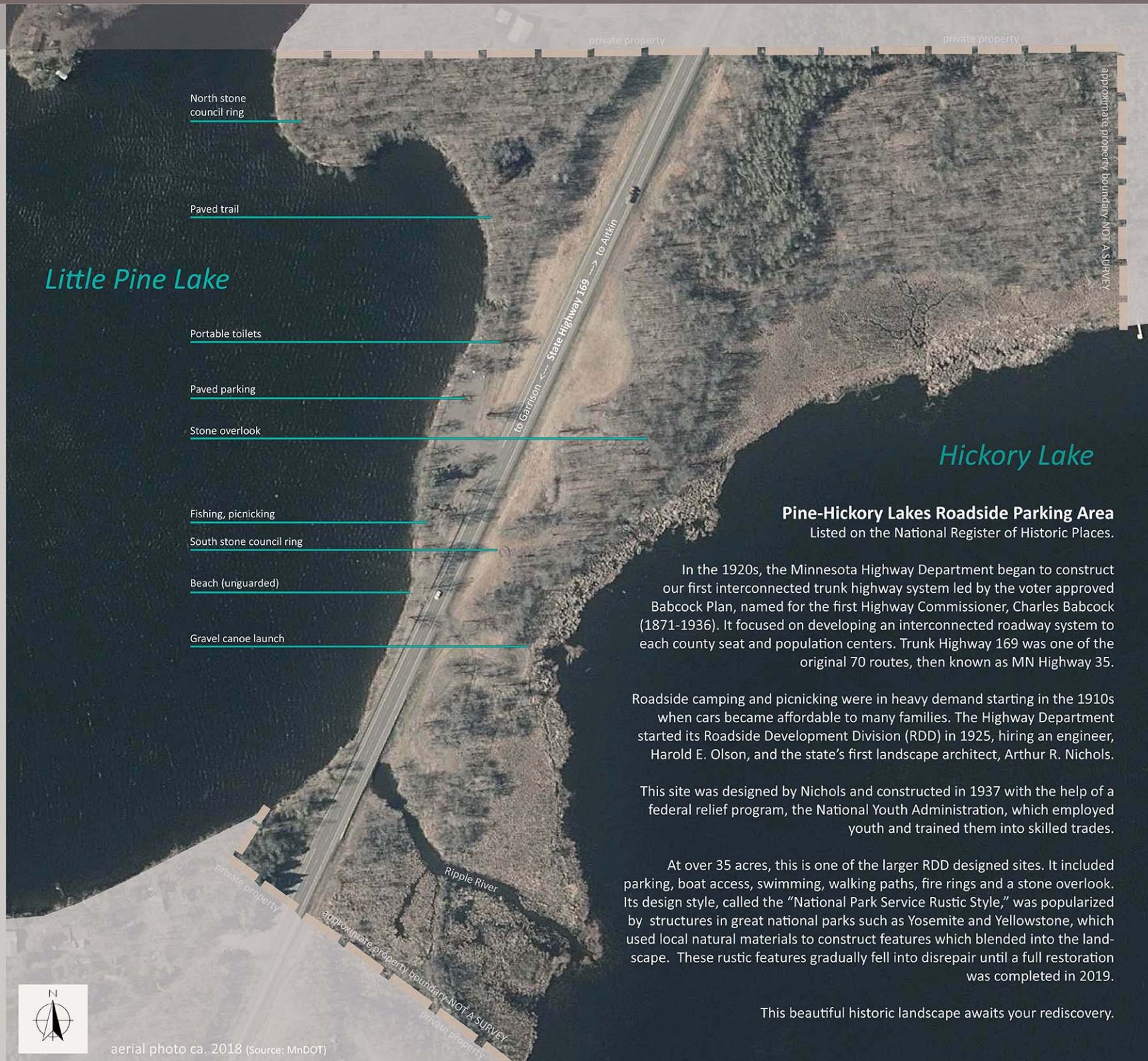


# PINE-HICKORY LAKES ROADSIDE PARKING AREA



## Pine-Hickory Lakes Roadside Parking Area

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In the 1920s, the Minnesota Highway Department began to construct our first interconnected trunk highway system led by the voter approved Babcock Plan, named for the first Highway Commissioner, Charles Babcock (1871-1936). It focused on developing an interconnected roadway system to each county seat and population centers. Trunk Highway 169 was one of the original 70 routes, then known as MN Highway 35.

Roadside camping and picnicking were in heavy demand starting in the 1910s when cars became affordable to many families. The Highway Department started its Roadside Development Division (RDD) in 1925, hiring an engineer, Harold E. Olson, and the state's first landscape architect, Arthur R. Nichols.

This site was designed by Nichols and constructed in 1937 with the help of a federal relief program, the National Youth Administration, which employed youth and trained them into skilled trades.

At over 35 acres, this is one of the larger RDD designed sites. It included parking, boat access, swimming, walking paths, fire rings and a stone overlook. Its design style, called the "National Park Service Rustic Style," was popularized by structures in great national parks such as Yosemite and Yellowstone, which used local natural materials to construct features which blended into the landscape. These rustic features gradually fell into disrepair until a full restoration was completed in 2019.

This beautiful historic landscape awaits your rediscovery.



Hickory Lake stone council ring under construction by National Youth Administration workers ca. 1938 (MnDOT)



Hickory Lake stone overlook ca. 1938 (MnDOT)