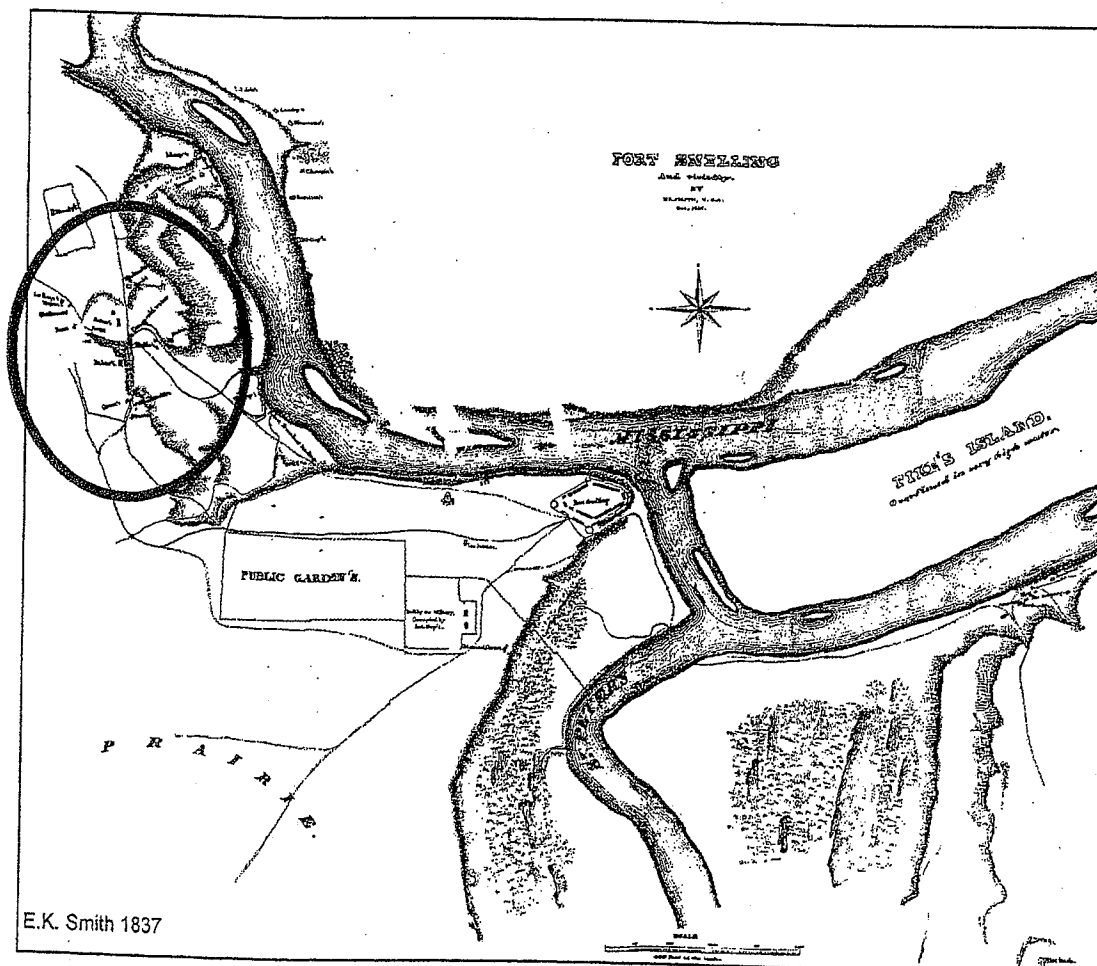


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Archaeological Research at the former Twin Cities Bureau of Mines Testing Facility, Minnesota



by

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The closure of the Twin Cities Bureau of Mines facility (BOM) and its possible transfer to a non-federal agency resulted in an archaeological survey and testing program to define cultural resources on the property. Research on historic maps and other documents show unequivocally that 19th-century military use and early historic settlement within the former military land grant and reservation extend into the tract of land formerly occupied by the US Bureau of Mines. The National Park Service (NPS), which was assisting the Bureau of Mines Closure Team on cultural resource matters related to the proposed transfer of the land out of federal control, requested this research in order to better understand the potential for and significance of archaeological resources on the property. This document reports on that research.

In order to evaluate the potential for cultural resources and document the status of existing archaeological resources within the BOM parcel, a cooperative agreement was signed between the National Park Service and the Minnesota Historical Society—the work to be executed by the Society's Archaeology Department under the direction of the author. That agreement called for an archaeological evaluation of buried cultural resources on the former BOM tract in order to determine the extent of significant archaeological resources that might be in need of protection if the property left federal ownership. During the fieldwork phase it was thought that the property would leave federal ownership, however it now appears that that will not be the case. The land has been transferred to the Fish and Wildlife Service. While there appears no immediate need for protective measures, these field investigations and recommendation can provide the new federal land managers with information relevant to their stewardship of the property.

The testing program conducted in 2000 and 2001 produced management recommendations to provide for long term protection for resources in the Bureau of Mines property contributing to the Fort Snelling National Register District and Fort Snelling National Historic Landmark. The recommendations are based on test excavations, stratigraphy, recovered material culture, and historic documentation as presented below. A series of resource zones were established within the BOM property to assist in the preservation process. Based on findings from the current research and limited previous investigations, 5 management zones have been defined (see Figure 55):

1. Zone I is recommended for further testing to assess potential resources that may contribute to the NHL or NR District.
2. Zone II contains in situ cultural deposits and material culture dating to the period of significance of the NHL and NR District. This area also corresponds to the historically documented location of the early period of use at the Camp Coldwater settlement and waterworks development from the last quarter of the 19th century and first quarter of the 20th century. The intact strata and material culture in Zone II are buried well below the surface and general maintenance and continuing normal use should not adversely affect those resources.

3. Zone III does not appear to warrant inclusion in the NHL or NR and no further archaeological investigations appear necessary.
4. Zone IV does not appear to contain in situ cultural strata nor any material culture that is considered contributing to the significance of the NHL or NR District.
5. Zone V contains a late-19th-century military railroad grade however, the remainder of this area has yielded neither archaeological features nor strata contributing to the NHL or NR.

The NHL's existing western boundary through the BOM tract was initially drawn along topographic contours without knowledge of the archaeological resources in the area. Based on the findings of this research project, it is recommended that the Fort Snelling NHL boundaries be modified and moved to the west to include those areas delineated as Zone II. This zone clearly exhibits cultural strata and material remains in undisturbed contexts that contribute to the significance of the Fort Snelling NHL and NR District as defined for the last three quarters of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century.

