

## Lapham Peak Manager's Report 2010

11/3/10

-Ed Muzik

After 10 years, this will be my last report as property manager at Lapham Peak, since I have accepted a lateral transfer to Big Bay State Park located on Madeline Island near Bayfield. Madeline is the largest of the Apostle Islands. It was a difficult decision to leave Lapham, since I've developed a deep affection for the place and its visitors. At this point, it appears that I'll be at the park until almost Christmas, so I will be able to assist with snowmaking and ski trail grooming.

Lapham Peak is an exciting and dynamic park, though also one with a large workload, limited equipment, and a small staff, compounded by the fact that the staff also maintains 26 miles of the Glacial Drumlin State Trail. Without the support of volunteers and the Friends of Lapham Peak, it is certain that the park would not be as nice as it is. Fortunately, the Friends of Lapham Peak are probably the strongest Friends group in the Wisconsin State Park System. A fact recognized this year, when the group was given an award by the Wisconsin State Parks for being the "Friends Group of the Year".

There are some very exciting developments about to happen at the park. First, the Nature Center project is finally going forward and a construction bid has been signed. The approximate cost of the project is \$1.6 million. Also, a new paved bike trail is going in on the west side of the park, with completion expected early next summer. This trail will connect the Lake Country Trail, Lapham Peak, and the Glacial Drumlin Trail.

Last spring, the park itself was given the "Property of the Year" award, and John McCarthy was given the "Volunteer of the Year" award for his work on the snowmaking project. There are also several other volunteers at Lapham who were, and are, excellent candidates for this award. Though the awards were given out this past May, officially they are for 2007. (The Parks Bureau hasn't had a conference in several years, so they decided to give out awards this year for the past three years.)

It's been another busy year for Lapham Peak. For the fiscal year (FY) ending June 30, Lapham Peak brought in revenues of \$370,275.00. This is an increase of \$58,405.00 over FY 2009 revenues of \$311,870.00. The Glacial Drumlin State Trail-East Unit, also maintained by the Lapham staff, in FY 2010 brought in \$61,778.00. For a comparison, Wyalusing State Park, a popular Wisconsin State Park located on the Mississippi River, in FY 2010 brought in a total of \$322,713.00. The Department's most recent budget request for 2011-2013 does recognize the funding inequities facing the park, and includes additional funds and an extra permanent position for Lapham Peak (possibly to be shared with the Southern Unit), though there is great uncertainty whether it will make it through the actual state budget process which will begin in earnest early next spring.

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*Lapham Peak Friends show their enthusiasm for trail work while putting down straw mulch at the volunteer trail work day on September 25, 2010. Heavy rains this past summer took a toll on the trails.*