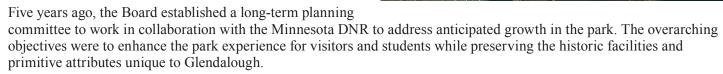
Ready for the Final Pull

by Dan Malmstrom

Your Park Partners Board is thrilled to inform you that two long-term projects – the Sunset Lake Trail segment and the new Glendalough Trail Center – are entering the final stretch to construction. This article will outline an innovative shift in plans with the DNR to address an unexpected challenge and move both projects to completion simultaneously.

As avid mountain hikers, Lisa and I have become accustomed to the phrase, "one more long pull, let's do this". It's often our encouraging rally call to each other as we ascend the last arduous mile over steep, rocky terrain to reach an impressive destination...a pinnacle waiting majestically above us. Metaphorically, the DNR and Park Partners team is at a very similar place today.



Two major projects emerged from that collaborative work: a new Sunset Lake Trail segment and a compelling Glendalough Trail Center. Conceptual designs and plans for both initiatives were established by the committee and DNR

Final Pull Story continued on page 2



by Joan Vorderbruggen

THE DREAM

Where does a building project actually begin? Typically it begins as a dream in someone's head or heart, a desire of a person or a group, or a need that is voiced out of necessity. In the case of the new Glendalough Trail Center, it was all three.

With park attendance on the rise, there was a need to

have a multi-use facility that would relieve some visitation stress on the Historic Lodge which was never designed to accommodate the number of people it was hosting. There was a desire to have more flexible spaces, and toilets, more interpretive space, additional educational space, and better vender facilities within the park to coincide with Glendalough's growing popularity. These things drove a collective, shared dream among Park Partners and the DNR. A

dream to design a building that would truly be a gift to the public; a central hub where people would love to gather. And a building that didn't overpower the wild beauty of the park, but instead coexisted with it.

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President's Remarks

You will notice a common theme throughout this issue of Tracks & Trails; one that builds on previous articles that communicated our efforts to fund and build a much-needed new Trail Center at Glendalough. This is the most exciting project we've undertaken since the grand opening of the Glendalough Trail in 2014. The Trail Center is a natural extension to our continued work in the park. We have also been working with the DNR on a new Sunset Lake trail segment, one that will take bikers and hikers off the main roadway, making their entrance into Glendalough much safer and enjoyable. Both of these projects have been long and challenging, but incredibly we are entering the final stretches of both at the same time.

Dan Malmstrom will provide details on both projects, highlight milestones along the way, review recent strategy sessions we've had with the DNR to ensure both projects will move forward, and explain how you can join us in this effort.

Also in this issue, Joan Vorderbruggen will share her thoughts as an architect and board member on how dreams, desires, and needs all came together at the beginning of the Trail Center initiative. She will explain the importance of the building site and give you a glimpse at how the building will appear and function.

Bottom line is we have two great projects coming together that will significantly enhance what we like to call the "Glendalough Experience" for our ever-increasing number of visitors. We have enjoyed a wonderful partnership with the DNR throughout this journey, have a huge percentage of our funding secured, and both projects are nearly ready to go to bid.

We've received great feedback and support as these two initiatives have evolved. We knew at some point we would invite you to join us in getting these projects over the finish line. Just today one of our Park Partners members made a commitment to match up to \$100,000 in new donations for the construction of the Trail Center! You are officially invited to help us match this incredible gift. If you are interested and have questions, contact me or any of our board members for more information or perspective.

Thank you,

Steve Nelson, President Glendalough Citizens Advisory Board Cell (612) 889-9895 stevenbrucenelson@gmail.com

Final Pull Story continued from page 1

in 2017. They became the tangible vision for an inspiring, yet challenging multi-year journey.

The Sunset Lake Trail segment was designed to establish a paved trail from the park entrance through the prairie to the new Trail Center. It would take pedestrians and bikers entirely off the Whitetail Lane roadway and complete the beautiful 12-mile Glendalough Trail loop from the city of Battle Lake through Glendalough. The new Trail Center was designed at the same time, inspired by the integration of indoor and outdoor spaces observed recently in other state parks to accommodate park information, trail orientation, natural interpretation, education, restrooms, a rental concessionaire, proximity to water access and parking.

