

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Minnesota</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Carlton</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	<b>MAY 24 1973</b>

1. NAME

COMMON:  
**Grand Portage of the St. Louis River**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

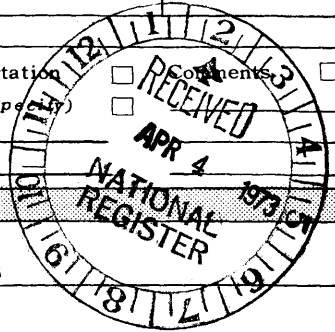
STREET AND NUMBER: *W of Duluth*  
**Within Jay Cooke State Park, accessible from State Highway #210**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Duluth**

STATE: **Minnesota** CODE: **23** COUNTY: **Carlton** CODE: **017**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			Yes: Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments: <input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>
Educational <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	



4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:  
**State of Minnesota, Department of Natural Resources**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **St. Paul** STATE: **Minnesota** CODE: **23**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Carlton County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Carlton** STATE: **Minnesota** CODE: **23**

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **14 acres**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Minnesota State Register**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1965** Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Minnesota Historical Society**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**690 Cedar Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **St. Paul** STATE: **Minnesota** CODE: **23**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Minnesota  
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**7. DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/>	Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

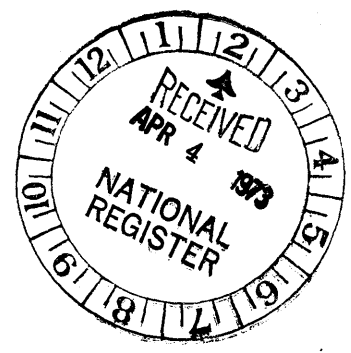
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Grand Portage of the St. Louis River was a rugged seven mile portage along a particularly difficult stretch of the St. Louis River in Carlton County, Minnesota. The Trail is described in the journal of Lieutenant James Allen, a member of Henry R. Schoolcraft's expedition in 1832. It "commenced by ascending a hill 100 feet high", he wrote. "No pains have ever been bestowed to make a road up it; and the ascent is by means of little imperfect steps, just large enough for the toes, that wind up the hill without any regularity as to direction or relative position." The voyageurs measured portages in pauses, or "poses", indicating the distance a carrier toted his two ninety-pound packs before setting them down and returning for another load. The lengthy Grand Portage of the St. Louis River had nineteen pauses -- the first being at the top of the ascent described by Allen.

From the second pause at Roche Galet (Shingle Rock), wrote Allen, the trail continued over "a little, narrow, crooked path, with bushes crowding it on either side, winding round trees, through marshes, over ridges, and across ravines, and presenting all the irregularities and inconveniences of a rude trail through difficult woods. There has been little or no cutting to clear it out, and all the bridging consists of a few small poles, laid in the length of the path, which serve rather to annoy than to assist the passenger. No idea can be formed of the difficulty of this portage without witnessing it." Allen went on. "The men, with heavy loads, are sometimes forced to wade through a swamp of half a mile, full of roots and bushes, and over their knees in mire at every step. And where the road is dry, it is generally over a hill or across a gulley, the steep banks of which are worse to pass than the swamps."

Today the Grand Portage of the St. Louis is marked and partly preserved in Jay Cooke State Park. From the marker one can follow the trail for a portion of its length, but some of the portage lies on privately owned property and is inaccessible. Changes in the river bed have flooded the original starting point of the Grand Portage and covered the well-known Roche Galet. The nominated property includes Sections 1 & 2, T 48 N, R 16 W, all within the state park boundaries.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

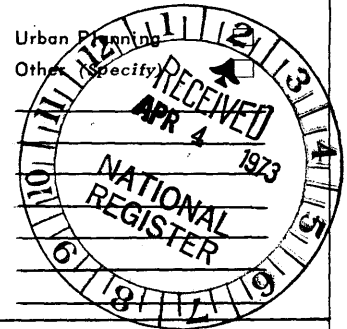
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century   
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>          | Education <input type="checkbox"/>    | Political <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>         | Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>  | Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Historic <input type="checkbox"/>            | Industry <input type="checkbox"/>     | Science <input type="checkbox"/>             |
| Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>         | Invention <input type="checkbox"/>    | Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Art <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>    | Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commerce <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> | Theater <input type="checkbox"/>             |
| Communications <input type="checkbox"/>      | Literature <input type="checkbox"/>   | Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>      |
| Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>        | Military <input type="checkbox"/>     |  |
|  | Music <input type="checkbox"/>        |  |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The streams and lakes threading the map of Minnesota were the highways of the fur trade, and of the many fur trade routes in northern Minnesota, one of the most important was the complex of lakes and streams connecting the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River. The route began at the mouth of the St. Louis River near present day Duluth and ended at Big Sandy Lake and the Mississippi, some seventy miles to the west in what is now Aitkin county. Traders going between these two major points often followed several smaller streams and negotiated several difficult portages, one of which was the Grand Portage of the St. Louis River.

