

Glendalough State Park Management Plan Amendment



**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Parks and Recreation**

March 2004



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-40__

Division of Parks and Recreation Approval of Management Plan Amendment for Glendalough State Park

The Division of Parks and Recreation develops plan amendments to update management plans to reflect the current development and operational proposals for a state park or state recreation area. The plan amendment process assists in formulating, evaluating and documenting these proposals.

This amendment to the 1993 Glendalough State Park management plan addresses three areas: the renovation and removal of structures in the Old Camp area, the designation of a permanent location for the group camp, and the relocation of the canoe/boat launch and rental on Annie Battle Lake.

The amendment received input and comment both within the Department of Natural Resources and from the public:

- reviewed by the Glendalough State Park advisory committee,
- released for public review which included an open house,
- approved by the Division of Parks and Recreation management team, and
- approved through the DNR's Region Interdisciplinary Review Service during February 2004.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Courtland Nelson".

Courtland Nelson, Director
Division of Parks and Recreation

A handwritten date in cursive script that reads "28 May 04".

Date

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Glendalough State Park Management Plan Amendment



State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks and Recreation

This management plan amendment has been prepared as required by 2001 Minnesota Laws Chapter 86A.09, Subdivision 1.

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this management plan amendment is to amend the current Glendalough State Park management plan (adopted June 1993) in three areas: the renovation and removal of structures in the Old Camp area, the designation of a permanent location for the group camp, and the relocation of the canoe/boat launch and rental on Annie Battle Lake.

Management plans are required for state park units in Minnesota Statutes (MS) 86A.09. Subdivision 4 requires that the construction of facilities and other development conform to the management plan. This amendment will bring the management plan into accordance with the current development proposals for the park.

DESCRIPTION

This amendment addresses three areas: the renovation and removal of structures in the Old Camp area, the designation of a permanent location for the group camp, and the relocation of the canoe/boat launch and rental on Annie Battle Lake. (See Figure 1 – Amendment Area Locations.)

Old Camp

The area known as the Old Camp (or Camp Complex) is located on the northwest shore of Annie Battle Lake. The Old Camp was a group of twelve structures that served as the lodging area during the site's history as a game farm and private retreat.

The 1993 management plan recommended the removal of the tennis court and all of the remaining Old Camp buildings, with the exception of the lodge. The lodge was to be updated and used for meeting space and limited interpretive opportunities. The long-term usefulness of the lodge was to be reviewed, and if the proposed interpretive/trail center was developed at the farmhouse site (the current park office), it was to be removed.

Several circumstances delayed the implementation of this recommendation and the eventual development of the alternative set out in this amendment. Removal of the buildings proved controversial with some legislators and local historians who sought to retain some of the Old Camp structures. Further, receiving funding for a new visitor interpretive/trail center through the Division's capital bonding program was also seen as a long-term process. In response, Division of Parks and Recreation and the Glendalough State Park Advisory Committee developed a revised proposal to restore several of the buildings. The intended uses were for meetings, school groups, interpretive programs, and workshops. However, funding requests to LCMR in 1998 to repair and remodel the lodge, kitchen, and conference room (as well as construct new restroom facilities) and in 2000 to restore the lodge and construct a new interpretive/trail center were unsuccessful.

Funds raised by the Advisory Committee and from the sale of several buildings from other areas of the park provided resources for more immediate restoration efforts at the Old Camp. The cabins and several other structures were sold for removal, relocated within the park for park use, or demolished - the foundations removed and the area re-vegetated. The kitchen was renovated into an interim trail center (completed 2000) to serve until the new interpretive/trail center was funded. The lodge was restored (completed 2003) as envisioned in the original management plan. Both projects were funded using donated funds and Division matching funds. Sentence-to-Serve program crews provided the majority of the labor for these projects.

Currently, six buildings and the tennis court remain at the Old Camp. The lodge, trail center, (formerly kitchen) and conference room are available for public use. In 2003, the old camp buildings were used 69 times, of which 3 were school groups in excess of 50 people. In previous years the area had hosted up to 10 school groups of that size. The other buildings are used for storage. The park road forms two loops in accessing the structures. Several park trails link to the site. (See Figure 2 – Old Camp Existing Conditions.)

However, use of these three structures present issues for the public and for park maintenance:

- The space is divided into three buildings, singly each one too small for larger group requests.
- The renovated Lodge is the only building with a handicap-accessible restroom.
- Structural problems persist with the conference room building.
- Maintaining three structures is not an efficient way to provide the public space made available.

