



Minnesota Natural Resources  
Department: Environmental  
Assessment Files Regarding State  
Parks

## **Copyright Notice:**

This material may be protected by copyright law (U.S. Code, Title 17). Researchers are liable for any infringement. For more information, visit [www.mnhs.org/copyright](http://www.mnhs.org/copyright).

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

### Canoe and Boating Route Rivers

#### I. Description of the proposed Action

A. Purpose of the action: The state canoe and boating route rivers were designated by the legislature as a way of authorizing the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources <sup>(DNR) again and</sup> to ~~spend money to~~ develop campsites, accesses, rest areas, portages and other facilities for canoeists, fishermen and other recreationists. This authorizing legislation was passed in ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ and 19\_\_ and is found in Minn. Stat. 85.32.

The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, as the federal administering agency of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, proposes to participate with the DNR <sup>in acquisition</sup> by providing money for ~~the purchase~~ land, easements and development of these sites.

B. Location and Magnitude of the projects: ~~The financial~~ The (within state boundaries) canoe and boating route system now includes the entire lengths of the following rivers <sup>12/</sup> ~~(the legislature may designate additional rivers)~~: Big Fork, Cannon, Cloquet, Des Moines, Kettle, Minnesota, Mississippi, Crow, Rum, Red Lake, St. Croix, St. Louis, Snake, Straight (the river in southeastern Minnesota), Little Fork, Crow Wing, <sup>6</sup> ~~and~~ Zumbro, and Root. The legislature may designate additional rivers. ~~The Parts of the Kettle, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nez Perce, and Crow rivers are state wild and scenic rivers. The St. Croix is a national wild and scenic river.~~

~~The financial magnitude of the canoe and boating route project is determined by the legislature, which commits funds for development and acquisition each biennium. This~~ The legislature <sup>has authorized</sup> allocated ~~about~~ \$ 400,000 for acquisition and \$ 470,000 for development and maintenance during the 1978-9 biennium. <sup>approx</sup> ~~it is proposed to acquire~~ and to 1954 <sup>year</sup> ~~of land at 148~~ location and develop 211 sites

1. Game time is 5:30. If a team does not have a minimum of 8 players by 5:45 it will be an automatic forfeit.
2. The home team will furnish a new, restricted flight game ball and be responsible for bases.
3. All postponements to be made up on the make-up dates, as doubleheaders in the second round, or at another time to be determined by the teams involved.
4. Umpires are to be furnished by the participating teams. A base umpire is optional. If a team is extremely dissatisfied with an umpire furnished by the opponent the coach may ask that the umpire not be used any longer during the game. The opponent must comply. This challenge shall be limited to 1 per team per game.
5. Rosters must be comprised of players presently working for your department or those who have formerly worked for you and played ball with you in this league.
6. Double elimination playoffs. The top 6 teams make the playoffs. The 1st and 2nd place teams draw a bye in the first round of the playoffs. The team finishing higher in the final standings will be the home team in the playoffs.
7. Call in scores to Bill Dircks at 7045 the day after the game.

C. ~~TIMING~~ of the project: The DNR has been buying land and developing sites along the canoe and boating routes for several years. Work on the rivers will continue as the DNR and the legislature see the need to develop more sites.

D. Facilities to be developed:

The following are the most commonly developed facilities:

— Campsites: These are usually primitive sites with areas for two or three tents, fire rings and pit toilets. Often, they are accessible only by canoe.

— Accesses: These are areas ~~where~~ with a small parking lot and a trail or ramp to the river.

— Rest areas: These are picnic areas, often with tables, pit toilets and fire rings.

— Portages: These are simply trails around river hazards such as dams, waterfalls and difficult rapids.

— Signs: The DNR marks hazards and sites with wooden ~~route~~ signs.

E. <sup>R</sup> Recreation needs served by the proposal: The canoe and boating route sites will be used mostly by canoeists and fishermen, although some sites will benefit ~~backpackers~~ picnickers, hikers and campers without canoes or boats.

*Imaging projects*

II. ~~DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT~~

A. ~~Topography: The following landform groups were~~



July 26	SPACERS	vs.	DNR BLUE	2
July 28	RED LEGATEES	vs.	ISD EAGLES	1
July 28	DELINQUENTS	vs.	DNR GOLD	2
Aug. 2	DODGERS	vs.	SPACERS	2
Aug. 4	RED LEGATEES	vs.	DNR GOLD	1
Aug. 4	OPEN (MAKE-UP)			2
Aug. 9	OPEN (MAKE-UP)			2
Aug. 11	PLAYOFF GAME #1			1
Aug. 11	PLAYOFF GAME #2			2
Aug. 16	PLAYOFF GAME #3			1
Aug. 16	PLAYOFF GAME #4			2
Aug. 18	PLAYOFF GAME #5			1
Aug. 18	PLAYOFF GAME #6			2
Aug. 23	PLAYOFF GAME #7			1
Aug. 23	PLAYOFF GAME #8			2
Aug. 25	PLAYOFF GAME #9			1
Aug. 30	PLAYOFF GAME #10			1
Aug. 30	PLAYOFF GAME #11 (if necessary)			1

