



HEARING STATE CAPITOL 2022

Mission Statement

The mission of this 501c3 organization is to provide relief and recreation to military veterans and their families as part of the continuous reintegration process. The Disabled Veterans Rest Camp Board of Directors, the administrating organization, and Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake staff actively seek out military members and Veterans dealing with reintegration issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as their families to offer them rest and recovery through various outdoor recreational activities. Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake provides many outdoor experiences, to include camping, swimming, boating, softball, volleyball, horseshoes, and fishing for the families of military veterans. Additionally, because children are missing a parent due to a military deployment, and sometimes it is their only parent that is deployed, they do not have the same opportunities for outdoor and land stewardship activities. Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake strives to reach out to those children to provide enjoyable outdoor activities. Also, groups such as Gone Fishing of South Washington County are recipients of various outdoor programs that the camp hosts, along with numerous veteran service organizations, patients of the VA Hospital, and residents of the Veterans Home in Hastings, Minnesota. This is all possible due to the accessibility of the camp for handicapped and disabled guests. This camp reaches out to all ages, races, and abilities, as service to our nation and disabilities affect without discrimination.



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History

- Original 69 acre farm was deeded to the Disabled Veterans of Ramsey County in 1926
- Disabled Veterans Rest Camp was established
 - During WWI returning Veterans suffering from shell shock came to the campground for rest and relaxation
 - During WWII returning Veterans suffering from battle fatigue found comfort at the campground
 - Today returning Veterans suffering from post traumatic stress disorder use the campground
- Although the name of the veteran's affliction has changed through the years, the camp mission to assist veterans with reintegration, provide family focused recreation and comradery remain intact



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2021 Campground Demographics

- **41313 Total visitors**
- **We welcomed the following Veterans**
 - **WWII Veterans – 1**
 - **Korean Veterans – 12**
 - **Vietnam Veterans – 108**
 - **Gulf War Veterans – 72**
 - **Iraqi/Afghanistan Veterans – 100**
 - **Other Veterans - 23**
- **First time Veteran visitors - 316**



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Opportunities, challenges, issues and needs facing Veterans Campground

- With so many Minnesotans affected by military duty in the past 18 years, more people are turning to the camp to be the provider of outdoor recreation
 - During the past 10-12 years the Veterans Campground has seen an unprecedented increase in annual visitors (3000 to over 41,000)
 - 12 years ago winter utilization of the campground was nearly non-existent
 - Service organizations that support Veterans Campground report a greater demand for access to the campground resources than we can currently support
- The greater demand of our veteran community in Minnesota has required a large expansion of the camp and proposed future growth
- Financial support to update and expand critical septic infrastructure is greatly needed



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Questions

