



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Mississippi National River  
and Recreation Area

111 Kellogg Blvd. E., Ste 105  
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1256

651-290-4160 phone  
651-290-3214 fax

---

## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Steve Johnson

651-290-3030 ext 223

steven\_p\_johnson@nps.gov

### **National Park Service to manage Coldwater Spring site**

Abandoned federal property along the Mississippi River near Fort Snelling should be managed by the National Park Service as part of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, federal officials have announced.

Paul Labovitz, NPS Superintendent for the Mississippi River, said the property would be cleared of its abandoned buildings and restored to natural conditions. This includes restoration of Coldwater Spring, a significant site in American history that is located on the property.


“This site holds great significance for American Indian people, for its role in early European settlement of the region, and for its 20<sup>th</sup> Century role in development of mining and mine safety technology. I am excited that this site will be preserved and managed by the National Park Service and we will be able to tell the many stories of this site to present and future generations of Americans,” Labovitz said.

The property is adjacent to Highway 55 and lies just south of Minnehaha Falls Regional Park and just west of the Mississippi River. For decades it was a research campus of the U.S. Bureau of Mines, a federal agency closed by the government in the mid-1990s.

The 27-acre site is within the Fort Snelling National Historic Landmark and Coldwater Spring on the site was the primary water supply for the soldiers that build the fort in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century and for the subsequent expanded fort itself well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

The National Park Service began a planning process in 2004 to determine the future of the site, but that process went dormant following publication of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement in 2006. The Department of the Interior, which owns the site, concluded last week that future management of the site should fall to the National Park Service.

Interior’s action was formally to select site restoration and NPS management as its “preferred alternative” as preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) goes forward. Interior’s decision could technically change following publication of the Final EIS and won’t be final until publication of a Record of Decision next year, but Labovitz said Interior has clearly set the direction for the property’s future.



“That decision is logical,” said Superintendent Labovitz, “since the site lies within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area and since the National Park Service is exceptionally qualified to interpret the rich history of this site.”

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been responsible for day-to-day management of the site since the Bureau of Mines closed and will manage contracts to demolish the buildings and restore the site to natural conditions. Site restoration should be completed by the fall of 2010, Labovitz said.

-NPS-