KLETZSCH PARK RIVER ACCESS AND FISH PASSAGE PROJECT

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Improvements made to Kletzsch Park will allow native fish to swim to critical habitat and spawning grounds, enhance public access, and fix portions of the dam.

Updates to the dam, required by the DNR, include: removing woody plants; replacing damaged stone material; removing sediment blocking and re-establishing the functionality of the bypass structure. Improving the dam will allow fish passage upstream and restoration of native fish species. Improvements planned for the overlook area, river access, and portage will create universal access for people of all abilities.

The project team consulted neighbors, local stakeholders, and Native American tribes individually about this project. These groups also had the opportunity to engage through public informational meetings held on January 9th and September 17th of 2019. The public also had the opportunity to provide input on plans through comment periods following each meeting.

PROJECT COMPONENTS:

1. Improved fish passage
2. Improved overlook area
3. Improved river access and portage
4. Dam repairs

PROJECT DESIGN CRITERIA:

- Preservation of mature oak trees on the project site
- No disruption of Native American burial grounds or other cultural resources
- No impacts to the floodplain
- Avoid active fish passage movement through intensive manual or mechanical labor facilities
- Preservation of the Kletzsch Park Dam

WHY MAKE IMPROVEMENTS?

Improved fish passage

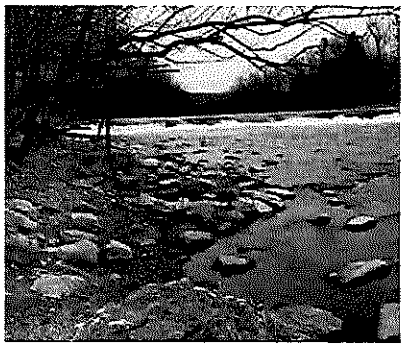
- Will expand important ecological connections between the upper and the lower portions of the Milwaukee River and Estuary
- Allows upstream travel for native fish, such as northern pike and lake sturgeon
- Connect native fish to higher quality spawning, nursery, and wetlands habitat
- Important for downstream fish movement, allowing better fish access back to the Milwaukee harbor and Lake Michigan

Improved overlook area

- Natural landscape will be repaired
- Restore native plant community, allowing for better wildlife habitat
- Create universal access for people of all abilities

Improved river access and portage

- Create safe entry and exit point for paddlers
- Provide a path for river access, allowing people of all abilities to canoe, fish, and relax by the water
- Help keep up the natural beauty of the location



Current view of dam and shoreline

Proposed view of river access and shoreline

For more detailed information, visit:
https://mkecoparks.helpscoutdocs.com/category/314-kletzsch-park

10

THE MILWAUKEE ESTUARY AREA OF CONCERN (AOC)

WHAT IS AN AOC?

In 1987, 43 Areas of Concern (AOCs), or pollution hot spots, were identified in the Great Lakes. These are places where historic industrial, agricultural, and urban activities caused severe damage to the waterways. This left the rivers with pollution in the sediment, habitat problems, and impacts to activities like swimming and fishing. Once the issues in an AOC are addressed, the area can be "delisted."

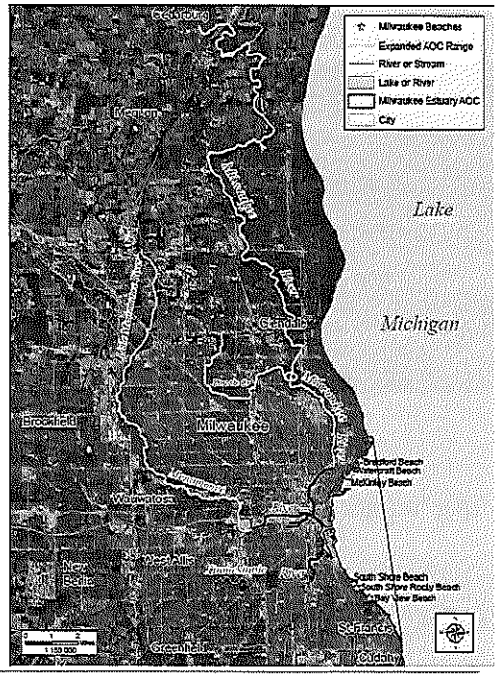
LONG-TERM BENEFITS

- Less pollution and cleaner water in our rivers and harbor
- Thriving, healthy, and diverse habitats
- Improved recreation
- More clean beach days
- Healthier fish and wildlife
- Healthier communities

The Milwaukee Estuary is one of five AOCs in Wisconsin. The Milwaukee Estuary AOC includes the meeting of three major rivers that flow into Lake Michigan – the Milwaukee, Menomonee, and Kinnickinnic Rivers. These river basins cover 880 square miles and are home to 1.3 million people.

