

**Minnesota State Parks and Trails
Cultural Resource Management Program**

**Cultural Resource Reconnaissance Survey for a
Proposed Land Sale of 21 Lots, Lake Bronson State Park,
Kittson County, Minnesota**

Project Number: SPK.1.208.1.14

2014

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The Minnesota State Parks and Trails Cultural Resource Management Program (MSPATCRMP) completed an archaeological reconnaissance survey and architecture/history review of a proposed sale of 21 lots in an existing platted subdivision at Lake Bronson State Park in Kittson County, Minnesota with negative results. The size of the project area and Area of Potential Effect (APE) was 2.5 acres. The typical lots in the Lakeside Subdivision measure 100-x-40 feet and 100-x-50 feet and are interspersed between existing houses. A **no properties** finding is recommended for archaeological and architecture/history considerations. The project is both a state and federal undertaking. The federal interest is related to the National Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The Lake Bronson State Park WPA/Rustic Style Historic District is located outside of the APE for the project. The water body of Lake Bronson, a contributing resource to the historic district, is situated about 70 meters to the southeast of the project location. Dense forest cover screens the project area such so there will be no indirect landscape issues affecting the historic district.

PROJECT TITLE

Cultural Resource Reconnaissance Survey for a Proposed Land Sale of 21 Lots, Lake Bronson State Park, Kittson County, Minnesota

PROJECT NUMBER

SPK.1.208.1.14

LOCATION

Verbal: In existing platted Lakeside Subdivision on north side of Lake Bronson and northeast of the Lake Bronson State Park Picnic Area.

County: Kittson

Legal Location: Section 33 T161N R46W

UTM (NAD 83): Z15N E234202 N5403339

USGS QUAD: Halma, Minn., 1982

INVESTIGATION LEVEL

Reconnaissance Survey Intensive Archaeological Testing

PROJECT TYPE

State

Federal (Land and Water Conservation Fund - National Park Service)

PROJECT SCOPE

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR), Division of Parks and Trails, will be conducting a land sale of 21 lots in the Lakeside Subdivision at Lake Bronson State Park in Kittson County, Minnesota (Figure 1). The lots are situated in six clusters in Blocks 1, 4, and 5 (Figure 2). Lot sizes vary from 40-x-100-feet to 50-x-100-feet with irregular-sized triangular lots on the northeast ends of Blocks 4 and 5. The lots to be sold are interspersed with privately owned lots. The lots are undeveloped with the exception of Lots 3 and 4 in Block 4. These lots have a concrete slab for a former house/garage and a concrete sidewalk. Please review this project, which is both a state and federal undertaking. The federal interest is related to the National Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The Area of Potential Effect (APE) for archaeological concerns and architecture/history concerns is approximately 2.5 acres and encompasses the lots to be sold (Figure 2).

PROJECT AREA

Hobbs and Goebel (1982) have defined the project area as Deposits Associated with the Des Moines Lobe (Pleistocene, Late Wisconsinan) and Glacial Lake Sediment undivided as to moraine association comprising sand and gravel. The project area is located on the McCauleyville Beach Ridge of Glacial Lake Agassiz and along the north side of the South Branch of the Two Rivers at the eastern portion of the Lake Bronson Reservoir. The McCauleyville Beach Ridge formed as the water level of Glacial Lake Agassiz receded leaving a series of beach strands several miles wide along the river approximately 9,100 years ago (Thorleifson 1996). The most prominent beach ridge in the vicinity lies on the south side of Lake Bronson and continues on the north side. Lot 1 of Block 5 lies on the eastern slope of this prominent feature (Figure 2).