We knew from experience that funding such significant projects would not happen in our small park or community of Battle Lake without tireless grassroots, citizen involvement. We addressed that challenge early by raising \$230,000 of private donations and pledges in 2017 from a handful of Park Partner members to demonstrate our local Glendalough commitment before we would write grants and seek legislative bonding.

The Sunset Lake trail segment became completely funded through two grants, DNR legacy funding and Park Partner matching funds. The construction for this trail has begun and is evidenced by survey markers and tree removal along the route. Archeological surveys and wetland mitigation studies are complete, with some additional work planned for this summer and fall.

Trail Center funding was more complex; although we quickly became successful in our efforts to secure \$750,000 of 2018 state bonding to augment our private donations and DNR legacy funds. Unfortunately, Covid-19 delayed the Trail Center project for nearly two years, during which time the project costs increased markedly. With Representative Jordan Rasmussen's support, additional 2022 bonding legislation was written to complete the Trail Center project. Yet this is where our trek incurred some unexpected rocky ground.

As most Minnesotans know, the recent legislative session ended without a 2022 bonding bill, affecting many statewide projects and organizations, including the Glendalough Trail Center. This was a serious setback for our project. Not only did the Trail Center require the new 2022 bonding for completion, but the prior \$750,000 of 2018 bonding for the Trail Center could not be carried forward and had to be applied to the Trail Center project commencing this year or be lost. We had traveled so far and could see the Trail Center destination right before us. With unwavering resolve, we were determined to finish the journey. The board understood its stewardship to the funds

from early donors, and the Trail Center's important role in preserving the Historic Lodge as 130,000 annual visitors came to the park.

Fortunately, DNR professionals aligned with our position and agreed a significant pivot was required to move both projects forward and not forego the 2018 bonding and philanthropy already secured. The DNR is more than 97% complete with all design elements related to Trail Center architecture, materials, mechanical, land use, well. septic and parking. Several DNR officials met with the Park Partners long-term planning committee on July 19 to discuss funding options. An innovative funding approach was offered by Ben Bergey, DNR Parks and Trails Regional Manager. Ben recommended shifting some of the DNR funds budgeted for the Sunset Lake Trail project to the new Trail Center project in the absence of 2022 bonded funds. This would allow the Trail Center project to start this fall and winter! The Sunset Lake trail segment would also continue forward, albeit at a slightly slower pace. The long-term planning committee agreed with the proposed shift and is thrilled with the DNR's collaborative approach and commitment to Glendalough.

There are two important underlying assumptions that make this proposed funding plan work. First, Representative Jordan Rasmussen will adjust future bonding legislation to include the Sunset Lake trail. Second, between the two projects (which will cost about \$3.2 million in total), there still remains about a \$300,000 funding gap. The DNR has asked the Glendalough Park Partner board to make a goodfaith effort to raise additional private funds to help bridge the gap.

From the outset, the Board intended to commence a broad fundraising campaign for these two projects once they entered the DNR bidding and construction phase. That time has come! And we're fortunate that a generous Park Partner has stepped forward to bring timely energy for our 90-day campaign.

You will see an important invitation later in this newsletter and on social media to participate financially in these projects to enhance the Glendalough experience for decades to come. Thank you in advance for your consideration and continued support.

Dreams and Beginnings Story continued from page 1

And so it was in January 2017 when the first long-term planning committee meeting was held to discuss the possibilities of a new Trail Center. The committee included several members of Park Partners Board of Directors, the Park Manager, DNR officials, and me – an architect and devoted park visitor. The excitement in the air was palpable, as we would become witness to the beginning of something special. The conversation was lively as we discussed the Trail Center's location, the spatial needs, and how the design inspiration would be influenced. We all agreed the structure needed to feel like it was part of Glendalough. It had to snuggle into the site, take advantage of the views and climate, and embody references to other structures in the park.

