

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Prepared for:

GUNFLINT TRAIL
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Prepared by:

Quinn Evans Architects
1037 Sherman Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

Final - April 2014

Cover Illustration: C-W 150, Collection of the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center.

Publication Credits: Information in this publication may be copied and used, with the condition that full credit is given to the authors, their companies, and the Gunflint Trail Historical Society. Appropriate citations and bibliographic credits should be made for each use.

Notice: The manuscript has been authored by Quinn Evans Architects, under a contract with the Gunflint Trail Historical Society. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society retains and the publishers, by accepting the article for publication, acknowledges that the Gunflint Trail Historical Society retains a non-exclusive, paid-up, irrevocable, world-wide license to publish or reproduce the published form of this manuscript, or allow others to do so.

Gunflint Trail Historical Society Mission Statement: The mission of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society shall be to preserve the history of the Gunflint Trail and its early settlers for residents, guests, travelers, and future generations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The preparation of this report has been greatly enhanced by contributions made by several individuals. Throughout the project, the members of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society (GTHS) have provided information, assistance, criticism, and guidance reflecting their outstanding knowledge of, and dedication to, the resources and local community. It has been a privilege working with these individuals whose long-term commitment to the community and museum have contributed greatly to the preservation of their cultural heritage. In particular, Sue Kerfoot served as the project contact for the GTHS, providing well-organized research materials, advice, local knowledge and introductions to key contacts.

Oral history information and historic photographs were generously shared by several people with connections to Chik-Wauk including Robert and Cornelia Einsweiler, Janet Butler Gouvas, John and Claudia Daly, Nancy Nunstedt Borgen, Norbert Mayer, Phyllis Noyes, Rick Anderson, and Ted Sage. Although circumstances sadly did not provide the opportunity to discuss Chik-Wauk with Ralph and Bea Griffis, their earlier contributions to the museum were of great value to the project.

Superior National Forest staff members Lee Johnson, Forest Archeologist, Nancy Larson, Gunflint District Ranger, and Christy Iozzo, Realty Specialist, offered essential contributions related to future management of the property. Lee Johnson also offered support throughout the project by supplying background materials and thoughtful review comments. Natascha Weiner of the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office provided guidance, suggestions, and reviews to ensure that the CLR addresses concerns of that office and provides a foundation for future additions to the property.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

<i>Project Scope</i>	1- 1
<i>Project Objectives</i>	1-2
<i>Location</i>	1- 3
<i>Description of the Project Area</i>	1- 4
<i>Report Methodology</i>	1- 6
<i>Cultural Landscape Terminology</i>	1-8

CHAPTER 2: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

<i>Overview</i>	2-1
<i>Activities prior to establishment of Chik-Wauk Resort</i>	2-2
1931-1952: <i>Nunstedt Ownership and Establishment of Chik-Wauk Resort</i>	2-6
1952-1958: <i>Noyes / Brugger Ownership of Chik-Wauk Resort</i>	2- 17
1958-1980: <i>Griffis Ownership of Chik-Wauk Resort</i>	2- 22
1980-2005: <i>USFS Use of the Property</i>	2- 63
2005-present: <i>Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center</i>	2-64

CHAPTER 3: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

<i>Overview of Significance</i>	3-1
<i>National Register Recommendations</i>	3-3

CHAPTER 4: EXISTING CONDITIONS & LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

<i>Overview</i>	4-1
<i>Landscape Characteristics</i>	4-2
<i>Response to Natural Environment</i>	4-2
<i>Spatial Organization</i>	4-5
<i>Vegetation</i>	4-9
<i>Views</i>	4-11
<i>Topography</i>	4-24
<i>Patterns of Circulation</i>	4-26
<i>Buildings and Structures</i>	4-28
<i>Small Scale Features</i>	4-31
<i>Archeological Resources</i>	4-37
<i>Summary of Contributing Resources</i>	4-38