This amendment's development proposal for the Old Camp area addresses the issues above and alters the interpretive/trail center concept set out in the 1993 management plan. Under the proposal, the combined functions for the interpretive/trail center will be divided between the trail center and the new contact station, with a visitor orientation/interpretative display area integrated into the contact station. The proposal results in several changes to the current layout of the Old Camp area and that envisioned in the 1993 management plan: (See Figure 3 – Old Camp Renovations.)

- The carriage house, garage, laundry, and conference room will be removed. (*Consistent with the 1993 management plan.*)
- The trail center will be expanded to provide handicap-accessible bathrooms. (*The 1993 management plan recommended removal of the trail center.*) The internal layout of the trail center will be examined as part of the design process to maximize useable space and occupancy. The final layout of the trail center and addition will be determined as part of the project design.
- The lodge will be kept permanently and available for its current public uses – community or other group meetings, school groups, interpretive programs, etc. (*The 1993 management plan recommended the removal of the lodge after construction of a new interpretive/trail center.*)
- The tennis court will be removed and replaced with a new parking area to serve the lodge and trail center. The road loops east of the new parking area will be removed with portions of the road being converted to trail. (*The 1993 management plan recommended the removal of the tennis court.*)
- The parking area near the bridge west of the road will be removed.
- Trails will be constructed to connect the new parking area to the lodge, trail center and trail network. A trail will be developed along the front of the lodge and trail center, connecting an existing trail and the park road. A trail section will be developed to connect the new parking area with the trail loops west and north of the old camp.
- A section of trail will be constructed to serve as a service road and provide handicap access from the parking area to the lodge and trail center. The possibility of providing a small number of handicap parking spaces near the buildings will also be considered. Figure 3 shows a possible service road and drop-off circle layout. The final layout will be determined as part of the project design.

Benefits of the proposal include: fewer buildings to maintain, more flexible space for public use, improved visitor service (accessible restroom), and preserving several structures from the Old Camp.

Group Camp

The 1993 management plan identified a group camp for future consideration at Glendalough State Park. Several sites were considered during the planning process, with a proposed site identified southwest of the former game farm near the park's western boundary. The site was selected because it was buffered from other development area and offered privacy favored for group activities.

Immediately following the park campground's opening in 1998, numerous requests were made for group camping opportunities. A portion of the proposed picnic area was used as a temporary group camp site in 1998 and 1999. With completion of the picnic area in 2000, the group camp was relocated just north of the picnic area to avoid conflicts with day-users. (See Figure 4 – Group Camp Improvements.) The group camp site was still close enough to utilize the parking area and vault toilet at the picnic area, but wooded enough to provide some privacy from other park visitors. The site can support approximately 40 people – group size averages 25-30 people.

This second temporary site is very popular with group camp users, both traditional youth/scout groups and family groups. The site is scenic and shaded, accessible to Annie Battle and Molly Stark Lakes, convenient to other park facilities (swimming beach, picnic area) and along the trail network. The location is also favorable for park operations – closeness to other park facilities makes it easier to maintain and monitor. There is also the possibility of the group camp sharing a future sanitation building with the picnic area. These positive features outweigh the isolation and privacy reasons given in support of the game farm location identified in the 1993 management plan.

The amendment designates the current temporary group camp location as the permanent site for the facility. Several additional improvements are planned as part of the group camp remaining in this location: (See Figure 4 – Group Camp Improvements)

- Construct an access road, parking area and campground cart rack. The parking area size - based on the group camp's capacity – will accommodate 10 vehicles. Figure 4 shows the access road and parking area location and a possible parking area layout. The road and parking area location was chosen to avoid impacting known archaeological sites and minimize impacts to the restored prairie. The final layout of the parking area will be determined as part of the project design.
- Construct a new trail connecting the parking area to the group camp.
- Remove the existing group camp trail and re-vegetate the area to increase screening between the group camp and picnic area.
- Remove the hiking trail along the west side of the group camp to increase privacy.
- Construct a vault toilet at the group camp.
- Construct a well to provide drinking water at the group camp.

Canoe/Boat Launch and Rental

The 1993 management plan identified three possible locations for the canoe/boat launch on Annie Battle Lake, one of which is the location of the existing launch. The existing canoe/boat launch is located east of the contact station and maintenance shop (the old farm site) between the park road and lakeshore. (See Figure 5 – Canoe/Boat Launch Relocation) Racks for the rental canoes and boats are located on the shore. Approximately one half of the canoe and boat rentals are by campers and the other half are by day users. Canoe campsite users also use the launch to access their sites across Annie Battle Lake.

