

TIMELINE ~ BRIEF HISTORY OF SUGARLOAF COVE, SICA, AND SUGARLOAF: THE NORTH SHORE STEWARDSHIP ASSOCIATION*

- 10,000 P.C.** Scattered archeological finds indicate Paleo-Indians occupy the area around Lake Superior's North Shore after the final retreat of glaciers in the last Ice Age (Pleistocene Epoch). A variety of indigenous peoples inhabit the area over thousands of years.
- 1600s** French explorers have the first contact with indigenous peoples in the area in the early to mid-1600s. Fur trade between native tribes and the French, British, and Dutch flourishes in the 1700s and early 1800s.
- 1854** The Ojibwe, who were established by then as the primary native tribe in northeastern Minnesota, cede substantially all the Arrowhead region, including Sugarloaf Cove, to the federal government in the Second Treaty of La Pointe, opening the area to European settlement. Settlers, mostly Scandinavian, flock to the North Shore and began commercial fishing and logging operations.
- 1880s** Extensive logging begins in Cook County, including depletion of old growth red and white pine around Sugarloaf Cove.
- 1899** The John Gunderson family from Norway homesteads Sugarloaf Cove property.
- 1902** Consolidated Water Power & Paper Company of Wisconsin ("Consolidated") begins a pulp paper business in Rhinelander (name changed to Consolidated Papers in 1962).
- 1909** The Superior National Forest is established.
- 1920s** In 1923, Consolidated begins harvesting wood from Canada and rafting pulpwood logs across Lake Superior to Ashland for transport to Rhinelander for processing. In 1925, Consolidated acquires a large tract of timberland in Cook County from which to harvest pulpwood (mostly spruce, jack pine, and balsam fir).
- 1943** Consolidated purchases the Sugarloaf Cove site (then called "Sugarloaf Landing") to stockpile harvested pulpwood, which is dumped into the cove and formed into rafts within booms, to be hauled across the lake to Ashland. Consolidated builds 14 structures on the site, including homes, garages, offices, maintenance buildings, and storage facilities.

* Sources: "Timeline—Sugarloaf: The North Shore Stewardship Association" (through 2001), by Pat Maus, John C. Green, and Janet Green; "Sugarloaf History," presentation by John C. Green to 10th annual meeting of the Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Ass'n, August 17, 2002; "The Saga of Sugarloaf Cove," background material for presentation by Janet Green to Sugarloaf annual meeting, August 11, 2018; *A Man's Reach*, by Elmer L. Andersen; *The Sugarloaf Interpreter* newsletters from 1993 to 2018; Websites—sugarloafnorthshore.org, umn.edu, fs.usda.gov, dnr.state.mn.us; Sugarloaf NSSA Dropbox—archived documents and memoranda.

- 1960s** Dr. John C. Green, professor of geology at the University of Minnesota—Duluth (“UMD”), maps geology along the shore of Lake Superior and is struck by the beauty and geology of Sugarloaf Cove.
- 1969** The Minnesota Legislature passes a law establishing the designation of Scientific and Natural Areas (“SNAs”) to permanently protect sites that include rare and significant natural features, such as unique plant and animal species and geology. SNAs are proposed, designated, and managed by the DNR with advice from the public through a Citizens’ Advisory Committee.
- 1971** Consolidated discontinues rafting operations at Sugarloaf Landing, converting to rail transport of pulpwood to Wisconsin for processing. Consolidated begins restoration of the Sugarloaf Cove site by planting red pine and white spruce in the upland area.
- 1975** “Inventory of Natural, Scientific, and Aesthetic Sites on the North Shore,” a report authored by John and Janet Green and delivered to the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (“ARDC”), highlights the Sugarloaf Cove area.
- 1985** Consolidated donates 64.2 acres of land at Sugarloaf Landing to the Nature Conservancy.
- 1987** John Green nominates Sugarloaf Cove (including the point and adjacent beach) for designation as an SNA.
- 1988** The Nature Conservancy sells 34 acres surrounding Sugarloaf Cove to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (“DNR”). Possible uses of the area include building a “safe harbor” and marina as part of a plan to establish harbors on the North Shore.
- 1991** The Nature Conservancy trades its remaining Sugarloaf Cove acreage to Cook County for property on Susie Island near Grand Portage. Part of the Sugarloaf Cove acreage is sold at public auction. Former governor Elmer L. Andersen purchases six acres of property bordering Sugarloaf Cove on the southwest side. His daughter Emily already owns acreage adjacent to the cove property to the north. Together they work diligently to protect Sugarloaf Cove from development.

