

"JAY COOKE: A MINNESOTA STATE PARK DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY"

BY

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Prepared for the
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of State Parks

Principal Investigator

Elden Johnson

June 1981

Abstract

An archaeological reconnaissance survey was undertaken in November 1979 on two development projects (a ski trail and a new campground loop) in Jay Cooke State Park, Carlton County, Minnesota. Both surveys were negative. During the spring of 1980 a delayed group campground was surveyed and found to have no cultural resources.

Jay Cooke State Park

The 1979 development projects for Jay Cooke were listed in the Scope of Work as "Group Camp" and "Trails". The Group Camp was eliminated from the scope by DNR when it was decided that there was to be a delay in the project and that a survey was not needed at this time. A new loop in the present campground was added to the survey work instead. The Group Camp was reinstated in the spring of 1980. The trail to be surveyed is located in the east end of the park on the south side of the St. Louis River.

Background

Carlton seems to be one of the few counties by-passed by Lloyd Wilford of the University of Minnesota during his many years of research. According to University of Minnesota files he had no field trips to the area and no sites have ever been excavated in the county.

The first field work done by a professional archaeologist was in 1975 when University of Minnesota graduate student Tom Neumann conducted a limited survey within Jay Cooke State Park.

Although Neumann reported no prehistoric sites within the park boundaries, he did record three historic sites: a silver mine, portions of the Grand Portage Trail, and a sawmill. He also concluded that the Lost Lake and Silver Creek areas have low potential for prehistoric sites.

In 1978 Vernon and Queripel conducted a survey in Cooke at three proposed bridge crossings in the Silver Creek area. All locations were devoid of cultural resources.

The 1979 Survey

The Ski Trail

The 1979 survey was conducted on 15 November 1979 by field director Jan E. Streiff. After consultation with the assistant Manager Ron Hains, the author was sent out with the trail crew to the south trail which was under construction. The crew

had finished the initial clearing of about half of the trail so the first segment was easy to follow. Trees and brush had been downed, but no surface work begun so there was no soil disturbance.

The third quarter of the trail was partially flagged but the last 1/4 of the trail was not yet definitely chosen. Mr. Hains joined the author as she finished testing the first 2/3 of the trail and together they followed what was to be the last stretch of the trail--he chose the trail route while she shovel tested.

Trail Location

The trail lies in Twp 48N R 16W and runs through Section 12 the SE 1/4 SE 1/4 of NW 1/4 and Section 11 SE 1/4 Section 14 NW 1/4. The area is in a valley behind the high south bluff of the St. Louis River and approximately across from the southeast end of the Grand Portage Trail. The trail follows a generally low potential route for cultural resources (i.e., ravines, narrow ridges, low bog areas, etc.) Only at one point along the route did an area seem a likely place for a site (at the junction of two old creeks) and the tests there were negative.

The vegetation is as mixed as the terrain: hardwoods (oaks, maples on ridges), cedar (in the bogs), heavy underbrush (along ravines) pine (scattered) and poplar (in the cutover areas).

Results

Eleven tests were excavated along the trail route. (See profiles for details). None showed any evidence of cultural resources.

The Campground Loop

Location

The campground is on the north side of Highway 210, across from the picnic ground information center. The proposed loop will lie west of Lane E in what is now a service area (building and parking lot). A small north/south drainage

ditch separates Lane E from the proposed loop. The new loop will extend north from the service road to within a few meters of a rock outcrop which divides the St. Louis River flowage and the Forbay Lake/Thomson Reservoir flowage.

The whole area appears to have been stripped of its topsoil--there is no humus present, just a stained red clay over more dense red clay. The vegetation is a cutover poplar stand with heavy fern undercover.

The south half of the west arm of the loop is an old garbage dump with a large rectangular hole and two mounds of dirt on each end. The hole was filled with water, so its depth was not seen, but cans and metal were scattered around and into the hole.

Results

Seven tests were dug along the proposed loop. All tests were negative. (See profile for details).

The preliminary field report was submitted to DNR, the State Archaeologist and SHPO on 19 November 1979. The State Archaeologist approved the report and determined a no affect with the SHPO informing DNR that they had no objections to the development plans on 5 December 1979.

