 3), Washington Club (Chapter 4), and CCC/Isle Royale National Park.
Commission (Chapter 5). Specific events, landscape elements, and individuals are all considered within this discussion. The following interpretive themes for Isle Royale National Park were addressed to facilitate a more robust narrative of Windigo landscape occupation and transformation:

- The influence of isolation on landscape occupation
- Aspects of self-sufficiency exercised by individuals and groups
- Changing cultures and consistent patterns of landscape occupation
- Recreation as a continuous aspect of landscape use

With the narrative serving as a backdrop, Chapter 6 reviews interpretative methods within the National Park Service. Aspects of interpretive frameworks, audiences, methods, and planning are explored in order to set the stage for discussions of interpretation at Isle Royale in following chapters. Chapter 7 specifically examines interpretation at Isle Royale National Park, including an assessment of current methods the staff uses to interpret the cultural resources associated with the Windigo area.

Chapter 8 includes suggestions on how NPS staff can enhance interpretive methods for Windigo cultural resources based on the discussion in previous chapters. Each current method of interpretation at Windigo is analyzed in relation to its scope and audience reach and I provide suggestions on how these methods can be further enhanced. Examples of additions to non-personal interpretation at Windigo, including new brochure concepts and walking path through the Ghyllbank townsite are presented in Appendix A. My hope is that Isle Royale interpretive staff can use this document to learn more about significant periods of landscape occupation and transformation, which will enable them to design ways to interpret this information to Park visitors, thus enriching their interpretive programs.
Chapter 2: Creation and Initial Use of Isle Royale

To understand the subsequent transformations that humans imposed on Isle Royale, one must recognize the geologic history, understand the narrative of the precontact and native Ojibwe people, and synthesize each of the three significant eras of historic occupation at Windigo. Both the precontact and historic occupation of the Windigo area was predominantly driven by two fundamental motives; resource harvesting and recreation. The geological forces driving land formation and evolution on the island shaped the activities associated with these motives by multiple groups.

Geologic History

The Isle Royale archipelago is primarily constructed of two different formations of rock deposited one on top of the other approximately 1,120-1,140 million years ago. The Portage Lake Volcanics include a sequence of flood basalts that were formed as lava welled up through fissures in the Earth’s crust along the mid-continental rift. This formation’s layers are older, lower, and include all lava flows and sedimentary rocks interbedded between each basalt formation. The Copper Harbor Conglomerate, by contrast, is comprised only of sedimentary rocks, primarily conglomerate but also including sandstone. These sedimentary rocks were deposited after the sequence of lava flows had ceased and are the younger layers of the deposits. These two rock sequences also formed in the Keweenaw Peninsula where they were first studied and named (Huber, 1983). After the mid-continental rift’s volcanic activity ceased, the land around the rift slumped along a massive syncline, creating long East-West running ridges with exposed rock strata. These ridges formed as mirror images on the north and south shores of the Lake Superior basin, creating what is today Isle Royale and the Keweenaw Peninsula.

The rift’s magma also forced superheated water through the rock layers, where the fluid deposited large mineralization of metals in the region. The abundance of native copper in the formations of the Keweenaw and Isle Royale are attributed to these geological processes. Native copper occurs in two types of formations; lode and fissure
deposits. Lode deposits are formed when small pores in basalt or sedimentary rock are filled with ore like water fills a sponge, while fissure deposits occur along fractures and faults that have filled with ore. Native copper is widespread on Isle Royale in both formations, though the mineralization of copper ore was too weak to develop large lode deposits like those found on the Keweenaw (Huber, 1983).

Ancient and historic-era persons performed mining on both types of ore deposits. Precontact miners typically targeted fissure deposits because of their predictability to occur along the fracture zones. Some historic mines, such as the Siskowit Mine, also focused on fissure deposits while the Minong Mine and Island Mine extracted copper from lode deposits (Huber, 1983).

**Precontact Land Use**

Humans began exploiting Isle Royale during the Archaic period (6000 BC – 500 BC) following the departure of the last glaciers. During this time, the island was naturally transforming from periglacial tundra to its current boreal forest. Lake Nipissing formed during this phase of periglaciation, which led to the creation of shoreline features that are far above the current levels of Lake Superior (Clark, 1995). The resources of the island, including wild game and native copper deposits, first attracted humans from the Canadian and Minnesota mainland (Clark, 1995). These ancient people traversed the island with calculated intent, using the most convenient routes and making camp in advantageous areas close to food and water sources. Many of these locations are now used as NPS trail networks and campgrounds all over the island (Cochrane, 2009).

Numerous objects and landscape features help explain precontact presence and activities on Isle Royale. Copper implements traced back to Isle Royale from as early as 3000 B.C. have been found throughout eastern and central North American trade networks. Evidence from the Woodland Period (1000 B.C-700 A.D.) is also present all over the archipelago in landscape features such as mining pits and an array of early ceramic styles, suggesting that the most intensive precontact use of the Island’s resources occurred during this period (Clark, 1995).
Mining pits from the precontact era pock the landscape of Isle Royale with high concentrations near Hay Bay and McCargoe Cove. These areas display the best archaeological remnants of this mining process in the entire Lake Superior Region (Clark, 1995). By the late precontact period multiple native groups along the Lake Superior North Shore used Isle Royale as part of their trade network; bringing goods from the mainland constructed of materials foreign to Isle Royale, such as gunflint silica and jasper taconite (Cochrane, 2009).

Both Archaic and Woodland occupation and manufacturing sites exist in the Washington Harbor area, which suggests that it was used frequently throughout the precontact period (Clark, 1995). At least ten Woodland sites and eight Archaic sites have been confirmed in this area and on the small nearby islands (Stroh and DePasqual, 2013). Recent archaeological investigation of the Grace Peninsula site confirmed that humans colonized the landscape nearby present day Windigo approximately 4,100 years ago, deeming Grace Peninsula as the oldest known occupation site on Isle Royale (Stroh, 2014). The Grace Peninsula site served as a field camp and copper manufacturing site, confirmed by archaeological evidence such as modified copper and lithic materials. These conclusions were made during surveys of the Nipissing shoreline performed from 2012 to 2014, which uncovered six new Archaic sites alone (DePasqual, 2017).

**Historic Ojibwe Land Use**

Native American use of Isle Royale had significantly diminished by the dawn of the historic period. During this time, the North Shore Ojibwe people used the island exclusively, rather than the diverse peoples who exploited the land during the late precontact period. The North Shore Ojibwe people called Isle Royale *Minong*, which most researchers translate to mean the “good place” (Cochrane, 2009).

The early Ojibwe occupation of the island mimicked that of precontact use in many ways. The North Shore Ojibwe primarily utilized Minong for seasonal subsistence, indicated by the apparent absence of wild rice and maize agriculture on the island (Clark, 1995). Minong provided the Ojibwe with many species of animals and plants for harvest and small family groups commonly resided on Minong seasonally to hunt, fish, and
gather. Ojibwe men took advantage of income opportunities as Euro-American pioneers began new industries on the island. In many instances Ojibwe people accepted jobs on Isle Royale in positions that were based on their knowledge of specific resources learned through their subsistence techniques (Cochrane, 2009). The Ojibwe people’s familiarity with wilderness living proved invaluable to early Euro-Americans living on Isle Royale as they carved out camps and small settlements on the island frontier.

In 1837, the American Fur Company (AFC) commenced commercial fishing operations on Isle Royale. They capitalized on the knowledge and skill of the Ojibwe men and women who introduced company officials to the Island’s rich fishing grounds. The fishing station at Checker Point in Siskiwit Bay served as the company’s hub for all island operations. Checker Point was linked to numerous auxiliary company fisheries across the archipelago and the fishery at Grace Point was placed near an Ojibwe encampment in Washington Harbor (Cochrane, 2009). This was the first commercial industry on Isle Royale in which Ojibwe men and women played a role. The men were hired and paid at either an annual wage between $120 and $300 or at $4 per 200 lbs. of fish, while Ojibwe women cleaned and packaged fish for transport (Rakestraw, 1968). By 1840 a natural recession in the fish market resulted in a decline for AFC fisheries, as island operations ceased completely that year. After a short lull in activity on Isle Royale, a new industry took root: copper mining.

In 1841, Michigan State Geologist Douglass Houghton published a copper report following his extensive exploration of the Keweenaw and Isle Royale. The result was a “copper fever” that brought Euro-Americans and immigrants to Isle Royale in masses. Prospects of rich mineral value from Michigan’s Keweenaw Peninsula to Duluth, Minnesota were enticing to many investors and mining engineers. Thus, the Ojibwe use and claim to Isle Royale was of primary concern. In an effort to secure mineral rights in these areas Robert Stuart, superintendent of Michigan’s Indian Affairs, planned a meeting of negation between Ojibwe people of the Great Lakes Region to be held at La Pointe, Wisconsin Territory. In September of 1842, thousands of Ojibwe gathered to discuss the value of their land to those interested in resource extraction. However, the North Shore...
Ojibwe, the people that used Minong for subsistence, trade, and income, did not receive an invitation (Cochrane, 2009).

The Treaty of La Pointe proposed the purchase of the mineral district from Marquette, Michigan to Duluth, Minnesota. It is unknown if Minong was mentioned explicitly during discussions related to the treaty, but it is unlikely that many of the Ojibwe present for negotiations would have understood its significance to the North Shore tribe, given their differing dialects. Non-native people would have also referred to the island with a completely different name as well; Isle Royale. These factors played heavy into the transition of possession of Isle Royale from Ojibwe to private ownership by non-native people. The Treaty of La Pointe was signed by Ojibwe leaders in 1842, none of which were North Shore Ojibwe. This treaty set many terms that impacted the use of Minong by local Ojibwe, though it never mentioned Minong or Isle Royale explicitly. Instead it referred to “all islands in said lake (Superior)” when designating boundaries. The treaty also assumed that all the Ojibwe tribes identified as one nation rather than different bands, making the absence of representatives from the North Shore Ojibwe irrelevant during negotiations at La Pointe (Cochrane, 2009).

With the treaty in place, people began to file new claims to Isle Royale mineral rights, and copper exploration on Isle Royale commenced by 1843. Upon hearing of the newly signed Treaty of La Pointe, the North Shore Ojibwe contacted the Bureau of Indian Affairs, explaining that the treaty occurred without their consent and impacted lands that they had claim upon. The North Shore Ojibwe understood that mining efforts were underway at Minong and that asking for reclamation of their land would prove futile. By this time their use of the land was in decline anyway and instead of fighting for their land, leaders asked for a settlement of $60,000 in cash and goods. Instead they settled for $400 worth of gunpowder and $100 worth of fresh beef upon signing a new compact, agreeing to the terms of the treaty (Cochrane, 2009).

Industrial Land Use: Euro-American Use, Ojibwe Influence

Euro-American miners kept busy on the island locating copper sources and living on Isle Royale year-round, despite continuing debate over the Treaty of La Pointe and
what it meant for Minong and North Shore Ojibwe. These groups quickly became the primary users of Isle Royale, while Ojibwe use of the land had already been reduced to minimal use by few small family groups. The presence of the Ojibwe people during the historic era on Isle Royale was beneficial to many individuals and industries. Many commercial fishing and mining companies utilized their knowledge of the land along with their practices of subsistence living in various settings. Their traditional fishing and trapping practices were adopted by others in the industry and interisland routes known by the Ojibwe were shared with those involved in resource extraction (Cochrane, 2009).

The first wave of historic mining on Isle Royale (1843-1855) was pioneered by explorers and consisted of many small ventures, predominantly in the Rock Harbor Channel and near Todd Harbor. These first historic miners harnessed their wilderness environment and shaped it into crude mining camps that supported miners from the Keweenaw and immigrants from European and Scandinavian countries (Rakestraw, 1965). Ojibwe people were also involved in historic copper mining efforts on Isle Royale. Many different families are recorded to have worked during this speculative phase of mining, with families noted at the Pittsburg & Isle Royale [sic] and Siskowit Mine operations of this era. Collectively the Ojibwe workforce was minimal, but their extensive knowledge of the island and hard work ethic was valuable to the companies. Friendly and respectful relations were commonplace among Euro-American and Ojibwe miners. Many accounts even note the two groups taking care of one another in times of hardship (Cochrane, 2009).

This first historic mining wave lasted twelve years, failing eventually on the account of dwindling copper sources and diminished returns on investments (Rakestraw, 1965). The height of Ojibwe presence on Minong was during this first phase of historic mining, which coincided with a second wave of commercial fishing endeavors. In fact, Catholic records indicate that in 1850, six Ojibwe births were recorded on Isle Royale versus three non-Ojibwe. These births were attributed to fishing activities island-wide (Cochrane, 2009). Hugh H. McCullough led the second commercial fishing boom between 1848 and 1857. He employed as many as 300 Ojibwe employees and reoccupied areas previously used by the AFC as well as former mining operations. Most notable
were McCullough establishments at Hay Bay, Siskiwit Bay (Checker Point), and Fish Island (Belle Isle).

After a sixteen year lull in mining activities, the second wave of historic mining picked up in the mid-1870s and was fueled by a significant jump in copper prices on the heels of the Civil War. The North American Mineral Land Corporation (NAMLC) took advantage of this opportunity by purchasing 70,000 acres on Isle Royale around 1870. Well-staffed with explorers, mining engineers, geologists, and miners—also equipped with new mining technologies and more reliable transportation—the Island and Minong mines of this era were seemingly set up for success. The Island Mining Company began their mine in 1873 but lasted only two years in the Siskiwit Bay area, while the Minong Mine became the Island’s most extensive and successful mine (Rakestraw, 1965). The location of the Minong Mine was influenced by the presence of extensive precontact mine workings in the McCargoe Cove area. This was also the most popular entrance to the island by people of previous eras. The Minong Mine was the longest operating mine in Isle Royale history, though it closed for the same reasons as the others, declining resource and high expenses (Rakestraw, 1965). Many North Shore Ojibwe worked in the mines throughout this second wave of mining, while others took work contracts to deliver the mail by dog team in the winter from the mainland to established island settlements (Cochrane, 2009).

**Historic Washington Harbor**

The last era of historic mining was relatively short-lived and exploratory by nature; no copper was ever produced. This took place between 1889 and 1892 and was the product of renewed interest by the Isle Royale Land Corporation, which performed work under its own name in Todd Harbor, and through its subsidiary, the Wendigo Copper Company, in Washington Harbor. The name of this copper company, and subsequently the present visitor hub, was taken from the Ojibwe legend of the *wendigo*. The wendigo is a spiritual beast in Ojibwe culture that possesses humans battling with the cold, winter, famine, and starvation, leading them to insanity and oftentimes cannibalism. The motive for naming the copper company after the mythical cannibalistic beast remains
unknown. Although speculative, it could very well be associated with Ojibwe lore for this area. This is buttressed by a curious absence of archaeological deposits from the precontact era in the immediate Windigo area (DePasqual, 2017). Those affiliated with the Wendigo Copper Company may or may not have been aware of the connotations of the name Wendigo, though no cases of the wendigo’s influence were recorded as a result of the place name (Rakestraw, 1965). The Wendigo Mining Company’s operations were short lived and are examined in the subsequent chapters of this thesis. The final phase of mining passed as the settlements around Washington Harbor became seasonal once more and dedicated to recreational activities primarily, while Ojibwe people became less involved with each transition of land ownership and use.

The era of private recreational use emerged with the 1902 purchase of the Ghyllbank property by the Washington Club of Duluth, Minnesota. The Club was interested in the location for use as a sportsman’s retreat. The Club transformed the Ghyllbank landscape during its 36 year occupation in many significant ways before selling to the new National Park in 1938. Numerous structures were demolished during this era, while new structures were erected and extensive landscaping was performed throughout the waterfront area. Despite the scope of these local changes, the Club’s development of the land was not as wide reaching as the Wendigo Copper Company however, since they only occupied the wharf site.

The creation of Isle Royale National Park led to the third historic era of occupation on the Windigo landscape: public recreational. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) arrived on the island during this time to assist with the construction of trail and NPS buildings. In 1939, the Windigo CCC camp utilized the same landscape previously occupied by the Washington Club and Wendigo Copper Company and constructed their camp adjacent to the Ghyllbank location. By 1940, Windigo developments were up and running and the NPS presence became a fixture on the Island’s west end. National Park Service infrastructure during this time included a visitor center, guest lodges, fueling station, and ferry docks, similar but more simplistic to that seen at Windigo today.
Each of these periods of landscape occupation and transformation contributed to the shape of the land and the sense of place in contemporary Windigo. An overview of the human activity associated with each era aids in the understanding of this overarching landscape narrative. In each case, the new occupants repurposed older buildings, adapted them to meet their needs, and undertook new construction and transformation of the landscape, often erasing previous patterns and appearances.
Chapter 3: Historic Industrial Landscape Use and Transformation of Windigo

The Wendigo Copper Company

Following the demise of the previously successful mines on land owned by the North American Mineral Land Company (NAMLC), the group hired Jacob Houghton, brother of former State Geologist Douglass Houghton, to help liquidate their land holdings on Isle Royale. Jacob Houghton ran a shipping line between the island and Hancock for some time and was familiar with Isle Royale and previous mining efforts (Barnett, 2014; Rakestraw, 1965; see also Franks & Alanen, 1999). Houghton’s confidence in the geological productivity of the land was not fraught with doubt as it was for stockholders of the NAMLC. In fact, he was a firm believer that there was still much copper to be productively mined on Isle Royale, especially on the west side where as yet there had been little mining exploration (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988). During this time period British investors were also convinced of value in American mine holdings and eager to become involved. With Jacob Houghton, investors from London and Liverpool formed the Isle Royale Land Corporation (IRLC). J.H. Thompson, George H. Feldtmann and Alexander M. Hay served as company presidents during the life of the endeavor (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988; Harman, 1992).

The IRLC purchased 84,000 acres of land at the mouth of Washington Harbor, as well as a parcel in Todd Harbor (Newett, 1897; Rakestraw, 1965). Their subsidiary, the Wendigo Copper Company, initially employed twenty-one laborers and twenty-two miners (Isle Royale Land Corporation, 1890). With this crew, the company stormed ahead with both exploratory work and construction of company settlements. The camp at Washington Harbor, named Ghyllbank, served as the wharf and company headquarters. Another mining camp was established approximately two miles inland from Ghyllbank and named Wendigo. A network of wagon roads connected the two settlements, which differed greatly from one another in terms of functional purpose (Rakestraw, 1965; Harmon, 1992; Chynoweth, n.d.).
Exploratory Work

The Wendigo Copper Company (WCC) initiated exploration work and development of infrastructure during the summer of 1889. The company hired many men familiar with local copper mining, including Mine Superintendent Samuel Stillman Robinson, formerly of the Quincy Mining Company. In addition, William W. Stockley served as a mining engineer and Jacob Houghton acted as consulting engineer. Their combined expertise in the geology and mineralization of the Keweenaw lent itself well to the exploration efforts conducted by the WCC. Early exploration included the common practice of excavating linear exploratory trenches called costeans, the term being of Cornish origin (Newett, 1897; Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988). These long trenches were placed in strategic areas to expose bedrock and test the rock’s mineral content. Many interpretations on island stratigraphy were made from these exposures (Lane, 1898). The costeans are found throughout the Windigo interior and areas closer to Washington Harbor including the Ghyllbank area, as well as Beaver Island. Exploration tactics differed in the winter due to snow cover as exampled by a handful of exploratory adits (horizontal shafts) throughout the property.

Through this work the company identified two amygdaloid belts that Houghton estimated would yield one half to one percent copper (Newett, 1897). Though of considerable thickness, he commented that their flat dip of approximately thirteen degrees would make the belts too expensive to successfully mine. Most notable during the company’s early exploration efforts was the discovery of substantial amounts of float copper. This prompted Houghton’s belief that the occurrence of this copper was a product of fissure veins, rather than lodes. According to Houghton, the amount of float copper found by the WCC was greater than what had been found on the south shore of the island by previous mining companies (Newett, 1897; Newett, 1989-99).

During the winter of 1891-1892, after unsatisfactory results from the initial explorations Robinson suggested the company use diamond drills to provide a more efficient and advanced investigation of the mineral content. The company’s investors agreed to Robinson’s proposition and subsequently purchased two Bullock-brand
diamond drills, which were in operation by mid-July 1891 (Newett, 1897). During this time, diamond core drilling was a relatively new technology. The first diamond drill was patented only 25 years earlier in 1867 by M.C. Bullock. It was steam driven and tested in Pennsylvania coal mines. These diamond drills consisted of three essential parts: the feed, the hoisting apparatus, and the engines. The two Bullock “Dauntless” drills that were utilized by the Wendigo Copper Company had a positive differential feed that was tooth-gearied (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2). The “Dauntless” style drill made by multiple companies proved to be a popular drill for hard rock mining during this time period (Denny, 1900).

Figure 3.1 Wendigo drill operators with the Bullock “Dauntless” Drill, ca. 1891-1892. Richard O’Neil on right (Lankton & Hyde, 1982).
Figure 3.2 Wendigo Copper Company utilization of the Bullock “Dauntless” Drill, ca. 1891-1892. Don Albrecht Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
The Wendigo Copper Company was the first and only mining company to systematically utilize diamond drilling technology on Isle Royale (Rakestraw, 1965; Chynoweth, n.d.). The “Dauntless” drill was an expensive and complicated piece of equipment. With the purchase of the drills, the company shareholders not only invested in the machine, but in skilled operators and advisors. Mining Engineer William Stockley kept detailed records for every drill site and included detail on the depths reached during three daily shifts, as well as the type of rock they encountered and the nature of the mineralization (Stockley, 1891). Jacob Houghton also maintained a comprehensive account of the exploration efforts of the company. He relayed this information to George A. Newett (1897, 1898, 1899), who then published Houghton’s letters in the State of Michigan Mines and Mineral Statistics.

The team ultimately drilled nineteen holes across a 5-mile span ranging in depth between 400 and 1,050 feet. The drill sites were situated at strategic locations on a NW/SE axis between the Island’s north shore (east of Huginnin Cove) and a location near the north end of the Siskiwit River swamps. These locations essentially cross-cut island stratigraphy within their property from the lowest elevation at Lake Superior to the highest on the Greenstone Ridge and many points in between (see Figure 3.3). Numerous drill sites were necessary since it was not possible at this time to core the entire strata at one location. Some overlap was necessary for more accurate comparison to adjacent drill sites (see Figure 3.4). Taken together, the drill cores accomplished the same thing where the entire island stratigraphy was captured by multiple cores. The cores were interpreted by Stockley who identified the location of a few amygdaloid belts with a desirable percentage of mineralization. This process also showed that the conglomerates found on this part of Isle Royale were much thinner than Robinson and Houghton expected when compared with those on the Keweenaw Peninsula (Newett, 1897).
Figure 3.3 Historic map of Wendigo Copper Company property, including diamond drilling sites and costean locations, 1897. Map based on surveys performed by W.W. Stockley, 1889-1892 (Lane, 1898).
Figure 3.4 Sections of map depicting Wendigo Copper Company diamond drilling from A.C. Lane’s *Geological Report on Isle Royale*, 1898.
Though diamond drilling provided beneficial knowledge to the company, the results of this work were not encouraging for shareholders. The financial panic of 1890, a result of the collapse of the Baring Brothers & Co. in London, had lasting influence on the decisions made by the company shareholders at this time. The company and workers were also on edge due to the failure to locate a desirable copper lode (Newett, 1897; Newett, 1898-9). Despite growing doubtfulness, Houghton promoted further exploration of specific fissures rather than striving to locate additional ones. His constant presence at the drill sites and ownership of 800 out of the 10,000 shares of the company demonstrated his unwavering investment. However, the other shareholders were not interested in Houghton’s advice nor were they willing to risk any more of their capital without satisfactory results. As a consequence, all exploration work was halted in October 1892 (Newett, 1897, 1898-9; Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988).

