

Emailed on Monday 4/12/21

From: Stephanie Chappell
Subject: Public Testimony for Wednesday's 337 DE Amend. Save Upper Sioux Agency State Park, remove from bill

Dear Committee members,

Please delete Article 1, Section 7, Subdivision 9 Upper Sioux Agency State Park Bond Defeasance. There is no support for the action nor has the action received time before your committee prior to its appearance in the DE-Amendment that posted on April 11.

The likely intention of this act is to remove the State Park from State ownership. Conveyance of state-owned property requires that property be free of any improvements paid for by bonding funds. As with conveyance of the Lower Sioux Agency Historic Site this year, the MN Historical Society, with the assistance of the DNR, has conveyed, given away, parts of the Site that were not improved using bonding funds.

In 1971, the State created the Minnesota Historic District Act. This Act defined and declared the Lower Sioux Agency historic site and the Upper Sioux Agency site complete historic districts enveloping roughly 240 and 800 acres respectively. The Upper Sioux Agency State Park is a declared Historic District and that District was set aside to preserve the historic value of the history the area played in the early development of Minnesota and U.S. history. The historic value of the District cannot be interpreted elsewhere.

Upper Sioux Agency State Park is located in the MN River Valley, an area where camping is in short supply. This State Park provides drive in camping with electrical hook ups at reasonable rates in a beautiful area of our state. The river side location also provides canoe-in campsites. Further, the Park has an additional feature of renting tipi's for a cultural experience second to none.

MN Historical Society has closed or given away its historic sites in the area and makes the historic site within this State Park a bonus for campers. The Battle of Wood Lake is the only declared Civil War battlefield in Minnesota and just a few miles from Upper Sioux Agency State Park. The Park provides a safe area for visitors to call home while experiencing Minnesota history interpreted by Euro- and Native American views. The MN River provides ample canoe and kayak tourism as well as designated mile markers to explore scenic natural areas to take a break from paddling and observe hundreds of different wildlife species including those on the threatened list and historic sites with histories unlike any other in the State.

Thank you for deleting the entire subdivision that would put in play an effort to remove Upper Sioux Agency State Park from state ownership and into federal ownership where the future of public enjoyment can be eliminated by Indian Trust guidelines.

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