When the French explorer Du Luth traversed at least a portion of the St. Louis River in 1679, the portage had already been used by the Indians for many years. Within the next century the trails to Sandy Lake became a major invasion route of the Chippewa against the Dakota. The portage did not become important to the fur trade however, until after 1783.

Because the route connected the Mississippi trading region with the supply and trading conduit of the Great Lakes, it was logical that both Britain and the United States should establish important fur collecting depots at each end of it. At the Lake Superior end, the North West Company maintained a post on Rices Point at least as early as 1784 and built a new and larger depot within present day Superior, Wisconsin in 1793. Called Fort St. Louis, the latter served for years as the headquarters of the company's Fond du Lac department and as a chief distributing and collecting center. About 1816 John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company constructed a trading post in what is now Fond du Lac, a suburb of Duluth.

At the western end of the route the situation was similar. From 1794 until 1816 the North West Company operated a department headquarters post at Big Sandy Lake. After the War of 1812, the American Fur Company took over the post, maintaining it until shortly after 1820. All the furs, trading goods, and supplies that passed between the posts on Lake Superior and those at Sandy Lake had to be carried over the St. Louis Portage.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Holmquist, June and Jean Brookins, Minnesota's Major Historic Sites, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, 1972.

Nute, Grace Lee, ed., "The Diary of Martin McLeod", Minnesota History Bulletin, Vol. IV, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, 1922.

Tyrrell, J. B., ed., David Thompson's Narrative of His Explorations in Western America, 1784-1812, The Champlain Society, Toronto, 1916.

Winchell, N. H., The Aboriginies of Minnesota, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, 1911.

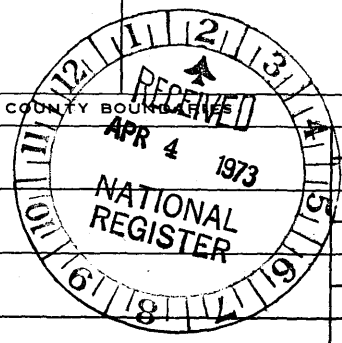
NW 15/550 714  
 5169 350  
 NE 15/553 100/5169 380  
 SE 15/553 120/5168 310  
 SW 15/550 730/5168 320

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	46° 40' 41"	92° 20' 13"				
NE	46° 40' 41"	92° 18' 02"				
SE	46° 40' 08"	92° 20' 13"				
SW	46° 40' 08"	92° 18' 02"				

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Diana Mitchell, Survey and Planning (Approved: Charles W. Nelson)**

ORGANIZATION: **Minnesota Historical Society**      DATE: **March 14, 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Building 25, Fort Snelling**

CITY OR TOWN: **St. Paul**      STATE: **Minnesota**      CODE: **23**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: *Russell W. Fridley*

Title: Director, Minnesota Historical Society

Date: 3-27-73

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

*Robert M. Utley*  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/24/73

ATTEST:

*Lowery*  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 5 23 73

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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

**8. Significance**

In addition to this westward route from Lake Superior to the Mississippi, the St. Louis River, and consequently this portage was part of a little used southerly trade route from the Pigeon River and Rainy Lake to Fond du Lac.

The Grand Portage of the St. Louis River was placed on the State Register in 1965.



