

100-20-27

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM

PROPERTY NAME: Starved Rock Lodge and Cabins  
CITY/TOWN/VICINITY: LaSalle-Peru vicinity  
COUNTY: LaSalle Code: 099  
ADDRESS: Box 116  
Utica, IL 61373

OWNER'S NAME: Illinois Department of Conservation  
ADDRESS: 524 South Second, Springfield, Illinois

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Same as Owner

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The nominated area includes the lodge, all cabins, and surrounding woods. This complex is best understood by reference to the enclosed site plan.

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE: approximately seventeen

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1933-1939

ARCHITECT AND/OR BUILDER: Joseph F. Booten

DESCRIPTION - SECTION 7:

The lodge building includes a central lounge flanked by dining room and hotel wings. The complex also includes twelve cabins. The buildings are sited on a heavily wooded bluff overlooking Starved Rock and the Illinois River.

Stone, unhewn log, clapboards, and wood shingles comprise the exterior finishes of the lodge building. The central portion of the lodge, the lounge, is defined by unhewn logs with random corner notching resting on a limestone foundation. Principal entry to the lounge is from the south, where carved logs support a small gabled porch. The north side of the lounge, where a change in grade provides a two story facade, contains a continuous band of windows and three doors, providing light to the interior and access to a flagstone terrace. To the east of the lounge is a two-story dining room/service wing; a three-story hotel wing is west of the lounge. Both are covered in a combination of clapboard and wood shingles stained a light green. Exterior alterations to the lodge appear to be limited to the replacement of the hotel wing's wood casement windows with modern single pane metal casements.

The principal interior spaces are the lounge and the dining room. The lounge is a two-story space with a stone double fireplace in the center. The

main lounge area is raised three steps above the concessions and business office area, and further defined by a log railing. Interior features include unhewn log walls and board and batten siding in the gables. The log roof trusses are left exposed. The dining room contains similar finishes, including a stone fireplace on the east wall. The hotel wing contains modern guest rooms decorated with knotty pine paneling.

There are twelve cabins located adjacent to the lodge. Two four-room cabins are just west of the hotel wing. The remaining single cabins are separated from the lodge by a steep ravine (called Fox Canyon). Access to these cabins from the lodge is by a footbridge. All the cabins are built of unhewn logs with random corner notching. The siting of the cabins amidst a heavily wooded area and their physical separation from the lodge emphasize their "camping in the woods" character.

#### SIGNIFICANCE - Section 8:

Starved Rock State Park Lodge satisfies the themes of the architecture and recreation for which this thematic nomination is proposed for the National Register.

#### ARCHITECTURE:

Starved Rock's lodge and cabins are rivaled in size and geographic extent only by the same at Pere Marquette. They represent the upper echelon of the Lodge with cabins complex at the state parks and visually convey their rank among the others at the time of construction. Both the lodge and cabins embody picturesque qualities.

The lodge has a special place in this nomination because it is the largest structure built primarily in wood to convey the picturesque mode which unifies this thematic nomination. Booten designed round log purlins with unevenly hewn ends that extend beyond the roofedge for the lodge in order to capture the atmosphere of a woodsy retreat. Although the towering three-story dormitory diminishes this mood, the public lounge replicates the cathedral-like qualities of its counterparts at Black Hawk, Giant City, and Pere Marquette.

#### RECREATION:

Illinois officially ranked this lodge with its dormitory as the finest in the state parks when it was built. For example, it was observed in the first issue of the state organ for state parks that,

Starved Rock Lodge is a magnificent structure of stone and logs. It is one of the finest buildings of its kind in the country. Up-to-date in every respect, there are 48 rooms with private bath. The high and colorful lounge is inviting in its informality. The beautiful pine-paneled dining room is noted for its cuisine. The basement

recreation room is a popular spot (Bates 1944:28).

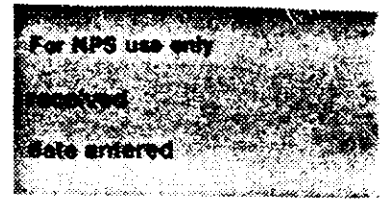
Clearly, the state believed the benefits of urban and country life were compatibly combined and rid of their preceived disadvantages in this recreational setting, much as suburbs offered middle class residents.

Starved Rock was reckoned worthy of this effort because it had the largest attendance of Illinois' state parks when the lodge was designed. Acquisition had been justified in terms of scenic and historic conservation; but the rationale shifted to recreation by the mid-1930's and accounts dwelled on the heavy traffic counts.

