

1668

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

SEP 15 1989

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Fort Ridgely State Park CCC/Rustic Style Historic Resources
other names/site number Fort Ridgely State Park

2. Location

street & number off Co. Hwy. 30 not for publication N/A
city, town Ridgely Township New Ulm vicinity
state Minnesota code MN county Nicollet code 103 zip code 55332

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>6</u>	<u>6</u> buildings
<u>9</u>	<u>1</u> sites
<u>11</u>	<u>2</u> structures
<u>26</u>	<u>9</u> objects
	<u>9</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Minnesota State Park CCC/WPA/Rustic Style
Historic Resources

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 1

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Nina M. Archabal 9/5/89
Signature of certifying official Nina M. Archabal Date
State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
- See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.

Entered in the
National Register

Albert J. Syer 10/25/89

- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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Continuation Sheet**

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Classification: Number of Resources within Property

The Commissary Building was counted as a contributing building in a previous nomination. It was not included in the count of contributing buildings in 3. Classification.

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation/Outdoor Recreation
Landscape/State Park

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation/Outdoor Recreation
Landscape/State Park

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: NPS Rustic Architecture

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
walls Stone/Wood
roof Shingle
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See Continuation Sheets

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1DESCRIPTION

Fort Ridgely State Park CCC/Rustic Style Historic Resources are included within a 220 acre historic district defined by the boundaries of the park during the period of significance. The park is divided into two distinct areas by an abrupt change in topography. Fort Creek runs through the lower area which is rugged and heavily wooded while the upper area is quite flat near the site of Fort Ridgely. The historic district includes both areas. The district contains 26 contributing elements ranging from shelter buildings, a residence, and water tower, to picnic tables and historical reconstructions. Also contained within the district are 9 non-contributing elements including six buildings, one bridge, an amphitheater, and the site of two small cemeteries. Architects for the park buildings were from the Minnesota Central Design Office of the National Park Service.

Department of Natural Resources building identification numbers are placed after the name of each building.

Fort Ridgely State Park Historic District

1. Building: Combination Building 4-83 Builder: CCC
Architect: Edward W. Barber Date: 1939

The Combination Building is an L-shaped structure with overall dimensions of 44'10" x 38'4" which provides space for a picnic shelter, concession, and kitchen shelter. The building is constructed with native granite laid random ashlar and is covered by an intersecting gable roof. The picnic shelter occupies the largest section of the building with dimensions of 25'2" x 23". The shelter features 14' entrances on both east and west facades framed by squared posts and brackets and contains a massive granite fireplace.

The adjacent concession has counters which open into the shelter and on the south exterior facade. Rough board shutters close the concession openings. The kitchen may be entered from the shelter or from a 6'10"

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opening on the north facade. The kitchen contains counters, a sink, and a stove battery containing 4 cast iron cook stoves built into a massive masonry chimney.

The Combination Building is constructed on the site of the C.C.C. camp.

2. Object: Drinking Fountains Builder: CCC
Architect: R.A. Skogland Date: 1938

Five Drinking Fountains constructed with Morton Rainbow Granite are found in the park. One is located adjacent to the Combination Building, two are located near the upper Shelter, one is in the campground, and one is located along a trail leading from the campground to the upper area of the park. The fountains are constructed on round platforms of native flat rock 10'10" in diameter. The are 2'10" square at the base, rise to a height of 3'6", and taper to 2'4" at the top as a result of the battered stonework. Each fountain has a side faucet and a stepping stone placed on one side. These are the largest fountains constructed in the state park system.

3. Building: Sanitation Bldg Builder: Unknown
Architect: Dept. of Natural Resources Date: 1963

The Sanitation Building is a rectangular gable roofed structure with vertical siding and entrance screens. The building is non-contributing.

4. Object: Picnic Tables Builder: CCC
Architect: National Park Service Date: c1935

The masonry side supports of four picnic tables remain extant in the campground area. Three are located on a hillside along the western edge of the campground and the fourth is located on the east bank of Fort Ridgely Creek. Except for several deteriorated plank seats, only the masonry survives.

