



Dear Friends of Isle Royale,

Thank you for your continued interest in the ongoing planning efforts at Isle Royale National Park (the park). The intent of the newsletter is to provide a brief update in the status of two ongoing planning efforts at the park and to notify you that there will be an opportunity to comment on them when they are released later this year.

This newsletter describes the following two planning processes:

- Wilderness Stewardship Plan and Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (WSP/SEIS)
- Cultural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment (CRMP/EA)

Planning for wilderness stewardship began with a Draft Backcountry Management Plan and, subsequently, a Final Backcountry Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement in 2011. Feedback received on previous planning effort will be incorporated into the current plan. The current plan is inclusive of all past documents, and presents a comprehensive vision of wilderness stewardship, including the treatment of historic structures in wilderness and issues related to their use.

Simultaneously with the WSP/SEIS, the park has been working on a Cultural Resource Management Plan. The CRMP/EA proposes a long-term comprehensive strategy for managing the park's cultural resources outside of wilderness. If implemented, it will: (1) ensure consistent and appropriate identification of cultural resources, (2) inform preservation treatment, and (3) guide future public use and interpretation of these resources. This plan will provide specific guidance and set priorities for the management of these cultural resources.

As planning progressed on the WSP/SEIS and the CRMP, it became clear there was overlap in the planning processes, specifically associated with the evaluation of treatments and uses of historic structures and landscapes in potential and designated wilderness. The NPS has determined that the evaluation of the alternatives for the retention or removal of historic structures in proposed and designated wilderness will occur in the WSP/SEIS. Historic structures in wilderness are not addressed in the CRMP. The benefit of this approach is that all information about historic structures in proposed and designated wilderness can be found in one document, as can the associated analysis of impacts to wilderness character and cultural resources.

After reviewing the remaining actions in the CRMP and the associated impacts, the park determined that the actions to be evaluated in the CRMP have no potential for significant impacts. Therefore, the park will be completing an environmental assessment (EA) for the CRMP rather than an EIS as originally proposed. This change from an EIS to an EA for the CRMP does not alter the NPS section 106 consultation process or the opportunity to participate in the planning processes for either document.

The table below offers a comparison and explanation of the purpose and contents of each document.

	Cultural Resources Management Plan	Wilderness Stewardship Plan
Type of NEPA document	EA	Supplemental EIS
Purpose	The park is proposing priorities and key management actions for its cultural resources, including archeological resources, cultural landscapes, historic structures and districts, museum collections, and ethnographic resources. This CRMP is intended to help prioritize the limited staff time and resources available for documentation and maintenance of the wide scope and variety of cultural resources at the park and to determine appropriate visitor use and access to its various cultural resources.	The purpose of this plan is to outline strategies for preserving wilderness character, including the treatment of cultural resources in wilderness, while also providing for the use and enjoyment of the park by current and future generations. This plan proposes alternatives for the preservation and use of historic structures, districts, and landscapes in potential and designated wilderness areas. The SEIS evaluates the potential impacts of these actions on both wilderness character and cultural resources.
What is included?	The document lays out management activities and treatment actions for cultural resources at the park outside wilderness areas. The document analyzes impacts on the park's physical resources, as well as on the visitor's experience of them. It presents a vision of proactive stewardship, research priorities, and visitor opportunities for the park's varied archeological, historic, and ethnographic resources.	The WSP evaluates potential management actions in wilderness, including day and overnight group limits, wilderness zone changes, use and preservation of historic structures in potential and designated wilderness and actions related to campgrounds and trails. The WSP/SEIS presents the impacts of these actions to wilderness character qualities and cultural resources.

Schedule and Next Steps

SEPTEMBER 2018	WSP/SEIS and CRMP/EA released for 45-day public comment including public meetings
FALL/WINTER 2018	Review and analyze comments on the two plans
WINTER 2018/2019	Prepare WSP/Final EIS and Finalize CRMP/EA
SPRING 2019	FEIS released/ Record of Decision/ CRMP FONSI