As our meetings continued, the importance of a multipurpose / multi-seasonal space was emphasized; one that would, among other activities, facilitate educational programs for the many school children who visit the park each year. It should include more space for historical, educational and interpretive information, and park orientation was also a requirement. Because this building would be located at the center of Glendalough Bike Trail and water access, there needed to be restrooms and concessions available at the Trail Center, as well as rental equipment for biking, various forms of paddling, and cross-country skiing. There was a desire for outdoor seating and signage for wayfinding within the park. We hoped the Trail Center would be more than a place that anyone could use, but rather wanted to experience. Plans and spaces shifted as we continued to talk, design, draw, estimate, and refine; but what never left the conversations were passion and excitement for how people would use the Trail Center for generations to come.

THE SITE

Siting (selecting a site) for a building is an incredibly important, though sometimes overlooked, beginning point for any architectural project. Good siting and orientation can do wonders to address the best views, create a welcoming sense of entry, and take advantage of sun in the winter or breezes in the summer. These things were discussed at the very beginning. Because the selected site had been previously occupied for decades by other game farm buildings, there would be no real worry about disrupting the rich archaeological history that is so precious in Glendalough.

Currently, the selected site is occupied by the Galloping Goose – the DNR's contracted rental equipment concessionaire. Prior to that, the site was occupied by older buildings including a farmhouse, which served as the park's office until 2010 when the new office building

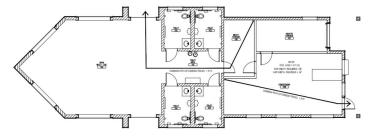
was constructed in the prairie to the southwest. The original farm buildings on the site were also used to store the DNR's recreational and maintenance equipment. This farmstead had been the central node of the original game farm and subsequently the park; occupied by the managers, their families, and some farm animals for many years. Two of the Park Partners board members, Tracy Kortlever and Chris Estes, grew up there while their father Les Estes managed Glendalough for decades. Prior to that, the Severson family managed the retreat and game and planted an extensive garden on the site to feed guests.



Of course, prior to the farmstead, it is probable that Indigenous People from the prehistoric era inhabited the site, as evidenced by artifacts found there: a projectile piece, and a large pit of fire-cracked rock (potentially another earth oven similar to that found in another section of the park). Due to the farming operations that occurred on the site centuries later, traces of habitation by more recent Indigenous People, such as the Dakota or Ojibwe, have been eliminated. Still, we know they lived in close relationship with the land and waters of the park prior to the European settlers taking ownership. The planning committee knew it would be very important to acknowledge those people before lifting the first shovel of earth for the new Trail Center construction.

THE PROPOSED TRAIL CENTER

Our first drawings – the conceptual design our team had envisioned – were handed over to the DNR's architects and engineers who were charged with designing the Trail Center according to Minnesota's rigorous standards for park structures. They continued the design process, incorporating much of the original vision. Recent drawings at 97% completion show many of the desired features.

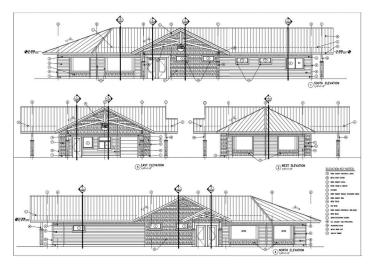


Visitors will enter the multi-purpose Trail Center space from the bike trail or parking lot under the protection of a large overhang, with open-air views to the West, South and East, including views of Annie Battle Lake. This area will be used for park orientation, maps, exhibit space, interpretive material, educational events, as well as other yet-to-be-determined uses.

To the east of the multipurpose space, and directly in line with the west entry, is a covered patio facing Annie Battle Lake. This will include seating, a place to enjoy concessions and take in the peaceful views.

Inside the Trail Center visitors will find four separate toilet rooms with maximum flexibility for families and individuals, and all will be wheelchair accessible.

On the north side of the building, there is space for the rental equipment and gear, as well as concessions. Additional rental equipment will be staged outside, similar to how it is organized now. There will also be additional storage on the north side of the building for use by park staff.



