

## Appendix D: Archeological Survey Summary

There are no known historic sites, structures, cultural landscapes, archeological or ethnographic resources in the project area. A team from the National Park Service's (NPS) Midwest Archeological Center (MWAC) under the direction of Jeffrey J. Richner, conducted an archeological inventory of the proposed bicycle path in 2006 and provided the following report:

The proposed trail would parallel the current NPS road to the Rainy Lake Visitor Center. That road leads from the junction of Highway 11 to the visitor center and other NPS developments where the road ends. Although the park had selected a preferred alternative from multiple alternate routes for the path prior to our inventory, two routes, one on each side of the NPS road, were marked with flagging tape at the time of our inventory. We examined each of the flagged routes, but our most intensive inventory effort was along the preferred route.

Maps depicting the routes, both preferred and alternate, were consulted at NPS headquarters in International Falls prior to the inventory. The route of the NPS road was inventoried with negative results in the 1980s in advance of construction of the road and the park's Rainy Lake Visitor Center. The entire visitor center development area was also inventoried in a separate effort in the 1980s with negative results. Given the negative results of those previous inventories and the character of the route of the path, it was our expectation that no archeological resources would occur within any of the proposed routes. Over 6,000 acres of archeological inventory have been conducted in similar upland settings within the park and no sites have been recorded in such settings in the past. All previously recorded sites within VOYA are located immediately adjacent to the shorelines of the park's lake system. Although the proposed bike path would pass near a shoreline segment of a bay of Rainy Lake, prior to the raising of Rainy Lake water levels in 1909 by just over an average of three feet, this shoreline would have been considerably farther from the path than it is today.

Prior to inventory we checked all available data on previous inventory coverage and site locations in the vicinity of the proposed paths. These data are curated at MWAC in the form of the Archeological Site Management Information System (ASMIS) and the data (both electronic and paper) supporting that NPS-wide database. No sites are recorded along or near the NPS road or at the visitor center or NPS fuel dock. Given this background, we did not anticipate that any sites would be present within the bike path project area.

Inventory was accomplished in August, 2006 under relatively dry, summer field conditions. Although no bare ground is exposed within the project area, other than surface exposures of bedrock, visibility for observing surface historic artifact scatters was relatively good. We began by walking both the preferred and alternate routes that were marked with flagging tape suspended in trees. The routes are gently undulating and follow the existing road prism. The routes would cross primarily over upland landforms where bedrock is at or very near the current ground surface. No surface artifacts, either isolated or in scatters, were observed during this reconnaissance effort. If historic sites were present within the project area, we would have expected that some surface indications of their former presence would have been obvious despite the relatively dense vegetation cover of second and third growth mixed coniferous and hardwood forest. After the reconnaissance inventory's negative results, we conducted an intensive inventory of the preferred route via interval shovel testing. A ten-meter interval was applied in a single, winding linear transect. The soils encountered in this effort were surprisingly variable. They ranged from the expected very shallow, rocky, silty loam of the rocky upland segments to dense gray clay in one low lying area. All soil was screened through 1/4 inch mesh hardware cloth. Results of the shovel

testing inventory were negative. No artifacts of any kind were recovered through this intensive inventory effort.

Given the previous negative inventories of the NPS road route and the development zone around the visitor center, the negative results of the bike path inventory are not surprising. In my opinion, development of the bike path, either in its preferred or alternate locations would have no impact upon archeological resources. (Jeffrey J. Richner, 2006)