

I own the Boom Site House and Barn across the street from the Boom Site wayside and I attended the February 6 meeting at Stillwater Town Hall regarding the wayside. It seems to me that no one is willing to take responsibility for the neglect and blight the Department of Transportation has left in Stillwater Township.

The DoT claims that "volume" was a contributing factor in deciding to close the wayside. Clearly they are basing that on an annual average as anyone who lives along 95 can tell you that from May through September there is an uninterrupted stream of traffic, north and south. Even in the dead of winter I can look out my window and see 10 cars a day try to pull into the wayside or park for a moment to look at the view.

Presumably, these people pay for their driver's licenses, their tabs, the sales tax on the vehicle, the taxes on fuel, the tax on the service and other products for the auto, and they probably have a State Park sticker and give \$5.00 to the DNR on their tax returns to boot! But they are denied access to this "public" property because we cannot compel a department of our state government to accept its responsibility.

And the Federal Government has a responsibility, as well. The natural access to the federally designated Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway is behind a locked gate, with parking blocked by huge cement barriers with large "road closed" signs, and the area blighted by vandals. The operative word here is "Scenic". If these cement barriers, obvious neglect, and evidence of vandalism are not in violation of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, then what is that act for? Why am I obligated to respect its requirements if the government, who is us and we are them, does not have to abide by its own law?

Are they going to let the Buckthorn grow, too?

The entire St. Croix Boom Site is also a National Historic Landmark, which was pointed out fruitlessly at the meeting. The roadside parking area itself has an interesting history dating back to 1936. The site is a destination for motorists nationwide and its overall significance historically has been codified definitively.

Our federal, state, county, and city governments have all said unequivocally that they will not be responsible for this now abandoned property. As I understand it, we are to hope legislation will force an unwilling partner to take over the wayside with less than a year's budget's worth in funding. We'll see. Meanwhile, there is a derelict, vandalized, polluted, and mostly un-scenic neighbor in front of the historic Boom Master's house.