## II. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

A. Topography: The following five major landforms are identified in

Selected Rivers of Minnesota: Recreational Analysis, 1966, prepared

~~for the~~ Midwest Planning and Research, Inc.:

Central Minnesota: Glacial <sup>in</sup> moraine land ~~comprised~~ composed primarily of ~~the~~ sand, gravel and boulders. This landform ~~is~~ extends from the Red Lakes in the north to the ~~the~~ southern border and includes a vast number of lakes of differing sizes, ridges of differing heights, and has been used by man for farming in a variety of ways. This hill and lake country is the region in which most of the large rivers of the state have their source.

Southwestern Minnesota: Till plains formed of fine glacial <sup>debris</sup> ~~beds~~ including clay as well as sand. This is a vast rolling plain extending beyond state borders into Iowa and South Dakota with fertile, rich black ~~prairie~~ soil. Almost no rock outcropping occurs, for bedrock is buried deep beneath ~~glacial~~ glacial deposits.

Northwest Minnesota: The flat plain of the northwest ~~identified as~~ (the Red River Valley and the Big Bog) was formerly the bottom of ~~a huge~~ ~~lake~~ glacial Lake Agassiz. The landscape is monotonously flat except for sand ridges, which are former beach ridges of this lake.

Northeast Minnesota: The rocky ice-scoured area of the Arrowhead region ~~is~~ is the result of extensive glacial ~~erosion~~ erosion which stripped off the topsoil and ground ~~down~~ down the bedrock. The landscape is rough <sup>There are</sup> with high forested hills and swiftly flowing streams <sup>which</sup> running into the Great Lakes. <sup>Lake Superior</sup>

Southeast Minnesota: This area was affected little by glaciers. The landscape was developed principally through the ~~erosion~~ erosion of rivers. ~~channeling~~ Deep wide valleys are separated by high, broad rolling upland plains.

**WATER QUALITY:** Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored. **HISTORY:** The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.

**WATER QUALITY:** Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored.

**HISTORY:** The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.

**WATER QUALITY:** Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored. **HISTORY:** The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.

**WATER QUALITY:** Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored.

**HISTORY:** The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.

**WATER QUALITY:** Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored. **HISTORY:** The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.

**WATER QUALITY:** Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored.

**HISTORY:** The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.

B. Soils: The ~~more~~ than 300 different soils within Minnesota have been consolidated into 15 groups. Because of this wide variation of soils, each site proposed for development will have to be checked <sup>individually</sup> to make sure that the soil ~~is~~ will support the planned activity. The following set of restrictions published by the Soil Conservation Service generally reflects the ~~capability~~ of specific soils to withstand recreational activities: ~~and~~

Restrictions for playgrounds, camping and picnic areas include avoidance of excessive stoniness, steep slopes, moisture-prone soils and highly erosive soils.

Restrictions for road and major pathway construction include avoidance of major slopes, highly ~~er~~ erosive soils, plastic soils, and areas of potential ~~flood~~ flooding.

Restrictions for construction of foundations related to park and recreation structures include avoidance of steep gradients, highly plastic and erosive soils, areas flood susceptibility and non-load bearing soils.

C. Mineral Resources:

This one is yours, Frank.



WATER QUALITY: Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored. HISTORY: The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.

WATER QUALITY: Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored.

HISTORY: The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.

WATER QUALITY: Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored. HISTORY: The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.

WATER QUALITY: Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored.

HISTORY: The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.

WATER QUALITY: Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored. HISTORY: The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.

WATER QUALITY: Good for all recreation, although the water is not drinkable without treatment. The Kettle is noticeably amber colored.

HISTORY: The Kettle was the focus of considerable industry during the last century. The forests, which once included much pine, were logged. Land near the river was mined for sandstone and copper.



10. In the proposed management plan are the boundaries, recommendations, and regulations final? Or can changes be made?

Legitimate problems that arise will be considered and changes will be made, but only as long as they don't adversely affect the goal of the plan--to preserve and protect the river. Changes will be made when comments from interested persons or groups suggest improvements of the management plan.

11. If the North Fork of the Crow River is designated as a Wild and Scenic River, will the public be allowed on my land?

No. In fact, under the Wild and Scenic River regulations it would be a misdemeanor for anyone to trespass on private land without owner permission. This same regulation applies to land on which a scenic easement has been purchased.

