



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Box 25

500 Lafayette Road

St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4025

Phone: 651-259-5109 E-mail: lisa.joyal@state.mn.us

March 17, 2015

Correspondence # ERDB 20150233

Ms. Martha Minchak
MN DNR Duluth Area Fisheries
5351 North Shore Drive
Duluth, MN 55804

RE: Natural Heritage Review of the proposed Knowlton Creek Stream Restoration,
T49N R15W Sections 14 & 23, St. Louis County

Dear Ms. Minchak,

As requested, the Minnesota Natural Heritage Information System has been queried to determine if any rare species or other significant natural features are known to occur within an approximate one-mile radius of the proposed project. Based on this query, rare features have been documented within the search area (for details, see the enclosed database reports; please visit the Rare Species Guide at <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/rsg/index.html> for more information on the biology, habitat use, and conservation measures of these rare species). Please note that the following **rare features may be adversely affected** by the proposed project:

- The mouth of Knowlton Creek is within an area that the Minnesota Biological Survey has identified as a Site of Moderate Biodiversity Significance. Sites of Biodiversity Significance have varying levels of native biodiversity and are ranked based on the relative significance of this biodiversity at a statewide level. Sites ranked as Moderate contain occurrences of rare species and/or moderately disturbed native plant communities, and/or landscapes that have a strong potential for recovery.
- Lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*), a state-listed special concern species, has been documented in the St. Louis River.
- The Environmental Assessment Worksheet mentions several measures that will be implemented to minimize effects to water quality and downstream habitats. These measures adequately address potential effects to the above rare features.
- Please include a copy of this letter in any DNR license or permit application.

The Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS), a collection of databases that contains information about Minnesota's rare natural features, is maintained by the Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Department of Natural Resources. The NHIS is continually updated as new information becomes available, and is the most complete source of data on Minnesota's rare or otherwise significant species, native plant communities, and other natural features. However, the NHIS is not an exhaustive inventory and thus does not represent all of the occurrences of rare features within the state. Therefore, ecologically significant

features for which we have no records may exist within the project area. **If additional information becomes available regarding rare features in the vicinity of the project, further review may be necessary.**

The enclosed results include an Index Report and a Detailed Report of records in the Rare Features Database, the main database of the NHIS. To control the release of specific location information, which might result in the destruction of a rare feature, both reports are copyrighted.

The Index Report provides rare feature locations only to the nearest section, and may be reprinted, unaltered, in an environmental review document (e.g., EAW or EIS), municipal natural resource plan, or report compiled by your company for the project listed above. If you wish to reproduce the index report for any other purpose, please contact me to request written permission. **The Detailed Report is for your personal use only as it may include specific location information that is considered nonpublic data under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.0872, subd. 2. If you wish to reprint or publish the Detailed Report for any purpose, please contact me to request written permission.**

For environmental review purposes, the results of this Natural Heritage Review are valid for one year; the results are only valid for the project location (noted above) and the project description provided on the NHIS Data Request Form. Please contact me if project details change or for an updated review if construction has not occurred within one year.

The Natural Heritage Review does not constitute review or approval by the Department of Natural Resources as a whole. Instead, it identifies issues regarding known occurrences of rare features and potential effects to these rare features. To determine whether there are other natural resource concerns associated with the proposed project, please contact your DNR Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist (contact information available at http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/ereview/erp_regioncontacts.html). Please be aware that additional site assessments or review may be required.

Thank you for consulting us on this matter, and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources.

Sincerely,



Lisa Joyal
Endangered Species Review Coordinator

enc. Rare Features Database: Index Report
Rare Features Database: Detailed Report
Rare Features Database Reports: An Explanation of Fields

cc: Rian Reed