



Environment

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Phase I Archaeological Survey of Knowlton Creek, Duluth-Superior Harbor, St. Louis County, Minnesota

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**PHASE I ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF KNOWLTON CREEK,
DULUTH-SUPERIOR HARBOR, ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

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ABSTRACT

AECOM, under the Baird/URS Joint Venture, conducted a Phase I archaeological survey of the Knowlton Creek survey area in St. Louis County, Minnesota. This work was conducted under contract to the Detroit District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act in support of the Remedial Action Plan for the St. Louis River Area of Concern, which is being led by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Specifically, the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the project is an approximately 40-acre area within T49N, R15W, Section 14 in Archaeological Region 9n.

The Principal Investigator for the project was Varna Boyd, MA, AECOM. Ralph Koziarski, PhD, AECOM, served as the Field Director, and Scott Seibel, MSc, AECOM, served as the Task Manager. Field investigations of the Knowlton Creek survey area were conducted from May 27 through 29, 2015. AECOM was able to access approximately 33.1 acres of the approximately 40-acre survey area for approximately 82.75 percent coverage. All portions of the Knowlton Creek survey area to which access was feasible, that featured less than 25 percent slope, and were neither disturbed by modern paths or exposed creek bed were subjected to shovel testing. A total of 133 shovel tests were dug during the investigation. All accessible portions of the survey area were subjected to pedestrian inspection. The areas to which access could not be obtained typically consisted of disturbed ROW along railroad beds and recently formed lands (ca. twentieth century) in the floodplain of the St. Louis River. Access could also not be obtained for one area lined with steep bluffs, a graded power line ROW, and small alluvial terraces; similar landforms were shovel tested to the north and south of this area and no archaeological resources were documented.

Although two artifacts, a small piece of metal slag and a fragment of clear bottle glass, were recovered from shovel tests, neither represents an archaeological site. Both were recovered from fluvial deposits and appear to have been transported from unknown locations upstream. While approximately 17.25 percent of the survey area could not be accessed, those areas have a low potential to contain intact, significant archaeological resources. It is recommended that proposed RAP activities within the Knowlton Creek APE be allowed to proceed without concerns for impacts to significant archaeological resources. However, if the APE is revised or expanded beyond its current boundaries, additional archaeological survey may be necessary as determined in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office.