

811665

"CAMDEN: A MINNESOTA STATE PARK DEVELOPMENT  
PROJECT RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY"

BY

JAN E. STREIFF

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

Principal Investigator

Elden Johnson

June 1981

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA

F  
412  
.C12  
887

DNR  
Consultants Report

## Abstract

An archaeological reconnaissance survey was undertaken in December of 1979 and April and May of 1980 on a new campground between the Redwood River and Highway 23 in Camden State Park, Lyon County, Minnesota. One small area produced lithic artifacts and DNR agreed to eliminate one camp space to avoid the site.

## Camden State Park

The 1979 development project for Camden State Park was listed in the Scope of Work as "Campground". This is a new campground to be located between Highway 23 and the railroad line and the primitive campground.

### Background

The first report of archaeological resources in the Camden area came in 1974 when Lloyd Wilford of the University of Minnesota met with George Chamberlain, custodian of Camden State Park. Chamberlain reported to Wilford how he and two other local men (R. A. Skogland, park landscape architect and W. C. Peterson, Lyon County Historical Society) dug into an Indian burial mound in the park in 1934. The burial was accompanied by a pottery vessel (later known as the "Camden Vase" which Wilford described as from the Blue Earth Focus approximately 1400AD). Chamberlain wrote up the excavation and it appeared in the Minnesota Archaeologist in 1942.

The site (21 LY 2) has since been destroyed by a gravel operation, but Wilford, and later Elden Johnson of the University, believed that an accompanying village may still exist. (Johnson, 1974 Park Atlas).

In 1951, a university student from Lyon County brought Wilford two pottery vessels which he had found in the then under construction Brauner Lake. The State Conservation Department was building a fish rearing pond adjacent to the Redwood River and bulldozed an island in the slough. Bones and the sherds of the vessels were exposed. Wilford identified one vessel as being of the Blue Earth Focus and the other as an earlier woodland, possibly Hopewell vessel, from about 500 AD.

In 1977 Mankato State University began an intensive archaeological survey of Camden State Park. While the results of their survey is not yet available, a map produced by the team is included here to show that several possible archaeological sites are located within the park. (See Map 1). More work is obviously needed.

## Camden State Park

The Minnesota Historical Society conducted a survey of two areas in the park in 1978. One area, a proposed trail bridge, across the Redwood River, showed no indications of cultural resources. The second area, however, at the site of a new managers residence, produced archaeological material. The site, 21 LY 5, a prehistoric lithic site, was avoided when planners moved the house away from the archaeological site.

### The 1979 Survey

The survey was conducted on 11 and 12 December 1979 and 29 and 30 April and 1 May 1980 by field director Jan E. Streiff. The proposed campground already had its roads in and a new planting of trees at the camp pads.

### Location

The survey concentrated in the SE 1/4 of Section 8 Twp 110N R 42W, Lyon County. The campground will lie between State Highway 23 on the east and the Redwood River on the west. It will cover an upper terrace (elevation 1490'), and a second lower terrace (1430') which is bound on the west by the Great Northern railroad and a large gravel pit on the south. Both terraces are former farm fields which have reverted to grasses. A dirt track bisects the area, running from the Highway 23 across the upper terrace, down to the second terrace and across the track to the primitive campground on the Redwood River. Other than the newly planted trees in the campground, there are hardwoods only along the bluff top overlooking the river and in a windrow separating the two terraces. A few scattered trees exist near the railroad tracks and the road crossing it.

### Methodology

The survey was conducted using Council for Minnesota Archaeology Standards. Shovel tests were placed every fifteen meters along the campground road route with additional tests placed at other areas as needed (i.e., sanitation building, pit toilets, etc.) Each test (50 x 50cm) was excavated to subsoil with all material screened through a 1/4" mesh screen.

Camden State Park

The results

Thirty five tests were dug in the proposed campground. Thirty-one tests were negative. Four tests were positive. All four tests were on the upper terrace on the south and southwest end of camp loop "A". The material was very thin and confined and consisted only of lithic flakes. The artifacts appeared in the humus, from 20-50cm, on a small terrace overlooking the river valley. Discussion with the project engineer of the recovery of cultural material in a proposed camp site, resulted in the engineer agreeing to eliminate that campsite, thus avoiding the archaeological site.

The preliminary field report was submitted to DNR, the State Archaeologist and the SHPO on 5 May 1980.

