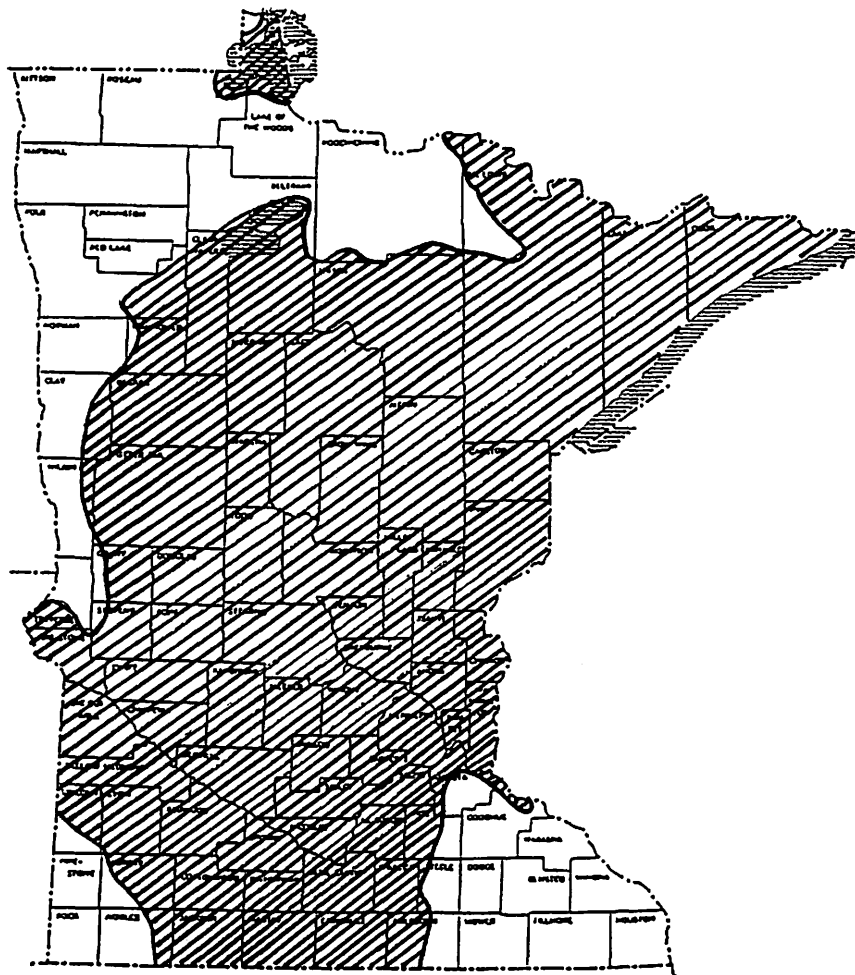


Historic Context:

MINNESOTA TOURISM AND RECREATION
IN THE LAKE REGIONS
(1870 - 1945)



CONTEXT LIMITS

MN SHPO
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MINNESOTA TOURISM AND RECREATION IN THE LAKE REGIONS 1870-1945

Minnesota has had a tourism/resort industry almost as long as it has had a mechanized transportation system. Even before the widespread expansion of the railroads in the 1860s and 1870s, residents of the Twin Cities were taking excursions to the Lake Minnetonka area. In addition, visitors from other parts of the country came up the Mississippi by steamboat to Minnesota on "fashionable tours" and partook of the region's clean air and water, both widely perceived as being invigorating and promoting good health.

Railroads were the first important means of access to resort areas in out-state Minnesota. Beginning in the 1870s and continuing throughout the rest of the 19th century, railroads brought vacationers to such diverse spots as Lake Shetek and Heron Lake in southwestern Minnesota as well as Detroit Lakes and the Brainerd area in the northern and central parts of the state. The primary attractions, besides scenery, were the traditional outdoor sports--fishing, hunting, and canoeing. This fact held true throughout the geographic area, with hunting and waterfowl gunning predominating in the western and southwestern parts of the context area.

Several factors combined to create rapid expansion in the resort industry after World War I. Most prominent among these were improved roads, increased automobile usage, increased leisure time, and extensive promotional campaigns undertaken by organizations such as the Minnesota Scenic Highway Association, Ten Thousand Lakes Association, Arrowhead Association, and Northern Minnesota Development Association. Public sector involvement grew as well, as the state of Minnesota became increasingly involved in efforts to promote travel and tourism.

Seasonal residents and tourists came from the Twin Cities and other urban areas in Minnesota, from other Midwestern states, and from the South. Many sought relief from stifling summer heat in urban centers, while others, coming from smaller areas, were attracted by the opportunities for outdoor sports. Expansion of Minnesota's state park and state forest system during the 1930s provided additional facilities and attractions for vacationers.