Meanwhile, the North Shore Management Board (“NSMB”), which had been tasked with completing a plan for development of marinas and safe harbors, identifies ten prospective sites along the shore. Of the ten, Sugarloaf Cove is the highest priority.

- 1992** The DNR designates 3.5 acres of the Sugarloaf Cove site, including the point, the tomobolo, and part of the beach, as an SNA.

John Green, Elmer Andersen, and others form a group dedicated to preservation of the remaining Sugarloaf Cove area to establish a geological and natural history interpretive center and oppose construction of a marina or other development. In

August, Articles of Incorporation of the Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association (“SICA”) are filed with the Secretary of State. Incorporators are UMD Chancellor Emeritus Robert L. Heller, attorney Lorrie Stromme, and Emily (Andersen) Galvan.

SICA’s first board of directors is elected and holds its first meeting in September. The first board includes UMD Chancellor Emeritus Robert Heller; UMD professors John Green, Richard Ojakangas, and Frederick Witzig; and Barbara Liukkonen.

- 1993** SICA forms a committee to develop a management plan for Sugarloaf Cove to present to the DNR. Among other points, the report recommends Taconite Harbor as an alternative site for a designated boat landing and safe harbor.

The IRS grants 501(c)(3) nonprofit status to SICA. The first issue of *The Sugarloaf Interpreter* (then) quarterly newsletter is published. SICA organizes “ShoreLink,” a forum for networking and collaboration of North Shore interpretive and educational groups.

Membership in SICA grows to 90, and the first annual membership meeting is held at Birch Grove in Tofte. A resolution is passed opposing harbor development.

Meanwhile, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (“MnDOT”) applies to the Federal Highway Administration for funding a public water access facility at Sugarloaf Cove. Governor Andersen and allies vehemently oppose any kind of harbor development or boat access in ongoing communications with NSMB, DNR, local government, local media, and others. Informational videos, presentations, and publications memorialize the attributes of the Sugarloaf site and engender support for its preservation throughout the state.

- 1994** Governor Andersen proposes that SICA buy the Lind family’s Twin Points Resort property in Lake County with the prospect of exchanging it with the DNR for ownership of the Sugarloaf Cove property.

Schroeder Township and Cook County approve the development of a safe harbor at Taconite Harbor rather than Sugarloaf. (The safe harbor and public boat access at Taconite Harbor will be completed and dedicated in 2001.)

- 1995** SICA officers sign an option to purchase the Twin Points property and reach agreement with the DNR to exchange the property for the area of the Sugarloaf Cove site outside the SNA. Fundraising begins to finance the purchase.

The Legislature approves funding recommended by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (“LCMR”) for site assessment and interpretation at the Sugarloaf site. Inventories of the geologic, biological and cultural features undertaken by experts in each area are released in 1996 (now available on the website: www.sugarloafnorthshore.org/about-sugarloaf/1996-site-surveys).

- 1996** The LCMR awards funds for SICA projects, including cutting an interpretive trail by the Minnesota Conservation Corps (“MCC”). Fundraising for the Twin Points purchase continues. The State Executive Board approves the proposed land exchange. A conservation easement for the Sugarloaf Cove site is drafted.

The Sugarloaf SNA is expanded to 10.3 acres, including most of the beach inside the cove and the shoreline and part of the lower level on the lake side west of the tombolo.

- 1997** Informational pamphlets about Sugarloaf Cove's history, geology, and ecology funded by the LCMR grant are published by SICA. The DNR is awarded a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for site planning and habitat restoration at Sugarloaf Cove.