The Milwaukee Estuary AOC has many kinds of impact from historical pollution. Presently, project initiatives are in the works, causing more opportunities for community feedback and restoration efforts to rise within the AOC for fish and wildlife restoration, beach cleanups, as well as contaminated sediment remediation.

To learn more, visit:
https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/GreatLakes/milwaukee.html



THE BIG AOC GOALS

- Address impacts of pollution
- Improve water quality
- Delist Milwaukee Estuary AOC

HOW WE GET THERE

- Collaborating among many government agencies and local partners
- Efficiently utilizing the millions of dollars funded by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative by making improvements across the Milwaukee Estuary AOC

Together, as a community, we have a historic and generational opportunity to cleanup legacy pollution in our rivers and harbor. This will mean healthier fish and wildlife, and improved recreational opportunities for all in the Milwaukee region. Many important projects are happening in the AOC. This is a critical time for community input and feedback. This work in Milwaukee will improve the health of our waterways and community for future generations.

To learn more and stay involved, visit: http://www.milwaukeeestuaryaoc.com

Nenn

December 6, 2019

MILWAUKEE RIVERKEEPER
PROTECT | RESTORE | CONNECT | ADVOCATE

Milwaukee County Courthouse
901 N. 9th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53233

Re: Support for Kletzsch Park Dam Fish Passage

Dear County Supervisors,

On behalf of Milwaukee Riverkeeper and the signatories below, we are writing to support the Kletzsch Park Dam Fish Passage Project, and to urge you to approve it at the upcoming Parks, Energy, and Environment Committee meeting and subsequent County Board meeting scheduled in December. The proposed fish passage is funded by EPA's Area of Concern program, as well as other funders, and would provide a way for fish to get past the dam while still retaining Kletzsch Falls, which is important to many in the community.

The proposed fish passage in Kletzsch Park is a generational opportunity to move native fish upstream from Lake Michigan past the LAST man-made barrier to their passage in Milwaukee County, the Kletzsch Dam. Many of our native fish can't jump over barriers, and can't swim upstream through intense flows created by dams and other obstructions. In addition, many native fish, such as northern pike, require access to vegetated wetlands for spawning, few of which exist along the Milwaukee River in Milwaukee County. Allowing fish to reach high quality spawning habitat upstream is essential to creating a healthy and sustainable fishery

For the past 14 years, the Wisconsin Department of Resources (WDNR) has had an ongoing restoration project for lake sturgeon, with a sturgeon rearing facility located at Riveredge Nature Center. Completion of this fish passage would have a significant positive impact on facilitating the return of sturgeon to the upper portions of the Milwaukee River, as well as improving habitat for a wide variety of other aquatic species. Providing a fish passage structure at Kletzsch Dam also provides connectivity to the significant restoration work and improvements made upstream by the Ozaukee County Fish Passage Program, which has removed several major dams, built a fish passage around the Mequon-Thiensville Dam, and addressed hundreds of smaller fish passage barriers. This type of river restoration opportunity does not present itself often, and it is rare that scientists, elected officials, government agencies, community groups, AND funding sources all come together around a project –we may not get this chance again.

We are at a pivotal moment in the history of water in Milwaukee. Momentum and energy are building to prioritize the work to clean up historically contaminated parts of our rivers and estuary through EPA's Area of Concern program. This could mean a serious federal investment to achieve cleaner rivers and healthier communities. Kletzsch Park Fish Passage is a priority project to address the fish and wildlife populations impairment, and our ability to implement this project or our failure to do so, will speak volumes to EPA about our ability to implement future projects.

While we are committed to the proposed fish passage, dam removal would be our first choice to addressing this fish passage impediment. Dam removal is the most effective and least costly alternative for enabling fish passage. However, we don't want to replicate the 10+ years of fighting that preceded removal of the Estabrook Dam. Achieving community consensus usually means compromise – there is often not a clear winner and all sides don't get everything they want. While providing a fish passage around the dam would not fully

restore the natural ecology to the river, it would allow us to retain the "Kletzsch Falls" that many in the community love, while still achieving our collective vision of FISHABLE rivers for everyone.

If we do not grasp this opportunity and move forward, we will lose more than just fish passage – we'll also miss out on another important opportunity to connect more folks to our river through an improved portage, access points, and accessible paths. This will not only protect paddlers, fishermen, and other river users, but will ensure that ALL community members can recreate in our parks and enjoy our rivers safely.