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5. Object: Fireplace Builder: CCC
Architect: National Park Service Date: c1935

One small fireplace built in the campground adjacent to Fort Ridgely Creek survives. The fireplace consists of a small metal box with a grate set in stone masonry.

6. Structure: Bridge Builder: Unknown
Architect: Dept. of Natural Resources Date: 1980

This foot bridge crosses Fort Ridgely Creek and leads to a nearby latrine. The bridge is constructed with structural steel placed on concrete abutments and spans 75'. The bridge replaces a rustic style bridge built on the same site and is non-contributing.

7. Building: Latrine 4-86 Builder: CCC
Architect: A. Schulz Date: 1935

This Latrine is a typical 29' x 18' rectangular design with a small utility space separating the rest rooms. The building is constructed with Morton Rainbow Granite laid random ashlar and features corbelled stonework to support the eaves of the gable roof. The entrance on the south facade is shielded with stone screens 5' high and a gable roof with timber brackets is placed over the doorway. The entrance on the north facade features a projection which also includes an enclosed storage area. Stonework rises to the eaves of the gable roof and a stone grill pierces the masonry. Rough sawn horizontal boards fill the remaining gables. Skylights have been added to the building.

8. Structure: Stone Steps Builder: CCC
Architect: National Park Service Date: 1935

A series of stairs constructed with large, flat or split stones laid dry are located to the rear of the amphitheater. A state park report from October 1935 describes these steps as follows: "A set of stairs located on a wooded slope behind the rostrum has been finished. This flight of stairs not only provides access between the upper plateau and the lower area, but also prevents erosion, by carrying the storm water from the upper area."

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9. Building: Shelter Building 4-81 Builder: CCC
Architect: Edward W. Barber Date: 1935

The Shelter Building is a 48' x 26' rectangular gable roofed structure built with native Morton Rainbow Granite laid random ashlar. The shelter may be entered through 20' entries on both the north and south facades which are divided into three bays by 12" x 12" posts with brackets. The interior features heavy timber trusses, built-in seats and a massive fireplace. An 8' x 26' concession area is included in the design. The concession features counter openings with segmental arches which open into both the shelter and to the exterior along the east facade. The counters may be closed with rough wooden folding doors. Large openings pierce the stonework of the shelter while the concession contains four light casement windows. The building still retains 4" x 8" lookouts which project from the gables.

In 1968 the shelter was extended to the east with a partially enclosed 12'6" addition. The addition was designed to match the original shelter with similar trusses, posts and brackets. Grills were also installed over the windows in the concession at that time.

10. Building: Latrine 4-88 Builder: CCC
Architect: O. Newstrom Date: 1938

The Sanitation Building is a rectangular structure constructed with Morton Rainbow Granite. Two pairs of four light casement windows separated by horizontal siding are placed on both the east and west facades while an entrance door and one casement are placed on each of the end walls. Five foot high stone entrance screens shield the doorways. The building still retains 6" x 6" lookouts which project from the shingle covered gable roof. Skylights have been added.

11. Structure: Amphitheater Builder: Unknown
Architect: Unknown Date: 1927

The Amphitheater may have been first constructed as early as the 1880s when a wooden platform is said to have been built. Later, the wooden stage was replaced by a 31' x 14' concrete platform. However, the present appearance of the Amphitheater is largely a result of a 1927 expansion when the back wall with decorative detailing was added. The wall is constructed with New Ulm art stone and is divided into three bays

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by four brick piers with stone caps. The central bay is capped by a pediment. Three terra cotta medallions with busts executed in low relief decorate the wall and commemorate the U.S.-Dakota Conflict of 1862. The figures include Col. T.J. Sheehan, Charles Hopkins, and an American Indian. The entire wall is capped with a stone molding with a dentil course and also features arts and crafts detailing. The platform rests on an arched opening so that run off water may pass directly under the Amphitheater. The Amphitheater is considered non-contributing although it may be potentially significant under a separate context.

12. Site: Cemetery Date: 1860s

Both the Fort Ridgely Memorial Cemetery and a National Cemetery are located adjacent to one another in the park. The National Cemetery is only 20' x 30' and the Memorial Cemetery is approximately 300' x 300'. This site is non-contributing although it may be potentially significant under a separate context.