The Group Camp

The delayed Group Camp (delayed due to an unfavorable first choice location) was reinstated in June of 1980. Park personnel, a DNR engineer and the author met at the proposed site to determine the exact location of the Group Camp.

Location

The proposed Group Camp will lie in the SW 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 9, Twp 48N R 16W. It will be west of the main campground, and less than 50 meters southwest of the new campground loop discussed above. The vegetation is tall grasses under a pine plantation. A small intermittent creek runs north/south through the area.

The on site determination of the exact placement of the parking lot, pit toilets, paths and two camping areas was made by DNR personnel and differed considerably from the original plans. Spots were chosen for each of the above, then the archaeologist tested the location to determine if cultural resources were present. A final project map was drawn from the archaeologist's field map (see Map 3).

Results

Five tests were excavated in the Group Camp Area: Test 1 at Area "B", test 2 at the bridge crossing over the creek, test 3 at Area "A", test 4 at the pit toilet location, and test 5 where the parking lot will be built.

All tests displayed the same soil stratigraphy as the Campground Loop tests: little or no humus with a dense red clay to subsoil or bedrock. The area had apparently been stripped of its topsoil in the past.

All tests were negative.

Jan E. Streiff

Archaeology Laboratory
Department of Anthropology
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
May 1981

Bibliography

Neumann, Thomas

- 1975 Unpublished field notes on survey work in Jay Cooke State Park, Archaeology Laboratory, Department of Anthropology, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

State Archaeologist Site File

- 1979 St. Louis County, State Archaeologist Office, Hamline University, St. Paul, Minnesota.

University of Minnesota Site and County Files

- 1979 St. Louis County and Department of Natural Resources, Archaeology Laboratory, Department of Anthropology, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Vernon, Robert, Susan Queripel and Michael Budak

- 1979 "A Cultural Resource Survey for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources", Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

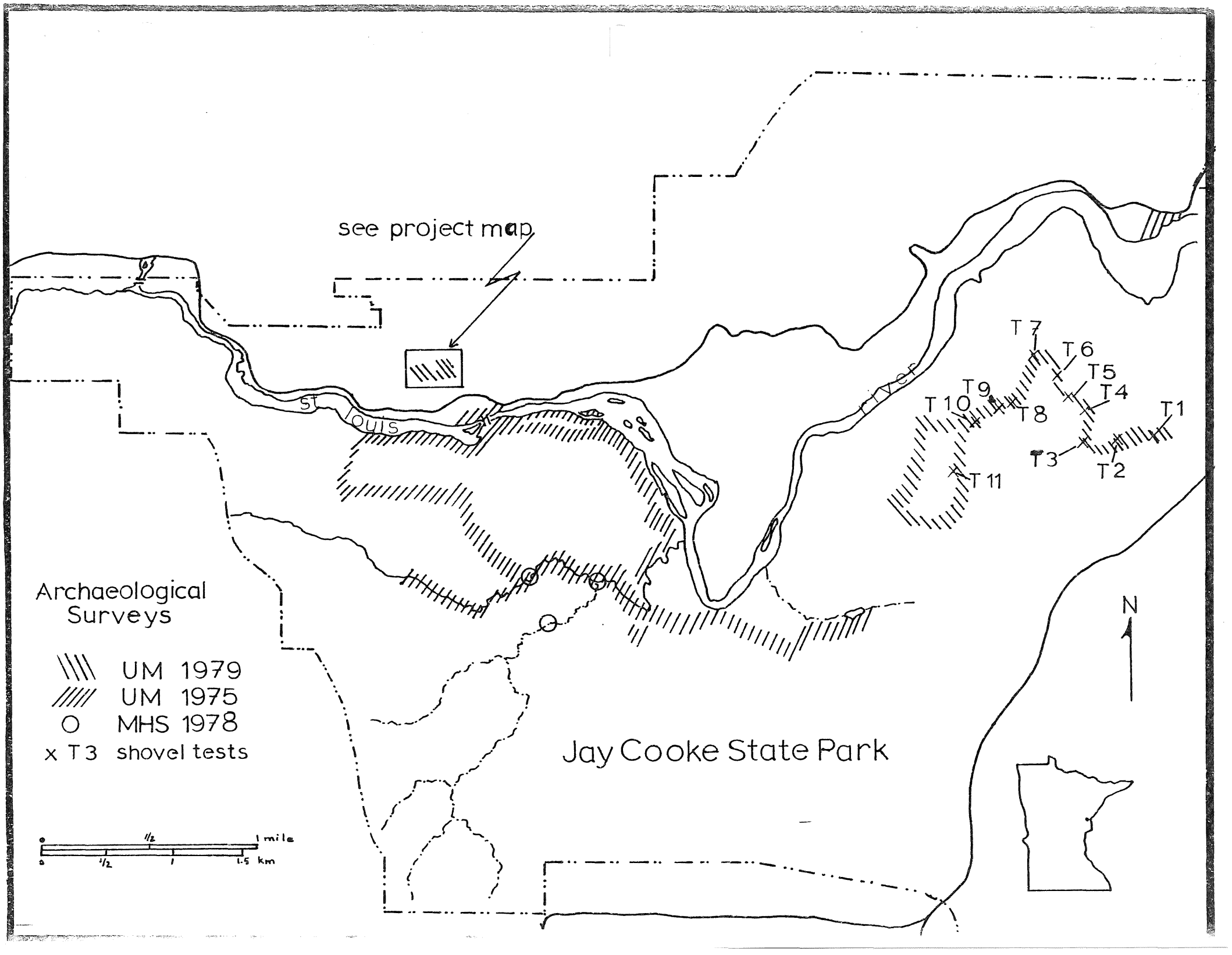
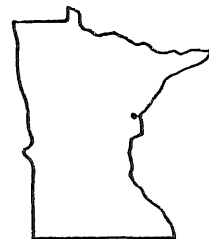
see project map