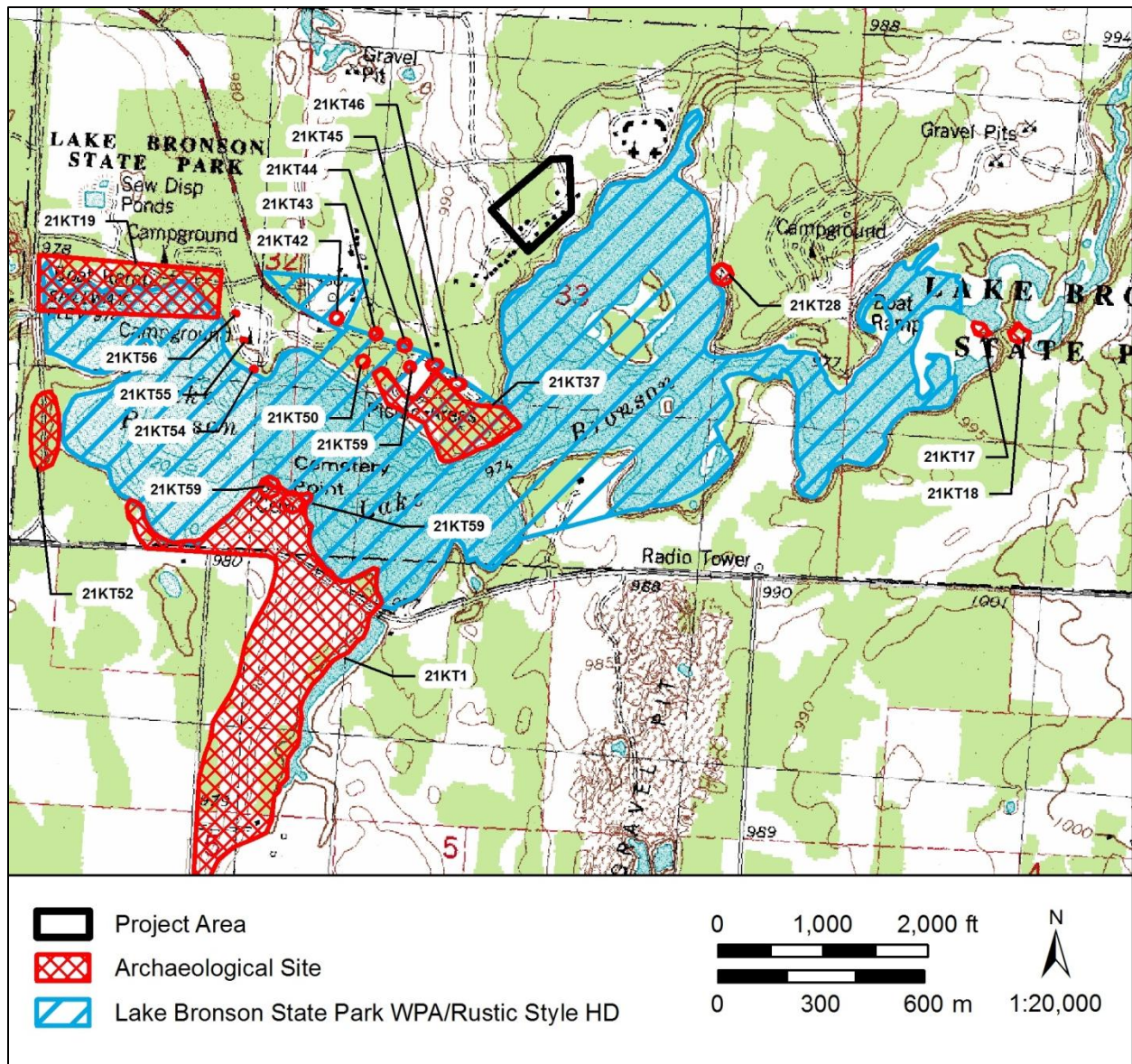


Figure 1. Location of the lot sale project and adjacent cultural resources at Lake Bronson State Park, Kittson County, Minnesota (USGS Halma, Minn. Quadrangle, 1982, 7.5 minute topographic series).

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (1988:1-7) classified the original vegetation of the project area from notes taken during the 1847 to 1907 U.S. General Land Office Survey as Aspen Parkland. Portions of some of the lots are partially mowed as lawns by adjacent owners. The dominant vegetation is aspen and scrub oak with a dense understory of poison ivy.

