

DEEP PORTAGE

Learning Center

Winter 2024

Deep Portage Learning Center

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www.deep-portage.org

Our Mission:

Through the exploration of woods, water, and wildlife, Deep Portage prepares and inspires learners of all ages to sustain and celebrate our natural world.

Who Are We:

We are a nonprofit residential environmental education center located on more than 6,000 acres of lakes, bogs, rivers, and woodlands. For nearly fifty years, we have provided extraordinary outdoor experiences for school groups, campers, families, and all who love the great outdoors.

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Social



Deep Portage's New Weather Station

In September, Deep Portage installed a new Vantage Pro weather station in the front yard of the main building. This station measures temperature, humidity, pressure, rain, wind speed and direction, and dew point. It also provides data on sunrise and sunset times, the moon phase, and weather forecasts for the coming days. The station is powered by solar energy.

We've been monitoring weather conditions at Deep Portage for several weeks now, and it's been exciting to receive real-time data about our surroundings. The monitor console is located at the front desk, and many visitors, including chaperones, have found it useful to check the weather in the morning to help plan outdoor activities and decide what to wear.

We are grateful to the Initiative Foundation and Hackensack Lakes Area Community Foundation for their grant, which made it possible to purchase and install this technology. If you'd like to see live data from our weather station, visit Weather Underground and search for station KMNHACKE21.



We look forward to tracking yearly data and identifying trends throughout the seasons!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Jerry Lamon

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2024-2025 STAFF

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Assistant Director/Camp Director
Neal Tacheny
Education Manager
Marissa Olsen
Communications and Office Manager
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Development Director
Dan Ryan

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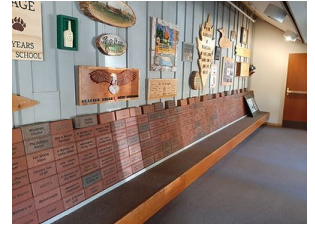
DONATE TO DEEP PORTAGE

There are a few ways you can help support Deep Portage by donating. Please take a look at the different ways below. Your contribution goes towards educating kids about the environment and other programs in environmental education, resources management, conservation, recreation, and community services.

Deep Portage Learning Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and donations are tax-deductible.

“BRICK BY BRICK” DONATION

The donation for a brick in our brick hallway has increased to a donation of \$150. This gift of a personalized, engraved brick will be displayed at Deep Portage as a reminder of your support of our environmental education programs.



\$75 MUG DONATION

Each year Deep Portage puts out a new mug with the year and a critter you might find at Deep Portage. The 2025 mug will be an Eastern tiger swallowtail designed by Ryan Forster, current staff and former 5th grade field trip student attendee several years ago! We will have the mugs soon.

MATCHING GIFTS

Double your impact! Does your employer match gifts? View a list of Minnesota companies that have matching gift programs [here](#).

IRA GIVING

If you are the age of 70 1/2 or older, you can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) annually from your IRA account. You can donate up to \$105,000 total to one or more non-profits each year. This will avoid income taxes on the funds you give directly to Deep Portage.

STOCKS, BONDS, MUTUAL FUNDS

You can gift stocks, bonds, or mutual fund shares to a non-profit while avoiding the capital gains taxes. You can also receive a federal income tax deduction for the current value of the gift.

DONOR ADVISED FUNDS

Make charitable gifts over time by creating a donor-advised fund. In most cases, you can earn a tax deduction. These are offered at investment firms and community foundations such as St. Paul and Minnesota Foundation.

2025 Winter Rendezvous

This year the Annual Winter Rendezvous will be on **Saturday, January 25th, 2025**. At this event, you have the opportunity to participate in multiple activities including Northwoods curling, axe throwing, snow snakes, atl-atl, and many more. This friendly competition includes awards for all ages and a nice tasty lunch of chili in our dining hall.

Keep an eye out on our [website](#) and [social media](#) for event updates.

Registration begins at 9:00 am and the day concludes at 2:30 pm.

Cost (Activities and Lunch):
\$15 adult, \$10 Youth, \$50 Family Bundle



Photo Credit: Bemidji Pioneer

New Staff Member - Dan Ryan



We are excited to introduce Dan Ryan as the new Development Director for Deep Portage Learning Center. Dan brings a wealth of experience and a deep connection to our community.

Dan first started as an educator at Deep Portage in 2013. His passion and dedication quickly became evident. He helped manage the education program from 2016 to 2019, then he took a hiatus to start a family. Dan has returned to continue his impactful work with us.

The purpose of this position is to enhance Deep Portage's capacity for fundraising, grant management, and program development. We are confident that Dan's expertise and passion will significantly contribute to these vital areas, ensuring our continued growth and success.