In conclusion, we urge you to support design and construction of the Kletzsch Park Fish Passage Project.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Nenn
Riverkeeper
Milwaukee Riverkeeper

Jessica Jens
Executive Director
Riveredge Nature Center

Mike Kuhr
State Council Chair
Wisconsin Trout Unlimited

John Rennpferd
Southeast Chapter Chair
Wisconsin Trout Unlimited

Todd Brennan
Senior Policy Manager
Alliance for the Great Lakes

Bob Hammen
President
Great Lakes Sport Fishermen Club - Ozaukee

Andrew Struck
Director
Ozaukee County Planning and Parks Department
Ozaukee Fish Passage Program

Ken Leinbach
Executive Director
Urban Ecology Center

Bob Wincek
President
Great Lakes Sport Fishermen Foundation-Milwaukee
Wisconsin Federation of Great Lakes Sport Fishing Clubs

Cc: Glendale Historic Preservation Commission
Glendale Common Council
Preston Cole, WDNR Secretary
WDNR Area of Concern Program

(10)
Smith

TO: Supervisor Jason Haas, chair
Supervisor Sheldon A. Wasserman, vice chair
Supervisor Marcelia Nicholson
Supervisor Felesia Martin
Supervisor Steven Shea
From: Mary Smith
RE: Agenda item 10, Parks, Energy and Environment committee meeting
DATE: December 10, 2019

1) At a standing-room only meeting on December 3, 2019 in Glendale an arborist whom I respect indicated that not cutting down the trees is not the same as saving the trees. His name is Jim Uhrinak and he is probably known to this committee. I urge you to get his input.

2) At last week's meeting I saw a map of Indian Prairie created by Increase Lapham. (I sent a link to the map by email to the committee last week Thursday.)

Attached to this memo is a copy of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) letter to the DNR's request for comment, including maps, which I obtained from Felipe Avila, GIS Coordinator, of the State Historic Preservation Office and an email from him to me.

3) According to a FAQ attached to today's agenda:

"Were Tribal Communities in Wisconsin notified about this project?

Yes, project notifications and request for comment/consultation were sent to Tribal Historic Preservation Officers. Requests for consultation between federally recognized tribal governments are supported on a government-to-government basis between the federal government and Indian Tribes. To date there have not been any responses to the project notifications."

I would like to share a link to a commentary written by a Ho Chunk woman who is a UW Madison graduate student.

The Land Remembers Native Histories

by Kendra Greendeer · Published November 21, 2019 · Updated November 21, 2019

https://edgeeffects.net/native-histories/

HP-05-07 (9-28-18) For SHPO Use Only. Case # 18-1481 MI

REQUEST FOR SHPO COMMENT AND CONSULTATION ON A FEDERAL UNDERTAKING

Submit one copy with each undertaking for which our comment is requested. Please print or type. Return to: Wisconsin Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, 816 State Street, Madison, WI 53706
Please Check All Boxes and Include All of the Following Information, as Applicable.

RECEIVED SEP 16 2019 BY:

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

☐ This is a new submittal.
☑ This is supplemental information relating to Case #: 18-1481 MI, and title: Kletzsch Park Dam Fish Passage
☐ This project is being undertaken pursuant to the terms and conditions of a programmatic or other interagency agreement. The title of the agreement is _____

a. Federal Agency Jurisdiction (Agency providing funds, assistance, license, permit): EPA

b. Federal Agency Contact Person: Leah Medley Phone: 312-886-1307

c. Project Contact Person: Richard Kubicek - DNR HPO Phone: 608-445-8395

d. Return Address: 101 S. Webster St. P.O. Box 7921 City: Madison Zip Code: 53707-7921

e. Email Address: richard.kubicek@wisconsin.gov

f. Project Name: Kletzsch Park Dam Fish Passage

g. Project Street Address: _____

h. County: Milwaukee City: Glendale Zip Code: _____

i. Project Location: Township 8N, Range 22, East ■ or West □, Section 19, Quarter Sections SE

j. Project Narrative Description—Attach Information as Necessary.

k. Area of Potential Effect (APE). Attach Copy of U.S.G.S. 7.5 Minute Topographic Quadrangle showing APE.

II. IDENTIFICATION OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

☑ Historic Properties are located within the project APE per 36 CFR 800.4. Attach supporting materials, per 36 CFR 800.11.
☐ Historic Properties are not located within the project APE per 36 CFR 800.4. Attach supporting materials, per CFR 800.11.

III. FINDINGS

☐ No historic properties will be affected (i.e., none is present or there are historic properties present but the project will have no effect upon them). Attach necessary documentation, as described at 36 CFR 800.11.
☐ The proposed undertaking will have no adverse effect on one or more historic properties located within the project APE under 36 CFR 800.5. Attach necessary documentation, as described at 36 CFR 800.11.
☑ The proposed undertaking will result in an adverse effect to one or more historic properties and the applicant, or other federally authorized representative, will consult with the SHPO and other consulting parties to resolve the adverse effect per 36 CFR 800.6. Attach supporting documentation as described at 36 CFR 800.11.