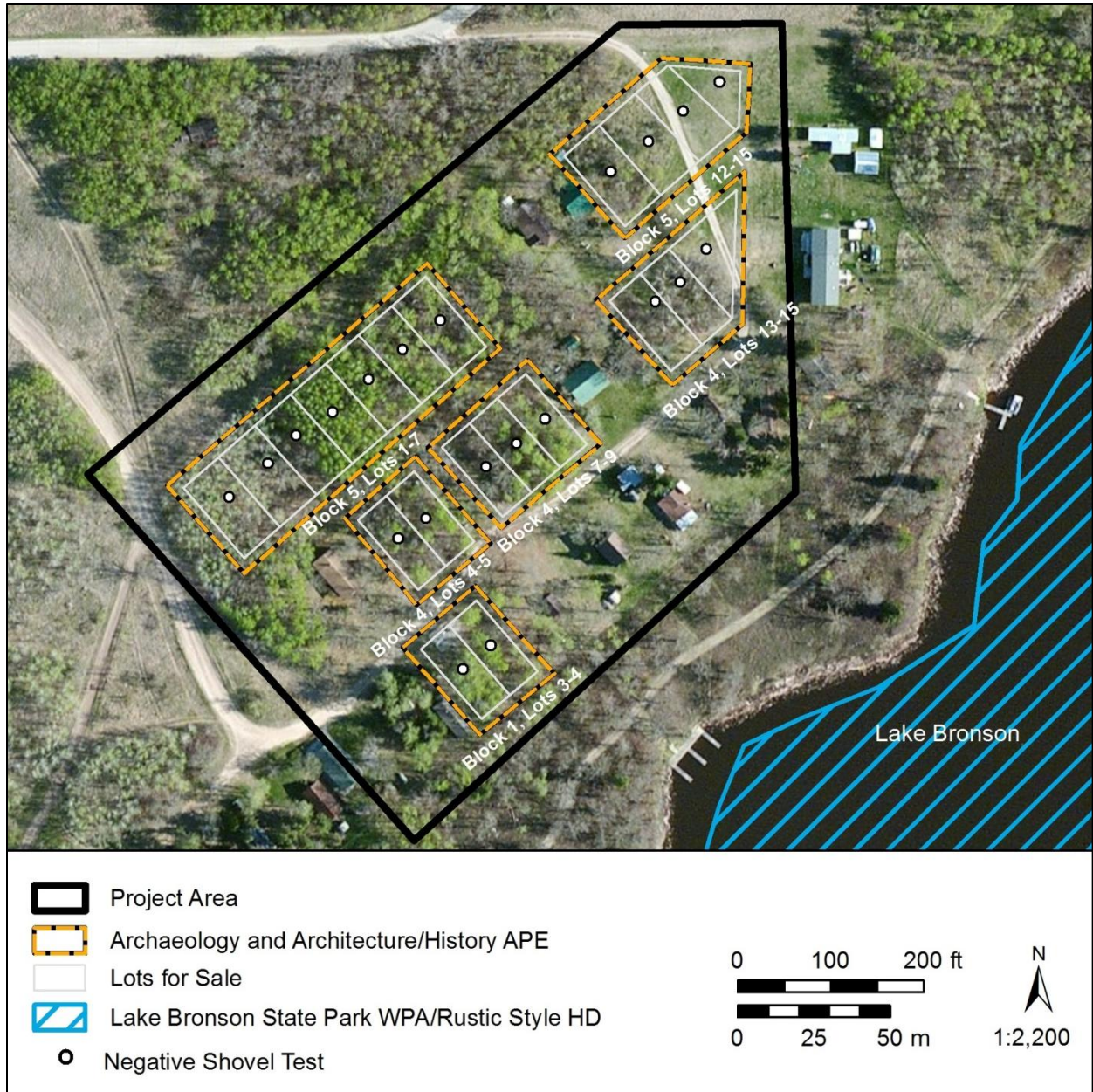


Figure 2. Map showing the project area with the lots for sale, the project’s APE, shovel test locations, and Lake Bronson, a contributing resource to the Lake Bronson State Park WPA/Rustic Style Historic District.