13. Building: Commissary Building Builder: CCC
Architect: Edward W. Barber Date: 1937 (1853)

When the historical reconstruction of the 1853 Fort Ridgely Commissary Building began only a small portion of the original walls remained. The building was originally 106'2" x 43'2" but only a 26'3" x 43'2" section at the south end of the building remained. The new walls were constructed with granite from the original quarry and plans for the reconstruction stated that the stone should "be laid as accurately as possible using walls still standing as (a) guide or model. Stone to be well bedded in fresh mortar...common red brick to match original to be used...laid up in American bond."

The masonry is roughly squared stone, 10 courses high, with 13' walls. Six windows, 2'9" wide and 4'9" high, with four over four light sash are placed along both the east and west facades. Flat segmental brick arches are placed over the window openings. The building is covered with a gable roof. The interior contains a museum and an assembly room, both with oak floors. Display cases and a registry desk were also constructed by the C.C.C.

The reconstruction was supervised by the National Park Service and the Minnesota Historical Society in order to insure historical accuracy.

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14. Structure: Foundation Restorations Builder: CCC
Architect: National Park Service Date: 1937

The foundations of six buildings from the 1853 Fort were excavated and restored with the footing walls brought up slightly above the original grade. The foundations for the following buildings were restored:

1. Officers Quarters - 26' x 60'
2. Headquarters & Surgeons Building - 57'6" x 65'
3. Officers Quarters and Mess - 99' X 44'
4. Officers Quarters - 59'10" x 44'
5. Main Barracks - 235' x 30'
6. Hospital - 41'8" x 40'

The reconstruction was supervised by the National Park Service and the Minnesota Historical Society.

15. Object: Monument Base Builder: CCC
Architect: E. Barber & N. Averill Date: 1938

In 1896 a monument was built at Fort Ridgely consisting of a 52' granite obelisk. It was constructed "by the state to commemorate the defense of Fort Ridgely by citizens and volunteer soldiers during the siege of August 20, 1862 and August 22, 1862 under the direction of Lieutenant Timothy J. Sheehan." In 1938 a base of native granite flagging, 24' in diameter, was constructed around the monument. A 2' wide step was also built at the edge of the circular base.

16. Structure: Check Dams Builder: CCC
Architect: National Park Service Date: 1937-38

Two Check Dams are located within the park. One is located in a long ravine just north of the Amphitheater and the other is just south of the Old Fort site on the south side of County Highway 30. The Check Dams consists of large boulders placed in mortar or directly in the earth and are used for erosion control during times of heavy run off.

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17. Building: Custodian's Cabin 4-90 Builder: CCC
Architect: Edward W. Barber Date: 1935

The Custodian's Cabin is a T-shaped structure with overall dimensions of 53' x 33'6" which contains a living room, kitchen, two bedrooms, and a bath. The building is constructed with Morton Rainbow Granite and is covered with an intersecting gable roof with projecting 4" x 8" lookouts. With the exception of three casements, all window openings are double hung sash. Three of the windows are capped with flat segmental stone arches. The living room features a stone fireplace and a beamed ceiling.

In 1962 an enclosed porch, 15'7" x 8'2", was added to the existing terrace on the principal facade. In 1981 this addition was converted to living space.

18. Building: Water Tower & Garage 4-84 Builder: CCC
Architect: V.C. Martin Date: 1937-38

This unusual building includes a Water Tower, Office, Garage, Pump Room, and Workshop. The Water Tower, which contains a Workshop below the elevated water tank, was completed in 1937 while the Office, Garage and Pump Room were built in 1938. The circular Water Tower is constructed with Morton Rainbow Granite laid random ashlar. The structure has a diameter of 21' and rises to the height of 31'. The battered stonework rises 21' followed by a 4' section of plank louvers separated by 8" x 10" posts. The tower is capped with a conical roof with a 3' overhang supported by 4" x 6" rafters. The entrance is covered by a protective canopy resting on timber brackets.