The final payment is made to purchase the Twin Points property in July. The land exchange is accomplished, the Twin Points property is conveyed to the DNR, and SICA becomes the owner of the Sugarloaf Cove property outside the SNA. Part of the Twin Points property is designated and dedicated as another SNA called "Iona's Beach" (after the Lind family matriarch), featuring a unique shingle beach of pink rhyolite and felsite bedrock stones.

Jill Jacoby is hired as SICA's interim administrator, its first paid position. She will temporarily staff the SICA office in downtown Duluth while a job description for a permanent executive director is formalized and applications are solicited.

- 1998** The LCMR approves a grant request to write a site management plan to include SICA's property and the SNA. Terri Port Wright is hired as SICA's first executive director. The board decides to remove the last remaining Consolidated building rather than upgrading it for use as an interpretive center.

Governor Andersen is awarded the Willard Munger Environmental Award by the Minnesota Resources Foundation in appreciation of his work to preserve Sugarloaf Cove; he credits many others involved in the effort.

- 1999** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides funds for coastal wetland restoration at Sugarloaf Cove. Excavation begins on a large area on the lower flats where a wetland had previously existed. An access road to the lake is closed; volunteers remove invasives and plant thousands of native trees, shrubs, sedges, and other plants to rehabilitate the area.

The grant-funded joint management plan with the DNR and SICA is completed, providing for management of the total site, including the SNA. SICA's fundraisers include a boat trip aboard the *Grandpa Woo* and sales of 2000 Sugarloaf Cove calendars (featuring member photos) and sweatshirts with an embroidered logo.

- 2000** SICA hosts volunteers for a week in May to plant seedlings of native plant species in the newly restored wetland area. Monthly "Second Saturday" themed hikes and interpretive programs are offered to the public at the Cove. A trail guide for the MCC-built interpretive trail is published.

The nearly completed interpretive center building, constructed by Senty Log Homes of Grand Marais from locally harvested timber, is dedicated at a ribbon-cutting ceremony in August. A weekend of festivities includes a reunion of Consolidated employees and a brunch cruise on the *Grandpa Woo*.

The board participates in strategic planning, resulting in adoption of a new mission statement.

2001 Volunteers assemble in May to complete interior finishing of the new nature center at the Cove. Plans are made to open the center to visitors on weekends through the summer months, with a call for “site host” volunteers to staff the building at other times as available. A deck is added to the building.

2002 A grant from Minnesota’s Lake Superior Coastal Program (“MLSCP”) enables SICA to complete a boardwalk on the trail traversing part of the SNA, to build a trail for observation of the new wetland, to prepare interpretive signage, and to update and upgrade the trail guide. Andrew Slade is hired to replace Terri Port Wright as SICA’s executive director.

SICA celebrates its 10th Anniversary at the annual membership meeting, featuring John Green as keynote speaker.

2003 The first interpretive signage is installed at the (then) parking area trailhead, at the entry to the SNA, and along the path to the wetland restoration area.

With a grant from MLSCP, SICA sponsors two-day in-depth “North Shore Naturalist” educational workshops on wildflowers and habitat, geology, and North Shore natural history. Pam McDougall is hired for the summer as a part-time visitor center manager. Volunteers are sought as site hosts to keep the visitor center open most days of the summer. The annual meeting in August features guided hikes and a fish boil dinner.

The SICA website is launched. SICA holds its first “North Shore Evening” metro-area fundraiser in Minneapolis, featuring soup, a silent auction, and a slide show by Rudi Hargesheimer. The fundraiser will become a fall tradition.

2004 The success of the 2003 two-day North Shore Naturalist workshops prompts their continuation through the year. Winter workshops feature winter ecology and nature writing. Summer offerings are ecology of the Sawtooth Mountains, waterfall exploration, geology, a Canadian provincial parks tour, and a lighthouse tour. Popular Second Saturday hikes and programs continue.

Restoration work includes a native plant inventory, conifer planting and naturalization, and development of a DNR-funded “North Shore coastal forest” demonstration site at Sugarloaf. Scuba divers explore the waters of the Cove for historical treasures, finding a logging chain and an apparently vandalized highway guardrail and DNR sign.