Communities

While the company officials were working hard to locate a substantial and profitable source of copper, the residents of Ghyllbank were also transforming the landscape. The community at Ghyllbank served as the central wharf for supplies and workers and functioned to support exploration efforts within the interior. One hundred and thirty-five people resided at the locations of Wendigo and Ghyllbank. Among this number, only 60 were adult men (Little, 1978; Franks & Alanen, 1999). Twenty children lived at Ghyllbank and many women including wives and housekeepers also lived there and worked for the company (Rakestraw, 1965). Many of these people came from the Keweenaw Peninsula, most often Hancock and Calumet areas. The Wendigo location was the simpler of the two settlements owned by the Wendigo Copper Company. The modest camp served as a base for exploratory mining activities located well inland, away from the company wharf. A handful of one and two story cabins were constructed here for workers and families (see Figure 3.5). Two boarding houses were located adjacent for single men (Coughlin, n.d.; Gray, n.d.; see also Rakestraw, 1965).
Figure 3.5 The O’Neil family outside their log cabin at Wendigo camp, ca. 1892. Richard O’Neil and his wife Alice came to Wendigo from Calumet, Michigan. Their daughter Blanche was the second baby born at the Wendigo Copper Company communities. Richard served as a diamond drill operator. Fisher Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Ghyllbank

During the summer of 1889 construction of the Ghyllbank wharf site commenced on what is now present-day Windigo Ranger Station. Company employees and hired hands built housing for the company officials, along with cabins for workers and their families (Harmon, 1992). It is hypothesized that the name of the Wendigo Copper Company’s wharf site stemmed from two separate British terms. Ghyll (or Gill) is defined as a narrow valley or ravine, often containing a water course. The term bank could also be used to describe a company base or headquarters. Thus, the name Ghyllbank could not have been more fitting for the Wendigo Copper Company’s headquarters based on its location on Washington Harbor.

Ghyllbank was quite rustic at the head of its first season. However, by the close of the summer the settlement had taken on a more refined appearance, which was somewhat unusual for an unproven property. Mining companies typically developed their settlements after first locating an established resource. Until that was accomplished, appearances were often plain and amenities minimal. At Ghyllbank, numerous buildings were erected in effort to create the self-sufficient camp. Log cabins and twin two story wood frame structures were built for workers and their families to live in. A large mess hall and kitchen, barn complex, carpenter shop, and blacksmith shop supported both Ghyllbank and Wendigo (see Figure 3.6). As a wharf, Ghyllbank also had a shoreline filled with boathouses, sheds, docks, and other utility buildings (Harmon, 1992; Chynoweth & Scarlett, 2017).
Figure 3.6 Ghyllbank looking north, ca. 1891. Thorough removal of vegetation for the construction of the townsite is apparent along with the beginning stages of construction of the headquarters building at right. MS-0935 Coughlin and Gray Family Papers, Box 1, Folder 2, Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections.
Structures and work areas at Ghyllbank were connected by a network of roads and pathways. An upper road connected the location of the headquarters building to the northern end of town. A lower road ran along the shoreline, routing supplies to company buildings, Wendigo camp, and points beyond. Another road ran uphill from the main dock, which joined the lower road to the upper one near the large headquarters building. Drainage ditches were installed near the men’s quarters and officer’s quarters to control the water flow on the wet hillside, as well as create a drain for related privies. A series of wagon roads connected the Wendigo and Ghyllbank settlements to each other as well as to the drill sites (Chynoweth & Scarlett, 2017).

**Coming to Ghyllbank**

The company steamer, the *A.B. Taylor*, traveled between Hancock and Ghyllbank with people and supplies during the open season on Lake Superior. Worker’s families and the last of the company employees ventured to the island in late 1890 once the town infrastructure was completed. John Coughlin and Grades Kruiit both worked for the company and brought their families out to Ghyllbank. On November 7, 1890, after being delayed two days due to poor weather and rough seas, the Coughlin and Kruiit families, and Superintendent Robinson, began their journey to Isle Royale. When the ship reached Ghyllbank they anchored out in Washington Harbor because a dock had yet to be constructed. Smaller boats brought the supplies from the *Taylor* to the shore, including Mrs. Coughlin’s furniture and the Kruiit’s pet parrot (Gray, n.d.).

The *A. B. Taylor’s* final Isle Royale journey of 1890 arrived at Ghyllbank the night of November 26th. Captain Charlie Plummer used the echo of his whistle to maneuver the small steamer through Washington Harbor in the dark. Company physician and financial agent, Dr. William P. Scott, was aboard this final trip, along with enough supplies for the two camps to last through winter. Luckily, the steamer departed Ghyllbank that night for its winter port in Duluth, Minnesota, because by the following day the harbor had frozen over (Scott, 1925; Chynoweth, n.d.).
Settling In

Oral histories and memoirs provide colorful details of the people and daily life at Ghyllbank. May (Coughlin) Gray recalled how the family settled into the camp, providing an example of how people utilized space in the small town. The Coughlin and Kruit families were welcomed to Ghyllbank and provided with a lengthy log cabin, which was divided in the middle. Each side of the cabin had three finished rooms, two downstairs and one upstairs. The upstairs featured an unfinished loft room that was accessed via ladder from the respective kitchens. A large outhouse was attached to the structure through an extended shed off the Kruit’s side of the cabin. The privy had a total of 5 holes of various sizes to accommodate all family members young and old (Gray, n.d.).

Residents of Ghyllbank lived on Isle Royale year-round, relying on a substantial supply of food and consumables from the mainland to last them through the winter. Barrels of apples, potatoes, turnips, carrots, and beets were kept in a common root cellar and a large community barrel of sweet apple cider was located next to the Coughlin/Kruit cabin (Gray, n.d.). Ghyllbank residents fished for lake trout and herring throughout the year using poles and nets. During winters, rabbit hunting provided the only fresh meat once beef supplies ran out. Two cows provided milk for the settlement and eggs were sometimes delivered in the mail from Port Arthur (today’s Thunder Bay), Ontario (Gray, n.d.).

John Coughlin, the storekeeper, managed the bulk of the food supplies including canned goods, cornmeal, flour, sugar, oats, prunes, and dried meats. Carpenter James A. Davis built all the furniture needed for Ghyllbank, including beds, desks, tables, chairs, and many other pieces. Harry Deagan, one of the cooks, prepared meals for Mr. Robinson and often made treats of popcorn and old-fashioned taffy for the children (Gray, n.d.). Along with his duties as the physician and financial agent, Dr. Scott volunteered as schoolteacher during the first winter at Ghyllbank. A cabin away from the rest of the camp that had once served as a temporary hospital was repurposed as a schoolhouse and
class was taught to all ages from nine until noon. John Coughlin supplied the school’s blackboard, as he had intended to teach his own children before Scott volunteered to do so. Books for the younger children were ordered from Port Arthur, while the older children used their own books that they had brought with them (Scott, 1925; Gray, n.d.; Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988).

**Expanding**

During the first winter of operation crews expanded the town while exploration work continued. The need for a dock was remedied once the ice was solid enough to support construction work and large timber cribs filled with rocks were built on top of the ice. Once spring came and the ice melted, these cribs sunk into the water and formed the foundation upon which the dock decking was constructed. A smaller dock was also built, as well as a few small frame buildings near the shore including a workhouse, icehouse, and a smokehouse (Scott, 1925; see also Gray, n.d.).

By 1891 the Wendigo and Ghyllbank populations had already increased. Prior to his family joining him at Ghyllbank, Coughlin had dictated the need for a company physician. Coughlin and his wife were expecting a baby that winter, which was born on January 23, 1891 with assistance from Dr. Scott. Elsie Coughlin was the first baby born at Ghyllbank and Mr. Feldtmann of the company gave her a gold coin and deemed her the special “Wendigo Baby” (Gray, n.d.). Richard and Alice O’Neil of Wendigo also welcomed a baby girl, Blanche, to the community on November 24, 1891 (Paquette, n.d.; see also Figure 3.7).

Miss Anna Dunn of Hancock came to Ghyllbank in the winter of 1890-1891. Dunn replaced Dr. Scott as the schoolteacher and participated in leading observance of the Sabbath. In lieu of Sunday school, Mrs. Coughlin and Dr. Scott sang hymns accompanied by Miss Dunn on the organ she brought with her to Ghyllbank (Gray, n.d.).
Table 3.1 List of Wendigo Copper Company employees at Ghyllbank from Dr. William P. Scott’s “Reminiscences of Isle Royale” in Chynoweth collection (Scott, 1925).

**EMPLOYEES OF THE WENDIGO COPPER COMPANY AT GHYLLBANK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHARLES PLUMMER</td>
<td>Captain of the <em>A.B. Taylor</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAMUEL S. ROBINSON</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAM W. STOCKLEY</td>
<td>Mining Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JIM PASCOE</td>
<td>Mining Captain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADES KRUIT</td>
<td>Surface Boss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AYRES STOCKLEY</td>
<td>Book keeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN COUGHLIN</td>
<td>Store keeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAMES A. DAVIS</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUSH LIVERMORE</td>
<td>Miner and Boatman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAM P. SCOTT</td>
<td>Physician and Schoolmaster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3.7 The Richard O’Neil family in a Wendigo Copper Company Costean, ca. 1892. Fisher Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Construction of the grand WCC headquarters building commenced during the summer of 1891. Referred to as the “Big House”, the new building served as housing for Superintendent Robinson and other office personnel. The hewn timber structure was built on a hill that provided a sweeping view of the harbor near the southeast corner of the townsite (Gray, n.d.). This was the last building constructed by the company at Ghyllbank and perhaps ominously, was likely done at great expense. The two-story side gable headquarters building embodied Georgian symmetry. The top floor was punctuated by two gable dormers on each side of the building, duel chimneys adorned the roofline, and porches were located at front and rear of the building. The headquarters was built in a prominent location, overlooking Ghyllbank, which was common among mine locations nationwide. The headquarters building was not ornately decorated or detailed with the latest designs, but what it lacked in style it made up in its great size and placement on the landscape (see Figure 3.11).

When construction of the “Big House” was completed, Mr. Robinson and his son, Sam, moved out of their frame house, along with his housekeeper, Miss Pert. With the two frame houses empty, there was room for more at Ghyllbank. In the fall Mr. and Mrs. William Stockley and their three children moved into one of the houses. Mine Captain Walton and his family inhabited the other, both new families to Ghyllbank. Stockley and Walton had been on the island with the WCC for some time but their families were new and eager to join the winter-bound community at Washington Harbor (Gray, n.d.).
Figure 3.8 Wendigo Copper Company headquarters building (the “Big House”) at Ghyllbank, ca. 1892. Fisher Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Like many mining towns in the Keweenaw, the settlements of Wendigo and Ghyllbank were ethnically diverse. English, German, Cornish, Irish, Scandinavian, and American born workers and their families all comprised the Wendigo Copper Company communities (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988). There is little evidence of much ethnic stratification, save for periodic disagreements between the Irish Coughlin and German Kruit families on more than one occasion. As told from the Coughlin perspective, the Kruit family seemed to be unhappy at Ghyllbank and would often start small squabbles with their family and others that disrupted the otherwise peaceful camp. Eventually, Superintendent Robinson suggested to the Kruit family that they would be happier back in their home in Calumet. They agreed and left Ghyllbank in 1891. The Walton family moved into the Kruit’s side of the duplex cabin following their departure (Gray, n.d.).

Social hierarchy by class was exercised by the Wendigo Copper Company as well. The company officials lived in framed houses until the “Big House” was constructed, while workers and their families lived in smaller log cabins. They also had separate kitchens and dining areas, though the same bugle call signaled a strict schedule for all. Despite this separation of classes most of the residents of Ghyllbank respected one another and got along. All community members were invited to holiday parties at the “Big House” by Superintendent Robinson, who often expressed kindness to all workers, women, and children (Gray, n.d.).

Communication

Communication between the communities of Ghyllbank, Wendigo, and the mainland was almost continuous, though complications were often impeded by Lake Superior. Mail was delivered once a week from Port Arthur, Ontario when weather permitted (Coughlin, n.d.). The arrival of the mail was dependent on the weather especially in the winter, which required service by dog team led by two Ojibwe men (Scott, 1925; Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988). During the winter of 1891-1892 the Wendigo and Ghyllbank communities went 71 days without communication from the mainland (Scott, 1925; Gray, n.d.; see also Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988). When written communication was more consistent during open seasons, company officials on Isle
Royale were able to provide exploration updates to those on the mainland and England. Ghyllbank residents also communicated with others via the mail service from Port Arthur (Gray, n.d.; Coughlin, n.d.).

Recreation

The Ghyllbank area served also as a landscape of recreation during the phase of industrial mining. Backcountry walks were frequent, allowing residents to take in the sounds of birds while admiring and learning the names of the trees. Flowers were not common here, but beautiful thick mosses flourished on the damp ground (Gray, n.d.). Wildlife, though not abundant, was encountered on occasion, most commonly the bold and curious red squirrels, muskrats, and snowshoe hares. Canada lynx and woodland caribou were present at this time but seen by few; their tracks were often the only remnants of their existence (Scott, 1925).

Ice skating on Washington Harbor was popular, since it would freeze over in December or sometimes November. Once enough snow had accumulated, tobogganing on the hill in front of the “Big House” was also a common event (see Figure 3.12). Sledding routes were sometimes lined with lanterns to extend the fun into the evenings, which came sooner during winter months. Many enjoyed fishing in the harbor ice as well or snowshoeing in the nearby woods (Scott, 1925; Gray, n.d.; see also Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988).

Music was enjoyed frequently and by many at Ghyllbank. The Coughlin boys (John, George, and Tom) all had harmonicas, as did the cook, Harry Deagan, who would often play while the men in the bunkhouse sang (Gray, n.d.). On special occasions, residents would bring out a fiddle, accordion, or other instruments. Amidst the bunkhouse merriment men would play cards throughout the evening, betting tins of tobacco or even entire paychecks on occasion (Scott, 1925).
Figure 3.9 Toboggan slide in front of the “Big House” Company Headquarters building, ca. 1891-1892. The piles of stacked wood and lack of front porch on the building suggest the photo was taken the winter of its construction. Fisher Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Special Occasions

Holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Independence Day were celebrated throughout Ghyllbank. In 1890, Superintendent Robinson supplied turkeys to families for their Thanksgiving feasts, while Christmas dinner consisted of boiled ham rather than the typical Christmas goose. Even Santa Claus remembered Isle Royale and managed to bring gifts for the children at Christmas. During Christmas 1891, Superintendent Robinson hosted a party at the “Big House,” an event to which everyone was invited. The large dinner consisted of ham, salt pork, cornmeal mush, and Johnny cakes; afterwards the dining room was cleared for dancing. Square dances and waltzes were the most popular and many took part in the dancing while the children watched. On Independence Day 1891, the Coughlin family enjoyed a row around Beaver Island, followed by treats of ice cream, oranges, and soda pop. They watched fireworks in the evening (Gray, n.d.; Coughlin, n.d.).

Many visitors came to Ghyllbank on the A.B. Taylor, including Mrs. Coughlin’s sisters, Annie and Ella, from Hancock. Though they were on the island for a short time, a trip to the Wendigo camp allowed them to embrace the beauty of the island forests. The steamer Glad Tidings, a gospel ship, brought another special occasion to Ghyllbank. The ship stopped at numerous island encampments including Washington Harbor. The captain of the ship held a service at Ghyllbank and presented a bible to the camp for everyone’s use (Gray, n.d.). The spring arrival of the Taylor was also considered to be a holiday by the Ghyllbank folks. They celebrated the ship’s arrival, along with its cargo of fresh meat and vegetables. This also signified the first opportunity to leave Ghyllbank in months, and allowed some to visit loved ones back in the Keweenaw (Scott, 1925; see also Coughlin, n.d.).
Figure 3.10 Overlooking Washington Harbor from Ghyllbank, ca. 1900. Rakestraw Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Demise

When the Wendigo Copper Company halted exploration work in October 1892, many were hoping that the company would find the reassurance they needed to continue the work in due time. However, this never happened. The company workers and residents of Wendigo and Ghyllbank left Washington Harbor shortly thereafter, before winter set. Dr. Scott recounted the conclusion of work and departure from Washington Harbor:

“The Wendigo Copper Co., after three years of work, spending over a quarter of a million of dollars, had but a few shanties, about ten miles of poor road, barely sufficient for travel, and some diamond drill work to show for it. In the fall of 1892, all active work ceased and the camps were practically abandoned, except for some caretakers left in charge. One evening in October about six o’clock the families and men left the island on the steamer Ossifrage. To many the island had become a peaceful home, and it was not without a tinge of sadness that some of us looked back at its receding shores.” (Scott, 1925).

Those that worked for the Wendigo Copper Company and lived at its settlements were the last to participate in a large scale effort to locate and extract copper from Isle Royale. They turned the undeveloped land at Washington Harbor into a welcoming and productive home that bolstered the company and mining industry and produced fond memories for many.

Continued Interest

Jacob Houghton maintained a great knowledge base of the nature of the geological landscape in the area. Houghton’s faith in Isle Royale copper and dedication to the mining efforts prompted him to continue seeking interest in Isle Royale’s mineral potential, even without the support of the English shareholders of the Wendigo Copper Company. He knew of the location of thirty fault lines over a seventeen mile expanse on the island’s west side and believed in their value. His plan was to explore specific fissures in the Lake Desor Region and to determine if they had taken the copper from the bedded deposits (Newett, 1897; Chynoweth, n.d.; see also Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988). In 1896
he decided that $25,000 was necessary for the project to move forward. He scoured major cities for investors including Chicago, Detroit, New York, and Boston but found little support for his plan. Determined, Houghton dedicated $3,000 of his own money to the cause, hoping it would prompt others to invest. He was eventually forced to discontinue his efforts due to the collapse of a Duluth bank that tied up his funds as a consequence (Newett, 1897; see also Chynoweth, n.d.).

Jacob Houghton was one of the last individuals to explore the island holdings of the Isle Royale Land Corporation. Despite the failure of the Wendigo Copper Company and his subsequent exploration work, Houghton became involved once again with a brief exploration near Washington Harbor in 1899. Similar to his previous mining ventures, this one ended in disappointment as well. Houghton never did fulfill his dream of locating the productive copper fissure he believed to exist somewhere on Isle Royale (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988).

Value

The Wendigo Copper Company’s mining enterprise ultimately ended in failure; however, their diamond drilling efforts provided irreplaceable information for Michigan State Geologist Alfred C. Lane (Chynoweth, n.d.). In 1893 he analyzed the core samples from the Company’s diamond drills, which allowed him to study the stratigraphy of the rock in this area in much greater detail than from the surface alone. He was able to make correlations between the lava flows and mineral events on Isle Royale and in the Keweenaw, patterns also noted by Robinson and Houghton (Karamanzki & Zeitlin, 1988). Geologists still have high regard for Lane’s interpretations of Isle Royale’s geology in today’s age. Because the WCC was the only mining company on Isle Royale to employ diamond drills, the scope and scale of Lane’s core sample study would have been impossible without their core samples. Thus, our knowledge of the geology of the Lake Superior Region would be significantly limited without Lane’s interpretations (Huber, 1975). As part of his field work, Lane also photographed the Ghyllbank and
Wendigo camps, providing great visual insight to the layout of Ghyllbank and life of its residents.

**Transition**

The business of recreation and resort activities on Isle Royale was first considered around the time of the Wendigo Copper Company’s demise. In 1882 Company shareholders A. M. Hay and G.H. Feldmann began discussing liquidation options, such as timber sales, and converting the camps and land owned by the company into a game preserve for sportsmen and pleasure seekers (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988). This plan included importing game species from Europe with special attention focused on the breeding of deer (Portage Lake Mining Gazette, 1892). This plan never came to fruition under WCC management.

The transition from industrial to recreational eras on Isle Royale was, in part, ushered in by the demise of the WCC. The selling off of other IRLC holdings to parties interested in constructing resorts and tourist homes aided the success of new motivations for island visitation. The failure of the WCC venture made way for another historic enterprise at the Ghyllbank location, beginning a decade after the company left the island and becoming part of a new era where recreation and resorts were the highlight of Isle Royale occupation.

**Information Gathered from the 2016 Ghyllbank Townsite Survey**

Archaeological investigations from the 2016 Ghyllbank Townsite Survey helped identify many remnants of landscape features created by the WCC (see Figure 3.11). Only small pieces of the Ghyllbank townsite were archaeologically tested prior to this survey, which provided a more complete understanding of the impacts made by successive occupations of the landscape. Surface features identified during this survey included two drainage ditches and evidence of both historic roads. The corridor for the upper historic road, though faint, still exists and shows much less impact than the lower road. Subsequent landscape changes have since obscured major portions of the lower road but a southern portion of the corridor remains visible. Additionally, the survey
confirmed the location of a historic well, corners of the upper residence building, and an associated privy from the WCC era. (Chynoweth & Scarlett, 2016).

Knowledge of lasting archaeological features associated with WCC structures was also informed by this survey (see Figure 3.12). For discussion purposes, I have split the Ghyllbank townsite into three sections based on the different types of survey conducted by Michigan Technological University (MTU) archaeology professionals. The team produced conclusions pertaining to the presence and absence of archaeological evidence associated with WCC structures from the combination of information gathered during survey and archival research that.
Figure 3.11 Map of historic Ghyllbank features identified by the 2016 Ghyllbank Townsite Survey with exception to “Historic Buildings”.
Figure 3.12 Ghyllbank Townsite. Photo by A.C. Lane, ca. 1892. Labeled by author. Don Albrecht Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
North Ghyllbank

Metal detector and shovel test pit (STP) surveys conducted in the North Ghyllbank area (see Figure 3.13) determined that the areas surrounding the WCC barn and upper residence have received minimal impact from subsequent landscape transformations. While the structures are no longer present, no buildings have occupied the landscape since their removal. Additionally, the privy hole associated with the upper residence remains and is filled with water throughout most of the park’s operating season. Half of the STPs placed in the barn and upper residence areas were positive and yielded various sizes of nails. Also located in the North Ghyllbank area was the Company mess hall, which remained until the NPS occupation of the landscape. Remnants of this building remain, such as the cook stove, though the area was leveled by the NPS for placement of the Windigo fuel farm. The archaeological integrity of this area was disturbed during this process and it is hypothesized that much of the mess hall’s remaining features were pushed back and away from the construction area. Many leftover features from other buildings in this section were most likely obstructed by the construction of the main NPS road along the waterfront. Archaeological remains of the long log house (possibly the Coughlin, Kruit/Walton family cabin), blacksmith shop, and other waterfront structures are believed to have been erased during this process. These areas were not surveyed intensively during the 2016 Ghyllbank Townsite Survey because they are occupied by NPS infrastructure (Chynoweth & Scarlett, 2016).
Central Ghyllbank

The Central Ghyllbank area (see Figure 3.14) was the primary location for much of the archaeological survey in 2016. Pedestrian and STP surveys confirmed that much of the archaeological integrity associated with the WCC structures was removed during subsequent landscape transformations. The location of the twin framed buildings is now a marshy hillside due to neglect of the associated drainage ditches placed during the WCC era. Artifacts located in this area may be attributed these structures or related privies deposited by slope wash or other natural processes. The location of the survey’s trench excavation was presumed to be close to the Company carpenter shop. The survey identified a “cluttered alignment of rock rubble (Chynoweth & Scarlett, 2016)” which cannot be identified as a foundation with any confidence. It is possible that the construction of the main NPS waterfront road may have impacted this structural footprint as well. Features associated with the tool room building would have also been destroyed during this construction, as would any miscellaneous buildings along the waterfront. Evidence related to the rigging room was also absent during this survey, though historic photographs suggest that the building was most likely removed early in the phase of historic landscape occupation following the WCC’s departure from Ghyllbank (Chynoweth & Scarlett, 2016).
South Ghyllbank

The most southern section of the Ghyllbank townsite was developed last by the Company and included their grand headquarters building and other smaller associated structures (see Figure 3.15). This section did not receive detailed attention during the 2016 Ghyllbank Townsite Survey. Pedestrian survey of the area confirmed the presence of the intact foundation of the WCC headquarters building. Known impacts by the NPS in this area include the construction of the Windigo Store on a portion of this foundation and on top of the footprints of the associated buildings (Chynoweth & Scarlett, 2016).
The 2016 Ghyllbank Townsite Survey confirmed that much of the Ghyllbank landscape was impacted by landscape transformations conducted by subsequent occupants. Portions of the Ghyllbank landscape were changed over the course of multiple events times and under different motivations. These alterations to the landscape can be attributed to the efforts of the Washington Club, Civilian Conservation Corps, and the National Park Service. Details on these successive groups, their motivations, and their impacts to the Ghyllbank area are discussed in the following two chapters.
Chapter 4: Private Recreational Landscape Use and Transformation of Windigo

At the start of the twentieth century the island began transitioning from an industrial frontier to a recreational landscape. Isle Royale provided a respite for middle-class individuals wishing to escape heat and symptoms of hay fever common on the mainland. With the Island bustling with boats full of people eager for an island experience, new resorts dotted the shorelines, awaiting a new audience; vacationers. This chapter reviews the private recreational phase of landscape occupation and transformation of the Windigo region by the Washington Club.