12. I own a farm along the Crow River: What would designation mean to me?

You would be able to continue farming as you have in the past. However, any expansion of your operation would have to conform to conditions of the new land use ordinances. Farming, especially a good farming operation, is considered a desirable use of land along the Crow River.

### III. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

A. Impact on the Physical Environment: Physical impact will be practically nil since the average size of each site is only five to ten acres. The site itself occupies ~~much less area than this~~ very little of the total area; the rest of the land is simply a buffer to surrounding property. Sites will be designed to avoid such problems as erosion or ~~the~~ ground water contamination.

B. Impact on the Tax Base: No measurable impact.

C. Impact on Roads, Traffic, Utilities and Other Services: Impact on traffic will be too small to be measured. Impact on roads ~~would~~ <sup>will</sup> be minimal; ~~if then~~

the sites wouldn't be built if they would interfere with roads or traffic.

*There will be no impact on utilities or other services.*

D. Impact on Historical or Archeological Resources: No sites are planned on areas ~~with~~ of historical or archeological significance.

#### E. Socio-economic Impact

1. Acquisition is from willing sellers. ~~No homesites will be purchased.~~ <sup>or commercial sites</sup>

1. Sites will generally be far from private structures to avoid disruptions and ~~the~~ vandalism to private property.

2. Sites will be redesigned, more heavily patrolled or ~~removed~~ closed if littering, trespassing and vandalism are persistent.

1. Economic benefit or detriment is ~~immeasurable~~ <sup>too</sup> small to be measured.

2. River use may increase, although such a prediction is only conjecture.

### IV. MITIGATING MEASURES INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSED ACTION

*1-3 above*

8. What is a scenic easement?

A scenic easement is an interest in land, but is less than full title to the land. It limits the land's development to protect the scenic and natural characteristics of the area. In general, this means that a person who sells a scenic easement could be paid for keeping his land the way it is.

A scenic easement is a legal document, written as a deed, recorded with the county <sup>REGISTRAR</sup> ~~Register~~ of Deeds, and remains forever with the title of the land. The seller of a scenic easement sells his right to develop or alter the landscape - but only in certain ways. The exact provisions of the easement are negotiable by the landowner. The landowner would then be paid the estimated value of the rights he has sold. Land covered by a scenic easement remains on the tax rolls and the landowner continues to pay a share of the tax support to the local community.

Selling a scenic easement to the state does not make the land public. No one has any more right to trespass on land covered by a scenic easement than on any other private land along the river.

9. Does the DNR have the authority in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to acquire land by eminent domain (condemnation)?

No.



~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

assessment/7

V. ANY ADVERSE EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED SHOULD THE PROPOSAL BE IMPLEMENTED

The development of sites will result in a very small clearing of land --

~~and a small clearing~~

only a few thousand square feet per site.

Some littering and minor vandalism to ~~state~~ property will probably be unavoidable.

The county will lose some taxable property if the DNR purchases private land to build sites.

Some wear and minor erosion will occur, even on well designed sites.

VI. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ~~ENHANCEMENT~~ OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY.

What the hell does this mean?

VII. ANY IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES WHICH WOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED ACTION SHOULD IT BE IMPLEMENTED.

None.

VIII. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION.

No Action: ~~If development~~ Development of sites could be left to local governments and federal managing agencies.

Project of larger or smaller scope: The extent of acquisition and development is determined by funding from the legislature. The rivers on which sites are developed is also determined by the legislature.

Miller said the appearance of the park would be drastically altered as a result of the necessary tree removal operation. He said the logging will be done by "hot shot" forest fire crews from Brainerd, who presently have little to do fighting fires because of the wet fall weather.

/ / /  
FEATURE

More Facts Found On  
Giant Canada Geese

The Department of Natural Resources reports it has acquired more information about the "giant" species of Canada geese found at the Lac qui Parle Wildlife Management Area in western Minnesota as a result of studies carried out since 1968.

The geese were restocked at the popular wildlife area in the 1960's by the DNR, and in 1968 Department personnel began trapping and banding birds in an effort to trace their migration movements and obtain other information about them.

The project was funded by Minnesota sportsmen -- and state sportsmen have reaped most of the benefits, since band returns show that the vast majority of the birds taken by hunters are shot right in the Lac qui Parle area.

A few of the geese have been taken south of the area but none to date from northern Minnesota. Nor have any been reported from the Rochester Wildlife Refuge -- another gathering place for the giant strain of Canadas.

Leg bands returned from hunters in other states show that a few of the birds stray into North and South Dakota, western Iowa, northern Missouri, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois and Oklahoma.

Some younger geese from the Lac qui Parle flock spend the summer months in the Quill Lake area 100 miles north of Regina, Saskatchewan, but return to Lac qui Parle when they are three years old to begin nesting.