Dan is married to Bryana Cook, the owner and operator of Boreal Bliss Yoga Retreats, which has been using Deep Portage as a venue for the past eight years. Together, they have two sons; Graham, age 5, and Lucas, age 2. Dan has been a full time fishing guide in Longville for the past 12 years.

We are confident that Dan's extensive history with Deep Portage, coupled with his commitment to our mission, will help us achieve new heights. His leadership and vision will be instrumental as we continue to provide exceptional outdoor education experiences and foster a deep appreciation for nature.

Please join us in welcoming Dan Ryan back to Deep Portage Learning Center. We look forward to the positive impact he will undoubtedly bring to our community.

2024 Annual Meeting

On Saturday, November 23rd, 2024, staff and board members gathered to review the past fiscal year at Deep Portage. During the meeting, committee chairs, staff, and the board president shared updates and discussed their plans for the upcoming year. Notable highlights included the completion two big capital projects (exterior stain and new windows) and the successful launch of our first annual Summer Rendezvous fundraising event. Two dedicated board members, Jerry Lamon and Norm Moody, were honored for their unwavering support and willingness to volunteer whenever needed.



Pictured: Neal Tacheny and Norm Moody

After the meeting, Dr. Brian Hiller, wildlife professor at Bemidji State University and Advisory Board member, held a discussion on creating more opportunities for women and girls in hunting. While more women are entering wildlife and outdoor careers, they still face fewer opportunities and don't always have the same experiences as men. Dr. Hiller has been teaching his female students how to hunt due to growing interest and hopes to expand this by hosting an all-girls upland bird camp at Deep Portage, as well as an all-women's hunting weekend on Deep Portage and nearby lands. Overall, we are excited for what the future holds for Deep Portage.



Pictured: Lindsay Bjorklund and Jerry Lamon

2025 Summer Camps

Deep Portage offers a wide variety of summer camps to suit almost any interest. Whether a child is interested in fishing, hunting, canoeing, or expanding their scientific horizons, we have a camp for them. Campers learn a lot, have fun, make new friends, and grow in their appreciation for all the Minnesota great outdoors has to offer. All camps offered are overnight style. Registration opens December 23. Register online on our website: www.deep-portage.org.

Forkhorn 1

Session 1: June 8-12, 2025

Session 2: June 15-19, 2025

Session 3 ALL GIRLS: July 27-31, 2025

Session 4: August 3-7, 2025

Ages :11-15 **Tuition:** \$525

Successful completion of this camp earns students their MN DNR Firearms Safety Certificate. By learning in a cooperative classroom, doing hands-on activities campers will come away with a high level of firearms safety, responsible hunting practices, and wildlife ecology skills. Although they will be busy with firearms safety training, campers will also have plenty of time for recreational and outdoor skills classes such as canoeing, fishing, survival, orienteering, rock climbing, and much more.

Forkhorn 2

Session 1: June 29-July 3, 2025

Ages :12-16 **Tuition:** \$525

Prerequisite: MN DNR Firearms Safety Certificate

Students will be certified in the Minnesota Bowhunter Education Program as part of the camp. This advanced hunting camp takes students beyond the basic white-tailed deer hunting and offers higher level training in bow hunting such as shooting out of deer stands and walking a 3D archery target course. Additionally, they will learn advanced map and compass skills, high caliber rifle and muzzleloader training, and ethical hunting practices. Campers will go on a day long canoe trip down the Boy River, up and over beaver dams to the remote Little Boy Lake to fish and have a campsite lunch.

Forkhorn 3

Session 1: July 6-10, 2025

Ages :13-17 **Tuition:** \$575

Prerequisite: MN DNR Firearms Safety Certificate

This camp will focus on advancing on the outdoor and conservation skills learned in Forkhorn 1 and 2. Campers will be doing advanced land navigation course with higher level survival techniques, rifle ammunition basics, muzzle loading, and shotgun wing shooting at our sporting clay course. We will be featuring special theme days at camp such as turkey, waterfowl, small game, and big game days where campers will learn more in depth information about the wildlife they can pursue and how to become more successful. Campers will go home with their own wild game calls! This camp will also feature an overnight tent camping experience on DP property.

Upland Bird Camp

Session 1: July 27-August 1, 2025

Ages :12-16 **Tuition:** \$600

Prerequisite: MN DNR Firearms Safety Certificate

Upland Bird camp offers campers the opportunity to learn the basics of hunting upland game birds and improve their wing shooting skills. Class cover upland bird biology, daily wing shooting instruction on our 10 station sporting clay pigeon course, dog training techniques, ethical hunting techniques, and campers will participate in an activity to learn how to respectfully gain permission on private lands. There will be a field trip where students receive hands-on training with professional dog trainers to handle dogs in the field.