Physiographic Area: Glacial Lake Agassiz (Wright 1972:564)

Geomorphic Region: Agassiz Lacustrine Plain, Inner-Beach Area (Agricultural Experiment Station, Roseau Sheet, 1980)

Archaeological Region: Red River Valley North, 6n

RECORDS REVIEW

Archaeological Review. Records review of the state park, State Archaeologist, and MnSHPO files immediately prior to fieldwork in October 2013 indicated that no archaeological sites have been recorded in the project area. Within a mile of the project area there are 19 recorded archaeological sites including: the Lake Bronson site (21KT1), Hazelton I site (21KT17), Hazelton II site (21KT18), Bronson Dam WPA Camp (21KT19), Bronson Cemetery (21KT20), Lake Bronson Catholic Cemetery (21KT21), Lake Bronson findspot (21KT28), Lake Bronson McCauleyville Beach Ridge site (21KT37), Lake Bronson State Park 1 site (21KT42), Lake Bronson State Park 2 site (21KT43), Lake Bronson State Park 3 site (21KT44), Lake Bronson State Park 4 site (21KT45), Lake Bronson State Park 5 site (21KT46), Lake Bronson Picnic Shelter site (21KT50), Bronson Dam Precontact site (21KT52), Lake Bronson Campground site # 1 (21KT54), Lake Bronson Campground site # 2 (21KT55), Lake Bronson Campground site # 3 (21KT56), and Lake Bronson State Park 6 site (21KT59). Table 1 summarizes these archaeological sites and their locations are shown in Figure 1.

Table 1. List of Archaeological Sites within a Mile of the Lot Sale Project Area at Lake Bronson State Park.

Site Number	Site Name	Description
21KT1	Lake Bronson	Precontact Cemetery, Artifact Scatter, Laurel
21KT17	Hazelton I	Farmstead
21KT18	Hazelton II	Farmstead
21KT19	Bronson Dam WPA Camp	WPA Camp
21KT20	Lake Bronson Cemetery	Historic Cemetery
21KT21	Lake Bronson Catholic Cemetery	Historic Cemetery
21KT28	Lake Bronson Findspot	Precontact Lithic on Surface
21KT37	Lake Bronson McCauleyville Beach Ridge	Precontact Lithic Scatter
21KT42	Lake Bronson State Park 1	Precontact Lithic Scatter
21KT43	Lake Bronson State Park 2	Precontact Lithic on Surface
21KT44	Lake Bronson State Park 3	Precontact Lithic on Surface
21KT45	Lake Bronson State Park 4	Precontact Lithic Scatter
21KT46	Lake Bronson State Park 5	Precontact Lithic Scatter
21KT50	Lake Bronson Picnic Shelter	Precontact Lithic Scatter
21KT52	Lake Bronson Dam Precontact	Precontact Artifact Scatter
21KT54	Lake Bronson Campground Site #1	Precontact Lithic Scatter
21KT55	Lake Bronson Campground Site #2	Precontact Lithic Scatter
21KT56	Lake Bronson Campground Site #3	Precontact Lithic Scatter
21KT59	Lake Bronson State Park 6	Precontact Lithic Scatter

The majority of nearby archaeological sites are precontact lithic and artifact scatters. Most of these sites were identified during survey of state park development projects over the years (Radford and George 1991, Radford and George 1997, Radford et al. 1997, Radford et al. 1998, Radford et al. 2002). Very few of these sites contain diagnostic artifacts or features and remain only assignable to the Precontact period. An exception is the Lake Bronson site, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. The cemetery and habitation site has a significant Laurel component, which dates to approximately 50 B. C. to A. D. 1000 (Gibbon 2008). Other Woodland components represented at the site contain St. Croix and Blackduck ceramics (Anfinson et al. 1978).