Jan E. Streiff

Archaeology Lab  
University of Minnesota  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455  
19 January 1981

## Bibliography

### Department of Natural Resources

- 1979 "A Management Plan for Camden State Park", Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, St. Paul.

### Johnson, Elden

- 1974 "Prehistoric Archaeological Sites in Minnesota State Parks", Archaeology Laboratory, Department of Anthropology, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

### State Archaeologist Site File

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

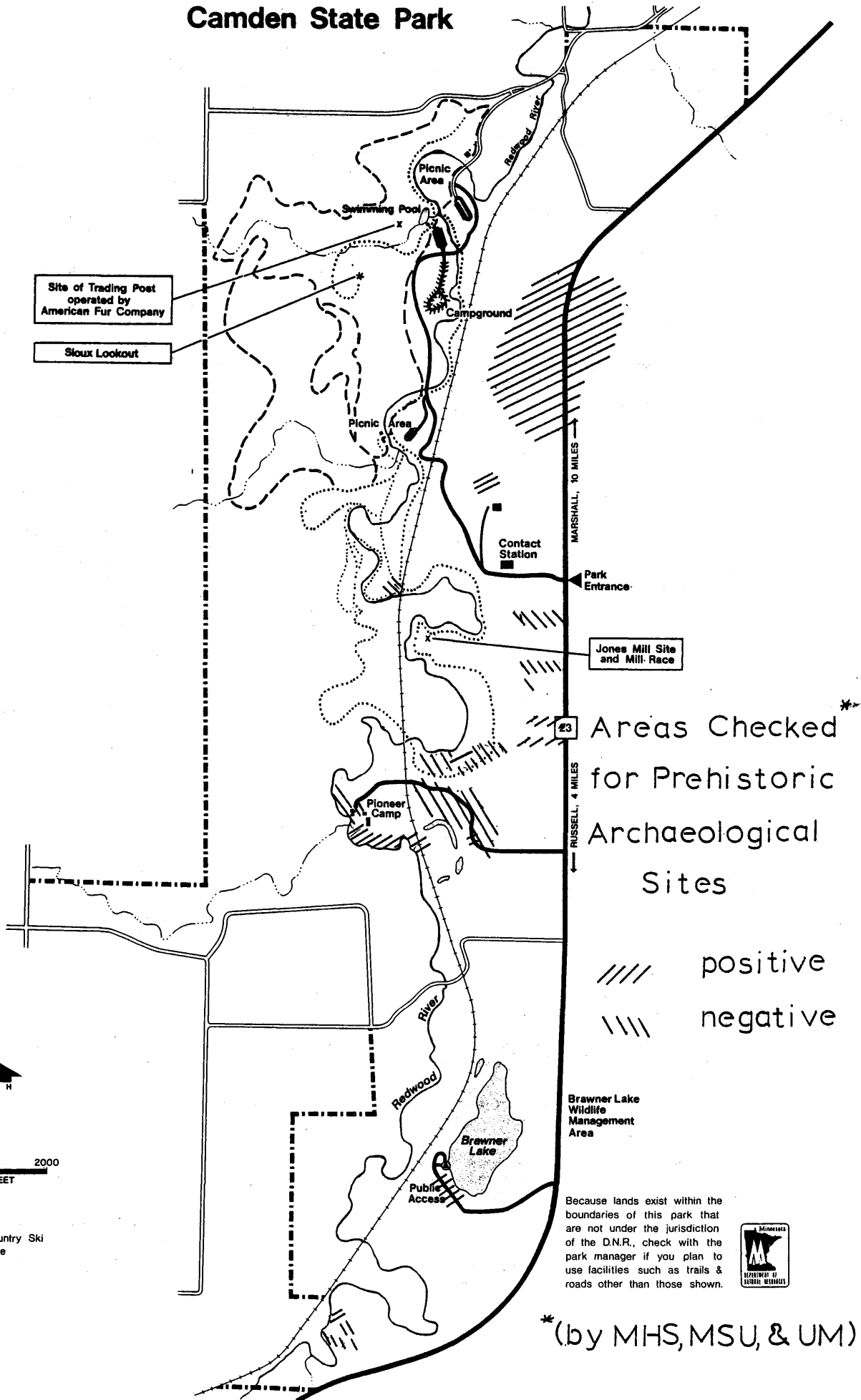
### University of Minnesota Site and County Files

- 1980 Lyon County and Department of Natural Resources, Archeology Lab, Department of Anthropology, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