CHAPTER 5: TREATMENT PHILOSOPHY,
MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND
SITE PROGRAM

Treatment Philosophy 5- 1
Management Issues / Site Program 5-2
Chik-Wauk Building Space Needs 5-4

CHAPTER 6: LANDSCAPE MASTER PLAN

Recommended Master Plan, Alternative 4: Combined Approach 6-2

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX A: TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

PROJECT SCOPE

The Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center occupies a property that served as a Minnesota Northern Border Lakes fishing resort and canoe trip outfitter from ca. 1930 until 1980. Today, the property is located within the Superior National Forest adjacent to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness on Saganaga Lake at the end of the Gunflint Trail National Scenic Byway (Cook County Highway 12). The property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007 for its local significance as a representative of “a unique historical pattern of fishing-resort outdoor recreation that flourished in the Border Lakes Country of northeastern Minnesota, in and around the lakes and streams of the Superior National Forest, from the 1920s to the early 1960s.”¹

The museum and nature center are housed in the former Chik-Wauk Lodge building. Constructed in 1933-34, the rough-cut stone lodge building was the centerpiece of the rustic resort complex that provided tourists with fishing excursions, lodging in rustic-style cabins with a choice of American Plan accommodations (including meals in the lodge) or housekeeping cabins (where visitors cooked their own meals). A bunkhouse was also available for wilderness trippers to spend the night at the beginning or end of their trip.

The intent of this *Cultural Landscape Report (CLR)* is to guide treatment and use of the above-ground resources associated with the significant historic landscape within the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center project area (see Figure 1-1). A thorough investigation and evaluation of the historic landscape has been conducted using National Park Service (NPS) and National Register of Historic Places guidelines. The documentation of historic significance and evaluation of integrity of the landscape serves as a framework upon which treatment recommendations are developed. The report provides site managers with a comprehensive understanding of the physical evolution of the historic landscape, and guidance for future landscape management.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

A number of project objectives laid the framework for the development of the project and report:

1. Document the development of the historic landscapes within the Chik-Wauk Resort Complex.
2. Document the existing conditions within the Chik-Wauk project area.
3. Evaluate the significance and integrity of the historic landscapes.
4. Develop and evaluate treatment alternatives for landscape design and management.
5. Provide treatment recommendations for managing the historic landscape resources within the project area.
6. Provide management recommendations and schematic designs for the historic core that accommodate current and future needs while preserving the historic character and significant landscape features present.
7. Enhance visitor experience by providing information about the history of the development of the historic landscape to interpreters and site managers.

LOCATION

Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center is located in northeastern Minnesota, on the southeast edge of Saganaga Lake near the end of the Gunflint Trail. The site is located approximately 55 miles northwest of Grand Marais, Minnesota, and can be reached via the Gunflint Trail (Cook County Road 12) and Moose Pond Drive (Cook County Road 81).