Architecture/History Review. Review of the MnSHPO files indicate that there are no architecture/history properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places within the APE (Nord 2003). The Lake Bronson State Park WPA/Rustic Style Historic District is a 358 acre district in Lake Bronson State Park that includes: Lake Bronson, Lake Bronson Dam, Water

Tower, Office and Garage, Picnic Shelter, Latrine, Bath House, Mess Hall, Stone Curbing, and Drinking Fountains. The nearest element that comprises the Lake Bronson State Park WPA/Rustic Style Historic District is Lake Bronson, which is 70 meters southeast of Lots 3 and 4 in Block 1.

FIELD EXAMINATION

Field review was completed in October 2014 by staff from the Minnesota State Park and Trails Cultural Resource Management Program (MSPATCRMP) of the Minnesota Historical Society including Matthew Finneman, LeRoy Gonsior, Amy Ollila, Charlie Yesberger, and the Principal Investigator David Radford. A MnDNR survey crew had staked lot corners in anticipation of this review.

Surface examination of each lot was completed by walking a transect through the center of each lot. There was very limited surface visibility present in the project area and subsurface shovel testing was necessary to complete the field review. One shovel test (n=21) was excavated in the approximate center of each lot. Shovel tests were a minimum of 40 cm in diameter and excavated in 5-cm levels through the Holocene sediments. The soil matrix was passed through one-quarter inch mesh. Shovel test locations were mapped with a Trimble GPS GEO 7X (Figure 2).

RESULTS

Archaeological Results. The archaeological reconnaissance survey of the proposed a land sale of 21 lots in an existing subdivision at Lake Bronson State Park was completed with negative results. No archaeological materials or features were identified. All of the shovel tests were excavated in undisturbed natural soils consisting of loamy sand over sand and gravel. Dense cobble and boulder deposits with gravel were common at the base in many of the shovel tests. A typical example of the soil matrix from the project area is from Shovel Test 4 and included: from 0 to 8 cm, very dark grayish-brown (10YR 3/2) loamy sand; from 8 to 35 cm, brown (10YR 4/3) sand; from 35 to 55 cm, yellowish-brown (10YR 5/8) sand; from 35 to 60 cm, yellowish-brown (10YR 5/8) sand and dense gravel with cobbles. Figures 3 and 4 show photographs of several of the lots.

Architecture/History Results. There are no architecture/history properties that will be affected by this project within the APE. Lake Bronson, a contributing resource to the Lake Bronson State Park WPA/Rustic Style Historic District, lies about 70 meters southeast of the APE. Vegetation screens the lots from the lake and the historic district will not be affected, directly or indirectly, by the project. The Lakeside Subdivision includes over 20 house/cabin structures as shown in the 1982 Halma, Minn. USGS Quadrangle. Several new houses have been built in the last few years. There is no indication that the Lakeside Subdivision is a significant historical property in itself. A modern concrete slab for a cabin/garage and sidewalk is present in Lots 3 and 4 of Block 1. The cabin/house structure was removed several years ago and the slab and sidewalk is less than 50 years old according to an adjacent landowner.



Figure 3. View of modern concrete slab for a cabin/garage and sidewalk in Block 1 Lots 3 and 4 looking east toward Lake Bronson, which is obscured by vegetation.



Figure 4. View of Lot 1 Block 5 on east slope of McCauleyville Beach Ridge looking northeast. Open corridor on left is a road corridor between Blocks 5 and 8.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

An archaeological reconnaissance survey and architecture/history review of the land sale of 21 lots in the existing Lakeside Subdivision at Lake Bronson State Park was completed. Archaeological reconnaissance survey of the proposed project revealed no archaeological resources and a **no properties** finding is recommended for archaeological considerations.

The architecture/history review found no architecture/history properties in the project's APE. Lake Bronson, which is listed as one of the contributing elements of the Lake Bronson State Park WPA/Rustic Style Historic District, lies about 70 meters southeast of the architecture/history APE and is effectively screened by trees such that there are no indirect landscape issues. A **no properties** finding is recommended for architecture/history review.

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