The most heavily used wintering area for the Lac qui Parle flock is around the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers.

Most of the transient geese from other flocks that pass through the Lac qui Parle area in the fall spend their winters at the Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge

(MORE)

Some were added  
as recently as 1976

I.

A. ——— The state canoe and boating rivers were designated by the Minnesota Legislature in 1965.

The ~~development~~ <sup>acquisition and development</sup> of lands along these rivers by the <sup>Minnesota Department of Natural Resources</sup> ~~M. D. N. R.~~ (DNR) will provide additional outdoor recreational opportunities for the use and enjoyment of the citizens of Minnesota these rivers by the public.

The State of Minn. - DNR proposes that the Federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR), as administrator of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON), participate in this action.

B. ——— The canoe and boating route system includes the following rivers:  
Big Fork, Cannon, Cloquet, ~~Des~~ Des Moines, Kettle, Minnesota, Mississippi, Crow, Rum, Red Lake, St. Croix, St. Louis, Snake, Straight, Little Fork, Crow Wing, Jumbore and Root. (MAP 1)

FP → The system includes ~~approx~~ 2,400 miles of river.

It is proposed that the State of Minnesota acquire approx 2,954 acres of land at 148 locations and develop 211 sites along these rivers.



C. \_\_\_\_\_ - The state has been buying land and developing facilities along the canoe and boating routes for several years. These projects are currently funded and future funding is anticipated to acquire and develop additional sites.

D. \_\_\_\_\_ - There are five types of facilities developed along the rivers.

1. Campsites: These are usually of a primitive nature, composed of two or three ~~com~~ tent pads, fire rings and pit toilets. These sites are generally accessible only from the river.

2. Access: These areas provide a parking lot with a trail or boat ramp to the river.

3. Rest Areas: These are picnic areas with picnic tables, pit toilets and fire rings. These sites are generally accessible only from the river.

4. Portages: These are trails around river hazards or obstacles such as dams, rapids, waterfalls and difficult rapids.

5. Signing: River hazards and facilities are identified with wooden signs.

F. \_\_\_\_\_ - These ~~sites~~ facilities will be used by canoeists and boaters presently using these rivers. In some cases picnickers, hikers and campers without a boat or canoe will <sup>also</sup> use the sites. ~~also.~~

## II DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

see attached book "A GATHERING OF WATERS" for each river (pages 23-101).

## III ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

### A. Impact on the Physical Environment -

related to  
sanitation

The sites will vary ~~in size~~ from 5 to 40 acres. The facilities to be developed will in few <sup>cases, such as an</sup> ~~cases~~ <sup>cases</sup> be in excess of 3 acres. There will be soil compaction in those areas where the facility is developed.

There is ~~also~~ a potential for soil erosion and a <sup>potential for</sup> groundwater contamination from the toilet facilities. An increase in litter may also be a problem.

### B. Impact on the Biological Environment -

There will be site specific losses of vegetation and displacement of wildlife.



C. Impact on Roads and Utilities - No impact is anticipated.

D. Impact on Historical and Archeological Resources - No sites are planned on areas of known historical or archeological significance.

E. Socio-economic Impact - There will be no relocation. The sites to be acquired will in most cases have little or no economic use.

There will be some tax loss but it will be insignificant since the sites are small and spread out across the state.

#### IV MITIGATING MEASURES INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSED ACTION

Soil erosion control measures will be included in development <sup>plans</sup> and ~~operate~~ to ground water contamination will be avoided by <sup>following</sup> ~~contacting~~ county health department and Minnesota Pollution Control <sup>Agency</sup> ~~regulations~~.

The sites will be surveyed for historical and archeological resources.

Maintenance crews will patrol the sites to clean up litter.

If any are found the state preservation officer will be contacted for mitigation requirements.

I ANY ADVERSE EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED SHOULD THE PROPOSAL BE IMPLEMENTED

Soil compaction will occur ~~at the~~ in the ~~area of~~ developed facilities.

There will be a <sup>slight</sup> small tax loss to local units of government.

There will be a disturbance to wildlife in the developed areas.

There will be a loss of vegetation in the developed areas.

## VI THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Short-term uses of the environment as they relate the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity are not considered in terms of years. Trade offs are ~~not~~ necessary in order to gain certain benefits.

## GAINS

- 211 public facilities (camp <sup>sites</sup> grounds, rest areas, portages) along 2,400 miles of river
- Increased public enjoyment of the river
- A reduction of trespassing on ~~the~~ private lands along the river.

## LOSSES

- Disruption of <sup>a very small area</sup> a localized area of flora and fauna.
- Expenditure of public funds
- Slight tax losses to local units of government.

## VIII ALTERNATIVES TO PROPOSED ACTION

There is no alternative since this is a legislatively mandated program.