With a grant from the Great Lakes National Program Office, SICA launches its ambitious “Lost Forest” program, set to begin in 2005. The intensive program for public and private landowners and property managers will include a 40-hour training course on forest ecology, preparation of stewardship and restoration plans for their properties with guidance from a qualified forester, access to appropriate nursery stock, and funding assistance for executing their plans.

2005 In keeping with its increasing focus on the environmental health of the North Shore beyond Sugarloaf Cove, SICA's board of directors, following a strategic planning session, adopts a new mission statement: "To inspire the preservation and restoration of the North Shore's unique environment through education and exemplary stewardship, especially at Sugarloaf Cove."

Members of the first Lost Forest "class" include private landowners, as well as property managers at Split Rock Lighthouse State Park, Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center ("Wolf Ridge ELC"), and Grand Portage Marina and Campground. Training sessions begin in April. Meanwhile SICA's regular hikes and programs, as well as intensive North Shore Naturalist workshops on geology, wildflowers, lighthouses, and waterfalls, are again offered.

At the final board meeting of the year, SICA is renamed "Sugarloaf: The North Shore Stewardship Association" ("Sugarloaf"), reflecting its expanded mission and outreach to the public and private lands along the entire North Shore of Lake Superior within the state of Minnesota.

2006 Sugarloaf and the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota co-host the North Shore Parks and Trails Leadership Summit, convening leaders of 26 organizations with interests along the shore, to foster collaboration in protection and promotion of state parks and trails.

Molly Thompson joins Sugarloaf staff as program manager, taking over responsibility for the Lost Forest project and for the ShoreLink "learning cart," presenting hands-on interpretive experiences at tourist sites along the shore from Duluth to the Canadian border. The one- and two-day intensive North Shore Naturalist workshops are offered again at the Cove, as are many free public programs throughout the summer.

With funding and assistance from a variety of sources, Sugarloaf publishes the first edition of an informative booklet, "Restoring the North Shore's Lost Coastal Forest: A primer for landowners and managers," with detailed information about reasons for reestablishing the original forest diversity, tree selection, planting instructions, and resources.

A controlled burn of alder thicket along the interpretive trail, carried out by experts from the Tofte Ranger District of the Superior National Forest, prepares the area for replanting with species from the original forests of the area, including white cedar.

At the August membership meeting, the first-ever "Tombolo Award" is given to SICA's founder and incorporator Emily Andersen. The award is SICA's highest honor, intended to recognize an individual who has contributed significantly to the mission of protecting and restoring the North Shore.

2007 Sugarloaf opens an exhibit at UMD's "Limno Lab" building at the mouth of the Lester River in Duluth, open to visitors Wednesday through Sunday, and staffed by trained volunteers. The exhibit features research about the North Shore conducted at UMD. North Shore Naturalist programs continue at the Cove, as well as the

learning cart at popular sites along the shore. Weekly themed events are offered at the Cove on Saturdays from June through August.

A consortium of conservation groups agrees to contribute strategies to a unified plan for protection of the North Shore, the “North Shore Protection Initiative,” to be developed by Sugarloaf in partnership with the Minnesota Land Trust.

The Cove hosts nearly 100 former Consolidated employees and their families at a day-long reunion at the Cove in September.

2008 A phenology program to keep track of when plants bloom and other natural happenings at the Cove is undertaken by a student intern. Reforestation efforts continue with the planting of a variety of native trees. Improvements are made to the interpretive trail. An updated trail guide and a “short form” trail guide pamphlet are published.

A partnership is formed with Wolf Ridge ELC, which brings summer groups to the Cove. Sugarloaf hosts field trips from UMD Geography and International Studies departments, MLSCP, St. Mary’s College International Program, and local schools.

The Tombolo Award is presented posthumously to Steve Pihlaja, who was a guiding force behind the effort to preserve Sugarloaf Cove, including pro bono preparation of legal documents with his wife and law partner Lorrie Stromme.