Individual resorts had various origins, including lumber camps and private lodges constructed by hunting and fishing associations. The majority of resorts, however, began as a collection of tourist cabins constructed by local farmers and landowners. During the 1920s, a classic resort configuration emerged which featured a central lodge structure surrounded by individual cabins. Other structure types related to the industry's development included: lakeside summer cottages, seasonal estates, planned recreational communities (often developed by Twin Cities real estate firms), private sporting clubs, youth camps, and public tourist camps. Some of these structural types later developed into motels and other structures associated with tourism, but not necessarily with the resort industry.

EXAMPLES OF PROPERTY TYPES
MINNESOTA TOURISM AND RECREATION IN THE LAKE REGIONS

Resorts

- one large lodge
- lodge with surrounding cabins
- complex of tourist cabins
- motels oriented to automobile travel

Private lodges and sporting clubs constructed by hunting and fishing associations

Lakeside summer cottages

Seasonal estates

Planned recreational communities

Youth camps

Public tourist camps

Supper clubs

Tourist attractions

Sites associated with boating and fishing

- Launches
- Boat works

Structures associated with travel to and from, and within, the resort area

- railroad travel--depots, etc.
- automobile travel--gas stations, motor courts, and other sites associated with the development of the road system

Public amenities for tourists

- park buildings
- fish hatcheries

CONTEXT PROPERTY TYPES

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SELECTED EXAMPLES OF NATIONAL REGISTER SITES
MINNESOTA TOURISM AND RECREATION IN THE LAKE REGIONS

Finsted's Auto Marine Shop (Ranier, Rainy Lake, Koochiching County)
Minnesota and International Railroad Freight House and Shelter Shed (Lake Edward Township, Lake Hubert, Nisswa, Crow Wing County)
Grand View Lodge (Nisswa, Gull Lake, Crow Wing County)
Wilford Fawcett House (Breezy Point, Big Pelican Lake, Crow Wing County)
Sherwood Forest Lodge and Cabins (Lake Shore Township, Gull Lake and Lake Margaret, Cass County)
Naniboujou Club Lodge (east of Grand Marais, unorganized territory, Lake Superior, Cook County)
Ellen Ruth Launch (Wahkon, Mille Lacs Lake, Mille Lacs County)
Winnibigoshish Resort and Bena Standard Station (Bena, Lake Winnibigoshish, Cass County)
Forest Inn (Itasca State Park, Clearwater County)

CONTEXT NRHP PROPERTIES

MN SHPO
Preserving Minnesota

Minnesota Tourism and Recreation in the
Lake Regions 1870-1945

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GOALS AND PRIORITIES WORKSHEET

Date: 6/13/90

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Minnesota Tourism and Recreation in the
Lake Regions 1870 - 1945

PROPERTY TYPE (if applicable):

Various

Ranking key:

A = High priority

0 - 2 years

B = Medium priority

3 - 5 years

C = Low priority

IDENTIFICATION

EVALUATION

REGISTRATION:

	Time-table for Completion	Priority Ranking
* Contract with student Intern to develop context bibliography, obtain information from nearly states regarding related contexts, organize and expand property types, NR inventory, contact state agencies (MNDOT, DNR, and Office of Tourism) and County Historical Societies, etc.	FY 91	A
* Contract MPDF on context with limited survey and nomination for 4 - 6 property types (with resort, seasonal home and roadside included)	FY 91 - 92	A
* Conduct survey (and MPDF) of early roadside properties relating to context in Beltrami, Cass and Crow Wing Counties		B
* Survey and develop possible district nom. for Lake Vermillion (or a portion)		B
* Survey of early resort properties on Lake Minnetonka, White Bear Lake, and Alexandria		B
* Survey of properties associated with waterfowl hunting in Prairie Lakes region		C
* Survey of Gull Lake		C
TREATMENT:		
* Prepare package of information on Tax Act and NR plaques to owners of resorts on NRHP		A
* Communicate with Office of Tourism and develop liason for future joint projects		B

CONTEXT GOALS & PRIORITIESMN SHPO
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Minnesota Tourism and Recreation in the Lakes Regions Goals cont.

Treatment:

* Sponsor a reuse study of Tettegouche in co-operation with DNR	summer, 1989	
* Sponsor a reuse study of Joyce Estate in co-operation with U.S. Forest Service	summer, 1989	
* Get on mailing list of Association of Restaurants and Resort Owners		A
* Develop brochure of booklet on the historic properties of Minnesota's lakes landscape -- project with Office of Tourism		C
* Get on agenda of annual meeting of resort owners		C
* Target Alexandria and Brainerd for outreach regarding local commissions and CLG program		A
* Conduct meeting on local preservation in north central lakes region to reach several resort communities		B
* Re-use study of representative resort on or eligible for the NRHP or Dunvilla (whose eligibility needs to be re-checked)	put on staff evaluation list	B

CONTEXT NRHP PROPERTIES

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