The adjacent Office, Garage, and Pump Room are contained in a 40'6" x 26'6" rectangular building constructed with native granite and covered by a gable roof which slopes to a height of only 6' at the rear of the building. All doors were originally constructed with 2 ply rough boards although the two garage doors have been replaced. Window openings are three over three light casements.

Entrances to both the tower and adjacent office share a flagstone terrace defined by a low granite wall.

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19. Building: Office & Warehouse 4-82 Builder: Unknown
Architect: Dept. of Natural Resources Date: 1963

The Administration Office and Warehouse is a 46' x 26' frame structure with 12" horizontal siding and a gable roof. It contains a two stall vehicle garage and an office. The windows are six light casements and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The building is non-contributing.

20. Building: Sheds 4-91 & 4-92 Builder: Unknown
Architect: Unknown Date: c1950s

Two rectangular storage sheds are located in the service yard. The sheds are frame structures with horizontal siding and shed roofs. The buildings were moved to the site and are non-contributing.

21. Building: Contact Station 4-79 Builder: Unknown
Architect: Dept. of Natural Resources Date: 1965

The Contact Station is a small rectangular building constructed with horizontal siding to the sill level and 1/2" plywood above. The building is covered with a gable roof and is considered non-contributing.

22. Building: Winter Shelter 4-80 Builder: Unknown
Architect: Dept. of Natural Resources Date: 1956

The Winter Shelter or Chalet is a 40' x 24' building constructed at the crest of a hill with two full stories opening on the north facade. The building is constructed with concrete block, horizontal and vertical siding, and is covered with a gable roof. The interior features a stone fireplace. The Shelter is non-contributing.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Landscape Architecture
Recreation
Government

Period of Significance

1934-39

Significant Dates

1934
1936

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

National Park Service
Civilian Conservation Corps

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See Continuation Sheets

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fort Ridgely State Park CCC/Rustic Style Historic Resources are historically significant for their association with the social, political, and economic impact of the Great Depression and the subsequent development of the various Federal Relief Programs which were responsible for their construction. The Civilian Conservation Corps in particular, which developed Fort Ridgely State Park, is considered the most popular and successful of these programs and is also considered one of the great conservation programs in the history of the United States. Fort Ridgely State Park is also historically significant for its association with the development of the Minnesota state park system. The park is the first example in Minnesota of the development of intensive recreational facilities at an historic site.

Built with native Morton Rainbow Granite, the buildings and structures at Fort Ridgely State Park are architecturally significant as outstanding examples of rustic style stone construction featuring irreplaceable labor intensive methods and finely crafted detailing based on National Park Service design philosophy. The Water Tower/Garage Building in particular is an especially distinctive example of rustic design. The Old Fort Commissary Building is also architecturally significant as the only remaining example in the state park system of an historical reconstruction executed by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The landscape design for Fort Ridgely State Park is architecturally significant for its ability to represent the use of master planning in state park development. The master plan located and separated the various areas of the park and carefully related the new development to the Old Fort in order to insure nonintrusive and environmentally sensitive expansion of the park.

Fort Ridgely State Park was established in 1911 and was known as a Memorial State Park due to its association with the U.S.-Dakota Conflict of 1862. The Fort was built in 1853 as an Army outpost to protect the newly settled lands and was the third military post constructed in Minnesota to defend the frontier. It was not a fortified structure but rather a cluster of buildings, yet it was equipped with three cannons and managed to withstand an Indian attack and a nine day siege beginning August 2, 1862. The Indians surrounded the Fort until General H.H. Sibley and his troops arrived and ended the six week conflict.

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The state Legislature authorized the purchase of the five acres of land for the park in 1911 and additional areas were added from time to time as the park became an especially popular meeting place for groups to celebrate historic events. On August 1, 1934 Civilian Conservation Corps camp SP-12 was assigned to the develop recreational facilities and to partially restore the original Fort buildings. In October 1935 when the state's quota of C.C.C. camps was reduced, the Fort Ridgely camp was abandoned with development only partially completed. The camp was later reoccupied in October 1936 by the C.C.C. camp from Camden State Park and development and the historical restoration was completed.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Brookins, Jean A. and Holmquist, June D. Minnesota's Major Historic Sites. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, rev. ed., 1972.
Department of Natural Resources. Working Drawings and Specifications for Buildings at Fort Ridgely State Park. St. Paul, Minnesota. State of Minnesota. Report of the Division of State Parks for October, 1935.
State of Minnesota. Minnesota State Park, Parkway, and Recreational Area Study. 1938.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 220 Acres

