

LOCALNEWS

VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK

VNP reservation, fee program underway

System sees more use than expected

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Voyageurs National Park's new reservation and fee program is up and running on www.recreation.gov.

VNP Superintendent Mike Ward reported the program has been running for one full week and has worked well with minimal glitches in the network system.

"In the first few days the reservations were open, we were amazed at the number of people who used it," Ward told The Journal.

Visitors who use www.recreation.gov are reminded to search in the "where" space in the left corner for Voyageurs National Park Permits and select permit and wilderness from the

"interested in" drop box. Four options will be offered below a description of the park.

The 51 campsites on the reservation system are filling fast, said Ward. In just the first two days, more than 200 people made reservations that included more than 1,300 people. These two days already brought in 50 percent of the park's estimated revenue for 2014.

Ward said last week 80 percent of the 34 "front country" sites have been reserved for July.

"If you don't know about the system, the sites may be filled," he said, urging people to spread the word about the system and how to use it.

The program will cov-

er 34 select "front country" campsites, all "back country" campsites, and all "back country" rental canoe and rowboats.

Visitors may reserve a site for summer by making reservations online at www.recreation.gov or by calling the National Call Center at 877-444-6777. When calling, ask for permits, not camping.

Park staff plan to continue discussions with representatives of the four houseboat companies that will bring about the final fees and operational plan for those visitors who rent from private houseboat companies which operate in the park. That program is expected to begin in 2015.

All fees collected from reservations will be used to maintain and rehabilitate the sites as well as offer new and expanded amenities in the park.



Mike Ward

RESTORING THE PRIDE



STAFF PHOTOS BY EMILY GEDDE

From left, Ryan Anderson, Up North Builders; Cody Holmstead, GreenTech Manufacturing; and Dave Harder, Up North Builders, hang a sign that says "FHS Broncos" on the north side of Falls High School Friday. The idea for the sign came from the school's Blue Ribbon Panel committee in an effort to bring more school spirit to the school. Several community members and businesses were involved with the project funded by TruStar Federal Credit Union. Labor to cut and hang the steel letters was donated by GreenTech Manufacturing and Up North Builders, respectively.



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