

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

BY

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Prepared for the  
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Division of State Parks

Principal Investigator

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## Abstract

An archaeological reconnaissance survey was undertaken in November 1979 on the proposed site of a new contact station in Banning State Park, Pine County. The area, a mile west of the Kettle River and 1/4 mile south of Highway 23, was previously disturbed and produced no cultural resources.

## Banning State Park

The 1979 development projects for Banning were listed in the Scope of Work as "New Park Office and Contact Station" and "Road Rehabilitation." The latter project was postponed for lack of funds so will not be discussed in this report.

### Background

A check of the Historical Society and University's records and communication with a number of professional archaeologists in the state indicated that no archaeological survey work has ever been done in Banning. The 1979 survey was the first official work undertaken since the park was established in 1963, although there has been considerable development in the park.

Local collectors report finding artifacts in the area along the Kettle River, which, along with the Snake River farther south, is a major tributary of the St. Croix River. There is every reason to believe that were a survey to be conducted throughout the park, prehistoric archaeological sites would be found.

DNR, in their management plan for Banning, has a section on the historic areas within the park (i.e., Banning Townsite, and quarry).

### The 1979 Survey

The 1979 survey was conducted on 1 November 1979 by Field Director, Jan E. Streiff. The area to be surveyed was delineated by Park Manager Randy Gordon. Mr. Gordon also indicated at the time that the second project, the road rehabilitation, was being delayed.

### Location

The survey was in the SE 1/4 SE 1/4 Section 27 twp 43N R 20W (Pine County). (See Map 1). The area is approximately a mile west of the Kettle River and a quarter mile south of Highway 23. The proposed site lies west of the current

## Banning State Park

### Location (continued)

entrance road to the park. The area is open, rolling grassland with a low, wet marsh on the northern border of the proposed station. The approach to the contact station will cross this marsh. The high point of the project area, an oak covered knoll, is the only undisturbed section of the project site. The remainder is former agricultural fields reverted to grasses, with a plantation of 10 year old pines covering the north approach between the marsh and the knoll and the area to the west of the knoll.

### Methodology

Methodology followed Council for Minnesota Archaeology Standards for reconnaissance survey; shovel tests were placed at least every 15 meters over the proposed project area. The exception was in the wet marsh areas of the site. The shovel tests (approximately 50cm x 50cm) were excavated to a depth of 50cm at 5cm levels. All material was screened through a 1/4 inch mesh screen. If the first 50cm proved sterile, and subsoil predominated, a soil probe was used to test below 50cm to a depth where subsoil predominated. (see profiles for details).

### The Results

Eight tests were excavated in the development area. (see Map 2) All eight tests were negative, producing no archaeological material. The area is already badly disturbed by the recent small pine plantation and past agricultural activity. The ground under the twelve oaks, although undisturbed, yielded no cultural material either.

The preliminary field report was submitted to DNR, the State Archaeologist and the SHPO on 1 November 1979. The State Archaeologist approved the report and determined a no effect the following day, with the SHPO informing DNR that they had no objections to the development project on archaeological grounds on 5 December 1979.

Jan E. Streiff  
Archaeology Laboratory  
University of Minnesota  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455  
5 February 1980

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Caine, Christy A. H.

- 1969 "The Archaeology of the Snake River Valley" University of Minnesota  
MA Thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of Minnesota, Mpls.

Caine, C. A. H. and T. Allen Caine

- 1972 "The Clarence Curry Collection" The Wisconsin Archaeologist, Vol. 53,  
No. 2. pp 70-75. Lake Mills.