Archaeological Surveys

- \\ \\ \\ UM 1979
- /// /// UM 1975
- MHS 1978
- x T3 shovel tests



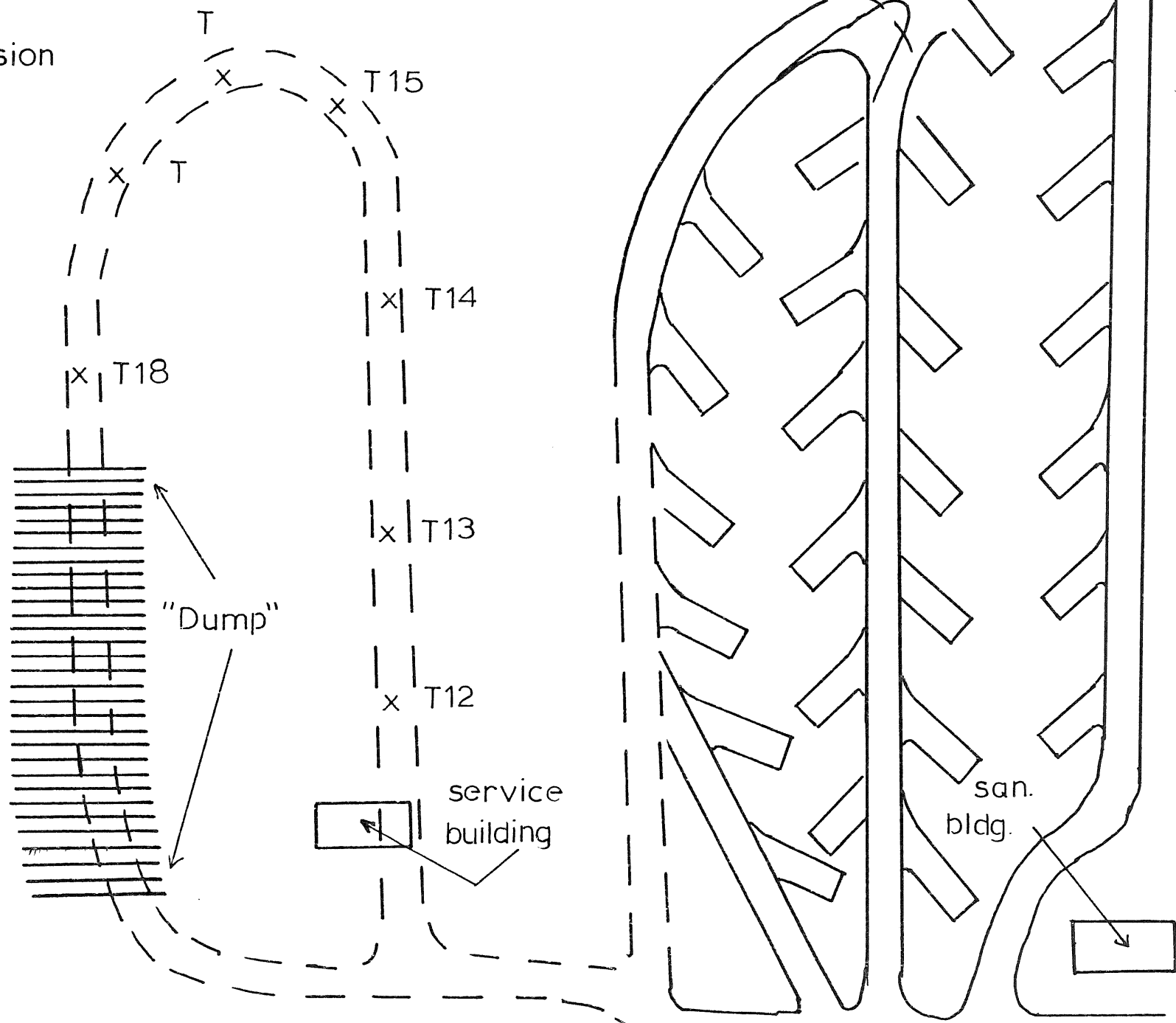
Jay Cooke State Park

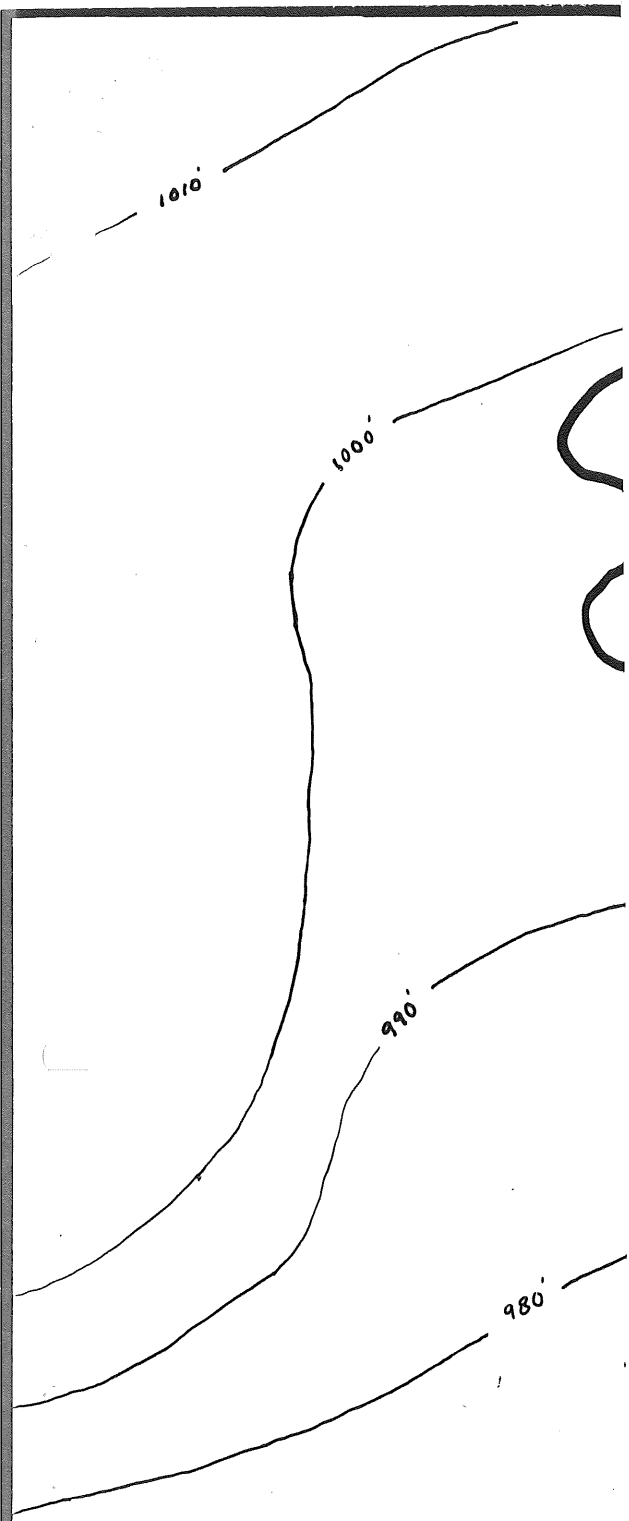


Jay Cooke

Campground Expansion

— — Proposed
x Tests





Map 3

JAY COOKE STATE PARK

TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

TEST 1



humus

reddish
yellow sand

bed rock (at 130 cm)

