



Report of FILA Activity at the South Fox Light Station – 2006

Subsequent to two assessment trips in the spring, FILA volunteers spent a total of 40 man days working on critical protective projects on all of the structures of the Light Station (with the exception of the Modern Tower). The volunteers provided their own tools and supplies; the latter amounting personal expenses of up to several hundreds of dollars per volunteer. This brief report details what was accomplished and the condition in which we left the Station at the end of the season.

1. Boathouse – This structure was observed to have been damaged by ice driven stones. These had buried the sill plate on the south side and resulted in it rotting, a portion of the wall collapsing and the support of the SE corner giving away. In addition the south and north walls are leaning north and lifting the SW corner off the sill. We dug away the stone and debris from the sill plate and replaced a 9 foot section that had rotted away. The missing section of wall was reassembled and reinstalled. Three additional vertical posts were installed to support the SE corner. Both the south and north wall were braced to stabilize their positions. It is hoped that this remediation is adequate to support the structure until more permanent repairs can be effected.
2. Walkways – Most of the side walks were obstructed by vegetation and accumulated soil. The vegetation was removed and the soil and debris cleared from the principle walkways leading to the historic Lighthouse and Keepers Quarters.
3. Oil House – The iron door and sheet metal roof were suffering corrosion damage. The door was chipped, primed and painted (2 coats of each). The roof was patched and similarly primed and painted.
4. Historic Lighthouse – This structure was open to casual entry and was suffering water damage due to several broken windows and corrosion damage to the metal work of the watch deck and lantern room. In addition, the chimney cap was missing and an area of roof was badly damaged. All metal surfaces of the lantern room, deck and rail were chipped, primed and painted. Then the missing lantern room windows were replaced with shutters and the broken windows in the tower and office area replaced. A plywood cap was installed on the chimney and the tuck pointing repaired to control further water/ice damage. A temporary patch was installed over the missing section of roof and the building completely closed up against the elements and entry.
5. Keepers Quarters – This building was being inundated by vegetation. Overhanging trees were damaging the roof tiles, the eaves were full of soil and loaded with rooted plants, and trees were sprouting from the chimneys.

All trees were trimmed away from the roof and foundation and the eaves relieved of their load. All three chimneys were capped and the vegetation removed. Damaged and missing roof tiles were temporarily replaced with galvanized sheet metal. A missing window was also replaced and the building left closed to the weather and to entry.

6. Carpenters Shop – Two trees were damaging the roof, the door was not secured and several windows were broken. The trees were removed, the windows shuttered and the door secured.
7. Fog Signal Building – Several portals (the main door, the 2nd floor door and 4 windows) were allowing water to damage the interior of the structure. The broken windows were all shuttered and the doors secured.

In summary, as we left the Light Station, all buildings were closed to entry and weather-induced damage for the first time in several years and projects aimed to preserve the buildings had been initiated.

FILA requests that MDNR extends our use permit for the 2007 season (May through October) so that we may continue these projects.