The Resort Era

The exponential growth in urbanization and disappearance of wilderness on the nearby mainland prompted interest in Isle Royale as a rustic recreation destination. The decline of extractive industries in the late 1800s, paired with the increased interest of tourists made way for new entrepreneurs and the Island’s resort era. The attraction to Isle Royale’s splendor continuously grew throughout the early 1900s and was booming by the 1910s. Resorts at Rock Harbor, Belle Isle, Tobin Harbor, and Washington Harbor provided isolation and opportunity to experience the rare and diverse beauty on the island. Isle Royale tourism catered to a small, primarily Midwestern, audience that enjoyed the ruggedness of the land and simple amenities. Few extravagances existed at some Isle Royale resorts, such as the 9-hole golf course at Belle Isle Resort and indoor bowling at Singer’s Resort (Little, 1978; Franks & Alanen, 1999; see also Chynoweth, n.d.). Many repeat visitors to Isle Royale embraced the island experience by taking advantage of resort provisions while also connecting with the natural landscape with activities such as camping, hiking, and canoeing (Little, 1978).
Figure 4.1 Tourist brochure advertising Washington Harbor, ca. 1931. MS-220 Ben R. Chynoweth Collection, Box 10, Folder 4, Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections.
Former miner and fisherman, John F. Johns, pioneered Isle Royale’s resort and recreation movement with the opening of the Johns Hotel at the entrance of Washington Harbor in the mid-1890s. Located on today’s Barnum Island, the Johns Hotel provided rustic accommodations for visitors alongside an active fishery. The John Hotel proved successful, so much so that others took notice and opened resorts of their own on adjacent properties. One such person was Walter H. Singer, who opened the full service Singer’s Island House in 1902. The Washington Island resort featured a two-story frame hotel with kitchen, dining room and private guest rooms. Additional buildings included ten guest cottages along the shoreline, a boardwalk, bowling alley, and a large dock for the passenger ship *Iroquois* (Alanen & Franks, 1999). From the early 1900s to the 1920s, the mouth of Washington Harbor was bustling with tourists enjoying the west end of the island with a great scale of provisions.

**The Washington Club**

Though many tourists took part in these recreational activities, a relative handful came from a more privileged class of people. The Washington Club was exclusive to wealthy businessmen from the Duluth area. The Club’s primary founder, Colonel Charles H. Graves, visited Isle Royale as early as 1880 and found it appealing to his views on recreation. Graves was the founder of the Duluth Board of Trade, a shipping cartel, and acted as an ambassador to Sweden and Norway. He was also a decorated Civil War veteran and avid trout fisherman. In 1902, Graves partnered with his business colleague, Marshall H. Alsworth, to establish a private sportsmen’s club at the back end of Washington Harbor, aptly named the Washington Club. The Club consisted of some of Duluth’s most affluent men ranging from shipping barons to steel company executives. These men varied in their elite status, but all embraced the outdoors in style by fishing the rich streams and lakes whilst arranging business deals amongst themselves. Of particular importance was their interest in the Ghyllbank wharf site, which had been unoccupied for most of the last decade (Harmon, 1992; Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988).

Ghyllbank held all the main attractions that a sportsmen’s club might offer and the location was rich with potential. Promise was seen in the cleared land, housing,
docks, and a grand headquarters building all surrounded by premier wilderness lands for hunting and fishing. The property was purchased for a modest price; twenty gentlemen invested $300 each to purchase the old Ghyllbank structures from the Isle Royale Land Corporation, as well as seventy acres of land along Washington Creek (Franks & Alanen, 1999; Harmon, 1992). Private membership at the Washington Club cost men approximately $100 in annual dues, along with $1 per year lease of the trout streams. Separately, the Club maintained a 99 year lease for exclusive use of Wendigo (Windigo) Creek, which was stocked with trout by the Michigan Conservation Department (Karamanzki & Zeitlin, 1988; Notes from Isle Royale NP Archives).

Graves purchased the 39-ton steam yacht, *Picket*, for the excursion from Duluth to Club property on Isle Royale. Club members exercised their societal position while at the Club grounds with their sophisticated dress, transportation methods, and extravagant amenities such as hot water for showers and baths. Numerous employees were hired to assist with their various needs (Harmon, 1992).

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Riederer worked for the Washington Club from 1916-1926. Mrs. Riederer was a cook for some years during this time and Mr. Riederer served as the Club’s caretaker. During the summers, he performed various tasks such as general maintenance, cutting wood, and as serving as a fishing guide for Club members. Mr. Riederer lived alone at the Club for four winters, accompanied only by his dog, Blackie. Aside from maintenance duties, he trapped Canada lynx and encountered moose frequently (Hakala, 1996; See also Figure 4.2).
Figure 4.2 Photo of Joe Riederer and partner trapping at the Washington Club in winter, ca. 1920. Joseph Riederer Collection Isle Royale NP Archives.
While many self-proclaimed sportsmen came to Isle Royale to enjoy the atmosphere among the island’s varied resorts or to “rough it” within the outdoors, the Washington Club was the only formalized sportsman group of its kind on Isle Royale. A large private investment kept the Washington Club accessible to twenty-five members only, all of them men. Women were only allowed to visit the Club with advanced approval from the board; such requests were seldom made (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988; see also Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 A rare occasion. Ladies on the porch of the Washington Club. George Barnum III Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Influence

The Washington Club's creation and presence at Isle Royale was a product of national and local trends. Powerful capitalists and businessmen of the American cities ushered in the attitude and desire to maintain a modified version of wilderness for their personal enjoyment and image. The era of the sportsmen was set in motion during the late 1800s by a variety of influences. Popular publications such as *Field & Stream* and *American Sportsmen*, the foundation of well-known clubs such as the Boone & Crockett Club, and the shift in attitude led by important American figures like President Teddy Roosevelt, fostered many discussions among like-minded outdoorsmen. Conservation also became a crucial aspect of outdoor sporting. Prior to this time sport hunting and fishing in America was generally viewed as frivolous activity only suited for utilitarian and economic purposes. This shift in mindset was also led by a refined definition of “sportsman” to mean an outdoorsman that exercised proper field etiquette with respect for wildlife and an appreciation for the land. Thus, conservationists and outdoorsmen melded into one identity: the true American sportsman (Reiger, 1975).

The Washington Club was like other sportsmen’s club of the Great Lakes Region, though not nearly as elaborate or structured. Rod and gun clubs in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota frequently purchased old logging camps and cutover landscapes to repurpose for hunting and fishing areas. Many of these sportsmen’s clubs were social groups with strict membership and visitation privileges. For example, the Huron Mountain Club of Marquette County, Michigan catered to the elite of Northern Michigan and major cities of Chicago and Detroit (Mayor, 1988) and similarly, the private Sylvania Club consisted of United States Steel Company officials in what is now the Ottawa National Forest in the Western Upper Peninsula (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988; Franks & Alanen, 1999).

Washington Club members cherished club grounds and promoted traditional sportsman activities. One of their primary motivations was to maintain the Island’s healthy native brook trout populations while also improving “the art of angling and the promotion of social culture among its members” (Franks & Alanen, 1999). Hunting, was
also an important Club activity, though less significant when compared to fishing. By this time the native woodland caribou population had declined greatly on Isle Royale. To bolster the hunting enterprise, the Washington Club attempted to introduce white-tailed deer to the island, though unsuccessfully. The deer introduction failed for at least two reasons; competition with moose for browse and the presence of predators (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988). This is the only known attempt to introduce a new species to Isle Royale by the Washington Club. One might expect a sportsmen’s club to be the responsible party for the introduction of such a substantial species like moose. Club members had the ways and means to transport large ungulates across large distances. Aside from a few anecdotes, there is no hard evidence to substantiate this story. Numerous theories of how moose came to Isle Royale include the animals crossing an ice bridge or swimming from the Minnesota or Canadian mainland. Some presume commercial fisherman brought them in their boats from Minnesota as well. All theories remain speculative (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988; Little, 1978).

**Rock of Ages Lighthouse Construction**

The Rock of Ages reef, five miles off the northwest end of Isle Royale, caused great danger to many large vessels navigating the shipping lane between Duluth and Port Arthur, Ontario. The location was the scene of at least two significant shipwrecks, the *Cumberland* (1877) and *Henry Chisholm* (1898) (Stonehouse, 1983). The Lighthouse Board recommended a lighthouse at the reef prior to the *Chisholm* wreck, though sufficient funding was not appropriated until 1905. Formal planning and construction for a new lighthouse began thereafter (Franks & Alanen, 1999).

Construction of the Rock of Ages Lighthouse commenced at Washington Harbor in May of 1907. The Lighthouse Board leased portions of the Washington Club for a staging area and worker’s housing (Tinkham, 1963). The Club maintained use of their Clubhouse while the buildings farther north on the site were used by the Lighthouse crew. The twin frame buildings served as living quarters for crew and offices for the project superintendent, assistant superintendent and the clerk. These two structures were described by the assistant superintendent, Ralph Russell Tinkham, as part of his 1963
reminiscences. Each had five rooms total: two rooms on the main floor used for offices, a bedroom on the main floor as well, and two bedrooms upstairs (Tinkham, 1963; Johns, 1985). The lighthouse construction crew consisted of thirty to fifty people depending on the projects and tasks, so many lived in other buildings at the Club grounds. This staging area was also used to store building materials, tools, and supplies. The total construction cost of the Rock of Ages Lighthouse was $125,000 and work was complete by the end of the 1908 fiscal year (Tinkham, 1963).
Figure 4.4 Photo of the Rock of Ages Lighthouse construction staging area, 1907. Paul Cornell Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Transformation of the Landscape

The Washington Club gradually repurposed the Ghyllbank settlement into a presentable and well-manicured recreation destination for its privileged members. The former Wendigo Copper Company headquarters building became the new Washington Club Clubhouse with little modification. The twin men’s quarters and office building, boathouse, and several of the utility and service buildings were utilized for many years by the club, as was the barn, log house, tool room, ice house, and dock (Little, 1978). Over time the Club demolished original buildings such as the blacksmith shop, carpenter shop, rigging room, and twin frame structures once used by the Rock of Ages Lighthouse construction crew. The purpose of these removals is not presently known, but it may have been part of an effort to polish the landscape for well-heeled membership. The Washington Club also constructed their own buildings to match their needs, including a two-story guesthouse in 1912 and a single-story dining hall and caretaker’s quarters. A boathouse, brick pump house, and water tank were other small additions to the landscape (Willemin, 1936). Photos of the Washington Club’s occupation of the landscape (see Figures 4.5 and 4.6) offer substantial evidence that the Club not only demolished, renovated, and constructed new buildings, but also manicured the grounds in a way that would have obscured or disturbed historic archaeological resources from the Wendigo Copper Company era. Pathways once used daily by Ghyllbank residents were abandoned and became overgrown during the Washington Club era as well.
Figure 4.5 The Washington Club, 1929. Significant changes to structures and the landscape from the Wendigo Copper Company era are exhibited in this photo. From left to right: brick pump house, boathouse and dock, tool room, Washington Club guesthouse, clubhouse/previous Wendigo Copper Company Headquarters, servants quarters and kitchen, water tank and tower. Isle Royale Papers 1885-1955, 1921-1946, Detroit News Collection, Box 2, Bentley Historical Library.
Figure 4.6 The Washington Club, 1929. Brick pump house, boathouse and dock, tool room. Isle Royale Papers 1885-1955, 1921-1946, Detroit News Collection, Box 2, Bentley Historical Library.
Disaster struck the Washington Club in November 1931 while under supervision of the Club’s caretaker, Joe Engel. After building a fire in the clubhouse’s kitchen cook stove, he went down to the barn to milk the cows. Edgar Johns (1965) speculated in an oral history that strong winds off the lake caused the fire to escape from the stove. Flames engulfed the clubhouse and by the time Engel noticed the blaze the building was a total loss. Luckily no one was hurt during the event, but all possessions in the Washington Club Clubhouse, including the old Wendigo Copper Company books, were destroyed. Engel returned the following spring as Club caretaker but shot himself in one of the small cabins. Guilt from the loss of the Clubhouse is thought to have contributed to his suicide (Johns, 1965).

Transition

Talk of designating Isle Royale as a National Park began to be seriously considered towards the end of Isle Royale’s “golden age” of tourism in the 1920s. Scientists, scholars, journalists, legislators, naturalists, and other individuals familiar with the beauty and peacefulness of Isle Royale advocated for its importance as a national example of wilderness. Many believed that the NPS would be the best entity for the care of the wild island (Franks & Alanen, 1999; Baldwin, 2011).

In June of 1935 the Isle Royale National Park Association wrote a letter to the Washington Club, proposing that they consider donating Club holdings to the cause. Albert C. Gillette, then Club president, responded promptly and discussed the Club’s assets and investment of several thousands of dollars for buildings, water system, docks, boats, and land at the club grounds. Though the Club declined the donation proposal, Gillette expressed support for the preservation of the island and voiced substantial interest in discussing the sale of land to the Isle Royale National Park Association (Gillette, 1935).

It was customary for the Isle Royale National Park Association to offer life leases to individuals with private cottages or fishing camps on the island during the early NPS era. This was meant to support those that used Isle Royale resources to promote their lifestyle. The Park Commission instead offered the Washington Club a concessioner’s
agreement though they declined, stating that the inclusion of the public to their area would destroy the character of isolation and thus defeat the purpose of the Club’s existence (Willemin, 1937). E.G. Willemin, Land Purchaser for the Park Commission, visited the Washington Club in 1936 to view the property, as well as assess and take measured drawings of the buildings following the Club’s declination of a concession agreement (Willemin, 1937).

Table 4.1 Washington Club Structures assessed by E.G. Willemin, Isle Royale National Park Commission Land Purchaser (Willemin, 1937).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Washington Club Structures assessed by E.G. Willemin, Isle Royale National Park Commission Land Purchaser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caretaker’s Cottage and Dining Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 story frame building; 6 rooms + hall: 2 bedrooms, dinette/kitchenette, kitchen, dining room, bathroom, pantry; white paint with green trim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guesthouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 story frame building; 6 rooms: 1st flr.: 2 bedrooms w/ corner fireplaces, 1 toilet, 1 shower, 1 bath, large lobby w/ fireplace, large front porch. 2nd flr: 3 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 story; 3 room; 2 lean to, one in good shape, other collapsed; no paint; evidently 2 log cabins originally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Barn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 story w/loft; 1 room upstairs, 1 room downstairs; 4 stalls; lean to/chicken coop on west side; no paint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 story frame; 1 room; white wash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tool House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 story frame; 1 room; white wash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pump House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 story brick; 1 room; no paint; concrete slab foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root Cellar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masonry concrete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flag Pole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamarack; 40’ long w/ 2 anchor wood posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dug w/ tile casing 18 x 16”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Tank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10’ diameter; 10’ high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dock &amp; Boathouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-shaped dock in very poor condition; cribs not stone filled; boathouse and lean to on north side</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following spring (1937) Willemin conducted a phone meeting with Gillette to
discuss the sale of the Washington Club to the NPS, along with the worth of their assets.
Gillette emphasized that the majority of value in the Washington Club property was its
many spectacular views and well protected harbor rather than the structures that Willemin
assessed. Willemin assured him that those elements would be taken into consideration,
but that he heard a similar argument from numerous Isle Royale landowners who
believed that their property was the most beautiful of all. Willemin gave a preliminary
offer for the purchase of the Washington Club, broken down as such:

**Isle Royale National Park Commission Appraisal of Washington Club (1937)**

- 21 acres of uncultivated land @ $49/acre…………………..…..$1,029.00
- 49.6 acres of uncleared timber land @ $4/acre……………...…...$198.40
- Clubhouse……………………………………………………....…$5,215.63
- Outbuildings……………………………………………………$1,497.46
- Water Tank-Elevated………………………………………….$305. 91
- Dock & Boathouses………………………………………………..$2,628.76
- Leasehold-Trout Stream………………………………........…….$2,532.09
- **Total……………………..…$13,407.25**

Willemin’s appraisal sheet for the Washington Club also included remarks on the bottom
stating that a lease to the Club for the 1938 season would be considered at a deduction of
$665.00 from the total offer. During this meeting Gillette provided the Washington
Club’s 1932 statement of their assets which were as follows to Willemin to counter the
Park Commission’s offer.

**Washington Club Appraisal of Assets (1932)**

- Land and Club Grounds……………………………………..$10,590.00
- Buildings…………………………………………………………..$9,274.19
- Pumping Station and Tank………………………………….$1,014.98
- Dock……………………………………………………………….$5,000.00
- **Total…………………………………………………………..$25,879.17**
Though Willemin’s purchase offer was much less than the Washington Club’s evaluation of assets, Gillette was somewhat relieved to have a substantial bid, most likely because Club membership was low and he also took great interest in the development of the park (Willemin, 1937).

On May 25, 1937 Gillette wrote the Secretary of the Isle Royale National Park Commission, H.F. Harper, accepting the purchase offer from the Park Commission on behalf of the members of the Washington Club. While the Washington Club felt that the grounds were worth much more than was offered by the Commission, its members were supportive of the efforts to create the national park.¹ The Washington Club also accepted the offer to maintain a year lease for use of the Club grounds, expiring in October of 1938 (Gillette, 1937).

Through this negotiation process Gillette and Willemin maintained a cordial relationship between the Washington Club and Isle Royale Park Commission and the Club continued their presence on the island during the summer of 1938. In July Gillette inquired to Willemin again about the same lease agreement for the following year, so long as the Park Commission did not have plans to work on improvements to the area during that season (Gillette, 1938). Willemin shared this information for consideration with George F. Baggley, the Park Commission’s Current Representative in Charge, who then penned a letter to Gillette in response clearly stating that leases were not to be permitted to private individuals or groups based on the objective of Park creation. Unlike Willemin, Baggley was not interested in entertaining the Club’s presence on the island any longer than necessary noting in the same letter “I presume, under these

¹ Letter from Gillette and the Washington Club to Isle Royale National Park Commission Secretary, H.F. Harper, May 25, 1937, “We had hoped that your Commission would have been willing to offer at least $200,000 for the property. The Club members, who are leaders in business activities of Duluth, are, of course, sympathetic with this development of Isle Royale as a national park...For these reasons we have decided to accept the above offer and will, upon receipt of same from your office, execute an option at this figure for a period of three months; and if the Commission exercises the option to take over the property we will also assign, without additional consideration, a certain lease which the Club owns for a period of ninety-nine years on what is known as Wendigo Creek.”
circumstances, you will wish to make some disposition of the personal property now at
the Club. I would appreciate being advised when the Club buildings are vacated at the
close of the present season.” (Baggley, 1938).

Baggley’s involvement in what was apparently an agreement between Gillette and
Willemin commenced the deterioration of the professional relationship between the
Washington Club and the Park Commission. Gillette inquired with Baggley, Willemin,
and other members of the Park Commission for further clarification and consideration of
a lease for 1939, under the same terms as the agreement for 1938. While Willemin,
Harper, and National Park Service Assistant Director, George A. Moskey, were working
together to create a compromise in favor of the 1939 lease to the Washington Club,
Baggley wrote to Gillette with continued opposition, expressing that the use of the land
was not of concern to the Club because they elected to sell with an agreement for the
current year lease with no extensions. In September 1938, NPS Assistant Director, A. E.
Demeray became involved in the lease issue. He proposed that while Baggley was
following the policies correctly, the Park Service should grant the Washington Club one
more year lease for 1939 in effort to maintain their support for the park. Unfortunately,
by the time a deed was drawn up Gillette had given into his disappointment for the way
the issue was handled and disposed of all the personal property on Club grounds and
mailed the keys to Baggley in anger. Following the agreement with the Isle Royale
National Park Commission in 1938, the Washington Club disbanded without pursuing a
different location to continue their sportsmen activities, mostly likely due to lack of
interest in another location as well as low membership.

Though the conclusion of the Washington Club’s occupation on Isle Royale
ended in disappointment and disbandment for the Duluth businessmen, it signaled a
success for the Park Commission. They were now one step closer to full ownership of the
island and could move forward with renovation for the new National Park. Washington
Club grounds were seen as an asset to Park Commissioners as the location offered a main
visitor port with structures that could be repurposed for Park use, such as visitor
accommodations.
Chapter 5: Public Recreational Landscape Use and Transformation at Windigo

From 1920 to 1940 a great deal of planning and consideration was made towards the foundation of Isle Royale National Park (IRNP). Private resort owners and Isle Royale enthusiasts were excited and supportive of the effort to make the island a new park for many reasons. Many regular Isle Royale visitors cherished the rugged aspect of wilderness promoted in resort advertisements. Under National Park Service (NPS) management, Isle Royale would be preserved thus ending many years of use and exploitation by private groups. Resort owners also embraced the idea of the new national park as it promised a boost in tourism. However, many private owners were hoping that they might retain full ownership of their respective properties, something that would not prove possible on Isle Royale (Baldwin, 2011).

Leaders in the Creation of Isle Royale National Park

The leaders of the Isle Royale National Park Project received endorsement by both William B. Greeley, chief of the Forest Service and Horace M. Albright of the NPS (Little, 1978). Considerable support from Albert Stoll Jr., conservation editor for the Detroit News and Isle Royale aficionado, increased both public and professional interest and involvement in the IRNP movement (Baldwin, 2011; Barnett, 2014; Little, 1978). Michigan scholars also increased public awareness of the efforts to create the national park. Doctor Walter N. Koeltz announced the discovery of a new fish species within the Island’s inner waters and archaeologist Fred Dustin conducted extensive work on Isle Royale that advocated for its protection (Little, 1978). Invested members of the public trusted the opinions of these individuals and others that supported the wilderness park (Baldwin, 2011).

In 1931 the establishment of the Isle Royale National Park Commission was approved to conduct land negotiations and a board was appointed by Michigan Governor Wilber Brucker. The Great Depression nearly destroyed the work of the Commission, along with a decrease in involvement of some board members. Stoll and the Detroit
News, picked up the slack of promotion for the Commission during their period of decreased involvement. The election of President Franklin D. Roosevelt brought hope to the IRNP movement with the implementation of the Emergency Conservation Act of 1933. Through this act the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was created and several federal land purchases were approved. Isle Royale was not included in that appropriation however, due to the state commission’s failure to complete their work for eligibility in time (Little, 1978; Baldwin, 2011).

Initially, one of the biggest barriers for the creation of IRNP was the general practice that land for national parks were to be obtained in the form of a donation. This was an issue at Isle Royale because there were numerous landholders with multiple interests and motivations. Companies such as the Island Copper Company owned the land for its mineral rights and the Washington Club owned their property for personal recreation, though both still supported the idea of the new national park. Individuals also owned and operated small fisheries and family cottages that were cherished by many family members (Little, 1978; Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988).