The exterior of the building acknowledges synergistic materials and expressions of other buildings in the park, such as the Park Entrance Kiosk and the Historic Lodge. Siding in a shingle style will be used as accents on the gable ends of the building – a nod to the cedar shingles of the Historic Lodge that resides further down the trail in the park. Cross timbers in the open gable reflect a similar expression used in the Entrance Kiosk, as does the horizontal siding. Large overhangs and covered areas allow for a seamless transition between exterior and interior spaces. Visitors will never be too disconnected from nature and the natural beauty of Glendalough while experiencing the Trail Center.

We can see our dreams and beginnings becoming reality in the new Glendalough Trail Center!

Invitation to the Trail Center Legacy Campaign

by Dan Malmstrom

Whether you are a Park Partner member, local resident, business owner, park enthusiast or seasonal homeowner, you likely appreciate the legacy of personal, local stewardship at Glendalough State Park. Today, you are invited to galvanize your role in the continuation of this stewardship at a very pivotal time! The enclosed "Trail Center Legacy Campaign" form will be your opportunity to make that happen.

Centuries ago, the place we know as Glendalough was a treasured, natural sanctuary for indigenous people. Their stories of living in harmony with the land are told to us by the remarkable historical artifacts resting beneath the prairie soil. The story continued into the 20th century as the Cowles and Ballantine families paid-forward decades of enjoyment by donating their family retreat to the Nature Conservancy which ultimately became Minnesota's Glendalough State Park. This stewardship continued for another 30 years, as local Park Partners worked closely with the DNR to apply physical effort, fundraising, and advocacy to establish a unique Glendalough experience with its natural interpretation, archeology, primitive camping, heritage lake, restored prairies, silent sports, trails, dark skies, abundant wildlife and so many natural assets. It is not an overstatement to say Glendalough has been and will continue to be experienced by millions of families, visitors and students.

Our newest initiatives in local stewardship, which have been in the works since 2017, are the Sunset Lake Trail and a compelling new Trail Center. The Sunset Lake trail segment will enhance the Glendalough Trail System with a safe and beautiful prairie experience for walkers and bikers. The new Trail Center fulfills a much-needed facility to serve 130,000 visitors annually (and growing) and students from eight school districts with natural interpretation, rental concessions, restrooms, a new water access and parking area. This is designed to off-load visitor pressure on the Historic Lodge.

Today, you are invited to participate in Glendalough's future. The Glendalough Board invites each person with an affinity to Glendalough to consider a financial contribution to our 90-day campaign to complete the new Trail Center in the park, while continuing to move the Sunset Trail project forward. The DNR has asked us to help bridge the remaining \$300,000 funding gap on the two projects that total \$3.2 million. We intend to tackle this goal over the next 90 days to ensure both projects are well underway this fall.

Fortunately, we are thrilled that a local Park Partner will jump-start our Trail Center Legacy Campaign by matching

every dollar given during the next 90 days up to \$100,000! Yes, that's right. As each Park Partner pays-forward the legacy of Glendalough with their personal generosity, every dollar will be matched. Please consider joining your friends at Glendalough in this important campaign.

To be specific, here's how you can contribute:

- 1. Make a one-time donation to the Glendalough Park Partners long-term project fund.
- 2. Make a donation now in 2022, with a pledge to donate again in 2023.

(Glendalough Park Partners is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt entity, making your donations tax deductible)

These projects are in process now and we encourage you to use the enclosed form to make your donation and pledges. We plan to acknowledge donations and pledges from our partners unless anonymity is noted on the enclosed form. We appreciate all donations.

Additionally, many people have designated Glendalough Park Partners as a beneficiary in their wills, trusts, annuities and insurance policies. Although such designation will not impact the Trail Center project campaign now, your consideration in that regard will ensure Glendalough's positive impact on families in perpetuity. If you are so inclined, you may want to let us know of your future planned-giving intention, even if you cannot quantify an amount today.

Thank you for your continued support.

Scavenger Hunt 2022

by Sarah Govig

If you are planning to visit Glendalough during the next six weeks, it's still not too late to participate in the online Scavenger Hunt and become eligible for weekly and end of year prize drawings. The Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota sponsors the hunt with a goal to feature the natural and recreational highlights of the 69 participating parks statewide.