Department of Natural Resources

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

State Archaeologist Site File

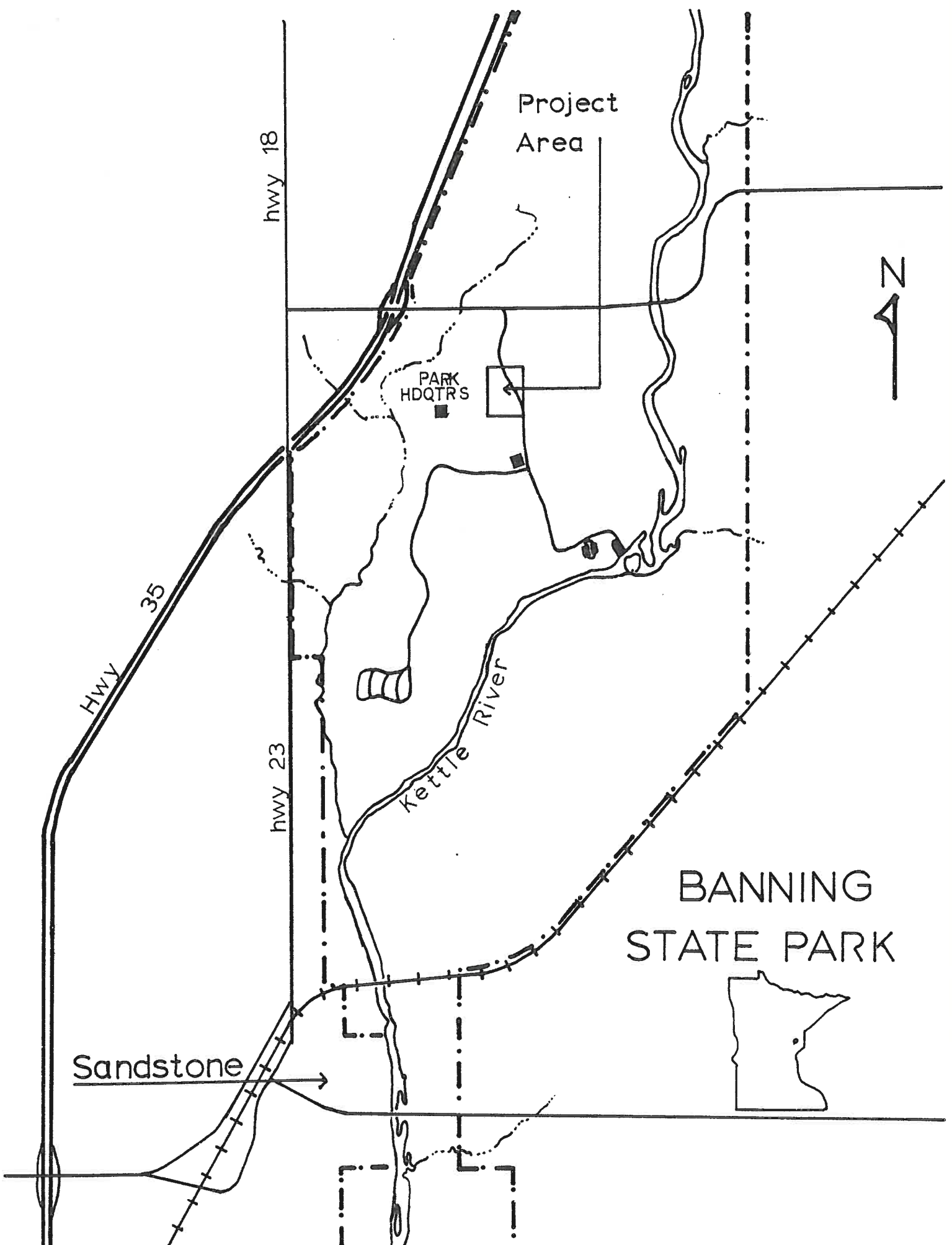
- 1979 Pine County, State Archaeologist Office, Hamline University, St. Paul.

Streiff, Jan E.