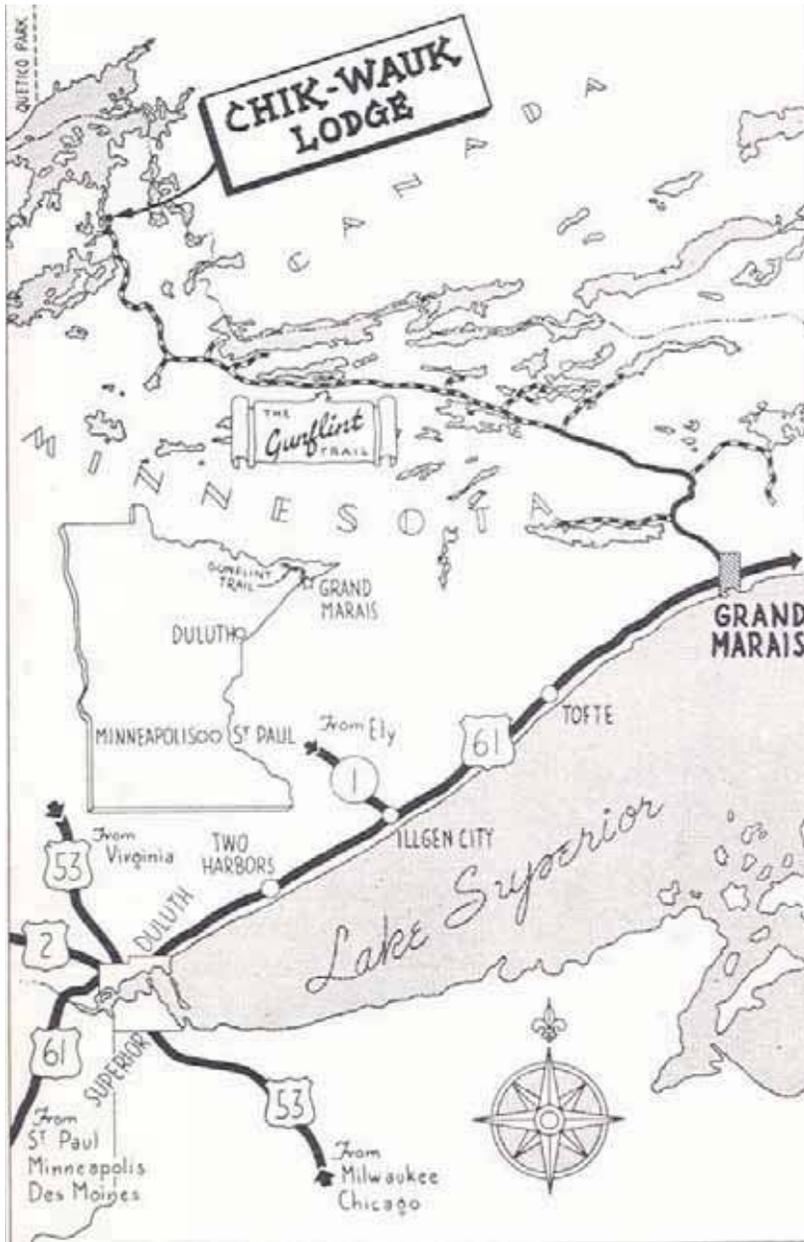


Figure 1-1: Location of Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center (source: C-W 241a)

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AREA

The facility is operated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society (GTHS) through a partnership with the Superior National Forest, Gunflint Ranger District (operating under a Special Use Permit). The goal of the society is to “preserve the history of the Gunflint Trail and its early settlers for residents, guests, travelers, and future generations.” The story of the Gunflint Trail is relayed to visitors at the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center through exhibits and interpretive displays that present the cultural and natural history of the community.²

Since it opened in 2010, the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center has become a popular destination for visitors and residents of the area. The museum is housed in the former Chik-Wauk Lodge, a stone building constructed in 1934 as the main lodge and dining area for Chik-Wauk Resort. The National Register boundary for the property encompasses an area including the lodge/museum building as well as the peninsula and surrounding harbor area (see figure 1-2).

When the nomination was prepared, the boundary was intended to include the historic viewshed from the main lodge building, as well as the area of resort operation during the period of significance (1930-1962). The boundary includes the footprints of multiple guest cabins and outbuildings and other historic features relating to the period of resort operations. Further analysis of the historic landscape is provided in Chapters 3 and 4 of this report.

