

MINNEHAHA DOG PARK

March 6, 2025

Progress update

The cultural importance of the Minnehaha Dog Park land – which is considered part of the sacred Mni Owe Sni Coldwater Spring area by Dakota tribes – is significantly greater than originally anticipated. Staff are working with Carrie Day Aspinwall, Indigenous Parks Liaison, to develop a process and timeline for engaging the MPRB Native American Parks Council, Dakota tribal historic preservation officers, and, potentially, Dakota and Anishinaabe/Ojibwe tribal leadership.

This work precedes the MPRB's Sites of Significance work (currently unfunded) planned as part of the [MPRB Reconciliation Action Plan](#). The breadth of engagement requires more time than a typical park project and a pace of engagement based on first establishing trust among the parties.

To assist staff, the MPRB has engaged The 106 Group, an archeological consulting firm with significant experience in Native cultural and historical resources. The firm is assembling a report framing the cultural and historical resources that might be encountered on this land. Due to the sensitive nature of archeological content, some content in this report will likely not be made available to the public.

More information will be shared before changes occur at the dog park.

Tasks Ahead

Work involving cultural resources is time consuming and highly variable, depending on what might be encountered. While staff offers a list of tasks, the nature of this work suggests timelines will likely vary.

- Conduct monthly coordination meetings with Minnesota Historical Society and National Park Service staff ongoing
- Receive initial feedback from National Park Service Indian Advisory Committee received January 2025
- Receive initial feedback from Minnesota Historical Society Indian Advisory Committee March 2025
- Engage with Dakota tribal historic preservation officers to seek official position and guidance March 2025
- Receive report from The 106 Group (MPRB archeological consultant) April 2025

- Engage MPRB Native American Parks Council to review findings and site features and conditions and seek recommendation to MPRB Board of Commissioners June 2025 **at the earliest*
- Inform stakeholders of findings TBD
- Formally request an official statement of position from Dakota tribal leadership, if needed TBD
- Present findings to Board of Commissions during a discussion item July 2025 **at the earliest*

Sources/Learn More:

Here are some resources to learn more about the history and importance of this land:

[Bdote Memory Map](#)

[Video: History of the Mni Owe Sni](#)

[Friends of Coldwater Spring: Facts and History](#)

[Sacred Sites International: Coldwater Springs](#)

[National Park Service: Mni Owe Sni \(Coldwater Spring\)](#)

Media Statement

Conditions surrounding Minnehaha Dog Park are much more complex than originally anticipated.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is working with numerous stakeholders in the area to fully understand the historic and recreational value of the area. Part of this work includes meaningfully engaging Dakota tribes in a government-to-government dialogue to gather information and conduct due diligence regarding the cultural importance of the land.

More information will be shared before changes occur at the dog park.