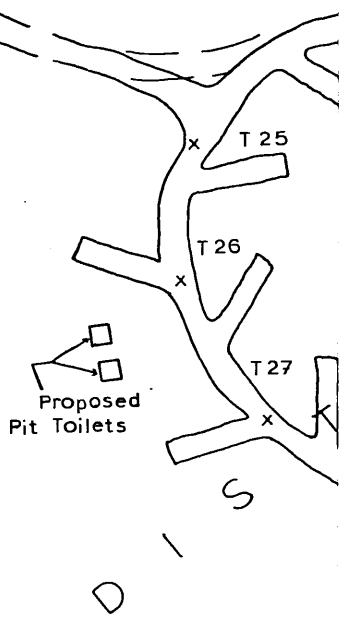
### Vernon, Robert, Susan Querpel and Michael Budak

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

# Camden State Park



← To Group Camp



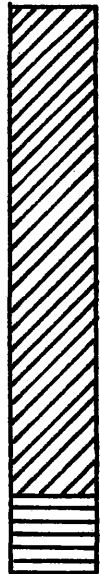
G,



# CAMDEN STATE PARK

## TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

TEST 1

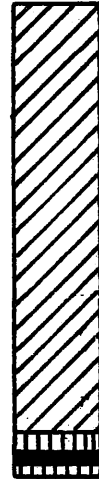


rim sherds  
to 20 cm.

dark sandy  
humus with  
limestone flecks

clay

TEST 2



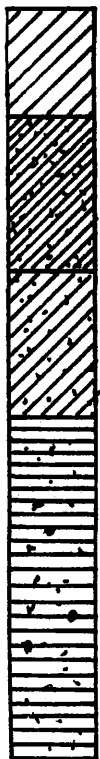
humus

yellow, gravelly  
clay at 115 cm.

black band at 120 cm.

clay-white  
limestone at 122 cm.

TEST 3



humus

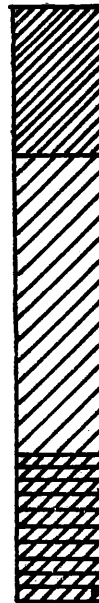
dark sandy  
humus

light sandy  
humus

yellow/orange  
sandy clay  
with gravel

boulder/till

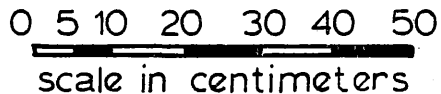
TEST 4



dark humus

mottled humus

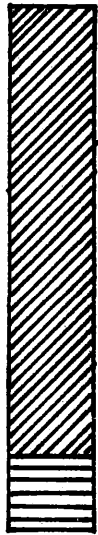
dense tan  
clay



# CAMDEN STATE PARK

## TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

TEST 5



dark humus

dense clay

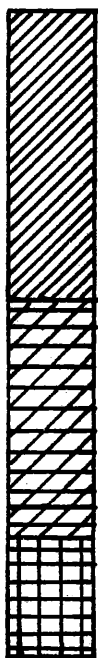
TEST 6



dark humus

dense clay

TEST 7

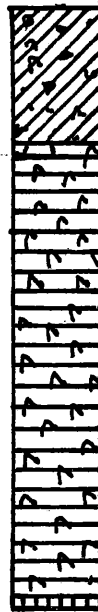


dark humus

clayey humus

clay with limestone flecks

TEST 8



light humus/gravel mixed

tan clay/gravel mixed

dense tan clay with limestone

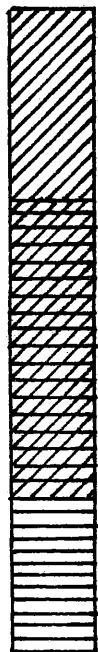
0 5 10 20 30 40 50

scale in centimeters

# CAMDEN STATE PARK

## TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

TEST 9



light humus

humus clay  
with  
root stains

tan clay  
with limestone

TEST 10



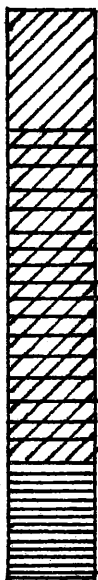
humus

blend

clayey humus

dense clay

TEST 11



light humus

clay humus  
mixed

dense clay  
with limestone

TEST 12



humus

tan clay

dense clay  
to 90 cm.

