

10 Most Endangered Historic Places

2010

Preservation Alliance of Minnesota ❖ www.mnpreservation.org

The Garrison Concourse—and the mammoth walleye replica in its center—nestles the western edge of Lake Mille Lacs, one of the state's most popular angling destinations. Located roughly 100 miles north of Minneapolis along Trunk Highway 169, this roadside structure was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (commonly known as the CCC), one of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal initiatives to counter the financial and emotional trials of the Great Depression. The concourse has stood for decades beckoning weary travelers to park and survey the beauty of central Minnesota.

Designed by the National Park Service, the handsome concourse of pink and gray native stone was completed between 1936 and 1939. Arcing 180 feet into the lake, the concourse rises at least a dozen feet above the water and extends over 330 feet along the lakeshore. The concourse is considered one of the finest roadside rest areas ever built in Minnesota, and is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This attractive stone monument to Minnesota's Depression-era past is Garrison's irreplaceable amenity.

Now over seventy years old, the concourse is reflecting its age. Many of the concourse elements have suffered substantial weathering, but the most critical area is the base of the overlook wall, which has been repeatedly thrashed by waves and ice. Stone is regularly lost to the lake, and wave action has eroded the mortar that holds the stones in place. While the wall remains structurally sound for now, it is clearly being undermined. Recent treatment reports urge its rehabilitation in order to preserve one of Northern Minnesota's principal landmarks.



Action Steps

1. Contract the MnDOT District 3 office in Baxter and say that restoration should be a funding priority for MnDOT. www.dot.state.mn.us/d3.html

2. Support the Garrison Commercial Club and its efforts to see the Garrison Concourse restored. www.garrisonmn.com/

3. Ask public officials to dedicate available resources towards restoring the concourse, and to apply for available grant funds to match local contributions.



GARRISON

Garrison Concourse