The amendment recommends relocating the canoe/boat launch approximately 150 feet south along the shore of Annie Battle Lake. Relocating the launch will resolve several concerns related to the existing launch. The existing launch site has limited parking - cars often park along the shoulder of

the park road. The new site also provides more space for the canoe and boat racks to be placed further off the lakeshore, reducing erosion and compaction concerns.

Several improvements will be made as part of the canoe/boat launch and rental relocation: (See Figure 5 – Canoe/Boat Launch Relocation)

- Construct a new parking area and access drive from the main park road. The parking area should accommodate 16 vehicles, based on the available rental watercraft and proposed total of seven canoe campsites (five campsites are currently open). Figure 5 shows a possible layout for the access drive and parking area. The exact layout of the access drive and parking area will be determined as part of the project design.
- Construct a new trail connecting the parking area to the launch site on the lakeshore.
- Relocate canoe and boat racks to the new location. The canoe and boat racks will be placed near the parking area away from the shore to reduce erosion concerns.
- Native vegetation will be planted to screen the parking area and launch from the Old Camp and park road.

NATURAL RESOURCES IMPACT

Old Camp

The removal of some road sections and buildings as envisioned in the 1993 management plan and the amendment will reduce the size of the developed area. Re-vegetation of the portions of the old camp (primarily east of the trail center) will improve the wildlife corridor between Annie Battle and Molly Stark Lakes. Retention of the lodge and trail center buildings as recommended in the amendment (verses the management plan's recommendation for an open public use area) will reduce the positive impact somewhat, but there will remain a net improvement for the natural resource value of the area.

Group Camp

The new parking area, access road, and new group camp trail are located at the edge of a tree line and an old field that is being restored into prairie. The parking area will be located just west of the hiking trail and tucked against the woods to partially screen it from the picnic area access road. The access road and new group camp trail are along the edge of the prairie restoration and woods, and can serve as firebreaks during prescribed burns. Screening between the group camp site and picnic area is also an opportunity to restore native plants to the site. The stream bank slopes along the east side of the group camp will be monitored for erosion from campers accessing the water. Permanently locating the group camp at this site will also mean one fewer development site in the park (the game farm location for the group camp identified in the 1993 management plan).

Canoe/Boat Launch and Rental

The relocated canoe/boat launch will reduce impacts on the lake shoreline. Moving the canoe/boat racks back from the shoreline at the new launch site will minimize erosion and compaction along the lakeshore. The new trail and launch area will be monitored for erosion. Vegetation planted to screen the parking area and launch is an opportunity to restore native vegetation to the site.

CULTURAL RESOURCES IMPACT

Old Camp

The renovations in the old camp will have minimal impact to known cultural resources. The buildings in the old camp, although part of the history of Glendalough State Park, are not considered historic structures. Many of the buildings were relocated to the site. None of the structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Retention of the lodge and trail center - although not historic structures – will help preserve some of the local history of the site and aid in interpreting the history of site as a summer retreat and game farm. The trail center addition will be designed to be consistent with the architecture of the existing building to help preserve the historic appearance of the structure.

A newly identified archaeological site is located adjacent to the trail center - Glendalough Lodge Site (Site21OT103). The site was expanded in 2003 during preliminary archaeological testing for the trail center addition. Previously one isolated artifact had been found along the beach near the trail center. The site boundary has not been determined and is not illustrated in Figures 2 and 3. Further archaeological testing will be necessary to identify the site boundary. An archaeological evaluation of the site will be conducted as part of the trail center addition project.

Group Camp

There are two known archaeological sites near the group camp area. These sites were identified as part of the archaeological surveys conducted during the construction of the picnic area, cart-in campground, and trail system along the west shore of Annie Battle Lake. Glendalough State Park 9 Site (Site 21OT132) encompasses the picnic shelter, parking area, and surrounding woods. Anne Battle Lake Site (Site 21OT104) extends along the west shore of the creek connecting Annie Battle and Molly Stark Lakes from the group camp site north toward the cart-in campground. Both are Native American habitation sites – there are no identified burial mounds or cemeteries associated with either site.