UTM References

A

1	5	3	6	1	9	4	0	4	9	2	3	8	1	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

1	5	3	6	3	3	0	0	4	9	2	3	8	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

1	5	3	6	3	2	8	0	4	9	2	2	5	7	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

1	5	3	6	1	9	3	0	4	9	2	2	5	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for Fort Ridgely State Park CCC/Rustic Style Historic Resources is shown as the heavy line on the accompanying map entitled "Fort Ridgely State Park." It is defined by the park boundary to the south, Fort Ridgely Creek to the east, County Highway 30 to the west, and the boundary between Nicollet and Renville Counties to the north. The boundary line is cross-hatched.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the buildings and structures that have been historically associated with the property and that maintain historic integrity. The boundary defines the areas of the park developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rolf T. Anderson

organization N/A

street & number 3632 Park Avenue South

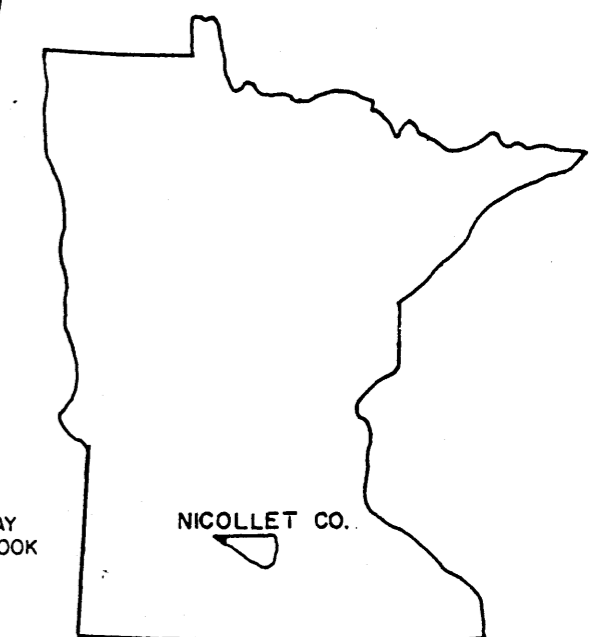
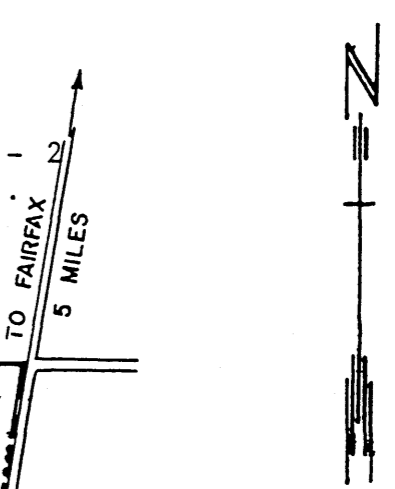
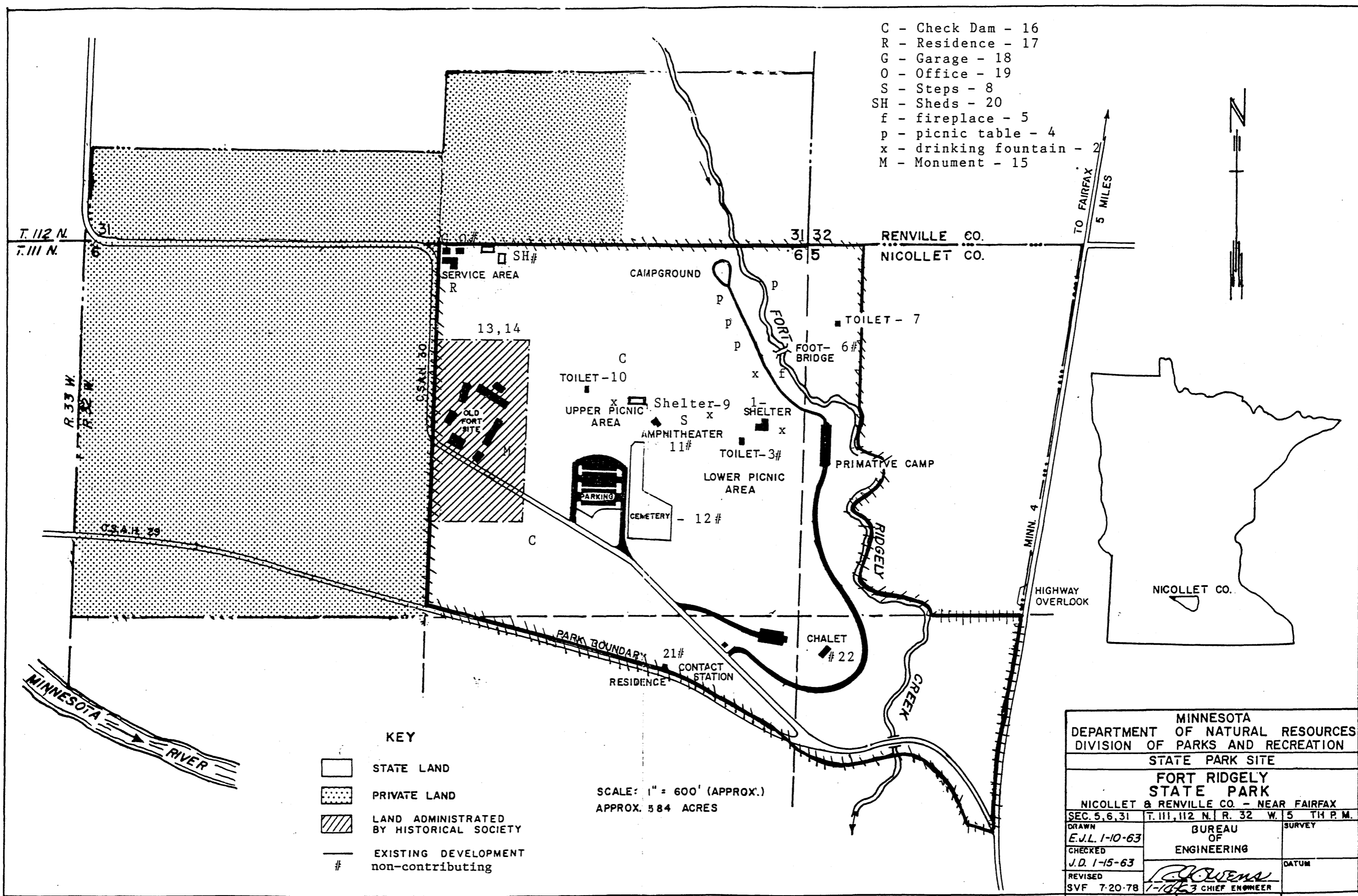
city or town Minneapolis

date September 9, 1988

telephone 612-824-7807

state Minnesota zip code 55407

- C - Check Dam - 16
- R - Residence - 17
- G - Garage - 18
- O - Office - 19
- S - Steps - 8
- SH - Sheds - 20
- f - fireplace - 5
- p - picnic table - 4
- x - drinking fountain - 2
- M - Monument - 15



- KEY**
- STATE LAND
 - PRIVATE LAND
 - LAND ADMINSTRATED BY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 - # EXISTING DEVELOPMENT non-contributing

SCALE: 1" = 600' (APPROX.)
APPROX. 584 ACRES

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION		
STATE PARK SITE		
FORT RIDGELY STATE PARK		
NICOLLET & RENVILLE CO. - NEAR FAIRFAX		
SEC. 5, 6, 31	T. 111, 112 N. R. 32 W. 5	TH P. M.
DRAWN E.J.L. 1-10-63	BUREAU OF ENGINEERING	SURVEY
CHECKED J.D. 1-15-63		DATUM
REVISED SVF 7-20-78	<i>R. J. OWENS</i> 1-10-63 CHIEF ENGINEER	
REQ. 62-30	SHEET 4	FILE P.015.00.01