

Glacial Lakes State Park Management Plan Amendment

Camper Cabin Development



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Parks and Recreation

November 2006

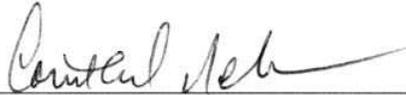
DNR Division of Parks and Recreation Approval of Management Plan Amendment for Glacial Lakes State Park

The DNR 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 1982 Glacial Lakes State Park management plan amends the plan to allow the development of camper cabins on the south side of Mountain Lake.

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

- reviewed by the Friends of Glacial Lakes State Park advisory committee,
- released for public review which included an open house, and
- approved by the DNR Division of Parks and Recreation management team (Deputy Director, Planning Manager, and Acquisition/Development Manager).



Courtland Nelson, Director
Division of Parks and Recreation
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources



Date

Glacial Lakes State Park Management Plan Amendment



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

This plan amendment has been prepared as required by 2003 Minnesota Laws Chapter 86A.09, Subd. 1.



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We would like to thank all who participated in this planning process.

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this management plan amendment is to amend the current Glacial Lakes State Park Management Plan (adopted in September 1982) to include camper cabin development areas on the south side of Mountain 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

In 2006, the Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$150,000 in capital bond funds to be used for camper cabins at Glacial Lakes State Park. In addition, the Friends of Glacial Lakes State Park has purchased one camper cabin kit, which they intend to donate to the state park (the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources has approved this donation).

At least six camper cabin development site locations were proposed and reviewed by DNR Division of Parks and Recreation staff and a statewide Division of Parks and Recreation "Camper Cabin" Committee. This committee developed a comprehensive camper cabin report in 2005 and has reviewed cabin development sites at several other state parks. Committee members and management staff from Glacial Lakes State Park and Lake Carlos State Park ranked each proposed development site at Glacial Lakes and recommended the two areas proposed for cabin development in this amendment (see Figure 1 – Amendment Areas of Interest – Camper Cabins). Existing overnight use areas in the park ranked lower primarily for the following reasons: 1) proximity to archeological sites in both the campground and group camp; 2) crowded, cramped sites close to the road and other campsites in the campground; and, 3) limited access for winter plowing in the campground.

The two areas selected for camper cabin development will minimize negative impacts to park resources, provide visitors with an esthetic cabin location, and work well for state park operations (especially winter plowing, which is an issue in the main campground).

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCE IMPACTS

Both cabin development areas have been examined by DNR Division of Parks and Recreation staff archeologists and reviewed by Division natural resource specialist staff. No archeological sites were identified. A County Biological Survey has been conducted in Pope County, including Glacial Lakes State Park. The proposed cabin development site across from the boat launch is in a disturbed old field area. The proposed cabin development site east of the picnic area parking lot is within the boundary of a native community "area of high significance"; however, site development will be in a disturbed area immediately adjacent to the parking lot. Although development inherently impacts any area, all site disturbance will be limited to the physical area necessary to allow cabin and related support infrastructure (e.g. parking, toilets, etc.).

Mountain Lake is classified as a "Natural Environment" lake. Although the statewide minimum shoreline setback for structures is 150 feet from natural environment lakes, Pope County has adopted a more protective 200-foot structure setback. Both of the cabin development locations are at least 200 feet from the shoreline of Mountain Lake. In addition, both locations are on the opposite side of the park road from the lake, providing a sense of separation from the lake environment and day use areas.

RECREATIONAL USE AND VISITOR SERVICE IMPACTS

The 1982 management plan stated:

The management and development recommendations for Glacial Lakes State Park are directed towards perpetuating the natural resources and enhancing recreational opportunities which provide access to them. It is the goal of park management to preserve the quiet, natural character which currently exists.

Only 1 to 2% of the park's acreage has been developed; this level of development reflects the management goals and overall philosophy for this park.

In describing the picnic area, the 1982 plan stated that the picnic area "does not receive much use." In recent years, state park staff has stated this continues to be an underutilized area. One camper cabin development area is situated at the east end of the picnic area; the other is near the west end of the picnic area and across the park road from the boat launch/beach area. The development proposal in this plan amendment will use some existing infrastructure that is currently underutilized.

Glacial Lakes State Park currently has one camper cabin in the Lower Campground. This cabin is open seasonally and has an occupancy rate of approximately 65%. The proposed areas for camper cabin development should experience higher occupancy rates because the cabins will be in a more appealing setting and the sites will also be accessible during the winter.

Both camper cabin area locations are situated on the south side of the park road, separating them from the picnic area, boat launch and beach area. This physical boundary should provide adequate separation between day users and overnight users.

MANAGEMENT PLAN TEXT REVISIONS

This amendment supplements the Introduction, Natural and Cultural Resources, and Recreation Resources sections of the 1982 Management Plan. The text of the amendment should be considered additions to the appropriate sections of the 1982 Management Plan.

Text to be added to the 1982 Management Plan under Campground Actions (page 94):

- Action #9. Provide Camper Cabin Development Areas south of Mountain Lake, adjacent to the east end of the picnic area parking lot and across the park road from the boat launch/beach area.

PUBLIC REVIEW

Public comment was solicited on the management plan amendment. The amendment will be presented at a Friends of Glacial Lakes State Park meeting on November 27, 2006. The Friends meetings are advertised in the local newspaper and are open to the public.

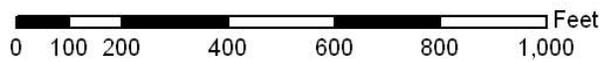
GLACIAL LAKES STATE PARK

Figure 1 - Amendment Areas of Interest - Camper Cabins



Legend

-  Camper Cabin development areas
-  State Park Roads
-  State Park Trails



Department of Natural Resources
Division of Parks and Recreation
Planning Section
Jade Templin 10/10/06