

**MNDOT HISTORIC ROADSIDE DEVELOPMENT
STRUCTURES INVENTORY**

CK-TFT-001
CS 1601

Berglund, Ray, Roadside Parking Area

Historic Name	Berglund, Ray, Roadside Parking Area	CS #	1601
Other Name	Berglund, Ray, State Scenic Mem Wayside	SHPO Inv #	CK-TFT-001

Location	N side of TH 61 250' E of the Onion River	Hwy	TH 61
City/Township	Tofte Township	District	1A
County	Cook	Reference	86.4

Twp Rng Sec	59N 4W Sec 12	Acres	.25
USGS Quad	Tofte	Rest Area Class	4
UTM	Z15 E667537 N5275177		

Designer	Unknown	SP #	
-----------------	---------	-------------	--

Builder	Minn Dept of Highways (MHD)	SHPO Review #	
----------------	-----------------------------	----------------------	--

Historic Use	Roadside Parking Area	MHS Photo #	013541.12-17 013544.04-06
Present Use	Roadside Parking Area		

Yr of Landscape Design	Ca. 1953	MnDOT Historic Photo Album	
Overall Site Integrity	Intact/Slightly Altered		
Review Required	Yes		

National Register Status	Not Eligible, see Statement of Significance
---------------------------------	---

Historic Context	
-------------------------	--

List of Standing Structures

Feat#	Feature Type	Year Built	
01	Signpost, Other	Ca. 1953	
02	Marker	1959	
NOTE: Landscape features are not listed in this table			

Fieldwork Date	10-11-97
-----------------------	----------

Prep by	Gemini Research Dec. 98 G1. 5
----------------	----------------------------------

Prep for	Site Development Unit Cultural Resources Unit Environmental Studies Unit
-----------------	--

Final Report	Historic Roadside Development Structures on Minnesota Trunk Highways (1998)
---------------------	---

■ BRIEF

The Ray Berglund Roadside Parking Area is located on the northern side of T.H. 61 about 300' east of the Onion River. It is located about 3.4 miles west of Lutsen and 3.5 miles east of Tofte.

■ STANDING STRUCTURES

Wooden Sign. Erected circa 1953 by MHD. Near the southwestern corner of the site is a wooden hanging arm-style sign. It is supported by a vertical square timber. Across the top of the arm is a stylized ironwork scroll. The sign is inscribed with an outline of the state of Minnesota and the words "Ray Berglund State Scenic Memorial Wayside."

Plaque on Bluff. Erected 1959 by Family and Friends of Ray Berglund. At the western edge of the parking area is a rectangular bronze plaque affixed to a natural bluff. The plaque is approached by a 10'-long, 3'-wide fieldstone walkway that is overgrown with grass. Directly in front of the plaque is one 4' by 5' flagstone step, also overgrown. The text of the plaque addresses the establishment of the wayside in commemoration of Ray Berglund. (See text at the end of this document.)

■ OTHER LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND PLANTINGS

The site consists of a simple, asphalt-paved, pull-off that widens into a paved parking area that measures about 42' by 130'. A long, narrow 8'-wide grassy island separates the parking area from T.H. 61. The parking area has a concrete curb along the northern side and wooden posts (overgrown by trees and brush) along the western and eastern sides and along the island. The parking area is surrounded by steep wooded bluffs. It has a nice view of Lake Superior.

At the southwestern corner of the parking area, near the T.H. 61 shoulder, stands the wooden sign. A few feet north of the sign, also at the western edge of the parking area, the Berglund plaque is affixed to a natural bluff. A set of five or six trail steps leads up the wooded bluff from the northwestern corner of the parking area. (It is not clear whether the steps are manmade or produced naturally by the rock, which breaks off easily.)

The only planting on the site is the grass on the island between the parking area and the highway.

■ SETTING

The site is located in a rural, forested, scenic area on the northern side of T.H. 61, which follows the shore of Lake Superior at this point. The parking area is located about 120' north of the lakeshore and about 500' east of the Onion River. It is surrounded by T.H. 61 and Lake Superior on the south, a forested bluff on the north, and forests and the T.H. 61 right-of-way on the east and west.

■ **INTEGRITY**

Alterations

The site appears to be essentially intact, although the parking area may originally have been gravel. The site retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Notes on Condition

The site is in fair to good condition and appears to be minimally maintained.

■ **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Minnesota legislature established the Ray Berglund State Wayside in 1951. Ray Berglund (1895-1948), of St. Paul, was a prominent lumberman and conservationist. In 1948, friends of Ray Berglund had contributed to a fund to purchase this land at the mouth of the Onion River for a wayside rest in his memory. Approximately 54 acres of land were purchased, deeded to the state in 1949, and added to the state park system in 1951. The State Parks Division planned to develop the site, but only the .25-acre wayside rest was developed. The wayside was built by the Roadside Development Division of the Minnesota Department of Highways circa 1953. The only early plan sheet that has been found locates the site but does not specify the size and shape of the parking area or provide any other details. It is dated August 1953. The memorial plaque was added to the site in 1959.

Site Development Unit files indicate that in 1961 this site contained a parking area and guardrail. By circa 1964, there were picnic tables, curbing, a privy, and refuse containers at the site.

■ **PREVIOUS SHPO REVIEWS**

There have apparently been no previous SHPO cultural resource reviews of the property.

■ **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Ray Berglund Roadside Parking Area has a very simple site design and few distinguishing features. It was developed in the 1950s. This property has been evaluated within the historic context "Roadside Development on Minnesota Trunk Highways, 1920-1960." It is recommended that the rest area is NOT ELIGIBLE for the National Register under this historic context because it does not meet the context's registration requirements.

■ **OTHER COMMENTS**

This property may require further evaluation for potential archaeological resources.

T.H. 61 past this site is very busy during the summer months.

The text of the marker is specifically associated with the site of the wayside rest (the name of the roadside parking area is mentioned in the marker text).

■ REFERENCES

Meyer, Roy W. *Everyone's Country Estate. A History of Minnesota's State Parks.* St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1991.

Site Plans. Minnesota Department of Transportation, St. Paul.

■ ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND TEXT OF PLAQUE

The Onion River derived its name from a Paul Bunyan legend. The legend says that wild onions grew in such abundance in the area, that Paul Bunyan's loggers shed tears while cutting lumber.

Lake Superior and T.H. 61

Lake Superior is the largest body of fresh water in the world. The lake is 383 miles long, 160 miles wide, and is 489' to 1,400' deep. The Ojibwe called the Lake "Kitchigumi," meaning "Great Water." The early French traders called the lake "Lac Superieur" because it was located at the head of the Great Lakes. By the early 1920s, Duluth and the North Shore area had become a mecca for tourists.

Trunk Highway 1 along the North Shore was built during the 1920s and 1930s and named the "Lake Superior International Highway" by the highway department in 1926. Its number was changed from 1 to 61 in 1934. The highway was the only thoroughfare to serve North Shore towns in Minnesota and to provide access to the Canadian North Shore from the state. It was specifically designed (and in some places, realigned) to provide outstanding views of the lake. Between Duluth and the Canadian border, T.H. 61 travels approximately 165 miles through three counties: St. Louis, Lake, and Cook. With the completion of the highway, recreation and tourism became important components of the North Shore economy.

Text of Metal Plaque on Bluff

"Ray R. W. Berglund Roadside Parking Area. This permanent recreational area on the beautiful North Shore is dedicated to Ray R. W. Berglund of St. Paul -- 1895-1948 -- by his family and legion of friends. It symbolizes the love of the great outdoors by one of God's noblemen and perpetuates for posterity a breathing spot for generations to come."