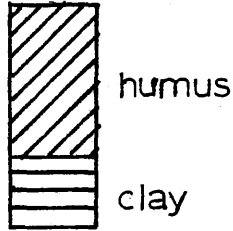
0 5 10 20 30 40 50

scale in centimeters

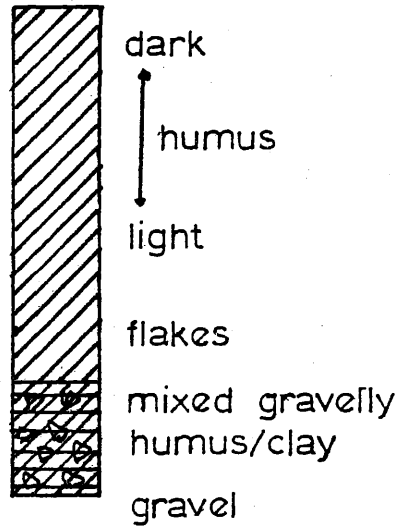
# CAMDEN STATE PARK

## TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

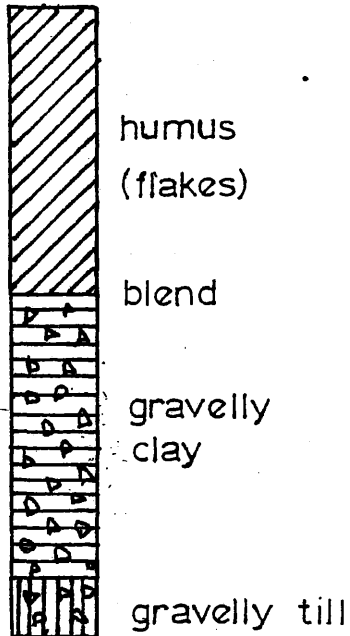
TEST 13



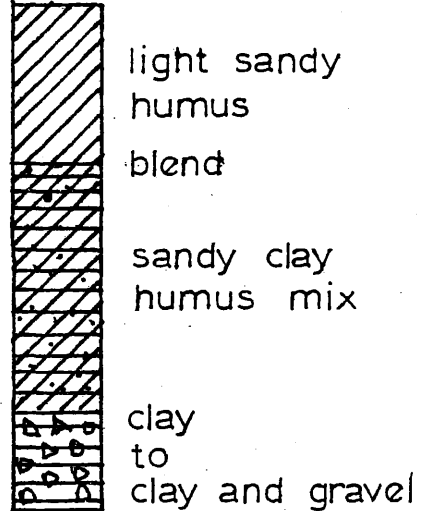
TEST 14



TEST 15



TEST 16

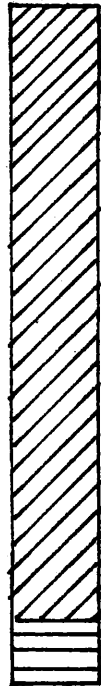


0 5 10 20 30 40 50  
scale in centimeters

# CAMDEN STATE PARK

## TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

TEST 17



humus

clay

TEST 18



humus

tan clay

dense clay  
with gravel

TEST 19



humus  
(plow zone)