TEST 2



humus

red sand

black burned root

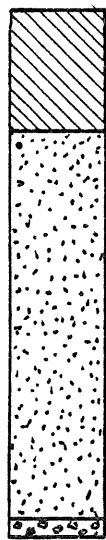
red clay

light tan clay

red clay

bed rock

TEST 3

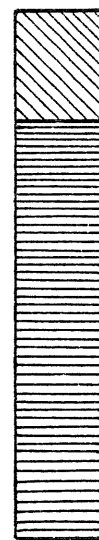


humus

red sand

bed rock

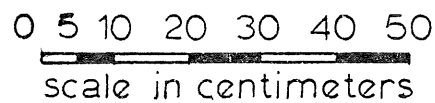
TEST 4



humus

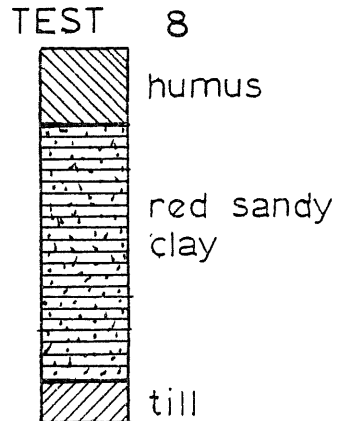
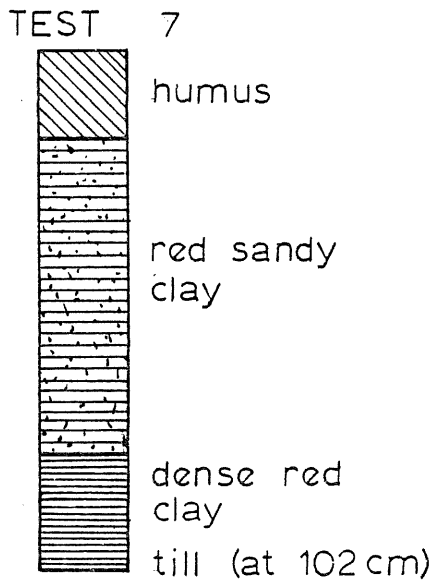
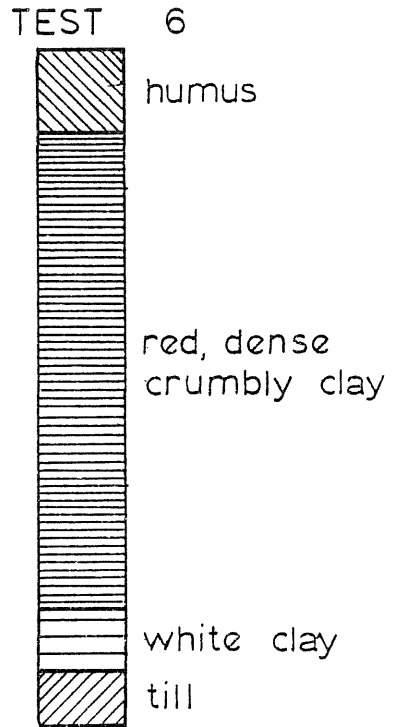
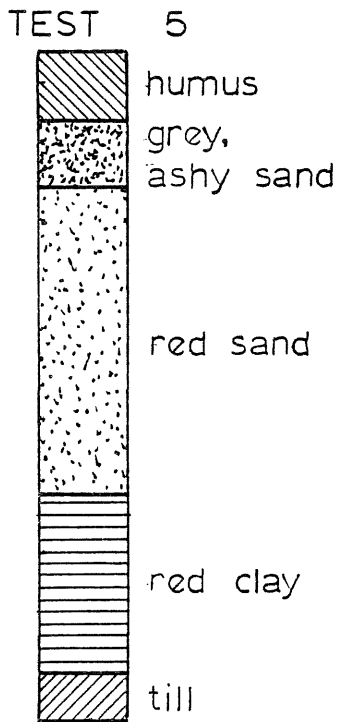
red clay
(dense, sticky)

till (at 122 cm)