Authorized Signature: Richard H. Kubicek Digitally signed by Richard H. Kubicek Date: 2019.09.16 12:04:26 -05'00' Date: 9/16/2019

Type or print name: Richard H. Kubicek

IV. STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE COMMENTS

☑ Agree with the finding in section III above.
☐ Object to the finding for reasons indicated in attached letter.
☐ Cannot review until information is sent as follows: _____

Authorized Signature: _____ Date: 9/18/19

WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

September 18, 2019

Mr. Richard Kubicek
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
101 S. Webster St.
PO Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921

WHS#: 18-1481 MI Kletzsch Park Dam Fish Passage
RE: Request for SHPO Comment and Consultation on a Federal Undertaking

Dear Mr. Kubicek:

We have received your request for comment dated September 16, 2019, regarding the above referenced project. This was originally submitted as a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) project. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be taking over as the lead agency and the DNR will be serving as a partner agency. Significant design changes have been introduced from the original submittal as well.

The original review for this project performed by the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in 2018, agreed with the findings of the DNR that an adverse effect would take place on the Kletzsch Park dam. A rough mitigation plan was sketched out that included photo documenting the dam, before and after construction. The 2018 review and mitigation plan did not include the Indian Prairie archaeological site (47 MI-0021 / 47 BMI-0081), as it was deemed too heavily damaged and the site integrity has been too disturbed by urbanization.

The SHPO agrees with the revised DNR findings that the 30% project plans dated August 26, 2019 and prepared by Inter-Fluve and K. Singh & Associates will result in an adverse effect. The Kletzsch Park Dam is a contributing feature to the Milwaukee River Parkway, which is on the National Register of Historic Places (NR # 12000914).

The lead Federal agency shall work with the SHPO to create a mitigation plan for the proposed project.

Additional concerns about the impact of the project on the Indian Prairie site have been raised by other interested parties. Indian Prairie was a unique mound group (effigy, conical and intaglio mounds) along with garden beds and other features.

The first concern is over the exact location of the site. Because all traces of the mounds have been destroyed, there are three historic maps and a verbal description that are used to locate the site. The 1855 Lapham maps are the basis for all following maps that were created. The 1855 map does not have any geodetic control or a local datum to provide current spatial reference. The Brown field notes (1905)

and White (1933) are addendums to the Lapham map. Both lack geodetic control and show the alignment of Bender Road. In addition the White map shows the Chicago & Northwestern/Union Pacific Railroad, and a quarry pit road. Both maps add the roads/railroad in relation to the mounds which were heavily damaged when the maps were made. Further quarrying activities, development, and the damming of the Milwaukee River have changed the landscape to the point that, the maps and verbal descriptions can only be used as a "ballpark location" and should not be taken as 100% accurate. If the location of a 4" drain tile discharge point is assumed to be the approximate location of the north spring into the Milwaukee River as shown on the Lapham map that could provide additional spatial context. But again, it is also an approximation and should not be taken as 100% accurate.

The primary issue over location is based on which 20th century map is more accurate. The White map from 1933 shows Bender Road, a quarry pit road and the rail line. The rail line is not drawn parallel to Bender Road, which raises questions of its accuracy. The Brown map from 1905 does not show the rail line and has Bender Road in a slightly different location. It should be noted that both maps are hand drawn sketches that were added to Lapham's 1855 map. They both agree that Bender Road runs over the intaglio mounds. It is the road location in relation to the bluff that is being called into question. LiDAR analysis of current (2010) ground conditions compared to the 1933 and 1905 maps, show that the White (1933) map is slightly more accurate.

As a part of this review the SHPO office ran an independent map analysis. Georeferencing is a Geographical Information Systems (GIS) process where a paper map with no coordinate information is matched up to an electronic map with known coordinates based on common features on both the paper and electronic map. First a 1937 aerial photo was georeferenced to a 2015 orthophoto. Then the White (1933) map was georeferenced to the1937 aerial image. Only the locations of intersection of the quarry road and Bender Road and Bender Road where it crosses the bluff, which are both visible in the 1937 image were used to georeference the map. Because the accuracy of the mapped rail line has been called into question it was not used as a reference point. Since the rail line was not used as a reference there is the possibility of north/south error. The Brown (1905) map only has one reference point that can be used, and as a result cannot be georeferenced. More than one point is required to georeference a map. The Lapham (1855) map was georeferenced to the White map based on mound locations. The SHPO decided to georeference the Lapham map since it was the original base map. It is important to see where it fell, to give an idea of the location. The SHPO is well aware of the imperfections inherit in running the analysis in this manner, but deemed it relevant to the matter at hand. Since the issue is the accuracy of the White vs Brown map, georeferencing the Brown map to the White map is not a viable solution. In addition the 1836 General Land Survey (GLO) maps for Milwaukee were also georeferenced in the hope of pinpointing the location of the springs that feed into the Milwaukee River as an additional data point. The GLO maps did not provide the location of the springs so they were removed from the analysis. None of these georeferenceing locations are perfect. If a GPS point for the 4" drain tile discharge point is provided and we make the assumption that is the location for the north spring, then this can be introduced as an additional reference point. The additional data would enable the Brown map able to be analyzed and potentially reduce the possible north/south error in the White map. The new data would also be an assumption, that the discharge point is the location of the spring. The reality is the landscape has changed too much for a truly accurate site location to be determined.