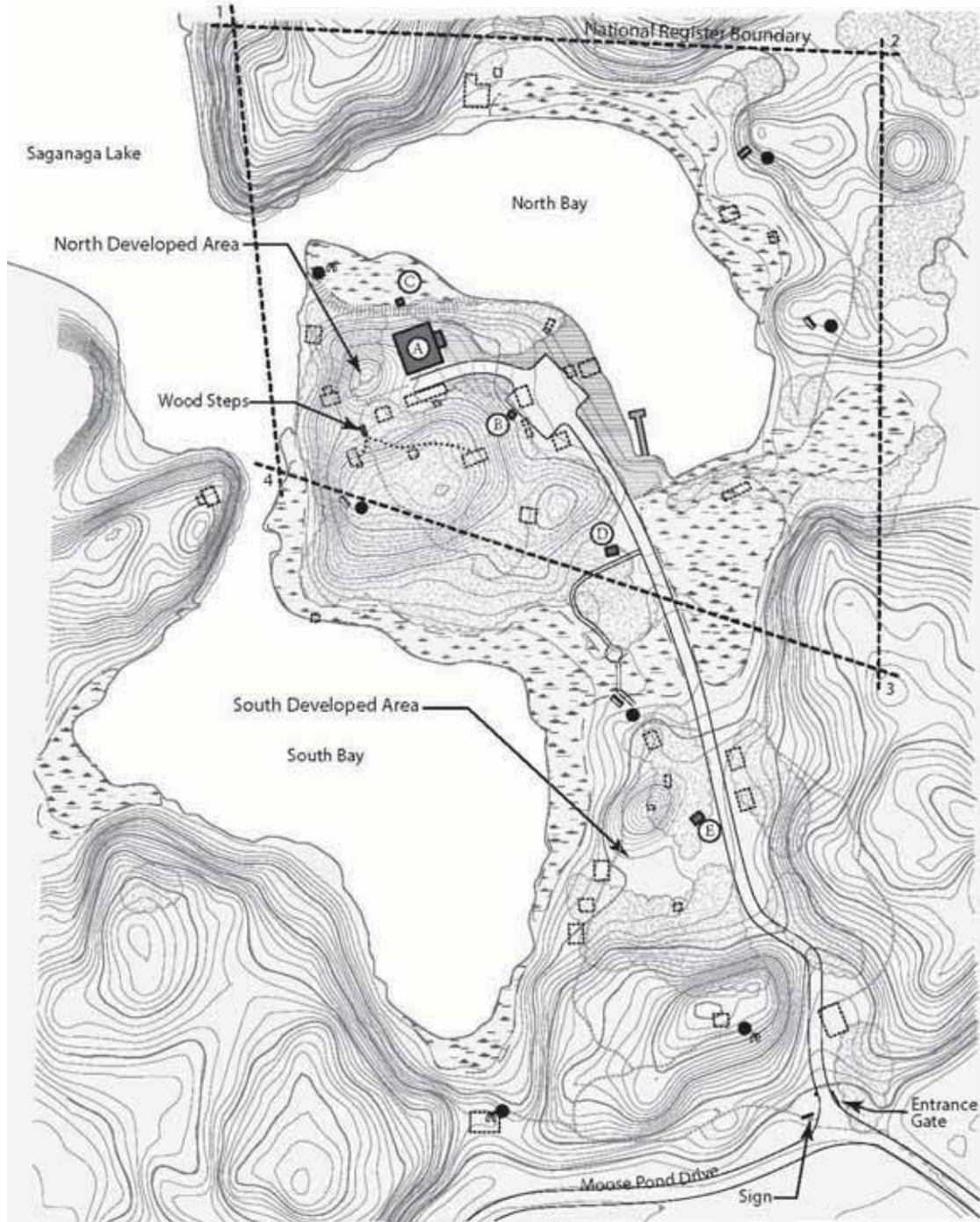


Figure 1-2: Chik-Wauk project area and National Register Boundary (see Figure C, Existing Conditions)

REPORT METHODOLOGY

This project has been undertaken using a *cultural landscape approach* according to federal standards guiding cultural landscape projects including *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques*, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, and other pertinent documents.³ This approach includes building a foundation of historical documentation as a basis for understanding the evolution of significant landscapes. The historical information is presented herein in the form of historic landscape chronologies that outline the physical development of the Chik-Wauk property during key time periods. Period of landscape change diagrams illustrate two historic phases using consistent scales and graphic styles, to allow for easy comparison of landscape conditions from one period to the next.