JAY COOKE STATE PARK

TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

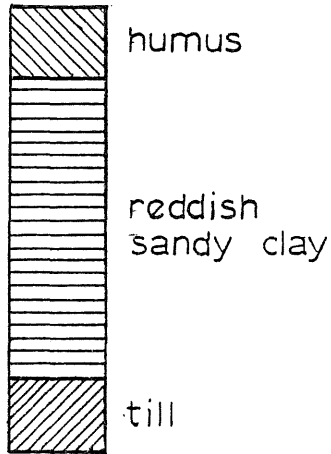


0 5 10 20 30 40 50
scale in centimeters

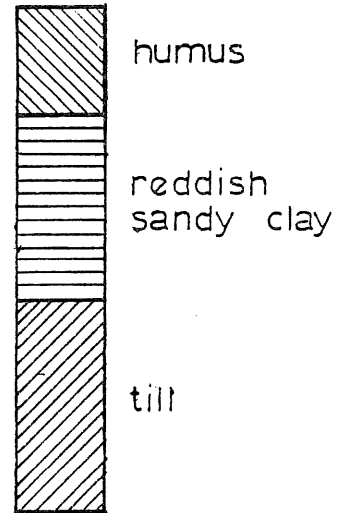
JAY COOKE STATE PARK

TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

TEST 9



TEST 10



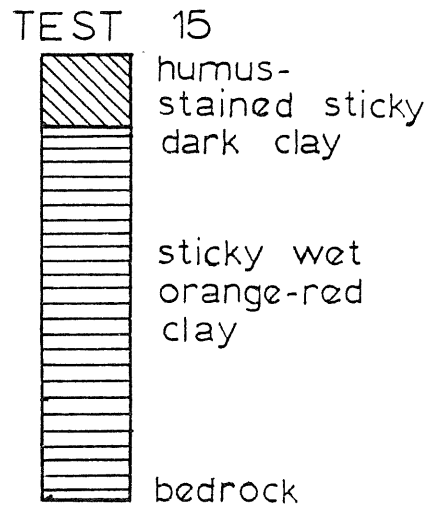
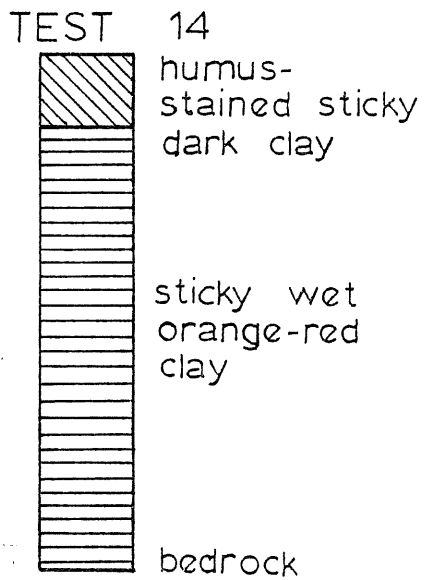
TEST 11