Many of these landholders were not willing to donate their properties outright, especially in cases where business interests were involved such as commercial fisheries and resorts. In reaction to these budding issues with many National Park commissions, the Roosevelt administration modified the circumstances relating to how a property could be transferred, either by purchase or life-lease. The purchase the Washington Club property, along with the donation of Island Copper Company and Michigan Conservation Committee land holdings accounted for over half of the Island’s acreage and served as driver for acquisition of lesser properties (Little, 1978). Owners of small fishing operations and summer cottages were offered life leases that would eventually expire at the death of the owner or any children alive at the time the agreement was made. Title to lands and all related improvements transferred once the agreement was signed, individuals and families allowed use of their former properties until terms of the agreement had expired. If a life-lease was not desired, then the land was purchased outright – through condemnation if necessary - as private inholdings were not possible within the new national park (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988).
Figure 5.1 Map of proposed Isle Royale National Park. Ben R. Chynoweth Collection, Box 12, Folder 15, Michigan Tech Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections.
NPS Assessment of Washington Club Structures

In 1935, the NPS began acquisition of all privately-owned resorts on Isle Royale, with the Washington Club as the only exception. During this time landscape architect Donald Wolbrink was hired as a consultant to assess the resorts for evaluation and management for the park. The Belle Isle Resort, Rock Harbor Lodge, Minong Lodge, Singer’s Resort, and Washington Club were all evaluated for their use as visitor accommodations under the NPS. Many small cottages and lodges were considered unsalvageable after the decline of the tourism industry brought on by the Great Depression and all resorts lacked adequate sanitation facilities. Wolbrink assessed the Washington Club facilities and noted them as being in generally good shape (Franks & Alanen, 1999; Cultural Landscapes Inventory, 2011). The guesthouse had been constructed within the last ten years and well-maintained throughout that time. He photographed all the structures on the landscape for his assessment including those few buildings that remained from the Wendigo Copper Company (WCC) era. This would include the barn and mess hall (see Figures 5.3 and 5.4), though these structures were not considered for NPS use.
Figure 5.2 Washington Club boathouse, tool house, and dock, 1936. Don Wolbrink Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.

Figure 5.3 Wendigo Copper Company barn, 1936. Don Wolbrink Collection. Isle Royale NP Archives.
Figure 5.4 Wendigo Copper Company mess hall, 1936. Don Wolbrink Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.

Figure 5.5 Washington Club guesthouse, 1936. Don Wolbrink Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Figure 5.6 Washington Club dining hall and caretaker’s quarters, 1936. Don Wolbrink Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.

Figure 5.7 Washington Club ice house, 1936. Don Wolbrink Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Figure 5.8 Washington Club pump house, 1936. Don Wolbrink Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.

Figure 5.9 Washington Club water tank and tower, 1936. Don Wolbrink Collection, Isle Royale NP Archives.
CCC Involvement

By the mid-1930s, the first wave of federal employees had begun work on Isle Royale. These workers were not employees of the NPS, but young men between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five enrolled in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The military style camps organized and executed specific projects informed by surveys and reports produced on varied Isle Royale management topics (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988). President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 7228 on July 13, 1935 which assigned federal funding to the Isle Royale National Park project. That August the CCC established Camp Siskowit at Senter Point. The Rock Harbor Camp (today’s Daisy Farm campground) came along the following year. Park projects such as trail and cabin construction commenced early in the 1936 season. In July a wildfire near Siskiwit Bay demanded the attention of the CCC crews and lasted through September, halting the progress of the planned projects (Little, 1978).

During the summer of 1938 a location for the new Park Headquarters was chosen at Mott Island. This project received the most attention by the CCC during that year with construction of multiple officer’s living spaces, office buildings, warehouses, sanitation facilities, and water storage tank. Aside from lodging for park employees, accommodations for park visitors were needed, primarily on the west end of the island. The area previously occupied by the Washington Club was chosen for the site of new visitor lodging and plans for construction were made in the winter of 1939 (Little, 1978). During the follow May, the third CCC camp was constructed just north of Ghyllbank and Washington Club grounds and named Camp Windigo (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988; Little, 1978). Work was slow at first, but gained traction once the Park’s first Superintendent, George Baggley, offered some necessary direction. One of the most well-known projects completed by the CCC was the construction of the Windigo Inn, which was completed in August. The Windigo Inn joined Rock Harbor Lodge as one of two major tourist centers at either end of Isle Royale (Little, 1978).
Life at CCC Camps

The experiences of the young men employed by the CCC were much different on Isle Royale than they were at other places throughout the country. While some CCC camps were situated many miles from the nearest town, most had external social, physical, and intellectual outlets for crewmembers. This was not the case for the crews on Isle Royale due to their relative isolation. The distance between Isle Royale and the mainland was too far for frequent trips and transportation was often unreliable due to constantly changing weather conditions. In addition, some aspects of wilderness preservation that IRNP promoted discouraged typical recreation habits of CCC members. Recreational facilities such as basketball courts, football fields, and baseball diamonds, common at other CCC camp locations, were substituted with horseshoe pits, hiking excursions, and water sports.

Educational facilities provided to CCC crewmembers were similar to those seen elsewhere. Members from Rock Harbor and Windigo Camps utilized these programs with a ninety-four percent attendance record. Academic programs focused on English, arithmetic, and American history. Some even received high school diplomas and college credits for their academic achievements. At Camp Windigo beginner’s French classes were also held. Camp libraries held an extensive collection of texts and access to local newspapers. An emphasis on vocational training included curricula in radio operation, mechanical drawing, and nautical skills, along with typing and photography. The intent of this training was to increase enrollee’s chances for skilled jobs after their time with the CCC (Little, 1978).

Windigo CCC Camp

At Windigo the CCC constructed their site to the northeast of the Ghyllbank wharf site and Washington Club complex. The camp featured numerous barracks, recreation halls, a library and other buildings. A portion of an old Wendigo Copper Company wagon road also served as a path from the docks at Washington Harbor to Camp Windigo. The Camp’s primary function was to improve visitor amenities at the
former Ghyllbank location. One if the first projects was the creation of the Windigo Inn, which combined the Washington Club’s servants’ quarters with new additions built by the crew. The construction project lasted three months and the Windigo Inn was opened for visitor use in August of 1940 (Cultural Landscapes Inventory, 2011).

Figure 5.10 CCC Camp Windigo, 1939. Barracks, library, first aid center, and recreation halls. Stellman Collection, Box 1, #001, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Figure 5.11 Building the Barracks at Camp Windigo, 1939. Stellman Collection, Box 1, #004, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Figure 5.12 CCC Crew on dock they built at Windigo, 1940. Stellman Collection, Box 1, #009, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Figure 5.13 Aerial photo of Windigo, 1940s. Windigo CCC Camp along with NPS lodge facilities. NVIC Collection, Image 40.324, Isle Royale NP Archives.
Camp Windigo crewmembers constructed the first visitor center and ranger station at Windigo and replaced the old Washington Club dock with a larger one further to the south (Stadler, 1999). A separate Camp project included the construction of the Feldtmann Ridge Fire Tower, which was completed in 1939. The structure was initially constructed from logs by the CCC and was later replaced by a modern steel version in the early 1960s. Mule teams and a Caterpillar tractor assisted the crew in heavy hauling operations necessary for the completion of these projects and others. By April 3, 1940 the Secretary of the Interior accepted the deed to all lands on Isle Royale, which was then officially designated as a National Park. In September of 1941, Camp Windigo and Camp Rock Harbor disbanded and the CCC crews left Isle Royale with a lasting appreciation for their efforts towards developing the new IRNP (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988; Little, 1978).

**Benefit of CCC**

President Roosevelt’s approval of Isle Royale CCC camps also came with $600,000 allotment for the program. This fund was used for construction of the Park Headquarters, Windigo Inn, trail systems, and other projects including efforts to extinguish the 1936 forest fire (Little, 1978). As part of the New Deal the NPS also received approximately a half million dollars from the National Industrial Recovery Act to purchase park lands. The final CCC projects on Isle Royale concluded in September of 1941, closing the book on the Island’s most transient phase of historic occupation. The trail systems developed by the CCC increased access to the island interior while new lodging facilities promoted a relatively modernized visitor experience (Karamanski & Zeitlin, 1988).

**Landscape Transformation during NPS Era**

With the foundational projects completed and the new national park open to the public, federal employees and public visitors became the primary human occupants of the Windigo landscape. Isle Royale National Park promoted the use of their new facilities at Rock Harbor and Windigo as gateways to wilderness with visitor centers, ranger stations,
lodging and other amenities. Though many physical structures and related landscapes have changed, the foundational NPS motivations and values towards visitor accessibility remain constant at Isle Royale today.

Figure 5.14 Isle Royale National Park Tourist Brochure, ca. 1941. MS-220 Ben R. Chynoweth Collection, Box 10, Folder 4, Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections, Houghton, Michigan.
In 1939 the CCC constructed NPS employee housing at Windigo as part of their project. By 1957, park staff had already exceeded the space created by the CCC and they adopted use of the Camp Windigo structures for additional worker housing. New buildings for NPS employees mingled with repurposed CCC structures until the last tent frame was removed in 2010. Through the 1990s and early 2000s, Camp Windigo was one of the best examples of CCC style architecture on Isle Royale (Franks & Alanen, 1999).

The 1950s opened with disappointment from vacationers and, as a result, IRNP experienced decreased numbers in park visitation. Tourists complained about poor upkeep of recreation and lodging facilities and once popular excursion ships, such as the South American and the Noronic, discontinued their services to Isle Royale. These issues and others were partially remedied by the National Park Service’s “Mission 66” initiative, spearheaded in 1956. The long-term development and improvement program was scheduled for a decade, concluding in 1966 for the 50th anniversary of the NPS. Isle Royale National Park received three million dollars for improvements to park infrastructure, which encompassed upgrades to visitor facilities, new electric generators, and enhancements to the Park’s trails network. Construction of new Adirondack style shelters promoted visitor interaction with wilderness areas and supported the up and coming backpacking trend. Lodges at Rock Harbor and Windigo received upgrades, as did the Park Headquarters on Mott Island. The “Mission 66” initiative was driven in principle by a focus on combining wilderness-based ideals with tourism. The bowling alleys, golf courses, and tennis courts were removed from former resort areas in favor of a more rustic park experience comprised of hiking, backpacking, and fishing activities (Franks & Alanen, 1999).
Figure 5.15 Plan view of Windigo by Dena Sanford, 1995. Previous Camp Windigo on left, Windigo Proper on right (Franks & Alanen, 1999).
Figure 5.16 Windigo Proper, ca. 1970. Buildings from left to right: Brule Lodge, Washington Club guesthouse, Windigo Store (on footprint of Wendigo/Washington Club Headquarters), Radisson Lodge, and first Windigo Visitor Center by ferry dock. Isle Royale NP Archives.
The “Mission 66” improvements to Isle Royale National Park proved beneficial for park visitation. In 1961 rising visitation statistics proved that the park had invested wisely in visitor amenities, while simultaneously promoting the preservation of wilderness. Since the 1948 construction of the first Windigo Visitor Center and Ranger Station, the NPS has maintained an overarching presence at Windigo. The Windigo landscape has transitioned completely from an environment suitable for resource exploitation (Wendigo Copper Company) to one associated with the tourism industry, promotes national park activities including backcountry camping, interpretative programming, and appreciation for preserved wilderness. Primary modes of transportation to Windigo now include ferries from Grand Portage, Minnesota and seaplanes from Houghton. In 1998 the first visitor center and ranger station was replaced with a new facility up closer to the Windigo Store. A pavilion now rests on site of the previous structure and is used for interpretive programming.

Visitor lodging amenities at Windigo has experienced the greatest change since park designation. Two visitor lodges, the Brule and Radisson, were constructed in 1956 with “Mission 66” funds. Such conveniences allowed Park visitors to enjoy aspects of wilderness at their own pace by providing simple, yet comfortable lodging. By the 1970s, lodge use had decreased significantly and they subsequently fell into disrepair. Both the Brule and Radisson Lodges were removed by the park in 1983. Part of the justification for their removal had to do with efforts to simplify the landscape and focus on promoting Windigo as a wilderness access point rather than a visitor port. After 1983, Rock Harbor Lodge provided the only hotel-like lodging options available island-wide. This remained so until 2010, when two rustic rental cabins were constructed at Windigo.

Legacy on the Landscape

The Wendigo Copper Company’s initial use of the Windigo landscape prefaced repeated landscape transformations that continue to this day. Though the spelling of Wendigo may have changed, the legacy of the WCC has been partially maintained through each subsequent use of the landscape. The Washington Club retained the name Wendigo Creek for their trout stream, though it has since been changed to Washington
Creek and the temporary CCC Camp Windigo boasted the historic name with updated spelling. The National Park Service continued the tradition by naming the popular west end tourist port Windigo as well. The preservation of the namesake of Wendigo/Windigo is suggestive of the influence of the pioneer historic landscape occupant, the Wendigo Copper Company. However, it also refers back to the regional Ojibwe lore as it might relate to this area. The use of the name “wendigo” fundamentally represents the Ojibwe people’s legacy on this same landscape even though the term was adopted by the successive landscape occupants up to present day.

Efforts to change the Ghyllbank landscape were different in each historic era but maintained a similar pattern of transforming some landscape elements, while preserving others. Most physical remnants from the WCC, Washington Club, and CCC landscape occupations were erased from the surface because of these differing incentives towards landscape function. Instead what remains from these eras are the narratives of these groups, including their recorded motivations and their personal stories of how they shaped space into place at contemporary Windigo. Such stories are quite useful when pursing a more complete understanding of the evolution of physical landscape and human ideals.

The Wendigo Copper Company, Washington Club, Civilian Conservation Corps, and National Park Service all employed similar patterns of landscape use and transformation. Recreation has been a prevalent aspect of the Windigo landscape, ever since the time of the WCC and lasting up to present day. Tobogganing on the hill in front of company headquarters, fishing in Wendigo Creek, and enjoying the beauty of the outdoors contributed to an enduring landscape theme. Each new pattern of landscape manipulation has also paralleled the previous over these three eras despite their varied motivations to transform the landscape. The Washington Club and NPS reused buildings constructed by the previous occupants before enhancing the landscape with the removal of old structures and construction of new. This repeat of landscape transformation suggests that each era of occupation sustained significance long after the people left the land. The narrative of the Windigo landscape is that of constant evolution, and it will
continue to be transformed with the occupation of the Windigo Ranger Station by the NPS.

Figure 5.17 Evolution of landscape structures at the end of each phase of historic landscape occupation: Wendigo Copper Company.
Figure 5.18 Evolution of landscape structures at the end of each phase of historic landscape occupation: Washington Club
Figure 5.19 Evolution of landscape structures at the end of each phase of historic landscape occupation: National Park Service
Chapter 6: Principles of Interpretation in the National Park Service

Preservation and interpretation of park resources are two primary goals of the National Park Service. Many national parks were established for the purpose of land conservation and the preservation of significant natural and cultural resources in perpetuity for the enjoyment of park visitors. One aspect of preservation is interpretation and the NPS is a leader in interpretive programming. The NPS defines interpretation as “a catalyst in creating an opportunity for the audience to form their own intellectual and emotional connections with the meanings and significance inherent in the resource” (Interpretive Development Program, 2001). Interpretive programming within the NPS exists not only for visitor engagement, but also for the support of preservation missions. Interpretation establishes value and strives to instill elements of resource significance to park visitors. One of the many goals of this planned form of communication is promoting the connection between visitors, park resources, and major park themes (Benton, 2009; see also Directors Order #6, n.d.).

Professional Interpretation

The interpretation profession has developed over time into a communicative art that strives to translate the meanings of physical resources into a language the audience can better understand. John Muir (1896) was the first person to undertake interpretation as a professional role, stating in his Yosemite notebook: “I’ll interpret the rocks, learn the language of flood, storm and the avalanche. I’ll acquaint myself with the glaciers and wild gardens, and get as near the heart of the world as I can.” Freeman Tilden (1977) defines interpretation as “an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.” Tilden was a prominent leader among professional interpreters, creating definitions and guides for effective communication between resources and visitors that are still used today. Pairing the works of these men with contemporary interpretive scholars such as Larry Beck, Ted
Cable, William J. Lewis, and Sam Ham, provides a sturdy foundation of understanding the role of interpretation, history of its evolution, details of interpretive methods, and creation of interpretive strategies (Foundations of Interpretation Curriculum Content Narrative, 2007; Beck & Cable, 2002; Knapp & Benton, 2004).

**Principles of Interpretation**

Heritage interpretation professionals currently view Tilden’s publication *Interpreting Our Heritage* (1977) as the foundational document in the field that describes heritage interpretation in an inspiring manner. The highlight of his work is the outline of “Principles of Interpretation” in which he provides guidelines of the primary achievements that interpretation strives for, ways to perceive interpretive processes, and ways to effectively interpret (See Table 6.1). These principles have been used by many interpreters to align their goals and priorities, been extrapolated to assess interpretation to a variety of audiences, and referred to repeatedly as the guiding principles of interpretation.
Table 6.1 Freeman Tilden’s Principles of Interpretation (Tilden, 1977).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tilden’s Principles of Interpretation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best, it will require a separate program.</td>
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Building upon the work of Tilden and other early interpretive scholars, Professors Larry Beck and Ted Cable authored *Interpretation for the 21st Century* (1998) which provided insight to the projection of the field. Together they formed their own “Fifteen Principles of Interpretation” which focus on what interpretation should do for different people and what different methods of interpretation can accomplish (see Table 6.2). Their work serves as an update to Tilden’s original six themes of interpretation. The significance of Beck and Cable’s (1998) work is that it recognizes the frameworks laid out by interpretive professionals before them but also amends their work and addresses lessons learned by interpreters since the profession first took root (Knapp & Benton, 2004; Benton, 2009).
Table 6.2 Beck and Cable’s Fifteen Principles of Interpretation (Beck & Cable, 2002).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beck and Cable’s Fifteen Principles of Interpretation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To spark an interest, interpreters must relate the subject to the lives of visitors.</td>
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<td>2. The purpose of interpretation goes beyond providing information to reveal deeper meaning and truth.</td>
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<td>3. The interpretive presentation – as a work of art – should be designed as a story that informs, entertains, and enlightens.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The purpose of the interpretive story is to inspire and to provoke people to broaden their horizons.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Interpretation should present a complete theme or thesis and address the whole person.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Interpretation for children, teenagers, and seniors – when these comprise uniform groups – should follow fundamentally different approaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Every place has a history. Interpreters can bring the past alive to make the present more enjoyable and the future more meaningful.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. High technology can reveal the world in exciting new ways. However, incorporating this technology into the interpretive program must be done with foresight and care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Interpreters must concern themselves with the quantity and quality (selection and accuracy) of information presented. Focused, well-researched interpretation will be more powerful than a longer discourse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Before applying the arts in interpretation, the interpreter must be familiar with basic communication techniques. Quality interpretation depends on the interpreter’s knowledge and skills, which should be developed continually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Interpretive writing should address what readers would like to know, with the authority of wisdom and the humility and care that comes with it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The overall interpretive program must be capable of attracting support – financial, volunteer, political, administrative – whatever support is needed for the program to flourish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Interpretation should instill in people the ability, and the desire to sense the beauty in their surroundings – to provide spiritual uplift and to encourage resource preservation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Interpreters can promote optimal experiences through intentional and thoughtful program and facility design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Passion is the essential ingredient for powerful and effective interpretation – passion for the resource and for those people who come to be inspired by the same.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Interpretive Framework

The National Park Service provides an interpretation framework to all park interpreters to utilize within their respective parks. The successful implementation of this framework promotes the telling of compelling stories that promote understanding of the park’s purpose and significance. The goal of interpretive strategies is to provide holistic stories that encompass the mission of the park, as well as the purpose and significance of the park’s resources (History in the National Park Service, n.d.; VERP Framework, 1997; see also Director’s Order #6, n.d.; Edwards, 1994). National Park Service interpretive frameworks and themes utilize analyses of visitor personalities and methods of understanding audiences to create interpretive strategies that work for all visitor types (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2009; Kohl & Ubanks, 2008). With these elements in mind, interpretive plans are formulated through strategic processes that analyze the potential of park resources along with the needs and interests of the audience.

Interpretive Themes

Individual parks develop their primary interpretive themes by focusing on the park’s significance statements and elements of their fundamental resources and values. Primary interpretive themes are analyzed and adopted by parks based on their values and ability to communicate importance and significance of park resources to visitors. These themes do not have to include every element that the park strives to interpret, but focuses on the principles that are most critical to the understanding resource significance by visitors. The NPS suggests using their thematic framework to successfully examine the most comprehensive narrative of the park’s resources (see Figure 6.1). This framework recognizes the numerous elements that affect NPS resources, as well as the importance to communicate their existence and impact on the landscape with visitors (General Management Planning Dynamic Source Book, 2009; Planning for Interpretation and Visitor Experience, 1998; see also VERP Framework, 1997; Knapp & Benton, 2004).
Primary interpretive themes are shaped by NPS values and have myriad uses in relation to each park. They work to create a footing for the park’s overall educational and interpretive programs. As a byproduct, primary interpretive themes often identify resources, services, and experiences that can be provided to visitors to enhance their own experience within the park setting. The development and interpretation of these themes also provides a framework for shared viewpoints among the public, visitors, and stakeholders (General Management Planning Dynamic Source Book, 2009; Planning for Interpretation and Visitor Experience, 1998; Edwards, 1994).
The National Park Service’s primary interpretive themes are meant to be used as a starting point for individual parks to create more detailed and specific themes that more closely relate to their distinct settings. Secondary interpretive themes are commonly utilized by national parks throughout the country to help visitors understand uniqueness in multiple locations within park boundaries. Each park also has their own interpretive program standards that encompass themes based on the purpose and significance of the park. Connecting park resources to broader contexts, meanings, and values is also a primary goal of interpretive programs (General Management Planning Dynamic Source Book, 2009; Planning for Interpretation and Visitor Experience, 1998; see also Larsen, n.d.).

Interpretive themes act as a tool for interpreters to positively affect the audience by means of providing focus on the visitor’s personal connections and striving to develop meaningful ideas. These work to captivate the audience and maintain their attention. The primary value of these ideas is the opportunity they provide for visitors to create their own connections to the resource. By using effective interpretive themes, interpreters can provoke the audience’s connection to and appreciation for park resources. In turn, this facilitates visitor belief in the importance of resource preservation (Larsen, n.d.; Benton, 2009; see also Knapp & Benton, 2004). Interpretation works to narrate information with methods that connect the audience to the content, such as storytelling, exploration of memories, and connecting on other personal levels. In this way interpretation can be viewed as an art form that combines the teachable elements of historical, scientific, and archaeological disciplines to provoke understandings, reactions, and responses from the audience (Tilden, 1977; Benton, 2009; see also Knapp & Benton, 2004; Planning for Interpretation and Visitor Experience, 1998).

**Interpretive Planning**

Creating successful interpretive plans for NPS use requires the recognition of many different elements that pertain to the way information is communicated to visitors. Conveying the goals of what the interpretive plan will achieve is of the utmost importance. The plan defines the target audience and what themes or topics the plan will
Interpretive themes and topics typically represent the resources that make each national park unique and meaningful. Articulating the specific objectives of the interpretive plan also considers how people are intended to experience, feel, and learn from the method of interpretation (Planning for Interpretation and Visitor Experience, 1998; Director’s Order #6, n.d.).

**Interpretive Audiences**

The audiences for interpretation at national parks are visitors with varying levels of interest and experience. People visit parks for a multitude of reasons, which are shaped by each individual’s diverse personalities, experiences, and values (Tilden, 1977; Planning for Interpretation and Visitor Experience, 1998). The interest that brings the visitor to the interpretive setting is formed by their personal qualities and is an investment or willingness to make further connections through learning. It is important to capitalize on these personal principles to best communicate the elements of interpretation (Edwards, 1994). Stepping back and allowing the visitor to make their own connections between the presented content and themselves helps ensure that they retain the information. In this sense, interpreters are middlemen that work to effectively present information to the audience in a way that allows them to create their own understandings on the information presented (Tilden, 1977; Kohl & Eubanks, 2008; see also Benton, 2009; Knapp & Benton, 2004). Methods that connect present people to past people by pointing out similarities are often successful for this reason. Visitors visualize concepts through their own perspective by translating the information provided by the interpreter. This allows for a very personalized experience and places the individual in control of their own understandings (Tilden, 1977; Knapp & Benton, 2004).

Knowing the limitations of the audience is also crucial in the execution of successful interpretation methods. Limitations can be both physical and mental and differ from person to person. These may include time constraints, absorptive capacity for information, available finances, and others. Although tailoring interpretation to a varied audience is important, it is essential to interpret the same narrative to each group while utilizing different methods of communication when necessary. Working with different
age groups, cultures, and capabilities requires different techniques to communicate the same themes and values. Successful interpretation also addresses different audiences in different ways while still communicating the same elements. Good interpretation does not dilute the presentation of information based on different ages, classes, ethnicities, and other elements. Visualizing the interaction that occurs between the interpretive message and the visitor is one good way to gauge the success of the interpretative strategy (Tilden, 1977).

