

Background: Legislation to Transfer 0.25 acres of Land at Marine Mill Historic Site

About Marine Mill Historic Site

Marine Mill was a lumber mill that operated for nearly six decades (1838 to 1877), during which it produced nearly two million board feet of lumber, much of which was used in the construction of many of the emerging towns and cities of Minnesota.

Today, what remains are portions of the stone engine house and large wheel dating from 1873, as well as the stream that powered the mill. Interpretive signs, pathways, and an overlook above the ruins provide visitors with a glimpse of the great industry that helped build Minnesota and the treeless plains states to the west and south.

Marine Mill was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970 and passed to the Minnesota Historical Society in 1972. Today, Marine Mill is operated under a partnership agreement with the City of Marine on St. Croix. It is a 'trail site' - with trails and interpretive panels scattered across the site.

Background on Request from the City of Marine on St. Croix

In 2023, the City of Marine on St. Croix approached MNHS about transferring land at the Marine Mill historic site to construct a community building. This building would serve as an amenity and interpretive addition to the historic site. The 5.2-acre MNHS-owned state historic site has very little buildable area (as does the City of Marine on St. Croix itself). MNHS archaeology staff completed an archaeological survey of the entire site in 2025 and identified a roughly **¼ acre parcel** where the city could build without impacting archaeological resources.

The City of Marine on St. Croix has partnered with MNHS on site maintenance and vegetation removal for many years. In recognition of this partnership, as well as the indirect benefits of having a community-owned building next to the site (which currently has no facilities), this transfer is mutually beneficial. The parcel would be transferred for no consideration, but agreements will be put in place to ensure the parcel is used for its intended purpose over the long term.

MNHS is requesting legislation to transfer this parcel to the City of Marine. Transfer language is requested to be included in the annual DNR Lands bill, which contains various lands provisions.

Marine Mill Historic Site --- Map and Parcel Identified for Possible Transfer



Map of Land Transfer as Intended in 2024

Parcel noted as MNHS [2] 13.32 acres includes the portion that was mistakenly omitted from the enabling legislation (now "Tract / Parcel C")