Molly Thompson replaces Andrew Slade as executive director.

2009 Alexis Berke-Hutchins is hired as Sugarloaf’s first staff naturalist, offering hikes and programs daily during the summer. MCC crews improve the safety of the interpretive trail by installing gravel donated by Minnesota Power Foundation.

Sugarloaf’s “learning cart” attracts more shore visitors. The cart project is funded in part by the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation and by Grand Superior Lodge, which also hosts guided hikes and campfire programs presented by the cart naturalist.

Sugarloaf joins the effort to control invasive species along the shore, including common tansy, spotted knapweed, and non-native thistles. With funding from MLSCP, Sugarloaf offers hands-on workshops about the threat and control of invasives to public and private landowners and managers in Cook and Lake Counties.

2010 New funding from the Sustain Our Great Lakes collaborative and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative enable Sugarloaf to offer a second Lost Forest program. Thirteen North Shore landowners begin intensive training in forest ecology and will develop and execute stewardship plans for their properties.

Sugarloaf launches its new website at www.sugarloafnorthshore.org.

At the annual membership meeting, John Green, geologist and professor emeritus at UMD, is awarded the Tombolo Award for his active involvement in the initial effort to preserve Sugarloaf Cove and his continuing involvement in Sugarloaf programming.

2011 Margie Menzies is hired as Sugarloaf’s naturalist. Regular programs are offered at the Cove Thursdays through Saturdays, featuring birds, wolves, natural history, off-site hikes, and geology. The Summer Speaker Series presents speakers on a variety of topics every Saturday in July and August.

A new bridge across the run-off ravine and a new trail from the parking lot to the bridge provide access to the nature center on a path through the woods.

Sugarloaf is instrumental in the formation of the North Shore Forest Collaborative (“NSFC”), whose members—organizations, agencies, and individuals—are affiliated “to revitalize and maintain a healthy and functioning ecosystem along the North Shore of Lake Superior with emphasis on restoring and maintaining native trees and associated forest communities.” See www.northshoreforest.org.

Sugarloaf formally partners with the Cook County Invasives Team (and, in 2014, the Lake County Invasives Team) in collaborative efforts to identify and control invasive species in the Arrowhead. See www.arrowheadinvasives.org.

2012 Funded by the MLSCP, an attractive and functional wood and glass-encased “map on wheels” display, with an informational panel on each of its four sides, is installed in the nature center. A shed is installed behind the nature center for storage. It will become the location where tools and equipment for forest restoration—and eventually invasives control—will be stored for use by property owners.

Margie begins Thursday morning bird-banding, which will become a popular regular feature at the Cove in subsequent seasons. Data she collects is shared with the National Bird Banding Laboratory in Maryland.

The pine plantations are thinned to naturalize the forest, to allow for planting of other conifers, and to promote a healthier ecosystem with understory growth and animal habitat. Sugarloaf updates its informational booklet, “Restoring Lake Superior’s Coastal Forest,” and distributes it to landowners. A “trail” of seven geocaching sites is installed at the Cove.

The Tombolo Award is given to Andrea Peterson, former Grand Marais mayor, early advocate for Sugarloaf preservation and charter member of SICA’s board of directors, for her work on behalf of numerous environmental efforts along the shore.

2013 Margie Menzies teaches the first Minnesota Master Naturalist course to be offered at Sugarloaf Cove, with 22 participants meeting twice a month from February to May. She will continue to teach this course, a joint program of the DNR and University of Minnesota Extension, in coming years at both the Cove and at North House Folk School in Grand Marais.

Margit Berg, long-time Sugarloaf supporter and board member, takes on the challenge of volunteer coordinator, recruiting volunteers to staff the nature center as “site hosts” and assist in trail maintenance and other projects.

2014 Sugarloaf’s third Lost Forest program takes place in the spring and summer, with a class of 26, owners of 16 properties on the shore.

A partnership of the DNR, Superior National Forest, and Sugarloaf is jointly awarded a Conservation Partners Legacy grant for reforestation work in the Spruce Creek and Cascade River watersheds and at Sugarloaf Cove. At the Cove, projects will include invasive plant removal and native species restoration.