The Scavenger Hunt details can be accessed online and consists of a hunt checklist for each park. Each item will include an identifying photo and brief description or fun fact. https://www.parksandtrails.org/events/2022-hunts/

Don't worry if you cannot find all the items on the park checklist. Points are awarded for items you find and for completing the hunt with children. The experience of observing Glendalough's plants and animals will only enhance your visit to the park.

The weekly prize consists of a \$20 gift card drawing to Minnesota State Parks. An additional end of season drawing (September 13th) sponsored by Glendalough

Park Partners is a \$25 gift card to Galloping Goose, the concessionaire in the park.

Glendalough currently ranks in the top 10 for visitor participation in the Scavenger Hunt this summer. The park has had 30 entries, making it number six overall statewide. Tettegouche State Park, at 72 participants, ranks number one again this year.

Thanks for your interest in Glendalough. Best of luck as you explore the beauty and surprises in the park.

Jeff's Jottings by Park Manager Jeff Wiersma

The Buildings and Grounds Worker position was not filled due to a lack of applicants. It was offered to three different candidates at various times, and all declined. As a result, the park has been again short on staff this summer. Salary savings may be used to extend other seasonals into the fall to complete fall projects.

After a late spring, storms, and excessive heat, park attendance has seen a considerable drop of about 15,000 visitors, although camping attendance remains relatively stable. Yurts and cabins, however, have had more openings than in past summers, perhaps due to the heat.

With plenty of moisture, the prairie is full of flowers this year. Special thanks to the volunteers who picked pasqueflower seed this spring. There may be other harvesting opportunities this fall.

The North Star Trail Travelers held a Volksmarch event at Glendalough on the Saturday following the storm. Their route had to be changed at the last minute, but they had 37 walkers despite the storm damage and a rainy forecast. They followed up with a donation of \$164 to the park.

Overpayments through the Glendalough self-pay station are now considered donations that go directly to Glendalough's Gift Fund. In July, the Gift Fund received \$176 in overpayments, the second highest amount in the system. Now you can feel good about having just a \$10 bill to pay for the \$7 daily permit!

The park rescue boat sprung a leak after the June storm and had to be replaced with a different boat. There was, surprisingly, no damage to the boat lift. Go figure ...

The Dance Barn Collective held a "Dance Hike" at Glendalough in July to benefit the Park Partners.

Park Projects

Storm Damage – On Monday, June 20, severe storm with winds over 80 mph snapped off dozens of trees and downed many others throughout the park. Park staff, the resource crew, and Sentence-to-Service crews worked quickly to pull down hanging limbs and remove fallen trees and debris. Campground reservations were closed for two days, and visitors were discouraged during the initial cleanup due to the hazardous conditions. Day-use areas and the bike trail were opened by the third day, but some trails remained closed for more than a week. Though all facilities are open, cleanup will continue well into the fall.

Glendalough Trail Loop Completion – Project is bid-ready, but some funds have been moved to the trail center project as that project must commence before December 2022. (See this issue.) Full trail construction will not occur this fall.

New Trail Center – Design is 97% complete, but funding is still \$300,000 short, even after moving funds from the trail (above). A significant National Scenic Byways grant was written to supplement other funding, but is unlikely to succeed as it was not highly ranked among other grant applicants in Minnesota.

Whitetail Lane – Parks and Trails staff are continuing to work with a supportive Township Board, Park Partners, the Division of Lands and Minerals, and the State Park Road Account managers to extend the paved entrance road to the Annie Battle Lake carry-in access and, perhaps, even to the lodge.

<u>Road Signs</u> – Two road signs were snapped off by the June storm and are being re-installed by the County Highway Dept.

Building Sale/ Demolition – Still waiting...

Office Air Conditioning – Office heat/AC unit was damaged by the storm, and staff were without air conditioning for about a month until the unit could be reprogrammed.

<u>Park Roads</u> – Gravel was purchased to fill in washouts following the heavy rains in June. Additional gravel will be used to improve park service roads to the campground, yurts, and burn pile.

From St. Paul

The state legislature failed to pass a Bonding Bill this spring, putting a hold on many state park projects. One of the projects needing additional funding was the new Glendalough Trail Center (see details in this issue).