**Interpreting the Whole**

Wholeness is a term that is paramount to the effectiveness of interpretation within the NPS. It refers to presenting the whole concept of a theme or idea and how it contributes to a larger idea, rather than providing pieces of a greater story. This strategy addresses elements of broader interpretative themes within specific national parks, helping the audience connect the smaller pieces of interpretation to others within the same park or on a larger scale (Tilden, 1977; Edwards, 1994). Proposing qualities that envelope the entire theme of the place also promotes a clearer understanding by covering all elements and leaving little to be misunderstood. Determining the keynotes for interpretation is a good method for creating a narrative that embodies wholeness (Tilden, 1977). Allowing visitors to make connections between the specific place themes and the broader park themes is often successful because they draw their own conclusions from the interpretive themes and strategies. And of course, successful interpretive themes must also be useful and achieve the goals they were created to accomplish (General Management Planning Dynamic Source Book, 2009).

**Tangible and Intangible Resources**

Connecting the tangible elements to the intangible is another goal of interpretation. This is best achieved by utilizing emotional connections that correspond with the subject of interpretation. A tangible element is a physical, concrete component that has material qualities that can be sensed in a variety of ways. Nonphysical elements, or intangible components, such as relationships, stories, events, ideas, values, and
processes of historic, biological, or geological significance are abstract in nature (see Figure 6.2).

Interpreters guide discussions in ways that help audiences connect the tangible resource to the intangible concepts that the park wishes to promote. Specific intangible resources are often dependent on the individual park’s themes, location’s subthemes, and the broader message that the park desires visitors to comprehend. The strength of connecting the tangible and intangible resources through interpretation is that it promotes the relevance of resources to visitors, as well as their preservation (Foundations of Interpretation Curriculum Content Narrative, 2007).

![Diagram showing examples of Tangible and Intangible resources at Windigo](image)

**Figure 6.2 Examples of Tangible and Intangible resources at Windigo**

**Methods of Interpretation**

There are many possible methods for communicating the content of interpretive plans, including interpretive signage, guided tours, interpretive programs, and museum exhibits. Awareness of financial and staffing limitations, as well as conservation policies (such as wilderness designations) are important for planning the execution of interpretive plans. This ensures that interpretive plans do not conflict with any of the park’s fundamental management guidelines. Additionally, employing a method for evaluation of the interpretive strategy is important so that these strategies can be amended to benefit the park and its visitors in the best ways possible (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2009; General Management Planning Dynamic Source Book, 2009).
Personal and Non-Personal Interpretation

There are two basic types of interpretation that determine the methods of communication to the visitor audience: personal and non-personal. While both types have their strengths and weaknesses, their forms and methods are utilized by interpreters every day. The NPS implements both personal and non-personal interpretation to provide visitors with a variety of forms of interpretation that are geared towards varied personal preferences. The purpose of employing both types of interpretation is to reach a variety of audiences and personalities while communicating the same values using different interpretive strategies (Ward & Wilkinson, 2006; Foundations of Interpretation Curriculum Content Narrative, 2007).

Personal interpretation is the most popular and most promoted method of connecting the audience to resources by NPS interpretive staff. This type of interpretation is linear and features a physical interaction between the visitor and the interpreter. Methods of personal interpretation include guided tours, interpretive talks, presentations, informal communication, and any other physical presentation of interpretive messages. The highlight of these methods is that it allows the interpreter to control the order in which the audience receives their message. This allows for more structured interpretation and assessment of audience interest. One of the main reasons that personal interpretation is so profoundly popular is the interpreter’s element of control over the order and amount of interpretation provided. These methods allow interpretive staff to make decisions about how and when to interpret park resources to the public. Personal interpretation is also more interactive and provides visitors with personalized experiences that are also easily measured by their success and ability to connect with the audience (Foundations of Interpretation Curriculum Content Narrative, 2007; Visitor Use and Evaluation of Interpretative Media, 2003; see also Director’s Order #6, n.d.).

Non-personal interpretation is a prevalent form of communication that presents an intended message without physical interaction between interpretive staff and the audience. This type of interpretation is nonlinear, meaning that the visitor is in control of the order in which information is received. Non-personal communication commonly
exists in the form of interpretive panels, brochures, pamphlets, audio recordings, self-guided tours, and others. These forms of interpretation are often popular because they allow visitors to access information at their own pace and in instances where interpretive staff is unavailable. Non-personal interpretation is particularly successful because it typically reaches more visitors than personal interpretation methods and allows visitors the freedom to explore and learn on their own will and pace (Edwards, 1994; Director’s Order #6, n.d.).

While non-personal interpretation is a popular method among visitors and heavily utilized by the NPS, it also has its downsides. Interpretive signage is often expensive to produce, requires outside professional fabrication, and is one of the most permanent interpretive methods which makes it difficult to change the information once the product is created. Printed paper materials are consumable and can be quickly diminished, though they are one of the most cost-efficient methods of interpretation. Another downside of non-personal interpretation is that the primary message may not always be received by the audience due to their ability to control what they read or contemplate. It is also much more difficult to determine which messages are being received and to assess the success of interpretation (Director’s Order #6, n.d.).

No one form of interpretation is more important than another. In order to reach the greatest number of varied audiences in the most effective way, multiple methods and types of interpretation should to be utilized. Personal forms of interpretation are often some of the most effective and praised, though on average within the NPS these methods only reach about 22% of the visitors. Conversely, non-personal methods are received by approximately 62% of park visitors. Interpretive planners must be aware of the appropriate methods for both personal and non-personal interpretation, as well as their benefits and downfalls (Foundations of Interpretation Curriculum Content Narrative, 2007; see also Table 6.3).
Table 6.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of Personal and Non-Personal Interpretation

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<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
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<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Guided Tours</td>
<td>-Interactive</td>
<td>-Audience is subject to interpreter’s methods/interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Interpretive Talks</td>
<td>-Can be personalized for audience more easily</td>
<td>-Visitors are confined to interpreter’s schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Presentations</td>
<td>-Interpreter is in control of how information is received by visitor</td>
<td>-Resources are not available 24/7</td>
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<td>-Informal Communication</td>
<td>-Easy to assess success</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-personal</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Interpretive Panels</td>
<td>-Visitor can choose the method that best suits their time, group, planned activities, and learning styles.</td>
<td>-Primary interpretive message may not be received because the audience can choose what they ready and information they receive.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Brochures/Pamphlets</td>
<td>-Provides interpretation when human interpreters are not available.</td>
<td>-More difficult to determine success.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Self-Guided Tours</td>
<td>-Freedom to explore and learn at own pace.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Audio Recordings</td>
<td>-Reaches more visitors</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Exhibits</td>
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Interpretation should provoke thought about new subjects, enhance familiar topics, and aid in the understanding of the importance of park resources rather than merely recite information. Interpretative strategies that are provocative stimulate audience interest and a desire to learn and understand. This is how information differs from interpretation. Information is recited to visitors, while interpretation fosters an emotional connection with the visitor and provides knowledge that they can analyze for themselves (Tilden, 1977; Kohl & Eubanks, 2008; see also Knapp & Benton, 2004).
Importance of Interpretation in the NPS

Interpretation is a major component of management plans in the NPS. Interpretive planning works to ensure that management actions identify key experiences for visitors and endorses methods that facilitate positive and beneficial experiences through interpretation (CIP Guide, 2005). Creating a positive visitor experience is one of the best ways to promote the understanding, appreciation, and protection of NPS resources (Tilden, 1977). The visitor experience encompasses everything they sense, think, feel, and do within the park setting. Natural environment, park facilities, and interpretation all contribute to the visitor experience. Effective interpretation strives to positively impact the visitor experience and can only be accomplished by interpreters dedicated to the goals and objectives of successful interpretation (Planning for Interpretation and Visitor Experience, 1998).

National Park Service interpretation works to translate the meanings and significance attached to resources into languages that audiences of all types can understand (Foundations of Interpretation Curriculum Content Narrative, 2007). By revealing the values of specific sites and facilitating meaningful experiences for visitors, interpretation achieves and fulfills the NPS mission to:

Preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world (Foundation Document, Isle Royale National Park, 2016).

To conclude, Tilden encourages interpreters to be informed and create their own definitions of interpretation and to strive to produce better interpretive messages for visitors that instill meaning of significant resources. “The true interpreter will not rest at any dictionary definition. Besides being ready in his information and studious in his use of research, he goes beyond the apparent to the real, beyond a part to a whole, beyond a truth to a more important truth.” (Tilden, 1977).
Chapter 7: Interpretation at Windigo, Isle Royale National Park

The National Park Service strives to instill values of appreciation and preservation in visitors through means of interpretation. Methods of interpretation are utilized differently and informed by foundational documents created by individual parks. Each national park has specific documents and statements that help aid understanding of the park’s purpose, foundation, values, and themes. These documents are significant because they are designed to clearly articulate the elements that influenced the decision to award the area with National Park designation. These resources are used for the creation of interpretive strategies and programs which help ensure implementation of a holistic interpretive plan that benefits interpreters and visitors (General Management Planning Dynamic Source Book, 2009; Planning for Interpretation and Visitor Experience, 1998; History in the National Park Service, n.d.). This chapter strives to present the methods of interpretation utilized by staff at Windigo, Isle Royale National Park. An overview of Isle Royale’s park purpose and significance is explored first, followed by an analysis of the Park’s interpretive themes and resources. Finally, visitor audiences are explored to understand how the interpretive framework and resources at IRNP work together to communicate with visitors.

Isle Royale National Park is full of interpretive opportunities for both natural and cultural resources. The diverse ecosystem of the island and the rich occupational history provides a great variety of topics to interpret. Rock Harbor and Windigo are the Park’s two main visitor hubs and the areas were utilized along similar lines prior the opening of the Park in 1940. Both locations have a visitor center, ranger station, ferry and seaplane docks, and a variety of interpretive opportunities for visitors to experience. Windigo interpretive staff facilitate these opportunities for visitors to enhance their understanding of Isle Royale as a national park, its significance, and related resources (Foundation Document, Isle Royale National Park, 2016). This chapter will explore the interpretive methods and resources utilized by park staff on Isle Royale and specifically at Windigo, including significance statements, interpretive themes and relevant resources. An
exploration of the audience types also influences the interpretive planning at Windigo. Thus, an overview of different visitor categories will also be analyzed.

**Park Purpose**

National Park purpose statements identify the specific reasons for the establishment of each park. These statements are typically derived from the enabling legislation and history that led to Park creation. Isle Royale National Park was formally established on April 3, 1940 after numerous years of park promotion from naturalists, conservationists, legislators, and Isle Royale enthusiasts (Foundation Document, Isle Royale National Park, 2016). Isle Royale’s purpose statement functions as a baseline for the most important aspects of the island and is as follows:

The purpose of Isle Royale National Park is to set apart a remote island archipelago and surrounding waters in Lake Superior as a national park for the benefit and enjoyment of the public and to preserve and protect its wilderness character, cultural and natural resources, scenery, and ecological processes. Additionally, as a unit of the national park system, Isle Royale National Park provides opportunities for recreation, education, interpretation, and scientific study (Foundation Document, Isle Royale National Park, 2016).

**Park Significance**

Each national park also has a set of significance statements that outline the prominent values the park represents through aspects of its ecological and cultural components. The significance statements focus on what makes Isle Royale unique within the national park system and identify why it was chosen to be a national park. Significance statements are used as interpretation guides for planners, managers, and visitors as a baseline for interpretive themes and strategies. The focus of these significance statements are the values the park embodies, factors that make the park distinctive within a variety of contexts, and a focus on the most important park resources (See Table 7.1). Isle Royale National Park’s significance statements concern both natural and cultural values and resources and focus on the creation of the island, the geology, flora and fauna, archaeological resources, aspects of isolation, and opportunities for research (Foundation Document, Isle Royale National Park, 2016).
Table 7.1 Significance Statements or Isle Royale National Park (Foundation Document, Isle Royale National Park, 2016).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Isle Royale National Park Significance Statements</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Largest Island Archipelago</td>
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<td>2. Isolation and Isolated Character</td>
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<td>3. Geology, Copper, and Distinct Topography</td>
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<td>4. Habitat and Refuge for a Unique Assemblage of Fish</td>
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<td>5. Scientific Study and Research</td>
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<td>6. Scenery and Scenic Resources</td>
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<td>7. Archeologic Mining Sites and Resources</td>
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Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are organizational tools that reveal and clarify meaning, concepts, contexts, and values represented by park resources. Sound themes are accurate and reflect current scholarship and science. In addition, they encourage further exploration of significant historic events or natural processes that occurred on the landscape and their subsequent effects. Interpretive themes go beyond a mere description of the event or process to foster multiple opportunities to experience the park and its resources. These themes help explain why a park story is relevant to people who may otherwise be unaware of connections to an event, time, or place associated with the park (General Management Planning Dynamic Source Book, 2009; Planning for Interpretation and Visitor Experience, 1998; Edwards, 1994).

Interpretive themes are constructed based on the specific purpose, significance, values, and resources of individual parks. Once completed, they provide structure for park staff to develop interpretive opportunities for visitors (Foundation Document, Isle Royale National Park, 2016). Interpretive themes vary by park and are shaped by the cultures that make each individual park unique. Themes of interpretation work to enrich the visitor experience by providing new information, shed light on ideas, and disseminate knowledge that affects the future behavior of people within national parks (Edwards, 1994). Interpretive themes also work to place topics of interpretation into the bigger picture of park significance.

Isle Royale National Park has several general interpretive themes that communicate the significance of the park and shape the management and interpretive programming (See Table 7.2). Like the Park’s significance statements, these themes encompass both natural and cultural aspects of Isle Royale, including its isolated wilderness character, the environmental and cultural processes that shaped the island, and contemporary significance within the NPS system (Foundation Document, Isle Royale National Park, 2016; E. Valencia, personal communication, December 1, 2016). Isle Royale’s interpretive themes also correspond with the broader NPS thematic framework by incorporating aspects of several national themes identified as Expanding Science and
Technology, Developing the American Economy, Transforming the Environment, Creating Social Institutions and Movements, Peopling Places, and Expressing Cultural Values (National Park Service, n.d.).

Table 7.2 Interpretive themes for Isle Royale National Park (E. Valencia, personal communication).

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<th>Isle Royale National Park Interpretive Themes</th>
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Interpretive Sources

Interpretive sources for IRNP and the Windigo area are available in a variety of settings. Some of these sources can be accessed online before visitors arrive to the park. These materials are discussed under “Prearrival”. Other interpretive sources for Windigo are only available on site at the Windigo Visitor Center or provided by interpretive staff. These sources of information and education are categorized as personal and non-personal methods of interpretation. The goal of interpretive sources is to inform and engage visitors in a variety of ways (Director’s Order #6, n.d.).
Prearrival

Interpretive resources for IRNP are available to visitors and enthusiasts even before they set foot on the island. These resources are both tangible and intangible, personal and non-personal. Some can be found online via IRNP’s website, while others can be obtained at the visitor center in Houghton, Michigan. These resources are supplemental to the interpretive experience on Isle Royale and considered to be non-personal. Not all visitors take advantage of these resources before making the journey to Isle Royale, but they are popular among many. It is also important to recognize that people do not have to be on Isle Royale to be considered visitors. They can peruse online resources and social media sites to get their own type of Isle Royale experience or visit the Houghton Visitor Center (K. Keller, personal communication, March 10, 2017).

Isle Royale National Park Website

The Isle Royale National Park website provides information on park history, events, transportation, backcountry camping, lodging, and invites visitors to experience a superior wilderness. A section titled “Maps & Brochures” provides access to a variety of literature including the park newspaper, boating and fishing guides, maps, hiking and backpacking information, and area guides for Rock Harbor and Windigo. While online sources of information are great resources, they are also considered to be pre-arrival resources as they are often inaccessible on the island. The sense of isolation is profound on Isle Royale as cell service is minimal and internet almost non-existent within island interior. (Isle Royale, Maps & Brochures, n.d.).

The Isle Royale National Park Cultural Resource Interactive Mapping Project

Isle Royale National Park’s website also provides links to outside sources of information relating to Isle Royale’s history and culture, including the Cultural Resource Interactive Mapping Project (CRIMP). This online resource was created by the Isle Royale Institute (2016), a research partnership between IRNP and Michigan Technological University (MTU). The CRIMP is accessible online and is set up to be navigated in two ways: as a traditional website and as an interactive mapping tool. The
traditional website method allows visitors to navigate different tabs for specific cultural topics relating to Native American use of Isle Royale, historic fisheries, historic mines, maritime resources, recreational histories, and other lesser known island histories. Each section gives an overview of that subject with content written by historians, archaeologists, and other cultural resource professionals. The interactive mapping tool allows visitors to click on specific locales and pop-up windows to make connections between historic and cultural sites (Isle Royale Institute, 2016).

Social Media

Many national parks utilize social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, and Instagram to connect with visitor audiences. Isle Royale National Park has an active presence on Facebook and Instagram social media sites. Facebook posts provide information on happenings within the park, upcoming events, photos taken by park staff and visitors, current research, and natural and cultural resources. This medium allows for text heavy posts, links to other pages, photographs, and other informational resources. Over 23,000 Facebook users “like” the IRNP Facebook profile and 99% of those Facebook users are followers that receive updates provided by park staff (Isle Royale National Park, n.d.). The IRNP Instagram account exists to connect with other Instagram users by using original and reposted photos of everything related to Isle Royale. The isleroyalenps Instagram account was launched in January of 2016 and has over 12,000 followers. The account’s biography section describes the location of the park and urges followers to use the hashtag #isleroyalenps for a chance to be featured on the official Park Instagram profile (isleroyalenps, n.d.). Social media is a great way for IRNP to connect with visitors before and after they come to the park.

Houghton Headquarters

The IRNP Headquarters in Houghton, Michigan is open year-round. Park staff is available to answer any questions in person, by phone, or email. Books, maps, and other resources can be purchased at the Houghton headquarters. Additionally, print materials such as brochures and pamphlets are provided at no cost. These include the headlining
Isle Royale *Unigrid* brochure, IRNP Lighthouses brochure, Rock Harbor and Windigo Area Guides, and other island-related brochures. These materials will be discussed in depth later in this chapter. The Houghton Visitor Center offers *Ranger III* tickets and ferry schedules in addition to interpretive brochures.

**Arrival**

Transportation to the island is a major element of the Isle Royale visitor experience. Rock Harbor and Windigo are the two transportation ports on the island for passenger ferries and seaplane services. To get to Rock Harbor visitors can take passenger ferries such as the *Ranger III* from Houghton, Michigan, the *Isle Royale Queen IV* from Copper Harbor, Michigan, or the *Voyageur II* from Grand Portage, Minnesota. Travelers can also board the passenger ferries *Voyageur II* or *Sea Hunter III* to Windigo from Grand Portage. The *Voyageur II* operates throughout the park’s open season and circumnavigates the island, while the *Sea Hunter III* provides day trip services during peak months of visitation (June through September). Alternatively, visitors can fly to the island with Isle Royale Seaplanes out of Houghton to either Rock Harbor or Windigo. All transportation services to and from the island are concessioner run with exception to the *Ranger III* which is owned and operated by the NPS (Isle Royale, Transportation Services, n.d.).

**Interpretive Programs on the Ranger III**

Visitors that begin their journey on the *Ranger III* out of Houghton may experience their first interpretive programs en route to the island. Interpretive talks are often part of both island and mainland bound trips on the *Ranger III* and are led by park staff and researchers. Presentation topics range from general park information on camping, boating, and Leave No Trace practices to updates on current biology, archaeology, and other projects on the island.
Figure 7.1 Map of Isle Royale National Park with transportation routes (Isle Royale, Maps & Brochures, n.d.).
Visitor Centers

Visitor centers are a prominent aspect of interpretation within the national park system. The intended purpose of visitor centers is to assist visitor understanding of meaningful park resources through interpretation such as exhibits, models, talks, guided tours, and other methods. These forms of interpretation tend to focus on how to interact with, appreciate, and protect these significant park resources. Visitor centers for IRNP are positioned at Houghton, Rock Harbor, and Windigo.

The Windigo Visitor Center provides both personal and non-personal interpretation to visitors and is an introductory space for visitors to become acquainted with the island landscape. It is the only place to find informational park resources on the west end of the island, the other being on the east end at Rock Harbor. The Windigo Visitor Center houses exhibits relating to cultural and natural resource themes such as moose and wolf displays, a Wendigo Copper Company display, the Rock of Ages Lighthouse Fresnel lens, shipwreck models and artifacts, and others. In addition, there are many print resources available for purchase at the Windigo Visitor Center including books, maps, and pamphlets similar to those available in Houghton.

Personal Interpretation

At Windigo interpretive topics follow the park’s overarching interpretive themes with a focus on “local” aspects of the island. Park Ranger Katie Keller says that interpreters at Windigo use the park’s interpretive themes as a lens for topics of interpretation. Choosing a topic and placing it within the scope of different interpretive themes ensures that interesting topics tie into larger island themes and are relevant and engaging to audiences (E. Valencia, personal communication, December 1, 2016; K. Keller, personal communication, March 10, 2017).

Guided tours, presentations, and causal interactions are all considered personal interpretive methods utilized by Windigo rangers. Personal interpretive methods allow for direct interaction between interpreters and the audience, establishing a more direct approach to communicate main interpretive themes, values, and importance of resources.
There are three methods of personal interpretation at Windigo, guided hikes, day programs, and evening programs.

- **Guided Interpretive Hike**

  The ranger led hike at Windigo is titled “Royale Resources” and explores the reasons why Isle Royale became a National Park. The hike follows a 1/2 mile trail route that includes six different topics of discussion including cultural history, moose and wolves, lichen, geology, and island biogeography. This guided hike is interactive and asks visitors to help answer questions and “play the expert” on these six subjects. The guided hike begins at the Wendigo Copper Company headquarters building foundation and ends on the Feldtmann Lake Trail. This guided hike is a visitor favorite and uses a variety of interpretive techniques to engage the audience and incorporates several interpretive themes (K. Keller, personal communication, March 10, 2017).

- **Day Programs**

  Day programs at Windigo are led by park rangers as well as volunteers. Day visitors and Base Campers are the two main target audiences for these programs. There are four pre-established 20 minute talks that include:

  - Bone-anza! (Life of a Moose): focuses on what can be learned by studying moose bones.
  - Island of Change (Animals on Isle Royale): describes the effect that isolation has on wildlife species that call Isle Royale home.
  - Forever Wild (An Island Park’s Story): gives an historical perspective on how Isle Royale became a national park.
  - Lighting up History (The Rock of Ages Lighthouse): explores the need for, construction, operation, and preservation of the Rock of Ages Lighthouse.

  These programs are pre-established for several reasons. Most importantly they allow for consistent programs that visitors enjoy, which permit interpreters to focus on improving their interpretive techniques rather than creating new programs. Day programs are often
attended by day visitors as well as some overnight visitors (K. Keller, personal communication, March 10, 2017).

- **Evening Programs**

  Evening programs are offered at the Windigo Visitor Center approximately 4-5 times a week. Members of Isle Royale’s interpretive staff and outside researchers develop these 45 minute programs based on the features of a particular area and their own backgrounds of expertise. This typically accounts for passionate presentations which in turn, make for engaging interpretation. Overnight visitors are the target audience for these presentations which range on subjects both natural and cultural. Park staff present on topics such as island biogeography, copper mining, Ojibwe heritage, shipwrecks, invasive species, resorts, and current research projects happening at IRNP. Special guest presenters will often introduce the audience to different perspectives from the field on topics such as archaeology, biology, family heritage, and more (K. Keller, personal communication, March 10, 2017).

**Non-personal Interpretation**

Non-personal methods of interpretation are also utilized at Windigo. Interpretive resources such as signs, wayside exhibits, visitor center exhibits, newspapers, and brochures are available to promote visitor understanding. The Windigo Visitor Center is the main area for visitors to take advantage of these non-personal interpretive resources but some non-personal methods are utilized separately over the general Windigo landscape.

- **Identification Signs**

  The purpose of identification signs is to simply label features along pathways. These signs are short and concise with their information and typically consist of a name only but include dates on occasion. In the greater Windigo area, along the East Huginnin Trail, an erroneously labeled identification sign reads “Wendigo Mines 1889-1892” marking one of the Wendigo Copper Company exploration sites. This sign is similar in
design with those seen at trail intersections all over the park. Identification signs are the simplest form of non-personal interpretation that merely label features and leave most of the interpretive process up to the visitor (S. DePasqual, personal communication, February 23, 2017).

