

Grand Portage Band and Park Service partner on housing project

Rhonda Silence

An exciting building project is underway in Grand Portage this winter. The Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and the Grand Portage National Monument are working together to build seasonal interpretive staff housing for the National Monument. And the goal is to obtain the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) platinum certification for a residential structure.

Brian Sherburne, the project foreman, said, "This is another example of the unique relationship between the Grand Portage band and the National Park Service."

The Grand Portage Band is leasing the land, next to the Grand Portage Trust Lands building, to the Park Service. And the Band is acting as general contractor for the project.

The trusses were set on November 29 and framing and interior work will continue through the winter, with particular attention to the LEED goal. To achieve LEED status, the design and construction must reduce or eliminate the negative impact of buildings on the environment and occupants. One way that the building is meeting LEED standards is through solar panels, which will be installed on the south side of the building. "The building will have net metering," said



Photo by Brian Sherburne

A crane from Edwin E. Thoreson Inc. sets the trusses in place for the new Grand Portage National Monument seasonal staff housing building. The project is being completed through a partnership between the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and the National Park Service. The building will provide housing for seasonal interpretive staff at the Grand Portage National Monument.

Sherburne. "If it produces more than it consumes, it will supply energy to Arrowhead Electric Cooperative."

Another goal of the project is to use as many local contractors as pos-

sible to help the local economy. Grand Portage Construction completed the excavation. Hall Masonry and Edwin E. Thoreson Inc. did the concrete work. Hedstrom E&E completed the

electrical work. A number of local carpenters assisted with the project to date—Steve Hudler, Corey Hudler, Jason Irvin, Marshall Pederson, Donnie Lehto, Steve Cleveland, Cody

Carlson, and Donovan Dahmen. Outback Solar has done the solar installation work. Appliances were purchased from County Plumbing & Heating of Lutsen. The floors are stained concrete done by Rick Crawford of S&C Masonry and carpet is coming from 1010 Interiors.

Sherburne said he and Melvin Gagnon, the Grand Portage maintenance supervisor, have worked together to obtain materials, alternating between Sawtooth Lumber and Superior Lumber in Grand Marais.

Sherburne said there will be final exterior work in the spring—sidewalks, a parking area, and a nice screened porch will be constructed. An open house is planned for May, however, Sherburne said, that depends on the weather.

And like Arrowhead Electric Cooperative which waited months to learn that it had earned a LEED gold rating for its headquarters building in Lutsen, the wait will begin. Sherburne said if the project obtains residential LEED platinum rating it would be only the fourth or fifth such building in Minnesota—and the first ever in the National Park Service system.

Sherburne said, "If all goes well, this could be the prototype for other projects around the country."