The permanent location of the group camp and associated improvements will impact the cultural resources in this area. The proposed parking area is located partially within a known archaeological site (Site 21OT132) surveyed during the picnic area development. Additional archaeological surveys and possibly mitigation will be necessary for final siting and construction of the parking area. The group camp trail will be built up over the existing ground surface to avoid impacting any archaeological resources. An archaeological survey will also need to be conducted prior to siting of the vault toilets or additional fire rings for the group camp.

Canoe/Boat Launch and Rental

The relocated canoe/boat launch and rental will have minimal impact on the cultural resources in this area. The proposed parking area and access road are located outside the known archaeological site boundaries. The access trail, boat rack area, and launch site are located north of Glendalough State Park Site 6 (21OT0114), a Native American habitation site – there are no identified burial mounds or cemeteries associated with the site. An archaeological survey will be needed to verify the boundary of the site. The access trail to the lake will be built up over the existing ground surface to avoid impacting any currently unidentified archaeological resources.

RECREATION AND VISITOR USE IMPACT

The main impetus of the plan amendment is to provide improvements to recreational facilities and improve visitor experience. These proposed improvements and their impact on park users is detailed in the Description section above and summarized below.

Old Camp

The old camp renovations will result in significant improvements to the trail center that will enhance park visitors experience in using the Old Camp facilities. The addition of accessible restrooms as part of the trail center addition will widen the range of people that can be accommodated at the site. The

centralized parking area, the drive in “drop-off” circle, and the improved trail connections between buildings and to the park’s trail network also make the facility more convenient and user friendly while preserving the historic appearance of the camp area. Accommodations for handicap access and parking will be considered as part of the design process.

Group Camp

The recommendations in the amendment will improve visitor experience by making the popular temporary group site into a permanent site and leading to facility improvements at the group camp. The site is well connected with the trails network and convenient to other use areas in the park. With the designation of the site as the permanent group camp, the Division will move ahead with the improvements outlined in the amendment – a separate parking area and formalized trail connection to the site, vault toilets, water, and vegetative screening. The result will be improved facilities for users of this popular facility.

Canoe/Boat Launch and Rental

Relocating the launch and rental area will have several recreational benefits. The new site will have more parking for day users and canoe campsite users. In addition, the relocated launch site will reduce congestion and safety issues caused by vehicles parking along the road shoulder at the existing launch site because of inadequate room for parking vehicles. The relocated launch site will also reduce the visibility of the facility from the Old Camp area.

MANAGEMENT PLAN TEXT REVISIONS

The text of this amendment replaces the references made to these facilities in the Glendalough State Park Management Plan (1993) as identified below:

Old Camp

Page 35 – 3. Camp Complex - recommendation to remove all buildings except the lodge.
Page 46 & 47 – Interpretive Services - discussion of removal of all camp complex buildings except lodge and consideration of removing the lodge after interpretive center is constructed.

Group Camp

Page 44 – 2. Group Camp – future consideration of a group camp near the relocated service court.

Canoe/Boat Launch and Rental

Page 35 – 2. Farmhouse - recommendation that area should be used as the carry-in boat access to Annie Battle Lake.
Page 41 – Carry-in Boat Access and Interpretive Area – discussion of possible carry-in locations.

PUBLIC REVIEW

The management plan amendment was presented to the Glendalough State Park Advisory Committee on November 12, 2003. The committee submitted comments concerning the amendment (see Appendix A).

The amendment was released for public review on February 16, 2004. Copies of the amendment were available for review at the park and at the DNR Regional Headquarters in Bemidji. The amendment was also posted on the DNR website. An open house was held on February 26, 2004 at the park lodge.

Glendalough State Park

Figure 1 - Amendment Area Locations

Legend

- Park Statutory Boundary
- State Park Trails
- State Park Roads
- County Roads
- Buildings
- Open Water

