**The National Park Service is preparing a plan for the Kettle Falls area of Voyageurs National Park**

## Voyageurs NP Background

Voyageurs National Park (VOYA) encompasses 218,054 acres of land and water along the Canadian border in northern Minnesota. The park was established in 1975 with a mission to preserve, protect, and enhance resources in the Rainy, Kabetogama, Namakan, and Sand Point Lakes areas. Voyageurs is a water-based park. The main body of land within the park's boundary, the Kabetogama Peninsula, is only accessible by boat, seaplane, or snowmobile.

## Kettle Falls Background

Kettle Falls is located at the end of the Kabetogama Peninsula. The area has been used by various peoples throughout history. Native Americans once gathered and hunted at the falls, voyageurs paddled and portaged through the area with their goods and furs, and prospectors stopped at the falls on their way to gold mines at Rainy Lake.



*The Kettle Falls Hotel. Credit: NPS.*

The Kettle Falls Hotel was built during the 1910s soon after construction on the dams at Kettle Falls began. The hotel initially served those who worked on the dam, followed by lumberjacks, commercial fishermen, trappers, and traders. As commercial fishing declined over the years, tourists became the hotel's primary patrons.

Today, Kettle Falls is a popular destination for tourists in Voyageurs National Park that has several docks, scenic trails, and lodging options. The Kettle Falls Hotel and adjacent villas operate from late May through mid-September, and are the only lodging available in Voyageurs National Park. Most of the Kettle Falls area does not meet universal accessibility standards and many structures in the area are in need of improvements.



*Map of Kettle Falls area. Credit: NPS*

## Plan Purpose

The purpose of the Kettle Falls Site Development Plan is to enhance the visitor and employee experience in the Kettle Falls area. The plan will expand employee housing options and consider improvements to recreational amenities, accessibility, wayfinding, and overnight opportunities for visitors. Site improvements taken into consideration in this plan include access for boats, houseboats, and seaplanes; additional concession staff housing; overnight lodging for visitors; and trails and other day-use amenities. Once the site development plan is complete, the compliance phase of the project will begin in which an environmental assessment will be prepared.

## Timeline

The estimated timeline for the project is shown below with the red star indicating approximately where we are in the site development plan process. Once the National Park Service (NPS) finishes researching and develops a proposed alternative this summer, they will begin the process of drafting the site development plan.

| October 2018 – December 2019 Planning Phase | | | January 2020 – July 2020 NEPA/Compliance Phase | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Oct 2018 – Jun 2019 | Jun – Aug 2019 | Aug – Dec 2019 | Jan – Apr 2020 | Apr – May 2020 | Jul 2020 |
| NPS research and develops a proposed alternative ★ | Outline and draft plan | Review of draft plan and public meeting | Outline and draft Environmental Assessment | Public review of Environmental Assessment | Decision (FONSI assumed) |

## Planning Team

An inter-divisional team that includes representatives at VOYA National Park, the NPS Midwest Regional Office, the Denver Service Center, and the Washington D.C. Area Support Office meets regularly to share information and discuss goals and objectives as they work towards developing a site development plan for the Kettle Falls area.

## Contact Information

Stay in touch with the park, check for updates, public meeting notices, or get other information on the park's website at: https://www.nps.gov/voya/ and search for Kettle Falls.

You may also contact Leigh Johnson, project manager for the site development plan, at leigh_johnson@nps.gov or 402-661-1740 or contact Bob DeGross, Voyageurs superintendent, at 218-283-6600.

Learn more and connect with Voyageurs National Park:

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