0 5 10 20 30 40 50
scale in centimeters

JAY COOKE STATE PARK

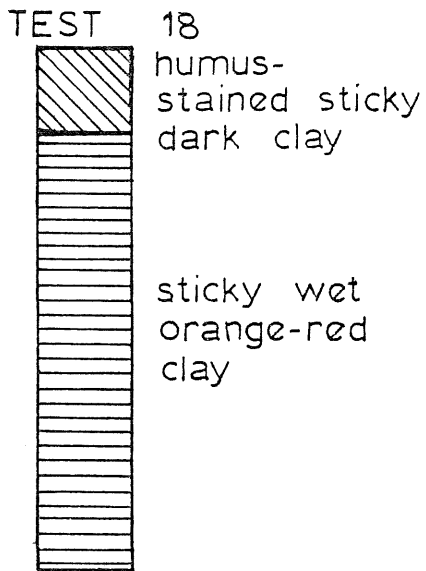
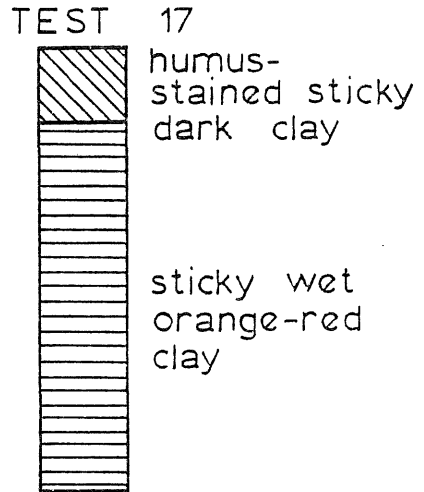
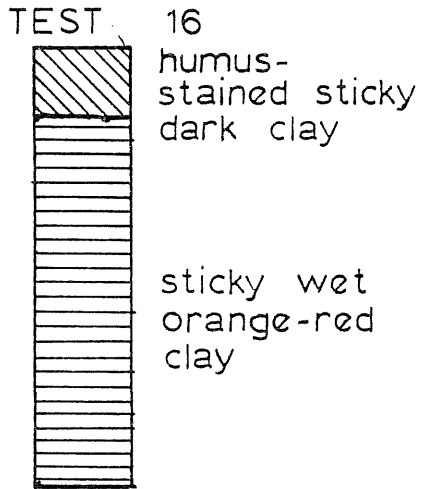
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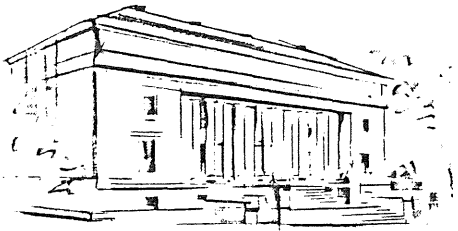
0 5 10 20 30 40 50
scale in centimeters

JAY COOKE STATE PARK

TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE



0 5 10 20 30 40 50
scale in centimeters



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

690 Cedar Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 • 612-296-2747

December 5, 1979

Mr. John Winter
Department of Natural Resources
Parks and Recreation
Box 39
Centennial Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Mr. Winter:

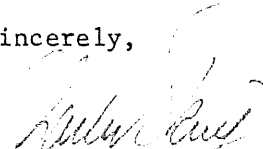
RE: Review of the archaeological survey
work conducted at Jay Cooke State
Park, Campground Loop, Carlton County.

MHS Referral File Number J593

This letter is to inform you that our office has received a statement regarding the above referenced project. No archaeological sites were located. Consequently, there are no sites of historical, architectural, cultural, or archaeological significance in the area which are on the National Register or eligible for inclusion on the National Register that may be affected by your proposal.

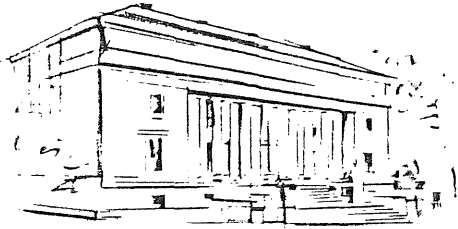
Thank you for your support in preserving Minnesota's cultural resources.

Sincerely,


Russell W. Fridley
State Historic Preservation Officer

RWF/cjb

cc: ✓Ms. Jan Streiff
Department of Anthropology
Ford Hall
224 Church Street S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455



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Dear Mr. Winter:

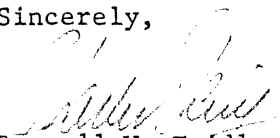
RE: Review of the archaeological survey
work conducted at Jay Cooke State
Park, Eastern half of Ski Trail,
Carlton County, Minnesota.

MHS Referral File Number J594

This letter is to inform you that our office has received a statement regarding the above referenced project. No archaeological sites were located. Consequently, there are no sites of historical, architectural, cultural, or archaeological significance on the National Register or eligible to the National Register which may be affected by the proposal.

Thank you for your support in preserving Minnesota's cultural resources.

Sincerely,


Russell W. Fridley
State Historic Preservation Officer

RWF/cjb

cc: ✓ Ms. Jan Streiff
Department of Anthropology
Ford Hall
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Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455