*Old Camp
Renovations*

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*Canoe Launch
Relocation*

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Group Camp

16

N

1000 0 1000 2000 Feet

16



Prepared by: Jade Templin

Glendalough State Park

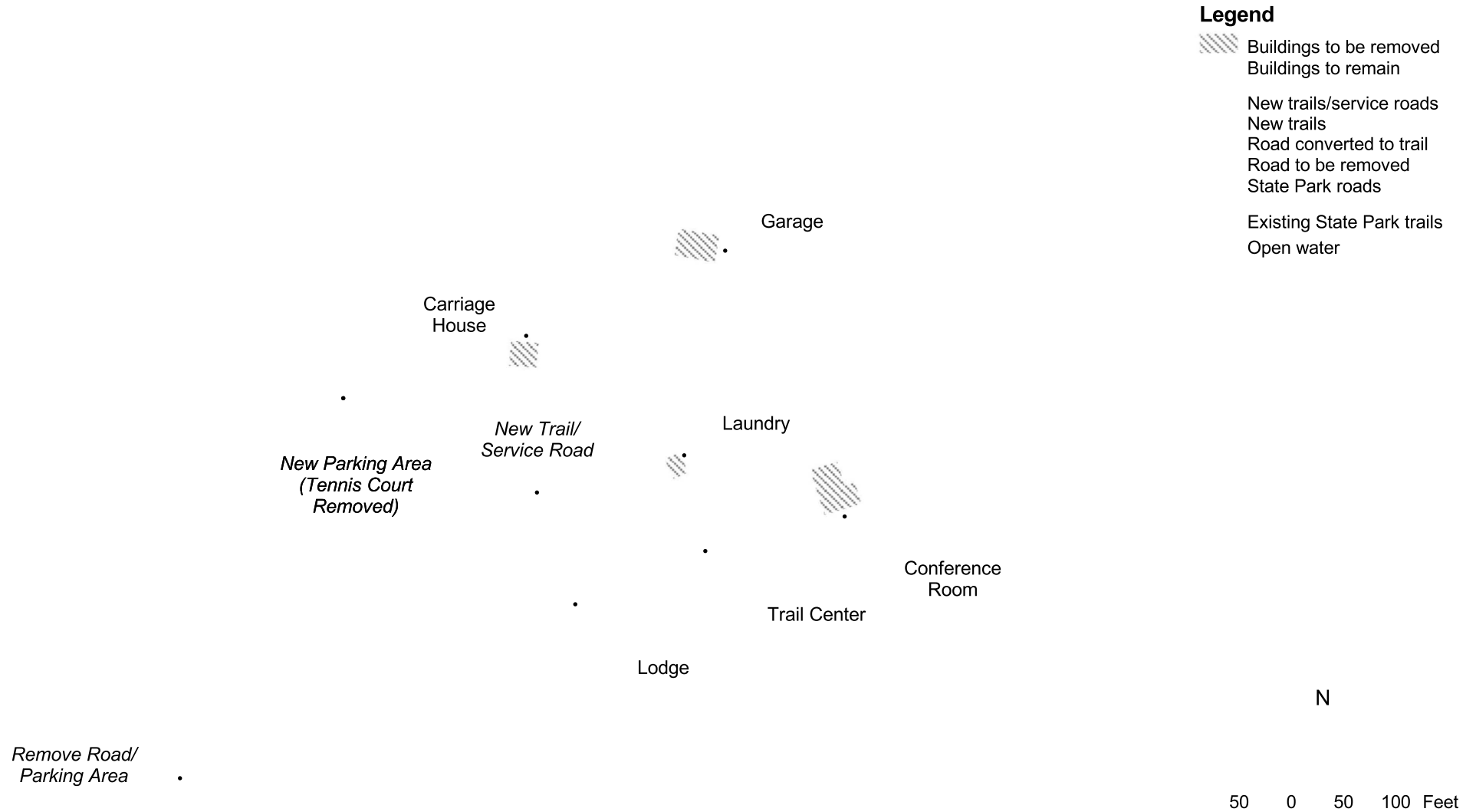
Figure 2 - Old Camp Existing Conditions



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Figure 3 - Old Camp Renovations



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Figure 4 - Group Camp Improvements



Glendalough State Park

Figure 5 - Canoe/Boat Launch Relocation



APPENDIX A
Glendalough State Park Advisory Committee comment letter

**Glendalough State Park
Advisory Committee**

Excerpt of minutes from the February 19, 2004 Director's meeting.

The topic of the proposed amendment to the Glendalough State Park Management Plan was placed into discussion. After hearing the history and evolution of the various facility options the following motion was offered by Dave Berg, second by Kent Olson and carried:

The Glendalough State Park Advisory Committee conditionally approves of the Management Plan Amendment with the following conditions concerning the trail center:

- Adequate classroom space must be provided.
- Restrooms are provided to serve both function occurring in the center as well as the trails on a year-round basis.
- The building and its facilities must be handicap accessible.
- Secure storage for equipment, supplies, and materials must be provided.
- A parking area needs to be in close proximity for not only handicapped but also those with mobility difficulties.
- Limited kitchen facilities are needed (similar to those in the lodge).
- Adequate heating must be available for year-around use.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie R Estes (Chairman)

Larry Krohn
Secretary