



## Mni Owe Sni Area

## Dog Park Fencing Project

The National Park Service (NPS), Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), and Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) are committed to protecting natural and cultural resources at Mni Owe Sni for future generations.

### What is happening?

The NPS has granted the MPRB funds to support the construction of a physical barrier that will prevent illegal off-leash dog use on the Mni Owe Sni lands managed by the NPS in partnership with landowners and Tribes.

- This project only prevents off-leash dog use on federal and historical society lands that have never allowed off-leash dogs.
- These lands have fragile resources that must be protected from off-leash dog use.

### I thought the only NPS area was above the bluff where the prairie is?

The Mni Owe Sni area from the upland prairie past the river's edge contains critical natural and cultural resources (see map right). These include:

- Traditional Cultural Property and associated resources,
- National Historic Landmark and associated resources,
- Endangered species habitat.

The NPS is required by federal law to manage resources unimpaired for future generations. Off-leash dogs are a documented impairment to protected resources. Because of this, off-leash dogs on NPS lands are prohibited explicitly under 36 CFR § 2.15.

### How does the NPS work with Tribes?

The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (NRRRA) has 22 affiliated tribes with which it regularly consults. At Mni Owe Sni, the NPS works most closely with the four Minnesota Dakota Tribes to coordinate management, NPS activities, and public use.

- In consultation, Tribes support and have asked for fencing to prevent off-leash dogs from entering the Mni Owe Sni area.
- Multiple Tribes have declared Mni Owe Sni sacred, and in 2023, much of the area was officially designated a Traditional Cultural Property in the National Register of Historic Places.

### Why is this happening?

Off-leash dogs are destructive to Mni Owe Sni's natural and cultural resources and illegal on NPS lands.

- The NPS manages the lands adjacent to the Minnehaha off-leash dog park in partnership with the MNHS and Tribes to preserve and enhance cultural and natural resources.
- Federal and state law requires the preservation of Mni Owe Sni resources; allowing off-leash dog use any longer would endanger protected resources and violate the law.

### Why does the NPS manage lands here?

The Mni Owe Sni area has had many different land managers over the last fifty years.

- The NPS received possession of Island 108 (the point) in 1988 when the Mississippi National River and Recreation area was established.
- The NPS began active management in the area in 2011 after the Bureau of Mines campus was transferred to NPS ownership.
- The management of this critical area aligns with the NPS mission to protect resources within the Mississippi River corridor in the Twin Cities.

### What will the NPS do after the fence is up?

The NPS has worked since 2011 to restore the upland prairie area of Mni Owe Sni. With much upland work completed, the NPS will focus on the lands below the bluff line. The current condition of these lands is poor due to off-leash dog use.

- Initial work will begin with forest succession restoration.
- Later work will include shoreline restoration and improvements below the high water line for fish and mussel habitat.
- Beyond landscape restoration, the NPS will increase wildlife studies and surveys to assess and improve wildlife health.
- The NPS will also work closely with its 22 affiliated Tribes for traditional plant gatherings and ceremonies in the area.