



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **2020 has been quite the year! Is the National Loon Center (NLC) still being planned?**

Yes, and we are staying true to our mission to be an interactive EDUCATIONAL destination that transforms visitors into CHAMPIONS for loons and fresh water EVERYWHERE! As we all know, COVID-19 had a major impact on our society. Out of respect and consideration for all the human loss, the NLC did not share any updates. But the environment and the loons still need our preservation – maybe now more than ever! <http://www.nationallooncenter.org/>

### **Is the NLC still being built on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Crosslake Campground?**

Yes, once required approvals are in place Spring 2021, the NLC in partnership with the Corps of Engineers will begin outdoor construction for boardwalks, mooring, shoreline restoration and exhibits. Plans are currently being finalized with our architectural and engineering consulting firm, WIDSETH!

### **Is there a plan for operations and maintenance in place?**

Yes, the Brainerd Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce will employ the Executive Director until the Center is built. Site operation and maintenance for outdoor activities is in partnership with the Corps of Engineers through an in-place Cooperative Agreement and Lease.

### **Was the Parking and Traffic study completed?**

Yes, the parking and traffic study was completed in 2019 in partnership with the City of Crosslake, Crow Wing County and the National Loon Center Foundation. It concluded that the City of Crosslake has all the parking necessary by including street parking, school lot, Town Square lots, etc., even on peak weekends in the summertime, we have ample parking. More attention will be given to safe pedestrian and bike crossings, travel and wayfinding (systems that can guide people through the physical environment). Visitors will also be able to come by boat. Additionally, much of the visitation will come during the school year with bus tours. Have you ever been to Wabasha, MN to visit the National Eagle Center? They do not have a parking lot on site, but use in-town parking as well with a parking map online. This promotes visitors to the center to enjoy other area restaurants, businesses and attractions.

### **Is there a benefit to me personally by having a year-round National Loon Center attraction in Crosslake?**

Yes! Currently the campground and day use areas receive an estimated 160,000 visitors per year in which together we can educate and inspire to help save our State bird. Visitors support our local businesses year-round, not just summers. This will help support many of the local businesses who

would appreciate the “off-season” support so that they can provide residents who want and need many services and goods to enjoy time spent in “Lake” country.

**Is the National Loon Center still fund raising?**

Yes! We are still in search of an “Anchor” Sponsor, but during COVID times you can understand why foundations, corporations and philanthropists are committed to employees, jobs and healthcare in this moment. Many non-profits have seen a decline in donations. We are executing an online Fall Donation Drive in efforts to continue to raise funds from the broader community and State of Minnesota. In 2020, we have raised a little over \$800,000. We have a goal to raise **\$6 million** and every donation (large or small) is important!

**Will having a National Loon Center accomplish anything?**

Yes! We will be able to measure human contributions towards the preservation of the Common Loon and our lakes. This means we will improve shoreline habitat. We will build and protect loon nests. We will help tag loons to monitor and observe migration issues. We will test water clarity for ecosystem warnings. And we will hold classrooms aboard an educational vessel to provide inspirational programs and curriculum. In short, the new Center will pique curiosity for everything there is to learn about loons and the lakes. And as important, the Center will be a gathering place for the community to share stories and memories.

**Are you ever going to organize more volunteers?**

Yes! We are in the process of creating an online form to submit so we can obtain your information. We hope to incorporate many volunteers into all our future programs. Please go to our website and share your information with us so we may contact you in the future.

Email: [info@nationallooncenter.org](mailto:info@nationallooncenter.org)

**Is anything else happening currently?**

Yes! In a partnership with the University of Minnesota, a curriculum has been developed about Loons, Lakes and People. Using that curriculum, a schematic design plan was created that describes the various exhibits that will be in the Center and on the surrounding grounds. In addition, a floating classroom that will take visitors out on Crosslake itself to learn about the Loon/Lake/People story is in development. And, at some point after the Center opens, the floating classroom may be transported to other lakes in the region for people to learn more about their lake that they share with the loons.

**Can I donate?**

Yes! And THANK YOU! Go to [www.nationallooncenter.org](http://www.nationallooncenter.org) and donate securely online. This Fall, we are initiating the “Answer the Call” campaign to create awareness and encourage donations. In return, donors will receive fun National Loon Center merchandise. But we're just building this campaign for our website, so keep checking in with us! You can also donate other Conservation & Philanthropy

options: Memorials, In-kind, Stock, Willed Gifts, Donor Advised Funds.

Please contact [info@nationallooncenter.org](mailto:info@nationallooncenter.org) or mail to PO Box 642, Crosslake, MN 56442