

**MNDOT HISTORIC ROADSIDE DEVELOPMENT
STRUCTURES INVENTORY**

GD-RWC-849
CS 2510
Red Wing Roadside Parking Area

Historic Name	Red Wing Roadside Parking Area	CS #	2510
Other Name	Red Wing Quarry Park	SHPO Inv #	GD-RWC-849

Location	W side of TH 58 about .6 mi S of Bush St	Hwy	TH 58
City/Township	Red Wing, City of	District	6B
County	Goodhue	Reference	21.6

Twp Rng Sec	113N 14W Sec 32	Acres	10.6
USGS Quad	Red Wing	Rest Area Class	4
UTM	Z15 E538510 N4932440		

Designer	Nichols, A R, Attributed	SP #	2510 58-58-21-2
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Builder	FERA/SERA, Suspected	SHPO Review #	
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Historic Use	Roadside Parking Area	MHS Photo #	013527.04-13
Present Use	Vacant/ Closed		

Yr of Landscape Design	1934	MnDOT Historic Photo Album	Nic 1.19	Nic 5.07
Overall Site Integrity	Very Altered		Ols 1.93	Ols 1.93a
Review Required	Yes			

National Register Status	Not Eligible, see Statement of Significance
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Historic Context	
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List of Standing Structures

Feat#	Feature Type	Year Built
01	Other Feature	Ca. 1910
02	Bridge/Culvert	1934
03	Wall	1934
04	Trail Steps	1934
05	Picnic Table(s), Stone	1934

Fieldwork Date	07-10-97
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Prep by	Gemini Research Dec. 98 G1. 62
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Prep for	Site Development Unit Cultural Resources Unit Environmental Studies Unit
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NOTE: Landscape features are not listed in this table

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

The Red Wing Roadside Parking Area is located on the western side of T.H. 58 within the City of Red Wing. It is located about .6 mile south of Bush Street, just north of the southern city limits.

■ STANDING STRUCTURES

Stone Powerhouse. Built circa 1910, apparently by a quarry company. The site includes one previously-existing building, a powerhouse that had been built for the quarry that existed on the site when it was acquired by Mn/DOT. It is a small building that is built into the hillside on what is now the western side of the main footpath about 130' south of the Stone Trail Steps. It is built of gray, rough cut, random ashlar limestone and has a door opening on the eastern facade that has been filled with brick and concrete block. The eastern facade is about 12'6" wide and about 10' tall. The building has a vaulted roof covered with earth because the structure is built into the hillside.

Bridge. Built 1934 by work relief labor. The "rustic bridge," as it is labeled on the plans, is the first structure encountered as you travel west on the site's entrance road from T.H. 58. It is a beam-span bridge with steel I-beams supporting a wooden deck. The bridge carries the entrance road over a hand-dug drainage ditch (that was dry at the time of the fieldwork). The bridge is about 21' long and its deck is approximately 17' wide. The bridge's abutments and 9'-long wing walls are built of gray, random ashlar, roughly-cut limestone. Historic photos show that the bridge originally had heavy logs and timbers lining and seeming to support the deck, and a log and timber railing. The deck's timber planks have been replaced, new timber railings (about 3'6" tall) have been erected, and the bridge has been barricaded with a timber pole. It has been closed to vehicles for at least 15 years.

Stone Wall. Built 1934 by work relief labor. Southwest of the bridge is a 50' by 160' parking area (originally surfaced with gravel), now a low-lying area in the woods, that is only partially clear of underbrush. It has a modified rectangular shape (a variation from the oval shape drawn on the original plan). The parking area is surrounded by a random ashlar limestone wall (completely overgrown) that is about 18" wide and currently about 1' tall in some places and buried in others. The original plans specify a dry stone wall with only the upper 6" joined with mortar.

Stone Trail Steps. Built 1934 by work relief labor. A 6'-wide set of stone steps is located on the western edge of the parking area at the parking area's north-south midpoint. There were originally at least 13 steps in the set but only about the lower five steps are exposed today. The steps link the parking area with the main footpath that is about 40' away.

Stone Picnic Tables. Built 1934 by work relief labor. The original plans specify that six stone picnic tables with benches be erected in a picnic area at the base of the bluff near the center of the site. The picnic table sets are gone -- only two stone piers (that supported either a table or bench) were located during fieldwork.