- 1977 "Archaeological Field Survey of the Snake River Campground" mss submitted  
to DNR, Archaeology Lab, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

University of Minnesota Site and County Files

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



Project Area

PARK HDQTRS

Kettle River

Hwy 35

hwy 18

hwy 23

BANNING STATE PARK

Sandstone



# BANNING STATE PARK

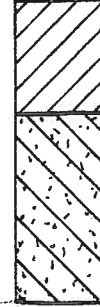
## TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

TEST 1



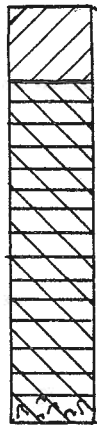
humus  
gravel  
clayey/sand  
glacial till

TEST 2



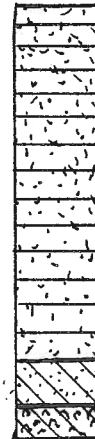
humus  
gravel  
clayey/sand  
glacial till

TEST 3



humus  
wet gravel  
clay till  
boulder

TEST 4

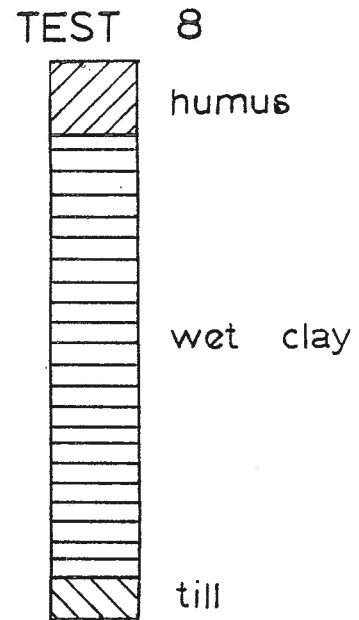
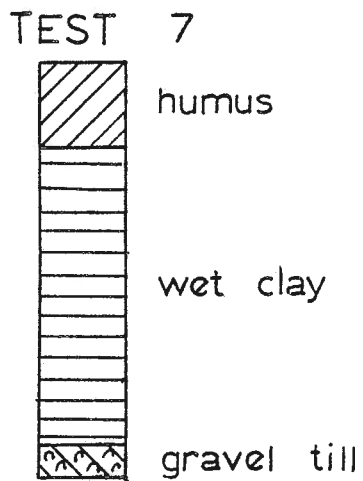
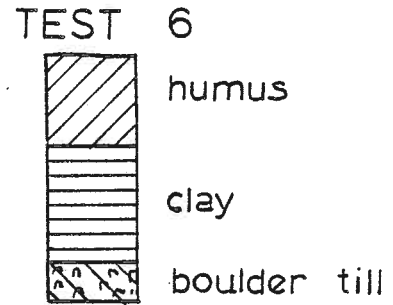
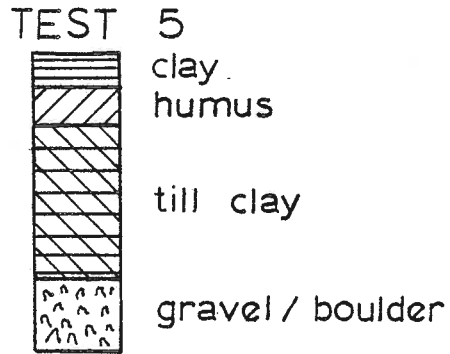


clayey sand  
till sand  
boulder till


0 5 10 20 30 40 50  
scale in centimeters

# BANNING STATE PARK

## TEST UNIT SOIL PROFILE

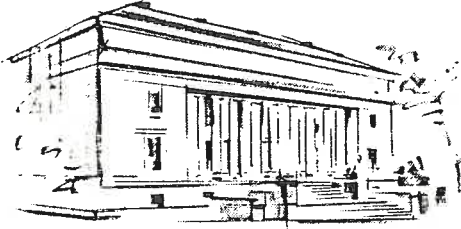


0 5 10 20 30 40 50  
scale in centimeters



Detailed description: A horizontal scale bar with markings at 0, 5, 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50 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 Banning State Park,  
New Contact Station, Building and  
Approach Road, Pine County, Minnesota.

MHS Referral File Number J596

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