Research was based on three main sources of historic information including the Chik-Wauk Museum archives, oral history interviews and questioners, and documents provided by the United States Forest Service Superior National Forest. Sue Kerfoot shared a wealth of historic photographs, oral history interview transcripts, and local knowledge from the Chik-Wauk Museum collection that served as the foundation of research for the project. A number of individuals who used to work or vacation at Chik-Wauk were contacted and asked to fill out questioners. Respondents included John and Claudia Daly who were employees at Chik-Wauk during the summers of 1964-1968 and in 1971 and continued to visit the Griffis until they no longer came to the property; Janet Gouvas (nee Butler) who worked at Chik-Wauk during the summers of 1971-1978 and also visited later; Rick Anderson who worked as a dock boy/fishing guide during the summer of 1973; Norbert Mayer who lived at the property with his parents (the Nunstedts) beginning in 1933; Nancy Nunstedt Borgen, who lived at the property with her parents (the Nunstedts) during her childhood; Phyllis Noyes who owned and operated the resort with her husband Carl Noyes and sister and brother-in-law, Erma and Herb Brugger from 1951 to 1953; Robert and Cornelia Einsweiler; Ted Sage, and Jan Baucom Myers who worked for the Griffis in the 1970s. Lee Johnson of the Superior National Forest provided documents related to the federal acquisition and management of the property, as well as historic aerial photographs.

Following documentation of the historic evolution of the physical landscape, existing landscape characteristics were assessed. Landscape characteristics include tangible and intangible aspects of a landscape from the historic periods; these aspects individually and collectively give a landscape its historic character and aid in the understanding of its cultural importance. Landscape characteristics relevant to Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center include: response to the natural environment, spatial organization, vegetation, patterns of circulation, views, topography, buildings and structures, and small scale features. Descriptions of existing conditions and an analysis of integrity are provided for each of the landscape characteristics.

The information regarding the development of the historic landscape, existing conditions, and analysis of integrity of the property provide a foundation upon which decisions are made regarding future design and management of the landscape. This began with the selection of a Rehabilitation Approach to treatment as the most suitable approach given the future needs of the Museum and Nature Center. Management issues related to current and future plans for the facility were outlined, as were the goals of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society for the

operation. Potential sites for necessary facilities were evaluated with careful consideration for potential impacts to cultural resources and a recommended treatment plan was developed.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE TERMINOLOGY

This section includes definitions of terminology used in the report that may be unfamiliar to the reader.

Cultural Landscape – a geographic area (including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein), associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values. There are four general types of cultural landscapes, not mutually exclusive: historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes.⁴

Cultural Landscape Report - refers to the primary management document for cultural landscapes within the National Park Service. A cultural landscape report documents the history and existing conditions of a cultural landscape, evaluates its significance according to Secretary of Interior standards, and provides design and management recommendations for the property.

Integrity – the authenticity of a property’s historic identity, evinced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property’s historic or prehistoric period. The seven qualities of integrity as defined by the National Register Program are location, setting, feeling, association, design, workmanship, and materials.

Significance – the meaning or value ascribed to a cultural landscape based on the National Register criteria for evaluation. It normally stems from a combination of association and integrity.

Treatment - work carried out to achieve a particular historic preservation goal.

Vernacular - a term used to categorize methods of construction which use locally available resources and traditions to address local needs. These resources tend to evolve over time and reflect the environmental, cultural and historical context in which it exists.

Historic vernacular landscape - a landscape that evolved through use by the people whose activities or occupancy shaped it. Through social or cultural attitudes of an individual, a family, or a community, the landscape reflects the physical, biological, and cultural character of everyday lives. Function plays a significant role in vernacular landscapes. This can be a farm complex or a district of historic farmsteads along a river valley. Examples include rural historic districts and agricultural landscapes.

Character-defining feature - a prominent or distinctive aspect, quality, or characteristic of a cultural landscape that contributes significantly to its physical character. Land use patterns, vegetation, furnishings, decorative details and materials may be such features.