tan sandy  
clay

TEST 20



humus

clay humus  
mixed

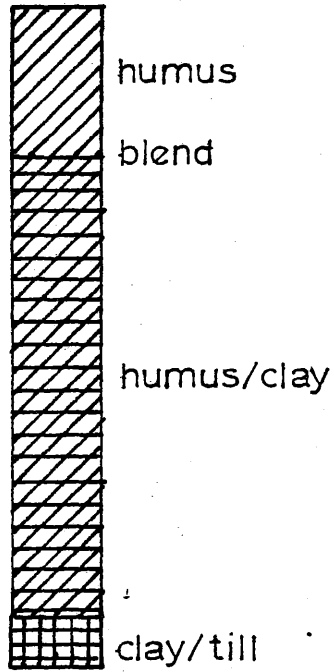
tan  
gravel / clay  
till

0 5 10 20 30 40 50  
scale in centimeters

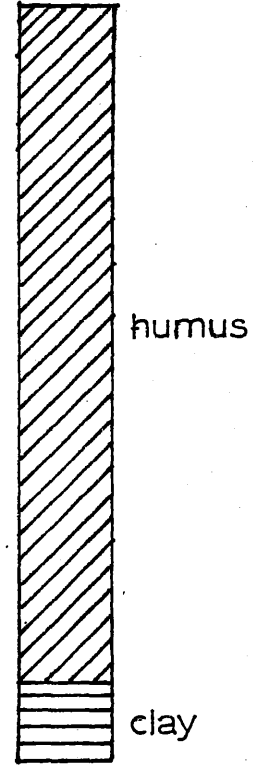
# CAMDEN STATE PARK

## TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

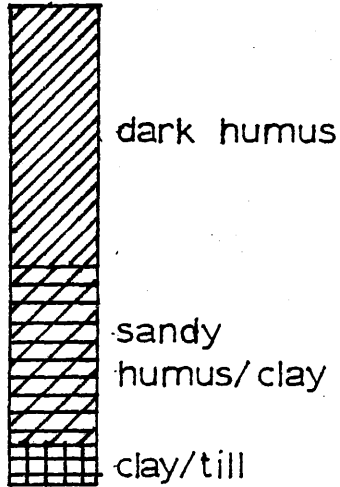
TEST 21



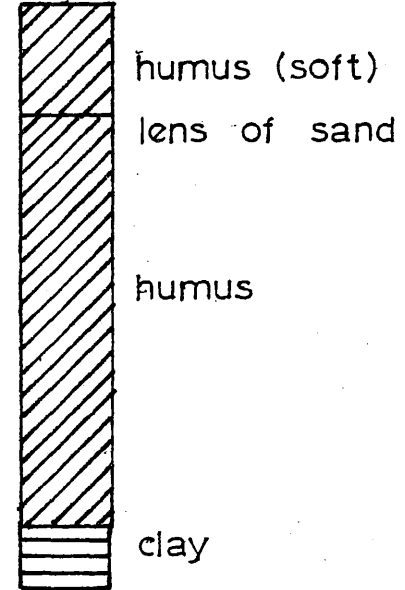
TEST 22



TEST 23



TEST 24

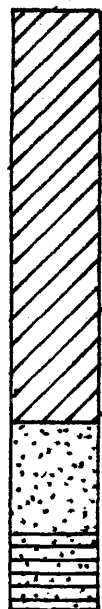


0 5 10 20 30 40 50  
scale in centimeters

# CAMDEN STATE PARK

## TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

TEST 25



light sandy  
humus/gravel

transition

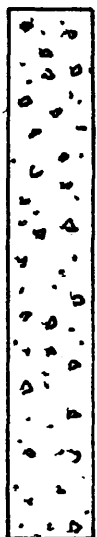
sandy  
gravel/clay

TEST 26



sand/gravel  
with  
black soil

TEST 27



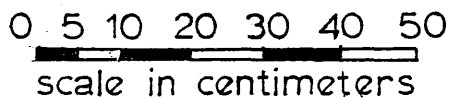
sand/gravel  
with  
black soil

TEST 28



humus

clay



scale in centimeters

# CAMDEN STATE PARK

## TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

TEST 29



gravel

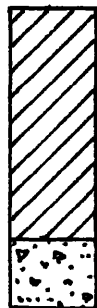
TEST 30



humus (to 180cm.)

sandy mineral stained subsoil

TEST 31



humus mixed with sand & gravel

gravel/sand subsoil

TEST 32



dark humus

humus/clay

clay (no humus)

light tan clay

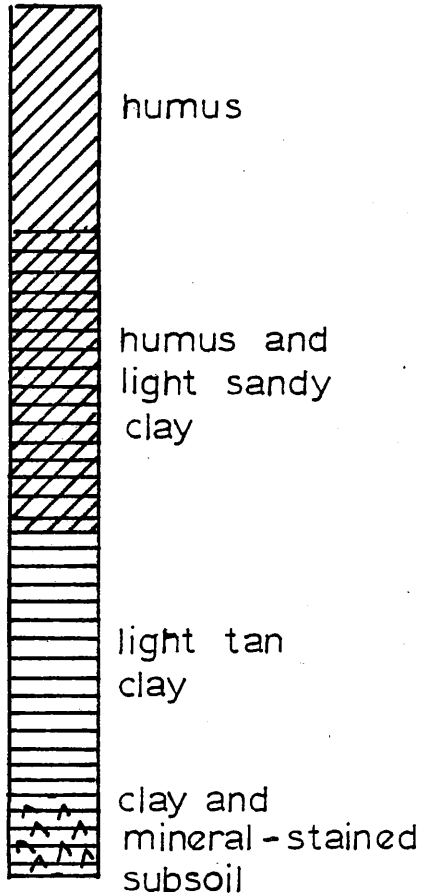
0 5 10 20 30 40 50  
scale in centimeters