➢ Wayside Exhibits

Wayside exhibits are the most complex type of interpretive signage employed by the NPS. According to the NPS Wayside Guide “an effective wayside exhibit enhances a direct and meaningful connection between visitors and the landscape” (Harpers Ferry Center, 2009). Wayside exhibits interpret significant features and resources with easy to read text and engaging visuals. Two types of wayside exhibits direct visitor attention in different ways: low-profile and upright orientation waysides. Low-profile exhibits direct visitor attention to landscape features and resources while upright waysides orient visitors to the site with maps and information. Isle Royale interpretive staff prefers the low-profile orientation wayside exhibits over upright because of the way the signs interact with the landscape. Low-profile waysides are relatively subtle and allow visitors to read from them without detracting from any vistas or viewscapes. These types of signs have become ubiquitous among national park settings for this reason primarily.

Three low-profile wayside exhibits are positioned along the path from the main ferry dock to the visitor center. The first is placed next to the Windigo NPS sign to orient visitors to their surroundings and what Windigo was like during the WCC era. This panel has a map of the Windigo area along with a photo of the WCC headquarters/Washington Club clubhouse building. This panel serves as an introduction to the landscape for visitors and is placed in a strategic position to gain their attention as soon as they come off the ferry dock. The second panel is placed next to the flagpole and drinking fountain beside the main road and focuses on the 1928 sinking of the passenger ship America in Washington Harbor, the closest and one of the most well-known Isle Royale shipwrecks. The third and final interpretive panel is approximately half way up the path to the visitor center and informs audiences about the wolf and moose dynamic on Isle Royale. This same panel is present at Rock Harbor (K. Keller, personal communication, March 10,
An additional wayside exhibit panel has been designed for the proposed Wendigo Wagon exhibit near the Windigo Store and historic headquarters/clubhouse foundation. The project has been planned and funded but stalled due to separate maintenance commitments (S. DePasqual, personal communication, April 26, 2017).

**Print Materials (Brochures, Newspapers, Pamphlets)**

Isle Royale National Park utilizes brochures as a method of non-personal interpretation. General brochures about Isle Royale include the park newspaper, the *Greenstone*, and the *Unigrid*. The *Greenstone* contains articles based on current park projects and research as well as pieces from the Park Superintendent and other staff members. The *Unigrid* is the base brochure for IRNP and provides a wealth of information on several of the park’s interpretive themes. The brochure features photos of the island and its wildlife and offers a detailed map of Isle Royale, showing hiking trails, ferry routes, campgrounds, and visitor centers (Isle Royale, Maps & Brochures, n.d.). The Windigo Area Guide brochure is available online and at the Windigo and Rock Harbor Visitor Centers. This handout discusses the WCC and Washington Club histories, along with the construction of the Rock of Ages Lighthouse. It provides information on the nearby moose exclosure, a trail map of the area, and details on short hikes and longer adventures on the Island’s west end. This is the most informative and concise brochure about the Windigo area (Windigo Area Guide, n.d.).

**Windigo Nature Trail**

The Windigo Nature Trail is a self-guided, 1.2 mile trail with numbered posts and a corresponding brochure that visitors can pick up at the Windigo Visitor Center. It allows visitors to interact with the source of interpretation and hike the trail at their own pace, rather than adhering to the schedule and stride of the lead interpreter. The self-guided nature trail pamphlet highlights both natural and cultural resources that visitors experience along the trail (K. Keller, personal communication, March 10, 2017).
Interpretive Audiences & Visitor Profile

People come to Isle Royale for a variety of reasons. Some visit for relaxation and solitude, others come for recreation and socialization. Interpretation works to provide resources for visitors no matter their motivation. At Windigo the nature of the audience drives the interpretive strategies. Park visitors encompass a large variety of groups. People explore the park in many capacities and varying lengths of time. Visitors may come in large groups, partnerships, or individually and stay for as little as a few hours or as much as a few weeks. Visitors of Windigo can be broken into two broad groups based on their length of stay at Windigo, as well as their destination once they leave. These groups are referred to and categorized as Day Visitors and Overnight Visitors (Foundations of Interpretation Curriculum Content Narrative, 2007; K. Keller, personal communication, March 10, 2017).

Day Visitors

Most day visitors arrive on the Sea Hunter III passenger ferry originating from Grand Portage, Minnesota, a journey that lasts approximately 2 hours. Once at Windigo the boat is greeted by Park interpretive rangers and visitors are oriented to Park protocols, including the Leave No Trace policy. Day Visitors spend four hours at Windigo during which they may participate in a one hour long, half mile guided hike and/or two 20-minute interpretive talks, which cater to audience interests and capabilities. Most members from this audience are national park enthusiasts that come to participate in the personal interpretive programs. Others that come with their own agendas for the afternoon will usually attend at least one of the day programs, most commonly the last program offered before visitors board the Sea Hunter III for its return trip (Grand Portage-Isle Royale Transportation Line, Inc., (2010); K. Keller, personal communication, March 10, 2017).

Overnight Visitors

Overnight Visitors at Windigo encompass a few different groups based on the way they interact with the landscape. This audience is comprised of Backpackers, Base
Campers, and Personal Boaters. These groups utilize the amenities at Windigo in different ways to facilitate their varying agendas. Backpackers typically arrive at Windigo on the *Voyageur II*, receive their orientation to the island, and hop back on the boat to continue on to Rock Harbor. From there they hike west, towards Windigo, along the Greenstone or Minong Ridge trails. Once back at Windigo they typically stay a night or two at the Washington Creek campground and take in one of the ranger led interpretive programs before boarding a ferry back to Grand Portage. Base Campers will usually take advantage of the extended 3-night maximum stay at the Washington Creek Campground or reserve one of the two rustic cabins at Windigo. This allows Base Campers to overnight at Windigo while hiking during the day on trails such as the Huginnin Loop, Minong Ridge, and Feldtmann Loop trails. This audience has the most potential for using non-personal interpretive methods such as trail brochures and wayside exhibits. Personal Boaters typically come to Windigo with their own agenda. Some will participate in the short day hikes in the area, while others will stay on their boats and spend their days fishing and relaxing. This audience is the least expected to take in personal interpretive opportunities (K. Keller, personal communication, March 10, 2017).

**Visitation Statistics**

Isle Royale is a seasonal park that operates from May to October annually. Though IRNP is one of the least visited of the national parks, it is reportedly one of the most revisited. The busiest months for Day Visitors at Windigo are from June to August. Some visitors arrive on their own personal boats or seaplanes, though most purchase tickets for the passenger boats or commercial seaplanes that service the park (S. DePasqual, personal communication, February 23, 2017). Visitation statistics for the Windigo area include visitors that arrive by all methods and their lengths of stay. The Washington Creek Campground has a 3-night maximum stay limit and two rustic cabins are also available for rent at Windigo.
Table 7.3 Visitation Statistics for Windigo, 2016 (Isle Royale NP, 2016).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Visitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>1,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>2,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
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<td>August</td>
<td>5,586</td>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>1,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

The park’s interpretive staff excels at implementing multiple methods of personal interpretation for a variety of audiences at Windigo. Their dedication to providing interesting interpretation is impactful on visitor learning and dissemination of park values. Day and Overnight Visitors, new and seasoned visitors, young and old visitors can all participate in some form of interpretation at Windigo. The balance of interpretation of both natural and cultural resources is another topic of consideration at Isle Royale and specifically Windigo. The following chapter will analyze this balance along with an assessment of the interpretive methods utilized in Windigo area.
Chapter 8: Evaluation and Enhancement of Interpretation at Windigo, Isle Royale National Park

This chapter presents an assessment of the current interpretive methods implemented at the Windigo Ranger Station and provides suggestions for enhancement to interpretive programming for the Windigo area. The primary goals of this assessment are to identify current interpretive methods that would likely benefit from additional information about cultural landscape history and the implement new non-personal methods of interpretation. An enhancement of current interpretive strategies, complete with information on landscape occupation and transformation, will ensure that visitors have access to the complete story of Windigo.

The historic Windigo story includes the prominent eras of landscape occupation and transformation covered in Chapters 2-5. Presently, resources and information from the Wendigo Copper Company (WCC) and Washington Club eras are promoted in personal and non-personal methods of interpretation. Isle Royale National Park (IRNP) could implement additional interpretive methods to enhance their narration of the legacies associated with these groups. Interpreting historic and cultural features on the landscape within the Windigo area is vital to the visitor experience because it creates connections between past and present people and the ways of life, attitudes, and personal desires associated with different time periods. Early efforts of the National Park Service (NPS) are mentioned briefly in present interpretive programming, though nothing specifically related to the Windigo Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp or the early efforts of Isle Royale National Park Commission are discussed. Additionally, an absence in information on local Ojibwe presence remains an issue throughout Isle Royale interpretation. These early Park histories should also be interpreted to promote visitor understanding of the complete Windigo narrative.

Interpretation within Wilderness

The NPS interprets cultural resources at Windigo somewhat differently based on their location on the landscape. Implementation of both personal and non-personal
interpretation of cultural resources involves many elements present on the landscape. These include but are not limited to wilderness areas, proximity to current NPS trails, and locations to park infrastructure. Park staff and interpreters can use these factors to their advantage when providing methods of interpretation to visitors.

The United States Congress passed the Wilderness Act in 1964. After a decade of considering possibilities on Isle Royale, the park implemented the Act in 1976, designating 99 percent of the island as wilderness. According to the Wilderness Act, wilderness is a recognized area where the land is undeveloped, retains its primeval character and influence, and exists where man is merely a visitor. Wilderness land is protected and managed in order to retain its natural conditions but may also include significant scientific, educational, historical, ecological, geological, or educational values. Wilderness areas are to be used as public landscapes for scientific, educational, scenic, and recreational purposes. To preserve the natural state of these lands, wilderness areas exclude the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment, and installation of structures, permanent roads, and commercial enterprise (Wilderness Act, 1964; see also Wilderness, n.d.).

Extensive cultural landscapes exist within the greater Windigo area because of their exclusion from continuous landscape transformation by humans. While not without its challenges for interpretation, there are also ample possibilities for interpreting resources within wilderness areas that benefit both the natural surroundings and visitor experience. Interpretive methods utilized within wilderness areas are smaller in scale and include personal methods, such as guided hikes, and non-personal methods such as brochures. Construction and placement of permanent interpretive signage or structure is contested within wilderness areas because wilderness designation discourages installing permanent structure such as buildings and signs. Rather, wilderness areas seek to promote natural appearances and experiences for human visitors, as well as habitats for native species. Nonetheless, interpretation within wilderness areas is important to visitor education for a number of reasons. Wilderness designation does not mean that an area needs to be devoid of cultural resources; however, it does require park managers to be mindful of how they interpret those resources within a wilderness setting. Through
interpretation visitors can learn about why wilderness is important, why IRNP strives to maintain the Island’s wilderness character, and how they can aid in the preservation of these areas (Wilderness, n.d.).

Some of the most significant cultural features in the Windigo area are located in designated wilderness in the periphery of Windigo Ranger Station. The WCC’s extensive wagon roads and diamond drilling stations are resources that have maintained the greatest integrity from this time period. The integrity of this mining landscape is a product of its remoteness within the island interior. Unlike Ghyllbank, the roads, staging camps and drill sites associated with WCC explorations were never repurposed or deliberately transformed and were left alone following abandonment. Today’s wilderness designation ensures that conditions will remain the same indefinitely.

Wilderness designations do not necessarily hinder cultural resources, though they sometimes make human interaction with them more challenging. While the guidelines for operating in these areas may constrain some preservation opportunities, the natural degradation of these resources is oftentimes slower than that of human impact. Cultural resources often benefit from wilderness designations as development is curtailed within them. Given that cultural resource integrity is often favorable within wilderness areas, it would seem that related resources hold great potential for interpretative opportunities. However, many of the Park’s wilderness-based cultural resources remain uninterpreted, especially those in the Windigo area. The interpretation of such features would educate visitors about the vast amount of exploration work that the WCC accomplished in a few short years. Explaining the significance of these features will also help bolster visitor investment and appreciation of Isle Royale history and lasting features.

The remaining historic Wendigo wagon roads are just one component from the WCC era that maintain significance and exhibit potential for further interpretation. Some of these roads have even been incorporated in the NPS trail network. These features could easily be interpreted to visitors because they are accessible and frequently traveled. Further, they create a distinct connection of past and present people through the transformation of human pathways and are features the NPS currently maintains within wilderness areas.
Figure 8.1 Map of Windigo non-wilderness area in relation to historic Wendigo Copper Company features that have been documented by archaeologists.
Though a great majority of IRNP is designated wilderness area, Windigo proper exists outside of the boundary. These non-wilderness areas, such as Windigo, provide important opportunities for involved interpretation methods because they are not constrained by the stipulations of the Wilderness Act. Methods of interpretation such as wayside exhibits and other signage are approved within Windigo proper and can be utilized to a greater extent in effort to provide the best methods of interpretation to visitors whenever possible.

I propose that the NPS should expand non-personal methods of interpretation at Windigo proper and in the broader Windigo area within wilderness boundaries. These assessments and enhancement suggestions are made with a knowledge base that includes: general NPS interpretation strategies and methods; current interpretive methods at Isle Royale; interpreter opinions of specific methods of interpretation at Windigo; future improvement plans for the Windigo area; cultural landscape occupation and transformation history of Windigo; and extensive personal experience with the landscape, interpretation, visitors, and park staff at IRNP. The general outline of the goals and objectives of this proposal is as follows:

**Goals of Interpretation:** (long range general description of desired outcomes)

- Incorporate topics relating to the cultural occupation and transformation of the Windigo landscape into personal interpretive strategies.
- Utilize more non-personal interpretive methods in the Windigo area to promote understanding of cultural resources.

**Objectives of Interpretation:** (short range measurable specific outcomes)

- Create new brochures that interpret the cultural history and resources of the Windigo area, including those located within wilderness along the East Huginnin and Greenstone Ridge trails
- Finalize plans for the Wendigo Wagon exhibit
- Create a new Ghyllbank interpretive walking path
Visitor Experience Goals:

By participating in these proposed forms of non-personal interpretation, visitors should be presented with new or complementary opportunities and experiences that augment those currently implemented at Windigo. If successfully executed these interpretive programs should give the visitors opportunity to:

- Experience a historic multifaceted landscape
- Understand how the landscape was used and transformed, including how each use contributed to its present state
- Explore the history of Windigo at their own pace in multiple methods of their choosing
- Learn about how each historic group utilized the landscape
- Learn about the broad national trends that influenced land use at Windigo
- Compare their personal experience to those that previously lived, worked, and vacationed at Windigo

Indicators of Success:

At this time, there is no proposed method of measuring success; however, an assessment of interpretive effectiveness after each season of implementation could be completed based on interpreter and visitor feedback. Indicators of success are presented below.

- Visitors will have knowledge of three major eras of historic landscape occupation at Windigo
- Visitors will understand the local origins of many Isle Royale places names, e.g. Windigo, Feldtmann, etc.
- Visitors will understand that wilderness designation does not mean devoid of cultural significance and that wilderness management aids in the preservation of cultural resources
The Core of Interpretation

The Windigo Visitor Center is the nexus for the strong and functional interpretation program at Windigo. The facility includes friendly staff, informational exhibits, and numerous printed materials for visitors. Both personal and non-personal methods of interpretation are available for visitors here, though personal forms of interpretation are utilized more often. Windigo’s best methods of interpretation include presentations, guided interpretive hikes, and one-on-one communication between visitors and park staff. Non-personal interpretive methods are also successful at Windigo, though there is plenty room for additional opportunities.

The Windigo Visitor Center is the only location in the Windigo area that houses and disseminates non-personal interpretive materials. This building is best fit for keeping these visitor resources and is also the most advantageous location for non-personal interpretive material. The brochures, trail maps, and pamphlets in the visitor center allows for non-personal interpretive material to be available within a convenient personal environment. Park staff is available to administer information for both forms of interpretation and interactions between park staff and visitors are almost guaranteed in this scenario. Windigo staff is also adept at engaging and connecting with a varied audience. Providing additional forms of non-personal interpretation will further enhance existing personal interpretive programs, since they will appeal to a wider audience and accommodate additional interpretive options for visitors within a personal and informative setting.

Visitor Profile & Experience

The NPS considers multiple audiences during interpretive planning. Target audiences for interpretation at Windigo are categorized as two distinct groups, Day Visitors and Overnight Visitors. Data related to visitor origins, visitor itineraries, and lengths of their stays helps distinguish between these two groups. Overnight Visitors can then be broken down into Backpacker, Base Camper, and Personal Boater groups. These groups are considered as target audiences throughout the evaluation and resulting
suggestions for enhancement. Expanding non-personal interpretive methods at Windigo targets a greater audience, specifically the Overnight Visitors.

Day Visitors benefit from every interpretive opportunity presented to them while they spend their short afternoon on Isle Royale. These visitors come on a two-hour long boat ride from Grand Portage, Minnesota and spend about four hours at Windigo before returning to the mainland. Because a few hours is a very short time to get to know Isle Royale, park interpreters schedule interpretive programs around the boat schedule and cater to those arriving and staying for the day. This does not exclude those that come to Windigo by different means and who ultimately stay longer, rather it prioritizes scheduling around the large groups that come from Minnesota for the day. This group is the target audience for the guided hike and day programs. They also benefit from non-personal methods that they can interact with at their own pace.

Overnight Visitors typically have much different agendas than day visitors, as well as more time to peruse interpretive material. Backpackers and base campers are the target audience for the evening interpretive programs because they stay in Windigo overnight and typically have more time than Day Visitors to take in multiple methods of interpretation. Both of these audiences are also the primary targets for wayside exhibits, as well as brochures that they can take with on their respective hikes. Personal Boaters are the group that is least examined for their interpretive preferences, not only because they vary greatly by the individual, but also because they are least likely to partake in any forms of interpretation by choice. For this reason, interpretive signage along walking paths is the most reliable form of interpretation for boaters.

Visitor center exhibits target all audiences because the visitor center is the core of all forms of interpretation at Windigo. It is safe to assume that the majority of visitors will tour the visitor center while at Windigo and will be introduced to a variety of interpretive methods regardless of their agenda. The Windigo Visitor Center caters to the schedules of visitors as well as their interests as much as possible while providing a welcoming and informative atmosphere.
Table 8.1 Methods of interpretation, target audiences, and cultural histories interpreted at Windigo, Isle Royale National Park.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of Interpretation</th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Eras of Historic Landscape Occupation &amp; Transformation Represented in Current Interpretive Programming</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Day Visitors</td>
<td>Overnight Visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Back-packers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
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<td>Guided Hike</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day Programs</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evenings Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Personal</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment & Enhancement**

This assessment of Windigo interpretation is meant to be constructive rather than critical. Evidence shows that visitors enjoy the interpretive methods offered by Windigo and other IRNP staff. The goal of this assessment is to identify points in the communication of Windigo’s significant cultural resources that might benefit from enhancement and subsequently enrich the interpreted history. The Park’s current interpretive methods are evaluated below for inclusion of historical topics from the major eras of landscape occupation at Windigo and balance between personal and non-personal interpretation methods.
**Personal Methods of Interpretation**

Most parks and interpreters prefer personal methods over non-personal methods of communicating with their audience. There are many good reasons for this. The interpreter can easily assess the success of methods because each staff member makes a physical connection with the audience and personal interaction with park rangers adds to the visitor’s experience and their learning. It is easier to ensure the successful communication of messages through physical interaction, as well as gauge the success of personal interpretive methods. If the message is unclear, the visitor can ask questions directly to the interpreter, whereas a brochure may not offer the answer they seek. Personal interpretation also gives park staff the opportunity to easily evaluate their audiences. Personal methods of interpretation are the strong suit of the Windigo interpretive programming and staff and these methods are highlighted below.

- **Guided Interpretive Hike**

  The guided interpretive hike at Windigo is one of the most informational tours available to visitors. Attendees are typically enthusiastic and engaged in the ranger-led hike that spans a half mile in distance and an hour’s time. This method of interpretation corresponds with Isle Royale’s Interpretive Theme #1: “Isolation is a dynamic force that shapes the face of Isle Royale (Foundation Document, Isle Royale National Park, 2016)”.

  The first stop on the hike is near the Windigo store, on the foundation of the historic Wendigo Copper Company (and later the Washington Club) headquarters building. The first topic covered is “Cultural History Transition,” exploring how all human visitors have been challenged by or have capitalized on Isle Royale’s isolation. A brief discussion of the Wendigo Copper Company’s (WCC) occupation and use of the landscape for mining exploration is presented here. Interpreters use the building foundation, a piece of copper, and a historic photograph of the headquarters building as tangible resources to aid in visitor connection. Audience members learn about WCC history through participation, expert cards, and question and answer techniques. From here the hike continues on while rangers use similar interpretive strategies to discuss wolves and moose, lichen, geology,
and biogeography in context of Isle Royale and Windigo (*Royale Resources, Isle Royale National Park, n.d.*).

Of the five topics covered in the hour-long hike, only one relates to a period of historical cultural significance. Though the topics seem to be imbalanced between natural and cultural resources, the program identifies one of the most prominent historic landscape features still intact at Windigo, the headquarters building footprint. Interpretation of a historic photo of the headquarters building, its foundation, and the history of the Company’s activities in the Windigo area helps the visitor connect the tangible with the intangible resources in a meaningful way. Although successful among visitors, there are a few opportunities for enhancement. For example, there is no discussion of the Washington Club’s transformation of the Windigo landscape or the demise of the headquarters building. By not presenting this material, the interpretive program bypasses an entire historic era of landscape occupation at the footprint location.

**EVALUATION:** 1) The hike highlights one of the most prominent eras of landscape occupation, the WCC. However, the balance between natural and cultural topics is not achieved by this method. 2) Use of tangible resources helps effectively communicate themes relating to the WCC. 3) Ignoring the history of the Washington Club at the first stop of the guided hike is a missed opportunity for interpretive staff to share a significant landscape occupation and transformation story with visitors.

**SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENTS:** 1) Include discussion of the Washington Club’s use of the headquarters building and its demise after presenting the Wendigo Copper Company’s use of this same structure. This would be the best opportunity to introduce the Washington Club, as visitors are at the site and attentively geared toward thinking about historic landscape occupation.

➢ **Day Programs**

Day programs presented at Windigo consist of a collection of four different 20 minute talks by interpretive staff. Two of the four day programs cover historic topics: the creation of IRNP and the construction, operation, and preservation of the Rock of Ages
Lighthouse. The Rock of Ages talk is a topic of local relevance to Windigo and engaging to visitors, as is the narrative of the creation of IRNP. These pre-established talks are repeated for visitors throughout the operating season. Pre-established programs allow interpreters to focus on presentation and interpretive techniques and strategies rather than researching new topics to create new programs (K. Keller, personal communication, March 7, 2017). These programs are one of the most popular interpretive methods for Windigo visitors. Audiences can connect with park interpreters and learn a great deal about natural and cultural topics relating to Windigo in a short amount of time.

**EVALUATION:** 1) The balance between cultural and natural resource topics is achieved. 2) There is easily more room for additional programs but it may contradict the strategy of using a small number or pre-established programs.

**SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENTS:** 1) Use the historic narrative of Windigo to create an additional pre-established program titled “Becoming Windigo: Historic Landscape Occupation and Transformation,” that covers the historic eras of occupation at Windigo. This program would educate visitors on the area’s many historic uses by the North Shore Ojibwe, Wendigo Copper Company, Civilian Conservation Corps, and National Park Service.

➢ **Evening Programs**

Evening programs are 45 minute talks that cover a broad range of Isle Royale topics. These programs allow overnight visitors to delve deeper into park subjects. Most of these presentations are constructed by interpretive staff and are subject to interpreter interests and research. Some of these talks are opportunistic and unplanned, such as those provided by visiting researchers. These individuals cover topics that connect Windigo resources and their background of expertise. Past evening programs include presentations on topics relating to wolves and moose, geology, shipwrecks, a variety of flora and fauna, island bio-geography, fish/fisheries, copper mining, Ojibwe culture, invasive species, and more (K. Keller, personal communication, March 7, 2017).
**EVALUATION:** 1) Because these programs are not pre-established and vary by interpreter preference and expertise, they are much more difficult to evaluate. 2) Due to variations in interpreter interests and knowledge it may not be practical to suggest that someone research and create a program about the cultural history of Windigo unless they are invested in learning about and communicating that narrative. 3) These programs allow for more detailed discussion and question and answer sessions between presenters and visitors.

**SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENTS:** 1) New presentations that address less recognized aspects of Windigo history, including Ojibwe culture and historic presence in the area, the history of the WCC, Washington Club, Rock of Ages Lighthouse construction camp, CCC camp, and early NPS impacts on the landscape would benefit the evening programming. 2) Including programs that explain the origin of the name Windigo/Wendigo may reinforce connections between Ojibwe and Euro-American cultures.

**Non-Personal Methods of Interpretation**

Non-personal interpretive methods are generally the first point of contact between the park and the visitor whether it is the welcoming sign at the entrance of the park, a brochure or exhibit at a Visitor Center, or online pre-arrival material. Windigo interpretive staff have identified the need for additional methods of non-personal interpretation that cater to a range of visitor audiences at Windigo, especially those arriving with their own agenda (K. Keller, personal communication, March 10, 2017). This type of interpretive method has the greatest potential for improvement at Windigo.

- **Visitor Center Exhibits**

Visitor center exhibits border between personal and non-personal interpretation. While the format of these exhibits is non-personal, they exist within a personal interpretive setting. The WCC era is highlighted in the visitor center with mounted historic photos of Ghyllbank, the headquarters building, and the O’Neil family, as well as a permanent exhibit highlighting the Company as a historic occupant of the Windigo
area. The Windigo Visitor Center does not have a formal exhibit plan, but does house a variety of captivating exhibits. Many of these exhibits are place based, focusing on Windigo and the west side of Isle Royale. Permanent exhibits include a shipwreck exhibit focusing on the America and the “Three C’s” at Rock of Ages Reef, i.e. the Cumberland, Henry Chisholm, and the George M. Cox shipwrecks. Other permanent exhibits include the Rock of Ages Lighthouse and the second order Fresnel lens, and the Isle Royale Institute’s ongoing wolf and moose study. Seasonal exhibits that vary by the year promote park events and current research, and a seasonal phenology board highlights what visitors can expect to see at appropriate times of year.

EVALUATION: 1) Windigo Visitor Center exhibits focus heavily on topics related to the Windigo area. Cultural topics are well represented by these exhibits and allow visitors to learn more about the resources on the west end of the island in an intriguing manner. 2) Cultural topics covered by visitor center exhibits include Rock of Ages Lighthouse, local shipwrecks, and the WCC. 3) There is an apparent absence of representation of Ojibwe, Washington Club, and CCC presence in visitor center exhibits.

SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENT: 1) Including exhibits that focus on historic landscape occupation or the transformation of the Windigo landscape before and after the WCC would also be beneficial to visitor knowledge. Depicting the evolution of the landscape in an exhibit would be a good introduction to motivate visitors to explore the current Windigo landscape and partake in the guided hike or grab a brochure and walk the Windigo Nature Trail. 2) Connecting natural and cultural resources within the Windigo area would also bridge the gap that exists between nature and culture.

Brochures

Brochures relating to Windigo and island history are readily found at all three visitor centers. Brochures such as the Isle Royale Unigrid, Isle Royale National Park Lighthouses, Windigo and Rock Harbor Area Guides, and the Greenstone (Park newspaper) all disseminate general Isle Royale information to Park visitors (Isle Royale, Maps & Brochures, n.d.). The Windigo Area Guide (Isle Royale National Park, n.d.) is a
double sided 11x14” brochure that provides a brief description of the WCC and Washington Club’s previous occupation of the landscape, as well as an overview of the Rock of Ages Lighthouse. This may be one of the few places that both histories are discussed in the same non-personal format. On the backside is a map of the greater Windigo area, including the Huginnin Loop Trail and other short day hikes. The Windigo Area Guide is a popular brochure among visitors because it provides details on short hikes in the area, a map, and short descriptions of nearby histories. This brochure does the best job among others at informing visitors of cultural histories of the Windigo area through non-personal interpretation. General brochures such as the Windigo Area Guide also have their limitations, as they provide only snippets of information on a number of topics.

Another brochure that corresponds with the Windigo area concerns the Windigo Nature Trail (Isle Royale National Park, 2014). This document links interesting landscape features to numbered posts along the Windigo Nature Trail. Eleven markers and corresponding entries on the brochure communicate evidence of change at Windigo. The first entry on the brochure is titled “Members Only,” and features a photo of the old clubhouse building and a description of what the people and landscape would have been like at Windigo during the Washington Club era. This description greatly resembles that of the Windigo Area Guide. Entry number 3 on the nature trail brochure titled “Copper Fever” encourages visitors to contemplate a large mound and related costean, pairing these mining features with a brief overview of the WCC and their activities in the area.

The subject-specific nature of this brochure, paired with the numbered posts, interprets landscape features to visitors efficiently. Because visitors are hiking and eager to get to the next stop on the trail it makes sense that the entries in the brochure would be brief. The location of the Windigo Nature Trail easily corresponds with the landscape occupation of the WCC and Washington Club. If visitors were to take the nature trail all the way down to the waterfront they would pass the location of the first Windigo Visitor Center. This would be an excellent location to communicate the early NPS influence on Isle Royale as well as describe the CCC contribution to their efforts to create IRNP. The Windigo Nature Trail also provides an excellent opportunity to familiarize visitors with
local Ojibwe culture. Additions to the current brochure or a separate one could include descriptions of common plant species on the trail, including historic Ojibwe names and uses for them.

Additional areas that might benefit from brochure interpretation are located within wilderness boundaries. The remains of WCC coring stations exist along the East Huginnin and Greenstone Ridge trails, which are frequented by hikers and Windigo visitors. Options for interpretation within wilderness are more limited but the integrity of the cultural resources associated with the Wendigo exploration camp and drill sites is much greater than those found at Windigo proper. Non-personal methods of interpretation that work along with the guidelines of wilderness areas should be utilized in ways that represent the significant impact that the WCC had on the landscape while maintaining an undisrupted wilderness experience for visitors. Related archaeological features are not interpreted; brochures available at the Windigo Visitor Center for hikers to take with them would provide information on the significance of the WCC and their exploratory efforts for copper in the Windigo periphery.

**EVALUATION:** 1) Brochures are an effective way to interpret the history and resources of Windigo in a non-personal fashion. Many of the general park brochures are effective based on their scope. Brochures are a lightweight and packable source of information for island backpackers as well as relatively inexpensive to produce and easy to change. 2) The Windigo Area Guide is well balanced with information but provides only a brief introduction to the WCC and Washington Club histories. 3) The Windigo Nature Trail brochure covers the same historic topics as the Windigo Area Guide with added historical interpretation but with only slightly more detail. 4) Both documents do not leave much room to expand on the narrative histories of these two occupancies or expand to include information on the Ojibwe presence, CCC camp and early NPS influence at Windigo. Because these are so brief, more detailed interpretation of another format should be provided. 5) Wendigo Copper Company (WCC) mining exploration features along the East Huginnin and Greenstone Ridge trails should be interpreted for Backpacker and Base Camper audiences.
**SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENTS:** 1) Integrate the early NPS/CCC narratives into the Windigo Nature Trail and corresponding brochure to cover all facets of the historic landscape occupation and transformation stories of Windigo. Also consider adding information about Ojibwe names and uses for common plant species along the trail. 2) A single informational pamphlet or multiple brochures on each historic era could be created and made available at the visitor center to cover the broader and more detailed narratives of each era of landscape occupation and transformation. The target audience for these pamphlets or brochures would be visitors that want to learn more about these groups and their impacts after they have read the Windigo Area Guide or hiked and learned about them briefly on the Windigo Nature Trail. 3) Creating a brochure for the East Huginnin and Greenstone Ridge trails that interprets significant cultural features relating to the WCC would benefit Backpacker, Base Camper and Overnight visitor audiences. The brochure should include information on the company, diamond drilling processes, costean purpose and creation, along with a map of the trail and landscape features.

**Interpretation Signs**

Interpretive signage is one of the primary methods of non-personal interpretation used by the NPS. Several different types of signage exist and each has their most appropriate setting for interpretation based on location and target audience. Identification signs and wayside exhibits have specific relevance at Isle Royale and Windigo. Signage has great potential for enhancement because it is the most under-utilized method of interpretation at Windigo (Signs, 1998).

- **Identification Signs**

  Identification signs are the least common interpretive resource at Windigo. Perhaps this is because simple signs work to call attention to features around them, rather than providing detailed interpretation of the feature. Another reason could be the often prohibitive cost of creating signs. While this may be the case, visitors of the Windigo area could still benefit from further implementation of simple identification signs. One
example of an identification sign at Windigo that is particularly prominent is the large welcoming sign directly off the ferry dock. The sign reads “Windigo” and is lined with moose sheds; it is the first sign read by Day Visitors. This sign is the most common to appear in visitor photos, attesting to its popularity. A separate example is an identification sign along the East Huginnin Trail that draws attention to one of the many WCC exploration sites. The post-style sign resembles those that mark trails and trail lengths at hiking path junctions and reads “Wendigo Mine 1890-1892.” No additional information is provided. The sign is located within designated wilderness, ostensibly riding on precedent set by the trail markers. Regardless, it directs visitor attention to some of the most significant remaining features from the WCC era.

**EVALUATION:** 1) Simple identification signs are minimally used in the immediate Windigo area. Multiple locations at Windigo proper would benefit from increased identification signs. This type of simple signage would help identify unmarked interpretive areas, notify visitors of features, and when paired with a map, help orient themselves on the landscape. 2) The “Wendigo Mines” sign successfully identifies a historic area and features to hikers in the subtlest way possible for a sign. However, it’s placement within wilderness is potentially problematic and similar markers are not advisable. Besides, much more information could be provided within a brochure. Additionally, this sign is somewhat misleading due to the fact that the WCC never produced a formal mine; only exploration efforts.

**SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENT:** 1) Implement simple identification signs within Windigo proper at the beginning of the Windigo Nature Trail, moose exclosure, and headquarters building foundation to help visitors locate the starting point for the self-guided hike. 2) Keep the placement of the non-obstructive “Wendigo Mines” sign and pair the location of the sign with a brochure that interprets the site in greater detail. Include a disclaimer that explains that the company did not commence formal mining.
Wayside Exhibits

Three low-profile wayside exhibits at Windigo account for most of the interpretive signage on the west side of the island. While the signs at Windigo are low-profile wayside exhibits, they do not provide interpretation as the NPS generally intends for this type of sign. Low-profile wayside exhibits are usually designed to direct visitor attention to specific landscape features or resources. This is not the case with the wayside exhibits at Windigo. The three wayside exhibits interpret topics closely related to Windigo (Windigo “Then and Now”, wolf and moose, and the America shipwreck) but do not correspond with or direct attention to related landscape features (K. Keller, personal communication, March 10, 2017). These low-profile waysides function more as stand-alone interpretive signs or upright wayside exhibits. Upright waysides do not direct a visitor’s attention to a landscape feature or resource as low-profile waysides do, but rather they introduce a new area for visitors and possible options for exploring the landscape. According to Harpers Ferry Center (2009), upright wayside exhibits balance site orientation and significance information to acquaint visitors with their expected experience. Wayside exhibits should typically be utilized in accordance to their type, low-profile or upright. Because the interpretive staff prefer low-profile waysides, the focus should be to use this type correctly; paired with landscape features whenever possible.

One of the last remaining physical remnants of the WCC era is an undercarriage for a wagon used on the roads constructed by the Company. This artifact was once featured in the old Company headquarters area where visitors could view it on the level grass. After becoming a nuisance to grounds keepers, the wagon was removed out of visitor view. In 2015, Park Interpreter Lucas Westcott and Cultural Resource Manager Seth DePasqual received a small grant for construction of an outdoor pavilion to shelter the wagon. The pavilion has yet to be constructed, but when this happens, a low-profile wayside exhibit would be the best method for interpreting this artifact. A wayside exhibit paired with the Wendigo wagon undercarriage would present information on the WCC and their wagon roads that the NPS now utilizes in their trail system. Thus, the
significance of the Company would be highlighted through interpretation of this tangible resource.

With exception to the headquarters building foundation, the majority of the Ghyllbank townsite area is overgrown and uninterpreted. A self-guided walking path through the Ghyllbank townsite would allow visitors to walk through the historic exploration camp and learn about specific people, events, and life at Windigo during the early 1890s. The Washington Club’s occupation of Ghyllbank could be examined as well. When placed along a trail, wayside exhibits can interpret features similar to that of a brochure keyed to numbered posts. Moreover, wayside exhibits are advantageous when used in non-wilderness settings and are well-suited for interpretation of historic Ghyllbank features such as building footprints, drainage systems, the well, and areas that have been tested archaeologically and yielded interesting results. Topics of the wayside panels could include information on the company, specific people that lived at Ghyllbank, recreation on the landscape, subsurface remnants of Ghyllbank/archaeology, and others. This trail would be accessible to all audience types and requires no additional materials for visitors. Unlike that of the Windigo Nature Trail, the terrain of the Ghyllbank interpretive walking path would be predominantly flat so that visitors with mobility limitations would be able to take advantage of this short interpretive trail with minimal issues.

**EVALUATION:** 1) Current low-profile wayside exhibits at Windigo do not meet their intended interpretive guidelines because they are not paired with immediate landscape features and resources to which visitor attention can be directed. 2) Though a costly option, creating new low-profile wayside exhibits that correspond with a Ghyllbank walking path would draw attention to distinct landscape features and resources that are currently uninterpreted to Windigo visitors.

**SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENT:** 1) Utilize low-profile wayside exhibits in ways that follow their intended use; in front of landscape features and tangible resources. 2) Move current wayside exhibits to locations and features that correspond with their topics; e.g. Place moose/wolf panel near the moose exclosure, relocate *America* wayside
closer to the shipwreck site on Barnum or Washington Island, and Windigo “Then and Now” exhibit within the Ghyllbank landscape. 3) Create new low-profile wayside exhibits that interpret Ghyllbank landscape features at locations such as historic building footprints, historic landscape features, or significant archaeological areas. These new exhibits could work together to interpret Ghyllbank landscape features to visitors along a path that guides them through the historic post-industrial townsite.

The proposed additions to the personal and non-personal methods of interpretation at Windigo should be used to guide further development of interpretive programming in the Windigo area. The groups that occupied the landscape had a great impact on not only the Windigo landscape, but other parts of the island as well, which contributed greatly to the legacy of Isle Royale. The area now known as Windigo attracted people with different backgrounds, interests, and intentions and continues to do so today. The main purpose of these evaluations and suggestions for enhancement is to demonstrate to visitors the importance and significance of the different eras of landscape occupation and use in the Windigo area, while catering to diverse audiences. These additions aim to create a foundation for future non-personal interpretive strategies at Windigo.

**Concluding Remarks**

This thesis addressed a variety of topics, including the creation of a more complete landscape narrative of Windigo and the evaluation and presentation of ways to enhance interpretation of cultural resources in the area. The research is intended to be useful to many different groups. Park interpretive staff can use this information to create new interpretive strategies and resources that highlight prominent features that currently receive little to no attention. Park Cultural Resource staff benefit from this work because it has compiled sometimes fragmented pieces of Windigo history into one complete narrative. As a result, this fuller narrative can facilitate a better understanding of the groups that influenced the landscape, how their decisions affect how we might view the
landscape today, and how lasting cultural features retain integrity and significance from past eras. The document also provides information on the location of historic buildings and landscape features that contribute to the grand narrative of Windigo. Such information is useful to park managers when developing plans for new landscape transformations undertaken by the NPS. Visitors of Isle Royale also benefit greatly from this work because its primary purpose is to enhance opportunities for interpretation that promote Windigo’s history and how it contributes to larger narratives at local, regional and national levels.

Research questions presented in Chapter 1 can now be answered with a better understanding of Windigo history, general NPS interpretation, and evaluations on interpretation at Windigo.

- What landscape transformations are visible on the contemporary Ghyllbank townsite?
- What cultural remnants of the three eras of historic landscape occupation are well suited for public interpretation for Windigo visitors?

Evidence from early landscape transformations is still present and visible on the Windigo landscape. Surface features such as the foundation of the headquarters building, historic well, drainage ditches, privy associated with the northernmost Ghyllbank residence, wagon road corridors, and others present physical evidence of lasting impacts on the landscape. Subsurface features also have great potential to yield further information on the history of Windigo. The 2016 Ghyllbank Townsite Survey contributed to this knowledge and further archaeological investigation would work to enhance knowledge gained from this type of work.

Cultural remnants from the WCC and Washington Club eras should be of primary focus for interpretation at Windigo. At Windigo proper these primarily include features that were constructed by the WCC and were reused by the Washington Club, i.e. Company headquarters foundation, upper road feature, historic Ghyllbank well, etc. Within wilderness, features related to the Company’s diamond drilling efforts along the Greenstone Ridge and East Huginnin Cove trails are the most intact and as such are well-suited for interpretation.
The National Park Service’s commitment to preserving and interpreting the legacy of Windigo is evident with the existence of lasting landscape features, recorded memories, and formal interpretation of related cultural resources. The best way to ensure that this legacy endures is the continual communication of the stories to visitors that are invested in the story of Windigo and how it contributes to the grand narrative of Isle Royale, Michigan, and within regional and national contexts.
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Appendix A: Examples for Enhanced Non-Personal Interpretation at Windigo

Previous chapters discussed the existing interpretive methods at Windigo, along with areas for improvement for those concerning historic narrative. Enhancing existing interpretive methods to include narratives of the Wendigo Copper Company (WCC), Washington Club, and early park construction contributions by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) would be beneficial to Windigo interpretive programming and require minimal planning efforts and funding. Enhancements of more extensive methods of interpretation are also possible, such as creating new interpretive materials that highlight the cultural landscape of Windigo. These options merit additional discussion and planning to interpret historic narratives and features to visitors that expand existing methods of non-personal interpretation of cultural resources at Windigo proper and within adjacent wilderness.

Overview of New Suggested Interpretation

Discussion of suggested expansion of non-personal interpretation focuses on prominent cultural resources; including stories and archaeological resources that visitor can make connections with. Examples of expanded non-personal interpretation are presented in this chapter as concepts for new brochures and a walking path. These concepts are informed by Isle Royale interpretive themes, discussions with IRNP interpretive staff, and time spent on the landscape studying cultural features in the Windigo area. The goal of these concepts for is to enhance the non-personal interpretation at Windigo while allowing visitors of all audience types to discover the history of the area. These concepts should be viewed as examples for consideration when planning new interpretation at Windigo.

Brochures

As discussed in previous chapters, Chapters 6-8 presented brochures as one of the most effective methods of non-personal interpretation due in part because they cater to all audiences and provide detail beyond that learned from personal interpretation methods
alone. Brochures devoted to the three main eras of landscape occupation and transformation at Windigo would provide added detail about the varied landscape history. Visitors could pick up one or all brochures about the historic occupation based on their personal interests, may it be copper mining or early NPS involvement on Isle Royale. Those interested in the cultural features along the hiking trails would also benefit from brochures that provide information and maps on the different features they can see during their time at Windigo. A series of brochures about the history of Windigo and interesting features nearby would provide visitors with information that they can process at their own pace, be it at their campsite, on the trail, or on the boat back to the mainland. Unlike static wayside exhibits, brochures can be modified at any time at minimal cost. Brochures are also conducive to use in wilderness as they require no permanent displays or signage that might conflict with the surrounding landscape.

What follows is a select group of brochure concepts that highlight Windigo area histories bracketed between arrival of Wendigo Copper Company and the creation of Isle Royale National Park By no means is this a conclusive history of Windigo. Many other brochure concepts are possible and I have made additional recommendations at the conclusion of this chapter for consideration among Park staff. For the purpose of discussion, I have presented brochure concepts that cover the histories that have been investigated through recent archaeological and archival research.

Outline of New Suggested Brochure Concepts:

- Historic Eras of Windigo Brochures
  - Wendigo Copper Company
  - The Washington Club
  - Civilian Conservation Corps & National Park Service
  - Wendigo Copper Company Place Names on Isle Royale
- Trail Companion Brochures
  - East Huginnin Trail: Wendigo Copper Company Exploration Efforts
  - Greenstone Ridge Trail: Diamond Drilling Technology
Wendigo Copper Company Brochure Concept

The Wendigo Copper Company brochure would provide visitors with an overview of the history of the company, including the two settlements of Ghyllbank and Wendigo, exploration activities, and maps that illustrate how the company transformed the landscape. Its purpose is to inform visitors about the origins of the Wendigo Copper Company, the employees, and the Company’s accomplishments. This overview brochure could be paired with two trail companion brochures that interpret Wendigo Copper Company features along the East Huginnin and Greenstone Ridge Trails, as well as two separate brochures that cover the Washington Club and Early NPS & CCC eras.
Figure A.1 Front, back, and inside panels of the Wendigo Copper Company brochure.

**Exploration Methods**

Brief explanation on how the Wendigo Copper Company conducted exploration efforts for copper.

- Costeans: an English term (WCC was an English syndicate) for prospecting for copper with deep linear trenches. This method of exploration was used first by the company before switching to diamond drilling.
- Diamond Core Drilling: The company embraced the new technology of the Dauntless Diamond Drill that produced core samples. The Wendigo Co. was the only mining company on Isle Royale to use this scale of technology. It greatly reduced the amount of time spent searching for a viable copper deposit to mine.

**Landscape Transformation**

Discussion of Landscape Transformation by the Wendigo Copper Company:

- Creation of two settlements
- Impact and creation of landscape features such as costeans and drill holes
- Remnants of infrastructure and roads
- Reuse and further transformation of the Ghyllbank townsite

Include contemporary photographs of Wendigo Copper Company features present on the landscape, such as costeans, drill shacks, etc.
**Wendigo Copper Company**

A broad overview of the Wendigo Copper Company:
- Last effort of historic mining on Isle Royale
- Discussion of its principal owner, the Isle Royale Land Corporation,
- Specific locations of exploratory mine workings,
- Company officials such as mine engineers, superintendents, stockholders, etc.
- Demise

**Ghyllbank Townsite**

Over 100 people lived at Ghyllbank, what is now present day Windigo. Could you imagine living here year round? Shipments of food and supplies came before the wintertime and lasted the isolated town until spring.

**Wendigo Camp**

Most miners and their families lived farther into the interior of the island, away from the main wharf town of Ghyllbank. The Wendigo camp was a much smaller settlement that consisted of small cabins for workers. Workers living at Wendigo were much closer to the many work sites and coring stations. Ghyllbank residents would often walk the wagon roads that connected the two settlements to visit friends at the nearby camp. Richard O’Neil and his family lived at Wendigo. They are commonly depicted in historic photos in front of their cabin and mining features.

**Elements to include:**
- Description of Ghyllbank
- Narratives of specific people at Ghyllbank from accounts of Doctor Scott, May Gray, Jacob Houghton, and others.
- Events such as Thanksgiving and Christmas and the celebrations
- Day to day activities of the women and children.
The Washington Club Brochure Concept

The Washington Club brochure follows the same format as the Wendigo Copper Company brochure with added emphasis on landscape transformation from the Wendigo Copper Company era to the Washington Club era. It focuses on the foundation of the Club, their motivations, landscape changes imparted by their activities and the construction of the Rock of Ages Lighthouse. This brochure presents detailed information within the basic narrative of the Washington Club’s 50 year impact on the Windigo landscape for all visitor types. Rock of Ages Lighthouse construction is a primary component of Windigo history that could be presented in a separate brochure altogether. For the purposes of this discussion the lighthouse construction also fits in with the Washington Club’s occupation of the landscape. This brochure can either stand alone or be viewed as part of the trilogy of history brochures along with the Wendigo Copper Company brochure and Early NPS & CCC brochure.
Landscape Transformation

Many of the Wendigo Copper Company buildings were initially reused. The headquarters building became the main clubhouse and many of the smaller buildings were repurposed. The Washington Club also constructed their own buildings, such as the guesthouse near the clubhouse building.