Feature - The smallest element(s) of a landscape that contributes to the significance and that can be the subject of a treatment intervention. Examples include a woodlot, hedge, lawn, specimen plant, house, meadow or open field, fence, wall, earthwork, pond or pool, bollard, orchard, or agricultural terrace.

Historic character - the sum of all visual aspects, features, materials, and spaces associated with a cultural landscape's history, i.e. the original configuration together with losses and later changes. These qualities are often referred to as character-defining.

*Landscape Characteristics*⁵ – tangible and intangible aspects of a landscape from the historic periods; these aspects individually and collectively give a landscape its historic character and aid in the understanding of its cultural importance. Those relevant to the Chik-Wauk property include:

Response to the Natural Environment - Ways that natural aspects influence the development and resultant form of a landscape.

Spatial Organization - Arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces.

Views - Features that create or allow a range of vision which can be natural or designed and controlled.

Topography - Three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features and orientation.

Vegetation – Native or introduced trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous materials.

Patterns of Circulation - Spaces, features, and materials that constitute systems of movement.

Buildings and structures - Three-dimensional constructs such as houses, barns, garages, stables, bridges and memorials.

Small Scale Features - Elements that provide detail and diversity combined with function and aesthetics.

Archeological Resources – Material remains or physical evidence of past human life or activities that are of archeological interest, including the record of the effects of human activities on the environment. They are capable of revealing scientific or humanistic information through archeological research.

¹ Clayton, William J. *National Register Nomination, Chik-Wauk Lodge, 2007, Section 8, page 1.*

² Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center website: www.chikwauk.com.

³ Page, Robert R., Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, 1998. *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program), and Birnbaum, Charles A. and Christine Capella Peters, 1996. *The Secretary of the Interior's*

Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes. Washington DC: Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 3-5.

⁴ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, Defining Landscape Terminology, <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/landscape-guidelines/terminology.htm>.

⁵ Page, Robert R., Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, 1998. *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program).

CHAPTER 2:

CHIK-WAUK LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY & PERIOD OF CHANGE PLANS

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER 2

The cultural landscape at Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center is a vernacular landscape that evolved through the use and activities related to a backwoods cabin resort at the property. Unlike places that are built according to formal designs prepared to reflect a specific style, this landscape was designed by the people operating the resort, based on their day-to-day needs. Choices of locations for buildings, roads, docks, and service areas were made to capitalize on views of the surrounding lake for visitor-related facilities, and ease of use for the many service-related activities associated with the resort. During the fifty years that the property operated as a resort, changes occurred on a regular basis. Cabins and out buildings (including generator sheds, ice houses, fish cleaning houses, boat houses, and other outbuildings) were added, relocated, or removed as needed to adjust to modifications at the property made to meet tourist expectations, staff housing needs, equipment storage, and other requirements. Buildings were repurposed to serve new uses as their former operations became obsolete. The landscape chronology and period of change plans presented in this chapter document known events that occurred at the property that affected the physical landscape conditions.

The landscape chronology is presented as six time periods, organized according to the owners and managers of the landscape. The initial section is a brief description of conditions known to exist during the period prior to the development of Chik-Wauk Resort. This is followed by information related to the original development of Chik-Wauk Resort by the Nunstedt family who owned and operated the resort from 1931 through 1952. A Historic Period Plan illustrates the conditions known to exist during this period (see Figure A, Nunstedt Ownership, 1931-1952). Only a small amount of information related to the landscape during the period between 1952 and 1958 was found. During the short span, the resort was owned by Carl and Phyllis Noyes and Herb and Erma Brugger. It appears that only minor changes occurred to landscape conditions during this episode. In 1958, Ralph and Bea Griffis purchased the property from the Bruggers. The Griffis ran the resort until 1980, when they sold the property to the United States Forest Service. A second Historic Period Plan illustrates the conditions at the resort during the Griffis' ownership (see Figure B, Griffis Ownership, 1958-1980).