Glendalough State Park Advisory Board:

Steve Nelson – President (2022)

Dan Malmstrom – Vice President (2023)

Sarah Govig – Secretary (2024)

Peter Christianson – Treasurer (2024)

Tracy Kortlever (2024)

John Christensen (2022)

Chris Estes (2022)

Jay Anderson (2023)

Joan Vorderbruggen (2023)

DNR:

Ben Bergey, Parks and Trails Regional Manager Melody Webb, PAT Assistant Regional Manager Shawn Donais, PAT District 1 Supervisor Cindy Lueth, Region Resource Specialist Kathy Beaulieu, Regional Naturalist Ben Eckhoff, Area Naturalist

Glendalough State Park:

24869 Whitetail Lane Battle Lake, MN 56515-9654 (218) 261-6900

Jeff Wiersma, Park Manager

Glendalough Tracks & Trails is the newsletter of Glendalough State Park published quarterly by the Glendalough Park Partners

Tracy Kortlever • membership

NEW/RENEWING PARK PARTNERS

May 1st to August 1st, 2022

William & Teresa Varney, Battle Lake, MN Cheryl & Brock Reade, Crook, SD Jim & Vicki Trites, Henning, MN Timothy Baland, Battle Lake, MN Rita Loftness, Battle Lake, MN Matt & Susan Macheledt, New Richmond, WI Jack & Susan Donelan, Henning, MN Vern & Laural Floen, Fergus Falls, MN Ann Schmidt & John Wright, Battle Lake, MN Gary & Nancy Hoffman, Battle Lake, MN Peter & LouAnn Jacobson, Plymouth, MN Brenda Tyre, Oakes, ND Dan & Sandy Thimgan, Battle Lake, MN Melanie & Steven Greene, Battle Lake, MN Donald Kostelecky, Battle Lake, MN Clifford & Phyllis Knutson, Fergus Falls, MN Peggy Gunn & Thomas Peterson, Minneapolis, MN Jody & Mike Bjerke, Appleton, MN Gerald Ziesemer, Fergus Falls, MN Roberta Skibness, Battle Lake, MN Bob & Karen Wasson, Battle Lake, MN Dale & Leon Ebel, Jordan, MN James & Anne Eidsvold, Alexandria, MN John Bernauer, Battle Lake, MN Gerald & Bernice Davis, Wahpeton, ND Vicki & Gerald Rose, Mankato, MN Rob & Darlene Nelson, Rochester, MN Dave & Mary Bernauer, Battle Lake, MN Tanya & Byron Hensch, Battle Lake, MN Thomas Hintgen, Fergus Falls, MN

MEMORIAL/HONOR

Memorials given in honor of Ken Chermak:
David & Janet Blattner
Tanya & Byron Hensch
Ron & Kathy Rickers
Doe & Judy Loe

Memorial given in honor of Sandy Asche from Don & Judy Loe

Memorial given in honor of Don & Marlys Siems from Dirk Siems

Gift in honor of Ken & MaryJo Wentz from Woodlawn Resort

Thank you for keeping your memberships current.

Please check the date on the address label of your Tracks and
Trails to check your membership status. Send your membership

correspondence to:

Glendalough Park Partners PO Box 901 Battle Lake, MN 56515

Next board meeting: **Thursday, August 18, 7:00 p.m.** in the Lodge Meeting minutes will be available upon request.

Thank you, Park Partners!

To Renew or to Become a Glendalough Park Partner:

Choose one of the following levels:

Park Pal (\$10) 1 year subscription to Tracks & Trails

Supporter (\$25) 1 year of Tracks & Trails + magnet

Donor (\$50) 1 year of T & T + Commemorative Walk T-shirt circle size: S M L XL 2XL

 $\begin{array}{c} Patron~(~\$100~)\\ 1~year~of~T~\&~T+Glendalough~History~DVD \end{array}$

 $\begin{array}{c} Benefactor \,(\,\$500\,) \\ 1 \; year \; of \; T \;\&\; T + Glendalough \; print \end{array}$

No Gift Desired (check box)

Send your tax-deductible contribution to:
Glendalough Park Partners
PO Box 901
Battle Lake, MN 56515



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Have you renewed your Park Partners membership?



