



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

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For more information:
Georgia Parham
(812) 334-4261 x203
Robert Hansen
(612) 712-5212

Safety Concerns Prompt Changes in Access to Former Bureau of Mines Center in Fort Snelling

Citing increasing safety and vandalism concerns, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is taking steps to protect the public and federal property at the former U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Mines Twin Cities Research Center located in Fort Snelling, Minnesota. Effective Monday, August 8, 2005, the public may enter the federal property grounds only by submitting a special-use permit application and entering the site during the specified hours on the approved permit. The Service manages the Center pending completion of a public process to determine disposition of the property

The Service's action was prompted by results of a recent safety assessment conducted at the Center, which formerly housed the now-disbanded Bureau of Mines research facility. An assessment of the site's 11 buildings and 27-acre grounds found a number of serious hazards.

"We realize this area is important to some members of the community, and we want to find a way to accommodate that interest," said Barbara Milne, Assistant Regional Director of the Service's Midwest Region. "We also have a strong obligation # one that we must uphold # to ensure the safety of this community while protecting federal property. With limited funds and staff, this is the most balanced way to meet these needs."

The National Park Service is currently working with the public to develop an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act to address possible future disposition of the site. The draft EIS, expected to be released in early 2006, will contain alternatives for disposition and potential impacts of possible future uses of the Center on natural, historic, and cultural resources.

For more information on entering the former Bureau of Mines Twin Cities Research Center, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at 612-713-5306. For information on the National Park Service's planning process and Environmental Impact Statement, contact Kim Berns, 651-290-3030 x 244.

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