Although the Griffis retained a lease on a portion of the property and continued to live there seasonally until the year 2000, the resort ceased to operate, and major changes to the landscape were implemented by the USFS after 1980. In 2010, the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center opened in the newly rehabilitated lodge building, marking the beginning of a new era of use and activity at the site.

operation. Potential sites for necessary facilities were evaluated with careful consideration for potential impacts to cultural resources and a recommended treatment plan was developed.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE TERMINOLOGY

This section includes definitions of terminology used in the report that may be unfamiliar to the reader.

Cultural Landscape – a geographic area (including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein), associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values. There are four general types of cultural landscapes, not mutually exclusive: historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes.⁴

Cultural Landscape Report - refers to the primary management document for cultural landscapes within the National Park Service. A cultural landscape report documents the history and existing conditions of a cultural landscape, evaluates its significance according to Secretary of Interior standards, and provides design and management recommendations for the property.

Integrity – the authenticity of a property’s historic identity, evinced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property’s historic or prehistoric period. The seven qualities of integrity as defined by the National Register Program are location, setting, feeling, association, design, workmanship, and materials.

Significance – the meaning or value ascribed to a cultural landscape based on the National Register criteria for evaluation. It normally stems from a combination of association and integrity.

Treatment - work carried out to achieve a particular historic preservation goal.

Vernacular - a term used to categorize methods of construction which use locally available resources and traditions to address local needs. These resources tend to evolve over time and reflect the environmental, cultural and historical context in which it exists.

Historic vernacular landscape - a landscape that evolved through use by the people whose activities or occupancy shaped it. Through social or cultural attitudes of an individual, a family, or a community, the landscape reflects the physical, biological, and cultural character of everyday lives. Function plays a significant role in vernacular landscapes. This can be a farm complex or a district of historic farmsteads along a river valley. Examples include rural historic districts and agricultural landscapes.

Character-defining feature - a prominent or distinctive aspect, quality, or characteristic of a cultural landscape that contributes significantly to its physical character. Land use patterns, vegetation, furnishings, decorative details and materials may be such features.

Feature - The smallest element(s) of a landscape that contributes to the significance and that can be the subject of a treatment intervention. Examples include a woodlot, hedge, lawn, specimen plant, house, meadow or open field, fence, wall, earthwork, pond or pool, bollard, orchard, or agricultural terrace.

Historic character - the sum of all visual aspects, features, materials, and spaces associated with a cultural landscape's history, i.e. the original configuration together with losses and later changes. These qualities are often referred to as character-defining.

*Landscape Characteristics*⁵ – tangible and intangible aspects of a landscape from the historic periods; these aspects individually and collectively give a landscape its historic character and aid in the understanding of its cultural importance. Those relevant to the Chik-Wauk property include:

Response to the Natural Environment - Ways that natural aspects influence the development and resultant form of a landscape.

Spatial Organization - Arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces.

Views - Features that create or allow a range of vision which can be natural or designed and controlled.

Topography - Three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features and orientation.

Vegetation – Native or introduced trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous materials.

Patterns of Circulation - Spaces, features, and materials that constitute systems of movement.

Buildings and structures - Three-dimensional constructs such as houses, barns, garages, stables, bridges and memorials.

Small Scale Features - Elements that provide detail and diversity combined with function and aesthetics.

Archeological Resources – Material remains or physical evidence of past human life or activities that are of archeological interest, including the record of the effects of human activities on the environment. They are capable of revealing scientific or humanistic information through archeological research.

¹ Clayton, William J. *National Register Nomination, Chik-Wauk Lodge, 2007, Section 8, page 1.*

² Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center website: www.chikwauk.com.

³ Page, Robert R., Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, 1998. *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program), and Birnbaum, Charles A. and Christine Capella Peters, 1996. *The Secretary of the Interior's*

Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes. Washington DC: Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 3-5.

⁴ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, Defining Landscape Terminology, <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/landscape-guidelines/terminology.htm>.

⁵ Page, Robert R., Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, 1998. *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program).