Fishing Camp

Session 1: July 13-16, 2025

Ages :10-14 **Tuition:** \$400

Fishing camp provides a fun learning atmosphere where campers not only get to fish their hearts out, but also learn important lake limnology, water ecosystems, and fisheries management skills to make them better anglers and water stewards. Camper will be using Big Deep Lake, Bass Pond, Boy River, and Little Boy Lake as their fishing grounds and classroom. Bring your fishing gear and be prepared to catch a few big ones!

Outdoor Skills Camp

Session 1: July 6-10, 2025

Ages :10-14 **Tuition:** \$500

Outdoor recreation activities will include fishing (fly fishing as well), canoe trip up the Boy River, archery, climbing wall, wilderness survival, and orienteering. Learning activities will include wildlife ecosystems, bog walk, TEAM challenges, arts and crafts, campfire cookout dinner, and brick fired pizza dinner. This camp emphasizes outdoor skills and natural resource conservation.

Young Women in Science Camp

Session 1: August 10-14, 2025

Ages :11-14 **Tuition:** \$500

Young Women in Science Camp is an opportunity for girls to explore areas of science outside the typical classroom. Camp will be taught by Deep Portage summer staff as well as visiting scientists and educators in the field. Topics will include renewable energy, earth sciences, forestry, plankton and the environment, and aquatic ecology. Camp will also include general outdoor skills and fun such as canoeing, archery, survival skills, arts/crafts, and more.

Northview Students' Experience As 5th Graders and Seniors

This past fall, two high school seniors—Andrew and Dylan—returned to Deep Portage as volunteer chaperones. Both had visited Deep Portage as 5th graders in 2017, when they attended a trip with Northview Elementary in Eagan. Sophie Bishop had the opportunity to sit down with Andrew and Dylan to discuss their memories of that trip and how their perspectives had changed after returning as chaperones years later.

What was the most memorable experience from your 5th grade trip?

Dylan: The food was really good and it felt like a home cooked meal everyday. To get outside the classroom in a different learning environment, it felt more life connected instead of getting stuck in a classroom. Definitely a different environment than we are used to in the cities.

Andrew: Being a more hands on learner worked better here than a typical classroom setting.

What made you want to come on this trip this year?

Dylan: The memories of Deep Portage were slowly fading and I remembered how much we loved DP, but the vividness started to diminish. To be able to soak it in more because we are older. Got the invite from Julie, so I came.

Andrew: I kept on asking my mom to come and the connection with friends is way better than a classroom like building a shelter and hiking through paths.

What was your favorite class in 5th grade and now?

Dylan: In 5th grade it was canoeing, I remember it the most. Now, the hike up to the observation tower because I can appreciate the land and nature more that we are older.

Andrew: The bonfire this year because we didn't get to experience that the first year, it was indoors.



Northview Students' Experience As 5th Graders and Seniors

How did it feel coming back to Deep Portage after 7 years?

Dylan: I remembered it, but it didn't fully click after 7 years, it came back slowly the more time we were here, especially the way around the building.

Andrew: Didn't recognize Deep Portage at first and definitely experiencing it differently as a volunteer and not a student.

What did you take away from your 5th grade trip?

Dylan: I wasn't an outdoorsy guy before this trip and wasn't artsy or creative. Coming up here I got an increased appreciation of nature. I'm getting older and coming back now and the appreciation of nature and the world we live in has improved. Seeing the importance for kids that don't go camping or have a cabin, the 3 days here can leave an impact for their future and give kids new experiences.

Andrew: We have a cabin, but haven't camped or gone fishing. Learned a lot more to appreciate nature as we are older now.

How was your experience observing this year's 5th graders in some of the same classes you did?

Dylan: Kids thrive in nature and not in the classroom. It's cool to look back and put yourself back in the shoes running through the halls. Now I realize how annoying we were back then. In a room of 10 kids, sorry Julie and Mr. Sell. I have a much greater appreciation of teachers with what they put up with and how they stay calm.

Andrew: Personally, seeing different personalities of these kids who are usually shy in the classroom, but the setting here, they are really opening up.

This was a full circle closer moment with their Deep Portage trip especially because they are graduating this year from high school. Dylan is looking into getting a business degree and hoping to go into sales or communication. Andrew is also looking into getting a business degree or finance degree, but would also like get his electrical and plumbing license. They are hoping to come back next year and volunteer with the new wave of 5th graders!