A Phase I archaeological survey conducted by TRC Environmental Corporation (SHPO # 15-1249), looked at the area that would be potentially impacted by the project. Concerns were raised, primarily about the location of the survey area and TRC's estimate of the location of the northern conical mounds. The archaeological report georeferenced the Lapham and White maps to a recent (approximately 2013)

aerial photo. The TRC report georeferenced site location is mostly south of the railroad bridge and a few mounds were north of the railroad bridge. This roughly agreed with the 2015 site boundaries on record with the Wisconsin Historical Society, Historic Preservation Database. The SHPO georeferencing performed with this review matched fairly closely to the georeferencing performed by TRC.

The Phase I survey resulted in the discovery of late woodland materials (including a projectile point) intermixed with more modern debris. Based on the survey results the SHPO extended the boundaries of the Indian Prairie site. The new site boundaries are now fully within the area that will be impacted by the project. The SHPO agrees with the findings of the survey, that the cultural materials recovered are likely the result of deposit from disturbance, filling, and development. The integrity of the site has been compromised with the post contact activities of the last 150 years. SHPO also agrees that because of the past documentation of human remains in the southern portion of the site, an archaeological monitor should be on site during all ground disturbing activities.

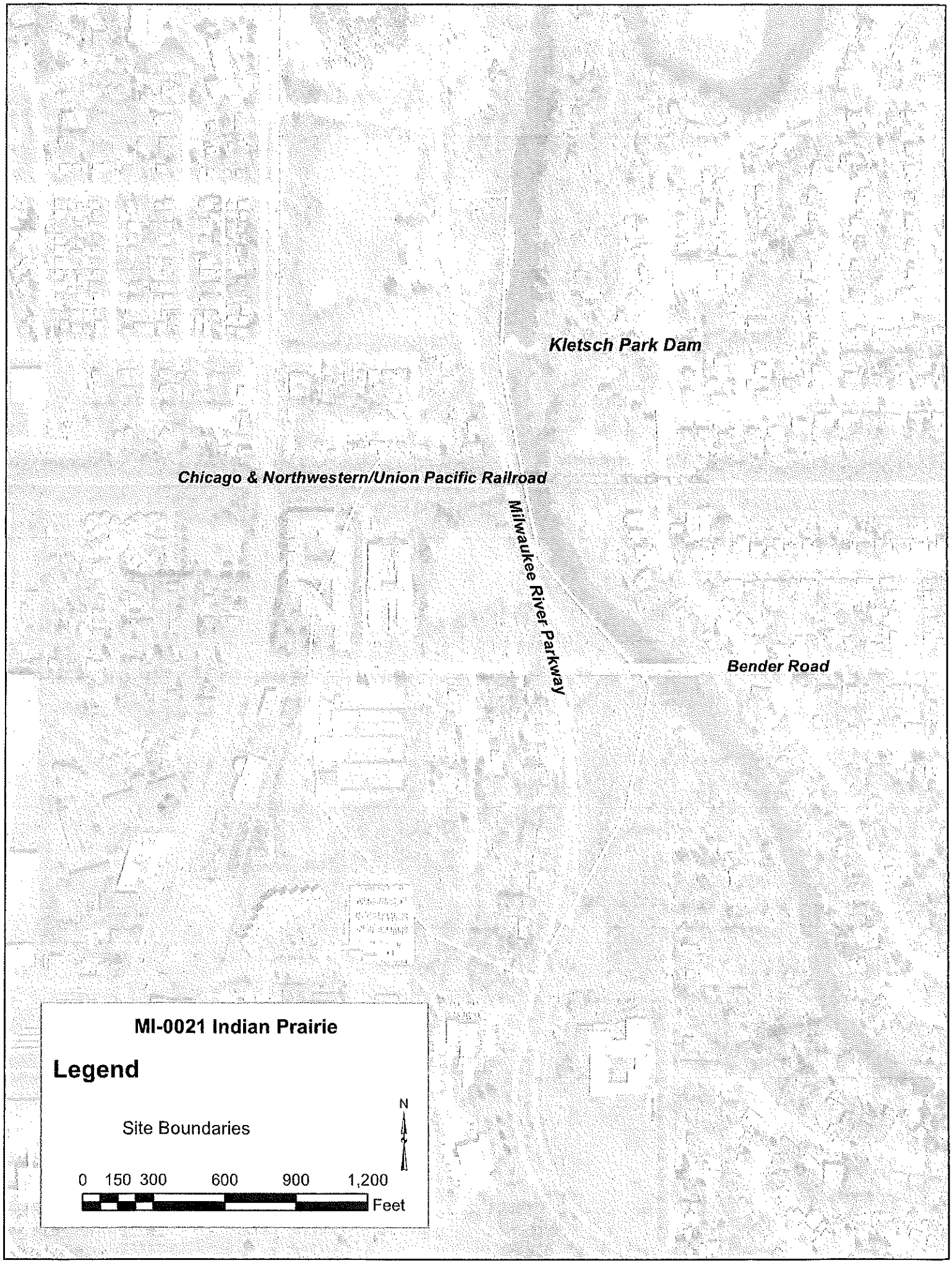
The past 150 years of post-contact agriculture, quarrying, urban development, the damming of the river and transportation and utility network construction have degraded the Indian Prairie site to the point that there is very little left. The review of the revised overlook and portage path concept plans dated August 23, 2019 by SEH Engineering shows ground disturbance taking place approximately 100 feet south of the dam to 400 feet north of the dam, on the west bank of the Milwaukee River. This entire ground disturbance area is within the revised boundaries of the Indian Prairie site. Past records show the known burials are south of the project area and are unlikely to be in the project area, the request to extend the original request disturb an uncatalogued burial site, based on the revised plans, is granted with the stipulation that a qualified archaeologist be on site to monitor ground disturbing activities.