■ OTHER LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND PLANTINGS

The original plan also specifies a dry stone overlook wall to be located high up on the edge of the bluff (looking east), a stone council ring, three fireplaces (presumably stone), and several footpaths with trail steps of unknown material. Fieldworkers searched the woods for all of these features. Some portions of the footpaths were possibly discernible. The bluff on which the overlook wall was to be built has partially collapsed. It is possible that the overlook has slid over the edge of the bluff, but no compelling evidence (such as likely stones) were found. It is also possible that the fieldworkers simply did not find the overlook in the dense brush.

The site is a fairly large, 10.6-acre parcel that is roughly triangular in shape. The site includes a steep forested bluff (west of the parking area) that is 60' tall. The access road currently follows its original path into the site from T.H. 58 (at the site's northeastern corner) and over the bridge. The road then originally turned southward into the parking area where it ended. Today the road simply merges into the site's main, asphalt-paved footpath just after it crosses the bridge. The path travels south to a point just south of the stone powerhouse before disappearing into the brush (or essentially ending) near the northern end of the picnic area. There is also a north-south row of timber posts in the woods near the eastern edge of the site, approximately east of the original site of the southern picnic table sets.

The site is closed, and completely and densely overgrown. The parking area and the picnic area, for example, are nearly impossible to discern. The original planting plan shows groups of Red Cedar flanking the entrance bridge, clustered at the picnic area, and surrounding the stone overlook. Additional plantings on the plan include 15 Lombardy Poplar, 11 Wisconsin Weeping Willow, 40 Tartarian Maple, and a large number of Coral Dogwood and other shrubs. Some of these plantings may be extant within the overgrown forest.

■ SETTING

The site is located on the western side of T.H. 58, within the City of Red Wing, just north of the southern city limits. The heavily-wooded site is located just north of the boundary of the extensive Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest. The site is surrounded by woods. T.H. 58 and its grassy ditch forms the eastern boundary of the site.

■ INTEGRITY

Alterations

The site appears to have been built according to plan, except that it is possible the stone overlook wall on top of the bluff was never built.

The bridge has been altered with a new plank deck and timber railings. The council ring, stone overlook, picnic tables, and fireplaces have been destroyed or removed. (Some of these objects were at this site in 1961, as the MnDOT Site Development Unit files indicate that in 1961 the site had a well, three picnic tables, three fireplaces, a council ring, two toilets, and a footbridge.) The parking area with its stone trail steps and stone wall has completely overgrown. Most footpaths and associated trail steps are no longer distinct from

the forest. The entrance road and the first portion of the footpath have been paved with asphalt. The entrance road no longer enters the parking area, but instead stops at the bridge where the asphalt-paved footpath begins. The site is abandoned, and completely and densely overgrown with bushes and trees.

The site has lost integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It retains only its integrity of location and setting.

Notes on Condition

The site and its remaining features are in poor condition.

■ HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Red Wing Roadside Parking Area was developed by the Minnesota Department of Highways in cooperation with the City of Red Wing. Plans were drawn in August of 1934 and the site had been completed by May of 1935, according to dated historic photographs in the Site Development Unit's historic photo albums. The site was created in conjunction with the improvement of a 15.2-mile-long stretch of T.H. 58 between Goodhue and Red Wing. Plans for the highway improvement had been approved in 1931 by C. W. Lilly (Engineer of Plans), J. C. Robbers (District Engineer), O. L. Kipp (Construction Engineer), and J. T. Ellison (Chief Engineer and Deputy Commissioner).

The site was built by workers hired under a relief program that was coordinated by the City of Red Wing. The program was probably funded by the State Emergency Relief Administration (SERA), which administered federal funds allocated through the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). Herbert Nordholm, former Red Wing city clerk, recalls in an interview in 1975 that "hundreds of local people" registered at the city clerk's office who were unemployed and needed work. He further described the program:

Thirty people were selected for each of two crews, who worked one-half day each, for six days a week, five hours a day. So they managed to get thirty hours of time. And for those thirty hours, they were compensated at the rate of thirty cents an hour. And that was not paid to them in cash. It was paid to them -- actually -- in a type of script. We issued orders to various merchants including grocers, meat markets, other merchants who would then sell to the individuals . . .

Now actually, when you would hear the sob story of these many people who called and registered for work and heard of their woes, you could not help but feel you were your brothers' keeper to a degree, and how lucky you were that you did have employment and could feed your family and take care of the necessities of life.