In the winter of 1935 a fire consumed the Clubhouse. By this time many of the smaller buildings constructed by the Wendigo Co. were already gone, leaving only the messhall and barn from the Wendigo Era. Unfortunately, many of the Wendigo Copper Company records and possibly Washington Club records remained in the headquarters building when it burned.

The Wendigo landscape was vacant for a decade before the Washington Club purchased and repurposed the Ghyllbank townsite. The Club gradually changed the landscape over the 35 years they occupied it.

The Washington Club may not have constructed as much as the Wendigo Co. did, but they impacted the landscape greatly. The demolition of Wendigo Co. buildings and creation of a well manicured wilderness landscape changed the landscape greatly and impacted the physical remnants left behind on the land by the Wendigo Copper Company.
The Washington Club

In 1902, some of Duluth’s most influential businessmen established the Washington Club at the Ghyllbank townsite. Ghyllbank held all the main attractions that a sportsmen’s club might offer and the location was rich with potential surrounded by premier wilderness land for hunting and fishing. Twenty gentlemen invested $300 each to purchase the old Ghyllbank structures from the Isle Royale Land Corporation, as well as seventy acres of land along Washington Creek. Private membership at the Washington Club cost men approximately $100 in annual dues, along with $1 per year lease of the trout streams. Separately, the Club maintained a 99 year lease for exclusive use of Wendigo (Windigo) Creek, which was stocked with trout by the Michigan Conservation Department (Karamanli & Zeitlin, 1968; Notes from ISRO archives).

Rock of Ages Lighthouse Construction

The Rock of Ages reef, five miles off the northwest end of Isle Royale, caused great danger to many large vessels navigating the shipping lane between Duluth and Port Arthur, Ontario. A number of ships wrecked near Rock of Ages and the Lighthouse Board recommended a lighthouse at the reef though sufficient funding was not appropriated until 1905.

In May of 1907 the construction of the Rock of Ages Lighthouse commenced at Washington Harbor. The Lighthouse Board leased portions of the Washington Club in order to house the workers and maintain a staging area for the project, as well as complete the first portion of the crib (Tinkham, 1963). The Club maintained use of their Clubhouse while the buildings farther north on the site were used by the Lighthouse crew. The lighthouse construction crew consisted of thirty to fifty people depending on the projects and tasks, so many lived in other buildings at the Club grounds. This staging area was also used to store building materials, tools, and supplies. The total construction cost of the Rock of Ages Lighthouse was $125,000 and work was complete by 1908.

Women were only allowed at the Washington Club with advance permission by all board members. This rare occasion of women, most likely wives, on the porch of the clubhouse was photographed prior to the destruction of the clubhouse in 1933.
Early National Park Service & Civilian Conservation Corps Brochure Concept

The Early NPS & CCC brochure follows a format similar to those already presented with specific focus on the formation of the Isle Royale National Park Commission, their motivations, and the creation of Isle Royale National Park. Contributions from the Civilian Conservation Corps and the construction of Camp Windigo also provide information on the final stage of historic landscape transformation and continued changes are included in this brochure. This information can inform visitors that are interested in this era specifically or be paired with the Wendigo Copper Company and Washington Club brochures.
Figure A.5 Front, back, and inside panels of the Early NPS and CCC brochure.
Creating Isle Royale National Park

Isle Royale National Park Commission

- Efforts of the IRNP Commission
- Who was part of the Commission
- Others that advocated for IRNP
- Process of purchasing land (life leases, concession agreements, purchase)
- Help from the CCC

The Isle Royale National Park Commission purchased the Washington Club and began transforming the landscape yet again in 1939. New docks replaced old and unkempt ones and dilapidated structures left from the Wendigo Copper Company days were torn down to make room for new. These projects and more would not have been possible without the involvement of the CCC at Camp Windigo.

Civilian Conservation Corps

- Details of Camp Windigo
- Specific projects of Camp Windigo
- Layout of "Tiny Town"
- Social life and education

Camp Windigo was the last temporary CCC camp built on Isle Royale in 1939. At Winidgo the CCC constructed their site commonly referred to as "Tiny Town," north of the Ghyllbank wharf site and Washington Club. Barracks, recreation halls, a library and other buildings made up most the camp complex and a portion of the old Wendigo Wagon road served as a path from the docks at Washington Harbor to Tiny Town. Camp Windigo's primary function was to improve visitor amenities. Previously the Washington Club structures, the CCC combined the old servants' quarters with new construction to create the Windigo Inn. The project lasted three months and the Windigo Inn was open to visitor use in August of 1940. Without the help of the CCC, Isle Royale National Park would not have prospered as it did when it opened in 1940.
Place Names from the Wendigo Copper Company Brochure Concept

The Place Names from the Wendigo Copper Company brochure concept highlights the legacy of the company through commonly known place names dotted around Isle Royale. Historic and contemporary photos aid visitor connection with the popular places on the island. Elements of this brochure reflect the impacts the WCC and associated individuals had on Isle Royale and include maps, historic photos, and descriptions of the specific people these places were named for. This brochure would prove interesting to varied audiences and has applicability island-wide as it concerns places beyond Windigo vicinity.
Figure A.7 Front, back, and inside panels of Isle Royale Place Names from the Wendigo Copper Company brochure.
The Legacy of the Wendigo Copper Company

Have you ever wondered how the places on Isle Royale got their names? Origins of place names can tell us a lot about the people that lived there or important individuals. The Wendigo Copper Company was a major influence on Isle Royale. Many places were named for men that worked for the copper company and impacted the island in many ways.

Wendigo/Windigo
(Wendigo Copper Company, Windigo Ranger Station)

The wendigo is an evil spirit from Ojibwe folklore that appears as a beast with human characteristics, or sometimes a human that has been possessed. The wendigo is associated with cold northern winters, cannibalism, murder, famine, and starvation. Wendigo Copper Company named their company after this beast and endeavored on last attempt at mining on Isle Royale from 1889-1892. Civilian Conservation Corp Camp Windigo also helped with the creation of the National Park.

Feldtmann
(Feldtmann Ridge, Feldtmann Lake, Feldtmann Ridge Trail)

George H. Feldtmann of Liverpool, England was the second president of the Isle Royale Land Corporation. The Wendigo Copper Company was a subsidiary of this corporation that owned 84,000 acres of Isle Royale in 1890.

Houghton
(Point Houghton, Houghton Ridge)

Named for Jacob Houghton, brother of State Geologist Douglas Houghton and mining engineer for the Wendigo Copper Company.

Hay (Hay Bay, Point Hay)

Alexander H. Hay was the secretary of the Isle Royale Land Corporation (principal company of the Wendigo Co.).
East Huginnin Cove Trail Brochure Concept

The concept for the East Huginnin Cove Trail brochure focuses on prominent Wendigo Copper Company mining features found in proximity to the trail, much of which traces the old company road bed. The front panel of the brochure features a photo of a Wendigo Copper Company drilling operation. The back panel focuses on diamond drilling technology as it was utilized by the Wendigo Copper Company on the landscape near the East Huginnin Trail. A map showcases varied mining features including: two diamond drilling station locations, an exploration area with numerous costeans, and features found in the vicinity of the erroneous “Wendigo Mines” sign post. This prominent visual helps visitors understand the scale of the Wendigo Copper Company’s exploration work as they encounter historic features along the East Huginnin Trail. This brochure is targeted for Base Campers and Backpackers but would be informational for Day Visitors and Personal Boaters as well. The goal of this brochure is not only to inform visitors, but also prompt them to explore these significant areas without having to wander far from the main trail.
Did you know that when the Wendigo Copper Company began utilizing diamond drills for their copper exploration efforts that it was cutting edge technology? No one had used such innovative efforts for mining on Isle Royale. The stockholders of the company believed that the time saved by drilling core samples instead of digging deep trenches (costeans) in search of copper would lead to a substantial source more quickly. Unfortunately that never happened. However, core samples garnered extensive information on the geology of the island and allowed geologists to study Isle Royale geology in much more depth. Had the Wendigo Copper Company not utilized these diamond drilling efforts, we would know much less about the ge-

Figure A.9 Front and back panels of the East Huginnin Cove Trail brochure.
The East Huginnin Trail is a favorite among many hikers on Isle Royale. It was also a favored area by the Wendigo Copper Company for their exploration efforts. On the East Huginnin Trail are many prime examples of mining features remaining on the landscape from over 100 years ago. Much of the current hiking trail was once used as wagon roads by the mining company to move their equipment with horse drawn wagons. Along the trail and not too far from it are multiple examples of exploratory tunnels and adits dug in search of copper! A drill shack with a stand pipe sits directly off trail and is a fine site to see.

Just remember to employee Leave No Trace practices while visiting these historic refining features to ensure that they endure as long as possible for generations to come!

Figure A.10 Inside panels of the East Huginnin Trail brochure
Greenstone Ridge Trail & Wendigo Copper Company Coring Station Brochure Concept

The Greenstone Ridge Trail & Wendigo Copper Company Coring Station brochure is in keeping with the East Huginnin Trail brochure in that it includes basic information on how to locate one of the Wendigo Copper Company diamond drilling stations and describes the nature of their work in the area. This brochure also describes in great detail the technology of diamond drilling as utilized by the company. The brochure map labels relevant landmarks to help visitors visualize their place on the landscape and gives a general description on how to locate the drilling station while allowing visitors to explore the area on their own. This brochure targets Base Campers, Backpackers, and Day Visitors primarily because of its close proximity to Windigo proper. The diamond drilling information would likely be interesting to varied audiences, including those not able to visit coring stations during their visit.
Diamond Drilling Technology

During the winter of 1891-1892, after unsatisfactory results from the initial exploration efforts through costeaming and drift mining, Wendigo Co. Superintendent Samuel S. Robinson suggested that diamond drills be employed to provide a more labor efficient and technologically advanced investigation of the mineral content. The company investors agreed to Robinson’s proposition and subsequently purchased two Bullock-brand diamond drills, which were in operation by mid-July 1891 (Newett, 1897). During this time, diamond core drilling was a relatively new technology. The first diamond drill was patented only 25 years earlier in 1867 by M.C. Bullock. It was steam driven and had been tested in Pennsylvania coal mines. These diamond drills consisted of three essential parts: the feed, the hoisting apparatus, and the engines. The Bullock “Dauntless” Drill that was utilized by the Wendigo Copper Company had a positive differential feed that was tooth-gear ed (Denny, 1900). The “Dauntless” style drill made by multiple companies proved to be a popular drill for hardrock mining during this time period.

Figure A.11 Front and back panels for the Greenstone Ridge & Wendigo Copper Company Coring Station brochure.
Wendigo Copper Co. Diamond Drilling Core Stations

The Wendigo Copper Company had a total of 16 core stations in which they operated their Dauntless Diamond Drills. The core samples from these drills contained valuable information on the geology of the area. This information not only benefitted the mining company, but those studying the island’s geology. Much more is known about Isle Royale geography because of the drilling efforts of the Wendigo Copper Company.

Locating Wendigo Core Station No. II
Follow the Greenstone Ridge Trail from Windigo approximately 1 1/2 miles. Wendigo Copper Company coring station II is located just 75 meters north of the trail. Nestled within a small depression is a low metal pipe with two supports on either side. This is where the Wendigo Copper Company set up their rigs for drilling core samples.

Figure A.12 Inside panel of Greenstone Ridge Trail & Wendigo Copper Company Coring Station brochure.
Additional Brochure Concepts

The following list provides an array of additional brochure topics not covered in depth by this chapter and beyond the scope of this thesis. These ideas cover uninterpreted narratives and smaller stories that contribute to the broad heritage of Windigo and should be considered when expanding the suite of brochures provided at the Windigo Visitor Center. Information for each concept can be collected from numerous park narratives and archival records at the IRNP Archives.

- Origins of Windigo: Ojibwe Occupation and Lore on Western Isle Royale
- Traditional Ojibwe Plant Use on Isle Royale
- Commercial Fishing on the West End of Isle Royale
- Wagons in Wilderness: How the NPS turned historic roads into current trails
- Recreational Pioneers: Commercial Resorts of Washington Harbor
- John F. Johns: Cousin Jack of all Trades in Mining, Fishing, and Resorts

Summary of Brochure Concepts

These sample brochure concepts serve as ideas for expanded non-personal interpretation of significant cultural resources that are modestly interpreted at present. Elements incorporated in these brochures include information, maps and photographs that appeal to all types of visitors. The goal of these concepts is to provide engaging information for multiple audiences, whether they are visiting for the day and taking brochures with them to read later, or backpackers that will utilize them to learn more about the area as they explore on their own. These brochure concepts would meet this goal if implemented and made available at the Windigo Visitor Center.

Ghyllbank Walking Path Concept

Interpretive trails are another method of non-personal interpretation within the National Park Service. The Windigo Nature Trail has proven to be popular among visitors of Isle Royale thus, a similar type of trail through the historic Ghyllbank townsite may be equally successful. The Ghyllbank Walking Path concept presents historical and archaeological knowledge of the WCC as it relates to the Company’s wharf settlement. This interpretive walking path could utilize wayside exhibits to present historical
information accessible to all visitor types. The purpose of the Ghyllbank Walking Path concept is to introduce visitors to the industrial community of Ghyllbank in a way that allows them to digest the presented information at their own pace.

The route of the Ghyllbank Walking Path concept is informed by discussions with Windigo lead interpreter, Valerie Martin, and Cultural Resource Manager Seth DePasqual. Considerations involved in creating this walking path concept included providing an attractive “loop style” trail and avoiding undesirable locations on the Ghyllbank landscape; including the NPS fuel farm and a naturally marshy area. The path’s structure also allows visitors to spend time at interesting features on the landscape while imagining living in Ghyllbank with the help of wayside exhibits. These types of panels would provide a detailed and permanent source of information to visitors when paired with significant landscape features. Moreover, wayside exhibits are well-suited for use at Ghyllbank, which is located in a non-wilderness setting.
Figure A.13 Map of proposed route for the Ghyllbank Walking Path
The proposed location for the new Windigo Store would be an excellent place for the beginning of the Ghyllbank Walking Path because it is close to a frequented location by visitors, which makes it easy to find and naturally attractive to their attention. The sample route of the Ghyllbank Walking Path concept guides visitors past some of the most unique features that have lasted from the Wendigo Copper Company era. Each interpretive panel would operate individually to communicate the significance of Ghyllbank while connecting with the other panels with the park’s interpretive themes. The path would wander through eastern Ghyllbank, reaching to the northernmost extent of the settlement site where the barn and upper residence once stood. This is an area that has maintained the most integrity out of the townsite landscape with minimal impacts in following eras of landscape transformation. Elements of daily life, social structure, civilian responsibilities, and many other concepts could be interpreted as these sites. Similarly, the preserved well on the east side of the settlement and walking path concept could be used to interpret a commonly used resource and other utilities at Ghyllbank.

The eastern portion of this walking path concept follows a historic upper road feature identified during the 2016 Ghyllbank Townsite Survey. This provides an excellent opportunity to interpret the extensive road networks created by the company, highlighting those which have been transformed into current NPS trails nearby. The path would connect with the current NPS road and continue back to the Windigo Store after stopping to interpret the historic barn and upper residence area. This section of current NPS road also runs though the Ghyllbank townsite and provides ample opportunity for further interpretation with wayside panels.
Table A.1 Opportunities of Interpretation on the Ghyllbank Walking Path.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEATURE</th>
<th>WAYSIDE THEMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of the walking path</td>
<td>Introducing Ghyllbank and the walking path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaeologically Significant Area</td>
<td>Archaeology of an Industrial Townsite, what artifacts can tell us about the people that once lived there, how archaeology helps to piece together history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn &amp; Upper Residence</td>
<td>Living at Ghyllbank, Living at Ghyllbank, Family Life, Narratives of Ghyllbank citizens, social structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well</td>
<td>Utilities and shared spaces at Ghyllbank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Upper Wagon Road</td>
<td>Transportation Methods, Wendigo Wagon Road Network, lead to Wendigo Wagon Exhibit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low-profile wayside exhibit panels would provide a reliable form of non-personal interpretation for features along the Ghyllbank Walking Path. These panels would focus on interpreting concepts of industrial communities and frontier lifestyles, providing personal accounts of Ghyllbank residents, and introducing archaeology as a tool for understanding the past. The permanence of wayside exhibit panels would be beneficial to Windigo interpretation as they would require minimal maintenance after installation. With the inclusion of wayside panels, the Ghyllbank Walking Path could become a great option for non-personal interpretation at Windigo. Park interpretive rangers could easily guide visitors of nearly all capabilities, time constraints, and interests to the Ghyllbank Walking Path for information on local history and resources.

**Sample Wayside Exhibit Panels**

This section provides examples of wayside exhibit panels for the Ghyllbank Walking Path. Included in this section is a brief description of what features these panels would interpret, relevant information that could be included, and goals that each panel
hopes to accomplish. The placement and quantity of these panels may depend on input from interpretive staff, landscape planners, and project budgets.

- **Introductory Panel**

  This wayside exhibit concept focuses on introducing the whole of the Ghyllbank landscape to visitors. The sample introductory wayside panel presents information to be included such as: a brief summary of the Wendigo Copper Company in context with the rest of Isle Royale history; an idea of what visitors can expect to see and learn on the path; and quotes or stories from those that lived at Ghyllbank. This panel should also include a broad overview map (see Figure A.14) so that visitors have a sense of distance so they can gauge how much time they will spend on the path.
Welcome to Ghyllbank!

Information to include:
- Date of Wendigo Copper Co. occupation
- Purpose for creating the townsite
- What kind of people lived at Ghyllbank
- What visitors can expect to see on the walking path
- How Ghyllbank transformed into present day Windigo
- Brief description of Ghyllbank and Wendigo Copper Co. in context with other Isle Royale mines and settlements

Interpretive Themes to consider when interpreting the Ghyllbank landscape:
- Isolation as a dynamic force that shapes the face of Isle Royale
- The Wilderness character of solitude, self-sufficiency, and discovery in a natural setting defines human experience on Isle Royale
- Despite changing human values and cultures, what allure of Isle Royale’s primeval character has been constant through time
- The ecological, physical, and social landscape of Isle Royale creates Layers of protection that insulate it in an evolving world.

To many the island had become a peaceful home, and it was not without a tinge of sadness that some of us looked back at its receding shores...  Dr. William P. Scott
Living at Ghyllbank

This wayside panel strives to interpret the lifestyle of those that lived at Ghyllbank through specific details of everyday life. Personal stories from May Gray (Coughlin) and Dr. William Scott could be included to connect visitors with real actors that contributed to the legacy of Ghyllbank. Including sensory information about the sites, smells, and sounds generally present at Ghyllbank would help visitors visualize themselves on the historic landscape.

This panel could be placed in many different locations along the Ghyllbank Walking Path; however, the author recommends the Upper Residence location near the barn. Here the landscape has retained much of its archaeological integrity with limited impact from subsequent landscape transformations. A privy hole is present in this location and might inform wayside exhibit narrative.
Figure A.15 “Living at Ghyllbank” wayside exhibit panel concept.

Living at Ghyllbank

Include:

• Elements from May Gray and Dr. Scott’s accounts of living at Ghyllbank
• Details of the community and class structure between workers, families, and company officials
• Walk through of an average day at Ghyllbank (Sites, sounds, tasks, leisure activities)
  * Include elements from the interpretive themes to connect concepts of all waysides

Could you imagine living on Isle Royale during the late 1800s? Families living at Ghyllbank and Wendigo, lived in log cabins that were built by the company in 1891.

The O’Neil Family outside their cabin at the Wendigo staging camp.
Archeology of an Industrial Community

The Ghyllbank Walking Path provides additional opportunity to interpret archeology and subsurface features associated with the Wendigo Copper Company era. Information gathered from the 2016 Ghyllbank Townsite survey would inform visitors of the benefits of archeological investigation and how it contributes to a greater understanding of landscape use, lives of specific people, and societal trends. This wayside exhibit panel could be placed in multiple locations along the Ghyllbank Walking Path in locations where archeological surveys, such as the 2016 Ghyllbank Towniste Survey, took place. Pairing exhibit panels with specific landscape features is important for aspects of interpretation, but even when placed in a specific location this panel can interpret the archeological potential of the entire Ghyllbank townsite.
Archaeology of an Industrial Community

Did you know that Ghyllbank was the largest historic industrial community on Isle Royale? We can learn a lot about the 135 people that lived here through archaeological evidence that was left behind. Surface features such as rock alignments, large depressions, and building foundations are all remnants of the past eras that help inform us of what people were doing and why. Artifacts uncovered by excavations help explain how objects were used by people as well as their importance.

What can the archaeology of Ghyllbank tell us about life on Isle Royale in the late 1800s?

Archaeologists are always asking questions to piece together information about past people. If you were an archaeologist what questions would you ask about the landscape and people that lived here years ago?

Methods used by archaeologists to explore the past:
- Background research
- Pedestrian Surveys
- Archaeological Testing: Shovel test pits
- Formal Excavations

The presence or absence of artifacts can also be telling of availability, regulations, and use of specific items. Artifacts such as alcohol bottles, smoking pipes, and animal bones are commonly found artifacts that archaeologists use to draw conclusions about past people.
Summary of Ghyllbank Walking Path Concept

Incorporating a feature defined as a historic upper road during the 2016 Ghyllbank Townsite Survey into the Ghyllbank Walking Path concept would be a great opportunity to interpret the transportation routes from the first phase of historic occupation to visitors. Additionally, incorporating the proposed Wendigo Wagon Exhibit into the Ghyllbank Walking Path would position a significant existing object from the Wendigo Copper Company era within the context that it would have been used in over 100 years ago. This exhibit would be a highlight of the trail and a destination for visitors, prompting them to also explore the other stops along the trail.

One of the main strengths of the Ghyllbank Walking Path is the attention given to a variety of features still present on the landscape that have gone practically unnoticed since Park creation. Additionally, because the location is in a developed (non-wilderness) area wayside exhibits can be used here without conflict. Incorporating park interpretive themes into the wayside exhibits would promote continuity in general Isle Royale interpretive programming and help visitors connect and maintain an understanding of how the elements of the interpretive themes are a constant in all aspects of Isle Royale.

There are many variations of the Ghyllbank Walking Path concept beyond that presented here. This example serves as a concept and just one option out of many that could enhance the interpretation of the Windigo landscape. Additional options might include the interpretation of all historic phases of landscape change at Ghyllbank imparted by Washington Club and Early NPS activities. This walking path concept could also be tied to a corresponding brochure, possibly modeled after that now used for Windigo Nature Trail. The Ghyllbank Walking Path would also be a good interpretive option for visitors that wish to learn more about the landscape but have limited mobility. The path is relatively flat, making it one of the more accessible trails in Windigo. It is expected that this new walking path would become a popular attraction for Windigo visitors and something that interpretive rangers could promote to varied audiences.
Summary of New Concepts for Non-Personal Interpretation

These examples of expanded non-personal interpretation opportunities are presented as a means of interpreting significant cultural resources in the Windigo area. These options were created with deference to multiple visitor types as presented in Chapter 7. Expanding the suite of brochures offered at the Windigo Visitor Center would not only provide visitors with more accessible information, but also motivate many of them to explore cultural features along the nearby trail networks on their own terms. As a result, visitors would gain a wider appreciation of island history and related features on the landscape within both developed and wilderness settings. The wayside exhibit panels on the Ghyllbank landscape would also allow visitors of multiple ages and capabilities learn more about relevant Windigo history on site rather than other locations that are detached from the actual resource.

Isle Royale National Park has been a variable landscape ever since it was created. Processes of both natural and human in origin have manipulated the landscape and continue to do so today. In order to understand Isle Royale’s future, it is crucial to understand the history, past events, and decisions that have influenced some of the things seen today. Windigo is only a portion of the Isle Royale story, but embodies centuries of significant stories that lend themselves to interpretative programming. The diverse Windigo narrative encompasses unique geological formations, significant precontact use of the land, a lasting emphasis of Ojibwe culture, technologically advanced historic mining practices, a sportsmen’s paradise, and countless contributions by the CCC. Since Isle Royale National Park is committed to the protection of related resources, interpretive staff should focus on providing balanced interpretation of them as well. Promoting this entire narrative will raise awareness of these relevant stories and result in increased dedication to the preservation and continued interpretation of Windigo and its multi-faceted past.