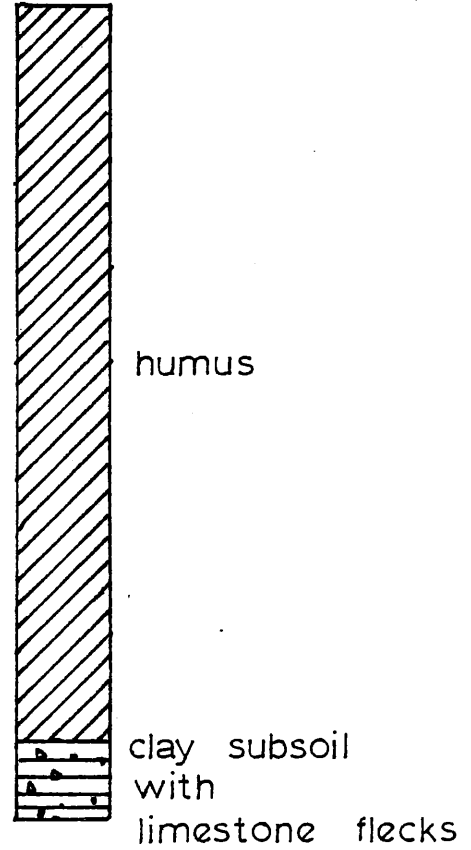
# CAMDEN STATE PARK

## TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

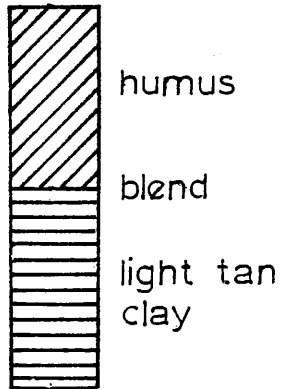
TEST 33



TEST 34



TEST 35



0 5 10 20 30 40 50  
scale in centimeters



# MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

February 3, 1981

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

Dear Mr. Winter:

RE: Camden State Park  
Road Resurfacing  
Lyon County

MHS Referral File Number: M 266

This letter is to inform you that our office has received a statement regarding the above referenced project. We concur with the archaeologist's opinion that there are no archeological sites in the area that will be affected. Consequently, there are no sites of historic, architectural, cultural, or archaeological significance listed on the National Register or eligible for inclusion on the National Register, which will be affected by your proposal.

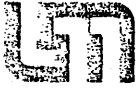
Thank you for your participation in this important effort to identify and preserve Minnesota's cultural resources.

Sincerely,

Russell W. Fridley  
State Historic Preservation Officer

RWF/sl

cc: Jan Streiff  
Dept. of Anthropology  
University of Minnesota



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
TWIN CITIES

Department of Anthropology  
215 Ford Hall  
224 Church Street S.E.  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

November 20, 1980

John Winter  
Park Specialist  
Department of Natural Resources  
Box 39 Centennial Building  
St. Paul, Mn. 55155

Dear John:

This is in reference to our phone conversation earlier today regarding the grading of the road from the main highway into the new campground in Camden State Park. While the road was not shovel tested, it was surface checked several times in the course of the survey of the proposed campground to the west. There was no evidence of cultural resources along or adjacent to the roadway. I can see no reason why the road could not be safely graded.

After our conversation, I called Sue Hedin of the State Historic Preservation Office to request permission to give you the OK on the project without going through the formal steps with the SHPO. Sue saw no problem since I had previously checked the area. Please inform the Park Manager that we see no reason why he cannot go ahead with the grading. However, of course, should he uncover historic or prehistoric materials in the course of the work, he should stop work immediately and inform this office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Jan E. Streiff'.

Jan E. Streiff  
Research Archaeologist

JES/tgv

cc: Sue Hedin, SHPO

## Appendix A

### Archaeological Material from Camden State Park

<u>Year Collected</u>	<u>Archaeologist &amp; Institution</u>	<u>Accession Number</u>	<u>Site Number</u>
1934	Amateur at Department of Natural Resources now located at Lyon County Historical Society, Marshall, Minnesota	None	21 LY 2
1951	Local Resident	None	21 LY 7
1977	Richard Strachan	?	None applied for
1978	Robert Vernon Minnesota Historical Society	140	21 LY 5
1979/80	Streiff/ University of Minnesota	833	