[They worked on] mostly parks . . . because you had various types of individuals, of course, who were not perhaps talented in any specific line of labor, but most of them could man a shovel or pick, and as such they could do park work. Many of our park improvements were carried out by this type of labor at the time, and it served a real beneficial municipal purpose. So they were getting the most they could for their money, and at the same time, accommodating the people who were in dire need.

I think perhaps Colvill rated perhaps number one [as the park the laborers worked on]. . . . I would say, Sorin's Bluff had just come into the picture then . . . and also the park way out along Highway 58 -- just a little roadside park, but it served a dual purpose there, permitting the quarrying of some stone which was used for the flagwalks, and tables and benches in some of the other parks. So they developed it for the primary use of getting the stone from the park, or for the parks (Nordstrom 1975).

The site was probably designed by Arthur R. Nichols of the firm Morell and Nichols. Nichols, who was one of Minnesota's most prominent and prolific landscape architects, served as Consulting Landscape Architect for the Minnesota Department of Highways during the 1930s and early 1940s and designed most of the roadside development structures of that period. Although the original plans do not list a designer, photographs of the site appear in a set of photo albums compiled by Nichols for the department circa 1940. The photographs create a portfolio of sorts of Nichols' work for the department, and the inclusion of the photographs in the albums strongly suggests that the site is Nichols' work. Additional historic photographs of the site were taken by Nichols in May of 1935. They appear in a historic photo album compiled by Harold E. Olson, head of the Department's Roadside Development Division (Nichols ca. 1937-1941; Olson ca. 1942/ca. 1954).

The fact that Reuben W. Law took some of the original photographs of the newly-completed site also suggests that the site may have been built with CCC involvement. Law was a Minneapolis landscape architect who worked as an inspector of CCC work (and other National Park Service-assisted federal relief work) in the state during the mid-1930s. He was also a landscape architect with the firm Morell and Nichols (Nichols ca. 1937-1941; Olson ca. 1942/ca. 1954).

The site was constructed in a former quarry and the original plans retained the quarry's gray limestone powerhouse (extant). The stone features at the site were constructed from stone quarried on site, and the stone was used for other parks in Red Wing (Nordstrom 1975). Outcroppings of Shakopee and St. Lawrence limestone had been quarried in Red Wing as early as 1865.

■ PREVIOUS SHPO REVIEWS

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

■ STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Red Wing R.P.A. is a roadside parking area with a complex site design that was developed in 1934-1935 by the MHD in cooperation with the City of Red Wing. It is one of seven properties in this inventory that are suspected (or confirmed) to have been built by relief labor hired with FERA/SERA funds. It is one of more than 60 sites that were designed by, or whose design is attributed to, Arthur R. Nichols.

This property has been evaluated within the historic context "Roadside Development on Minnesota Trunk Highways, 1920-1960." It is recommended that the property is NOT ELIGIBLE for the National Register under this historic context due to loss of integrity.

■ OTHER COMMENTS

This property may require further evaluation for potential archaeological resources.

T.H. 58 was moderately busy past this site when visited by fieldworkers. This Red Wing R.P.A. is closed to the public.

It is possible that the stone overlook wall still exists but was missed by fieldworkers combing dense brush during a July field visit. A return visit in early spring or late fall may reveal its location.

This site may also be associated with local historic contexts established by the City of Red Wing's Heritage Preservation Commission.

■ REFERENCES

Anderson, Rolf T. "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941." National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form. Oct. 9, 1990; amended Aug. 30, 1993.

Angell, Madeline. *Red Wing: Saga of a River Town*. Minneapolis: Dillon Press, 1977.

Nichols, A. R., comp. *Album of Roadside Development Projects*. 7 vols. Photo album prepared for the Roadside Development Division, Minnesota Department of Highways. Ca. 1937-1941.

Nordholm, Herbert. Oral Interview. 1975. Goodhue County Historical Society collection, #1.5.36.

Olson, Harold E., comp. *Historical Markers in Minnesota*. 4 vols. Prepared by the Roadside Development Division, Minnesota Department of Highways. Ca. 1942, updated ca. 1954.

Rose, Nancy E. *Put To Work. Relief Programs in the Great Depression*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1994.

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

■ ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Red Wing, the site of several large Mdewakanton Dakota villages, was first settled by Euro-Americans in 1850. It was chosen as the seat of Goodhue County in 1853, and incorporated in 1857. The city was named in honor of a succession of Mdewakanton Dakota leaders.