The NSFC overall plan for collaborative restoration of the North Shore forest is completed, including priority projects for which funding will be sought by the umbrella organization. Sugarloaf proposes a plan to provide fencing materials and planting assistance to private landowners at reduced cost.

The parking lot at the Cove is regraded and improved. New steps to the beach are installed, together with trail improvements. A weather station is installed at the nature center. Work begins on restoration of the “meadow” area outside the nature center, with treatment and removal of invasives, a controlled burn, and planting of seeds and plugs to promote growth of native species.

Margit Berg, former 20-year board member, president, secretary, committee chair, and current volunteer coordinator (and soon to be capital campaign chair), is chosen to receive the Tombolo Award in recognition of her service to Sugarloaf.

- 2015** Sugarloaf launches an ambitious capital campaign to fund parking lot improvements, new trail signage and educational panels, trail improvements, and nature center building renovation.

Sugarloaf undertakes training of property owners in invasives identification and control and safe methods of herbicide application. After receiving the training, they are authorized to borrow equipment and obtain herbicides from the Community Shed behind the nature center at the Cove.

- 2016** Sugarloaf’s redesigned “user-friendly” website is launched. This year’s nature center programming offers hands-on classes in artistic use of natural materials, such as dogwood, birch bark, cattails, and pine needles.

Capital campaign results are on display. The parking lot is enlarged and distinctive informational panels are installed. New stone steps are added from the parking lot to top of the trail to the nature center. A trail map is installed at the intersection of the nature center trail and the rerouted one-mile interpretive trail. Beautiful interior improvements to the nature center include a refinished floor, new walls separating office space and kitchen from the main room, additional wood cabinets for storage and recycling, and a site host desk and greeting station. New informative signage is installed at strategic places throughout the Cove.

The Sugarloaf/NSFC fencing program is launched with foundation and corporate funding, enabling landowners to purchase and install fencing around newly planted trees to protect them from deer browse.

Sugarloaf’s collaborative efforts with NSFC include securing a grant from MSLCP to explore implementation of a “North Shore Neighbor to Neighbor” program that would recruit landowners as “ambassadors” to assist neighboring landowners in forest restoration efforts.

2017 The fourth Lost Forest class, with 19 families representing 600 acres of private property along the North Shore, begins, supported in part by a grant from the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation.

As a fundraiser, Sugarloaf offers trees “for sale”—to be planted in an open area near the parking lot, with the donors to be recognized.

Sugarloaf announces the formation of its Legacy Society, to encourage estate commitments and other forms of planned giving to ensure the future of the Cove and the North Shore Forest.

Wendy Strombeck, Sugarloaf’s longtime graphic designer, is selected from 5000 submissions as a finalist for a prestigious Summit Creative Award, based on her design of the Cove’s new outdoor interpretive panels.

The North Shore Neighbor to Neighbor (“N2N”) program continues planning for implementation, recruiting “ambassadors” to test the program and inviting input.

Sugarloaf partners with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and the Northland Volunteer Center, which connect interested volunteers with opportunities to work with northeastern Minnesota nonprofits.

Former long-term board member Jim Mullin receives the Tombolo Award in recognition of his years of active service on the board, and his continuing involvement with and support of Sugarloaf following his retirement from the board.

2018 As both the numbers of visitors and the costs of maintaining and improving grounds and facilities at the Cove increase, Sugarloaf institutes a parking fee program. Non-member visitors will be asked to pay \$5 per vehicle when parking in the lot. Sugarloaf members can park in the lot without additional cost and will receive parking stickers to attach to their car windows.

Tammy Smith is hired as a part-time site host and gift shop manager at the nature center, as part of an initiative to keep the nature center open daily during the summer and fall. The gift shop is expanded.

The low-cost fencing program continues, with 115 landowners purchasing 512 rolls of fencing to protect plantings on their properties. Funding is secured from Arrowhead Electric for the design and installation of new signposts on the interpretive trail. The Northeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnership provides funding for implementation of the N2N program.