This is the most extensively used state park in Illinois, being only 90 miles from Chicago and readily accessible by automobile. As evidenced by the variety of facilities offered, the park is used for a wide number of recreational purposes of which picknicing, hiking, boating, camping and swimming are the most important. (Division 1438: 90)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 10

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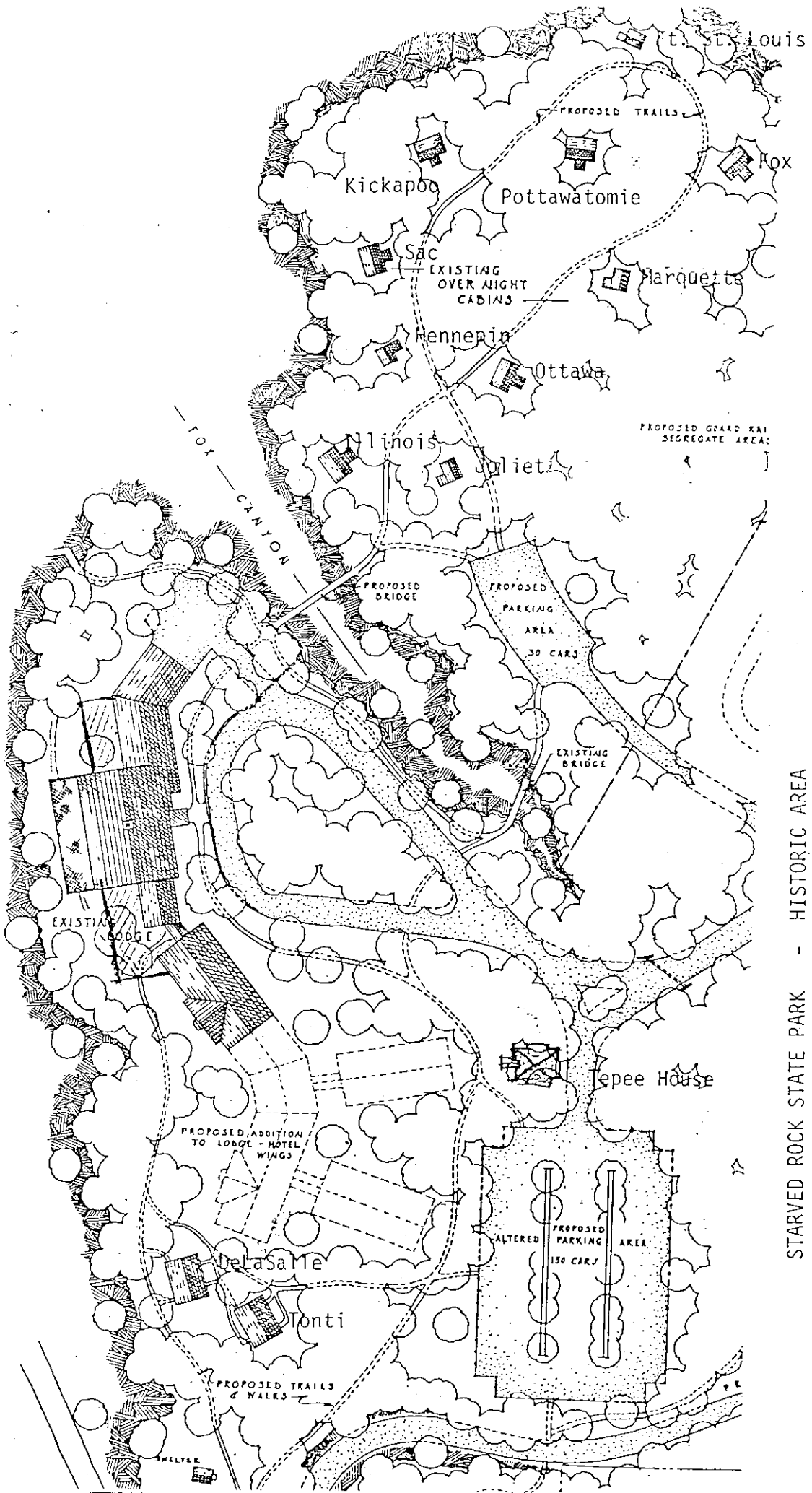
STARVED ROCK

Acreage of nominated property: 11  
Quadrangle name: Starved Rock, IL

Quadrangle Scale: 1:24000

UTM References

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
A:	16	332940	4575880
B:	16	333160	4575940
C:	16	333400	4575780
D:	16	333360	4575720



Adapted from 1938 Lodge Area Plan

STARVED ROCK STATE PARK - HISTORIC AREA