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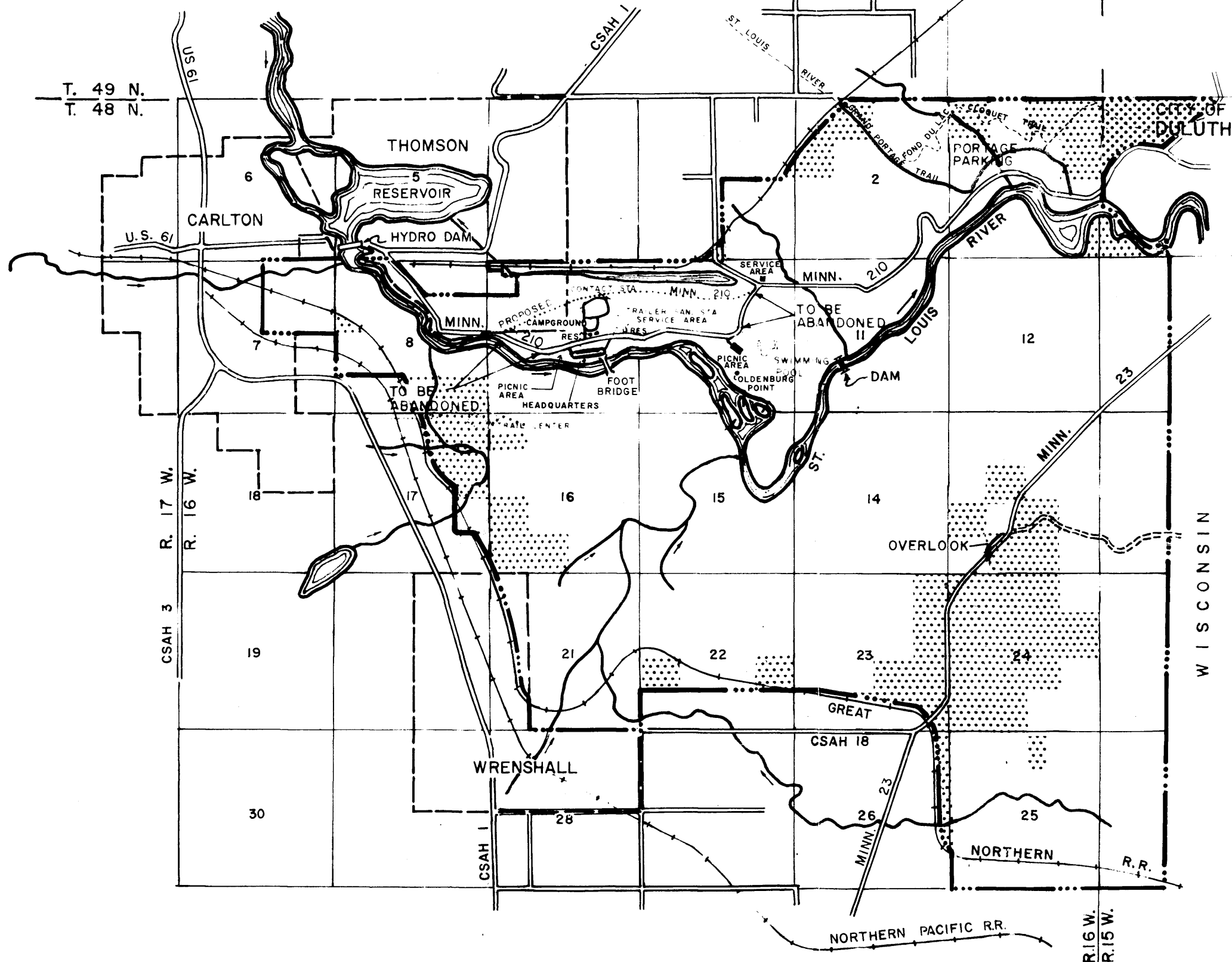
8.

The Trail of the Grand Portage of the St. Louis River has never been located outside the park boundaries. It can be assured, however that much of the route has been obliterated with the construction of the dam and reservoir at Carlton, Minnesota and other development in the area.

10. Corrected

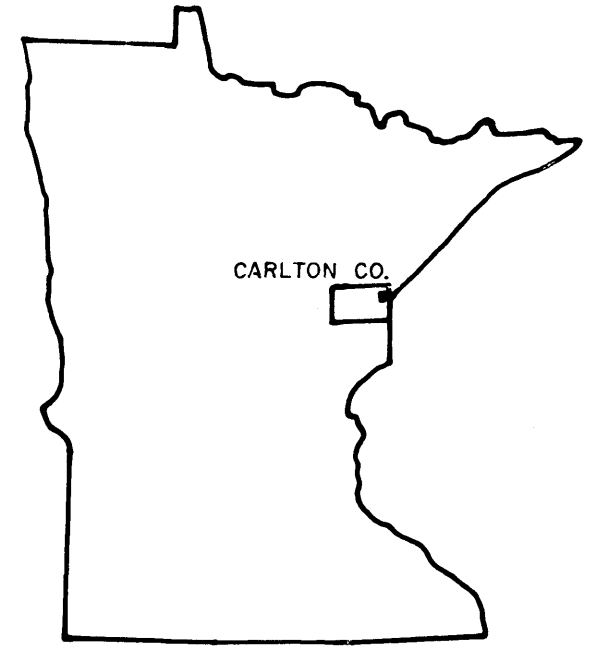
I have enclosed a map which shows the location of the trail within the park.





RECEIVED  
MAY 14 1973  
NATIONAL REGISTER

KEY  
 [Solid Line] STATE LAND  
 [Dotted Area] PRIVATE NATIONAL REGISTER  
 [Solid Line] EXISTING DEVELOPMENT  
 [Dashed Line] PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT



SCALE : 1" = 4000' (APPROX.)  
 STATUTORY BOUNDARY 11323 ACRES (APPROX.)  
 FEB 28 1973

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION STATE PARK SITE			
JAY COOKE STATE PARK CARLTON CO. - NR. DULUTH			
DRAWN DTC 2-2-64	BUREAU OF ENGINEERING	T. 48 N.	4TH P.M.
CHECKED AFR 2-26-64		R. 15, 16 W.	SURVEY
REVISED LDS 8-16-71	<i>[Signature]</i> 3-23-67 CHIEF ENGINEER		DATUM
REQ.	SHEET	FILE	
60-35	15	P.022.00.01	