If during the proposed ground disturbing activity human remains are encountered, **work must stop at that location and our office must be contacted immediately** for further coordination, and, in the event that human remains must be excavated and analyzed, for negotiation and execution of an appropriate contract.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. You can reach me by phone at (608) 264-6013 or via email at felipe.avila@wisconsinhistory.org.

Sincerely,

Felipe Avila
Wisconsin Historical Society
Division of Historic Preservation – Public History


Kletsch Park Dam
Chicago & Northwestern/Union Pacific Railroad
Milwaukee River Parkway
Bender Road
MI-0021 Indian Prairie
Legend
Site Boundaries
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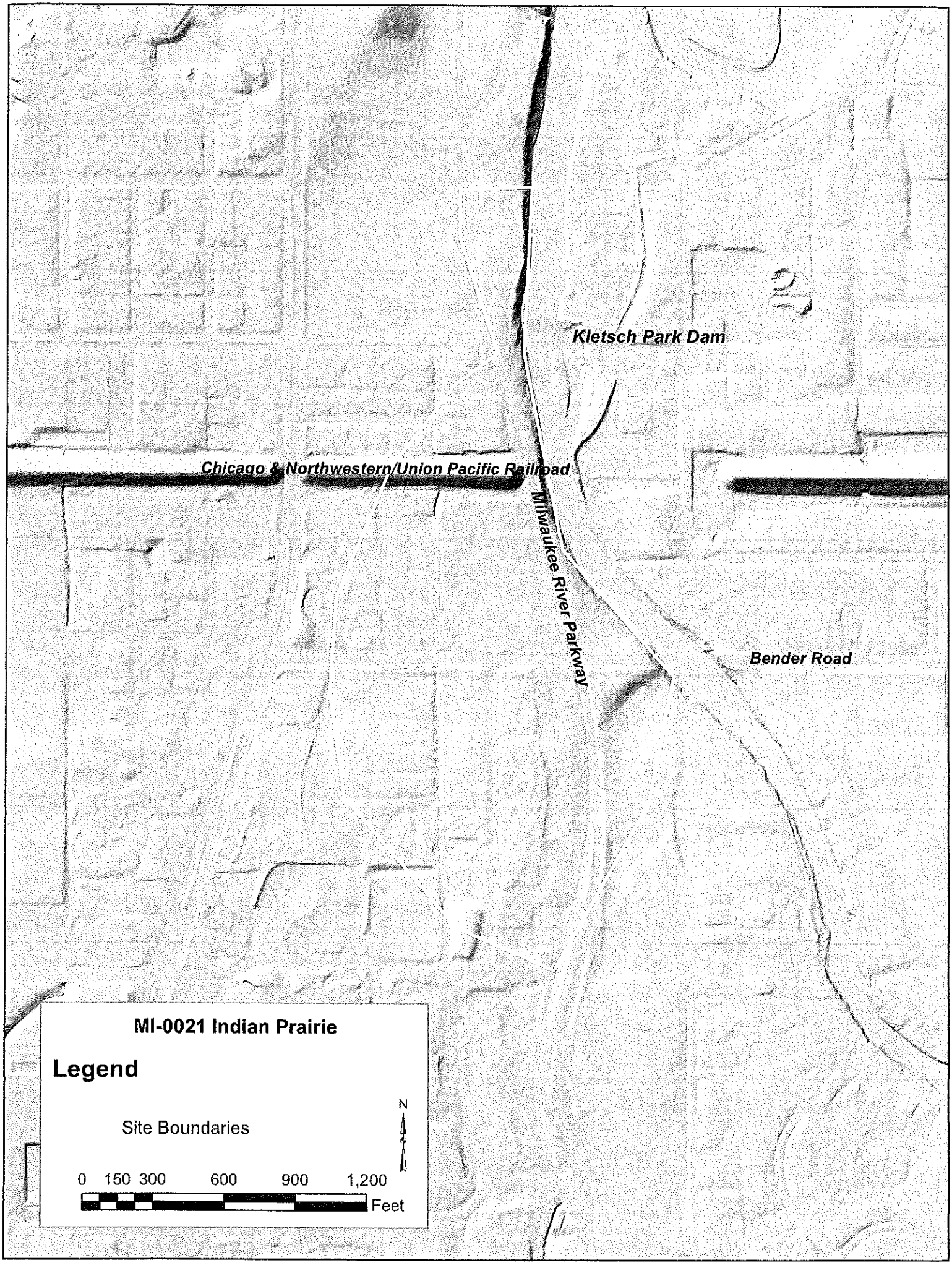
Feet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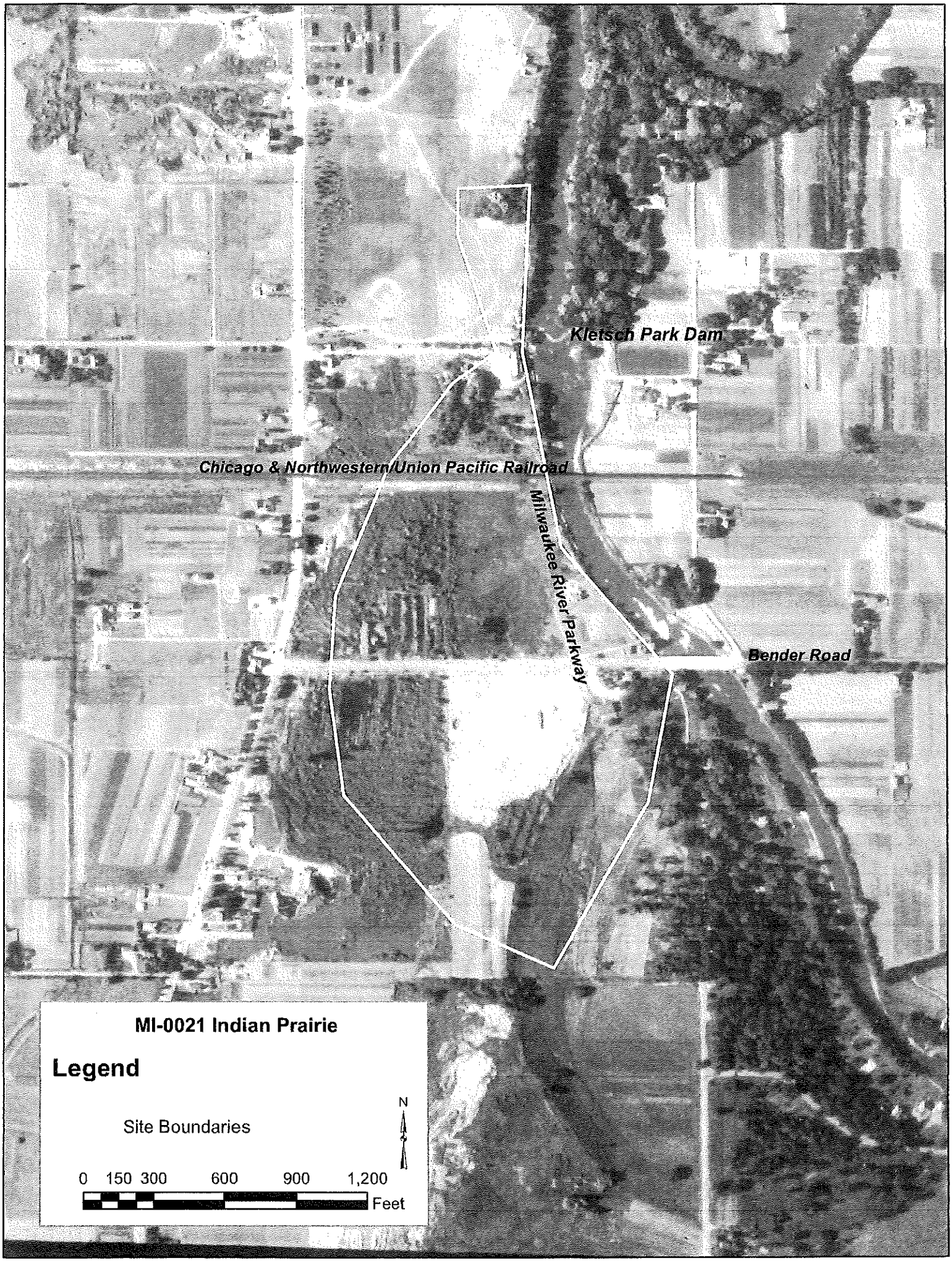
Kletsch Park Dam
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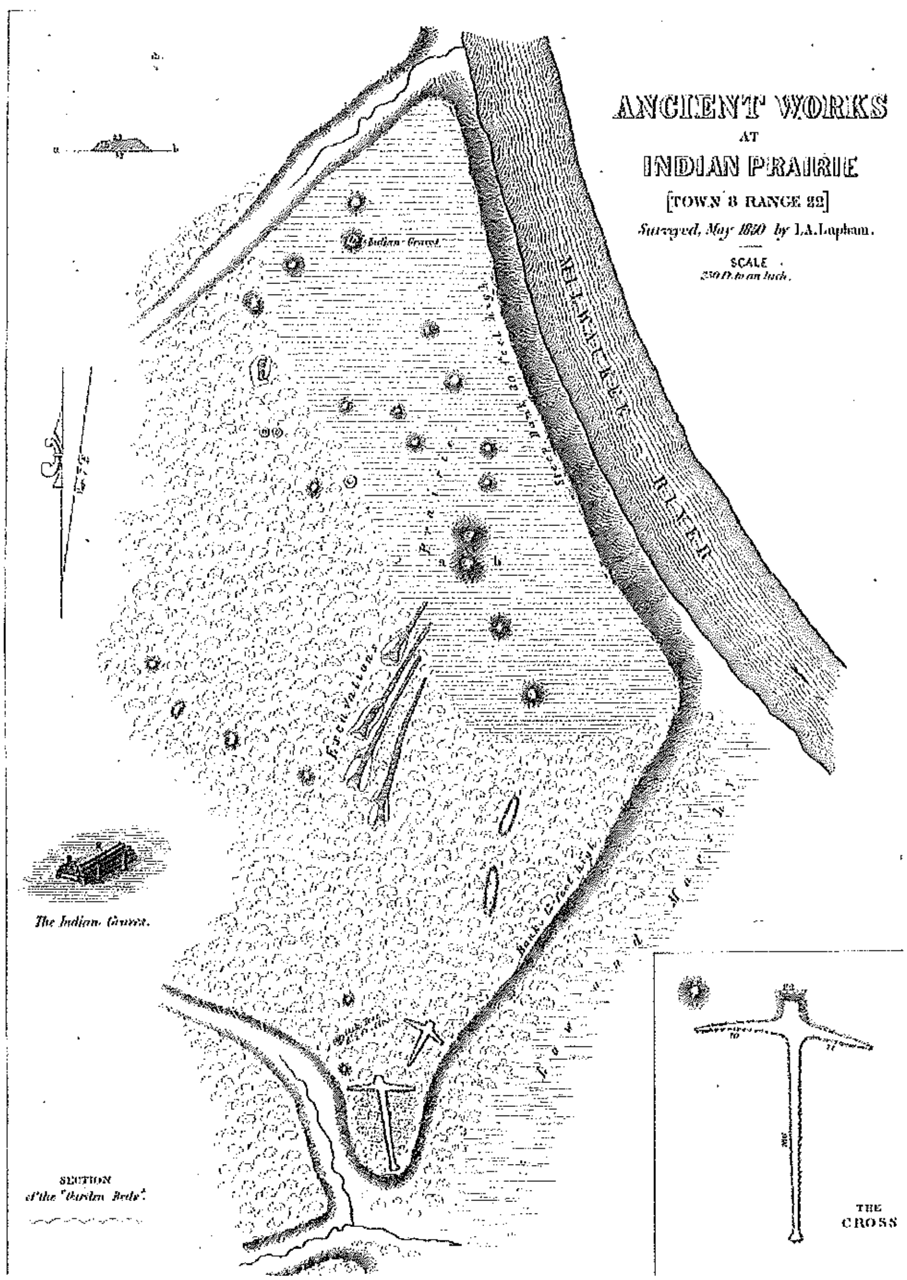
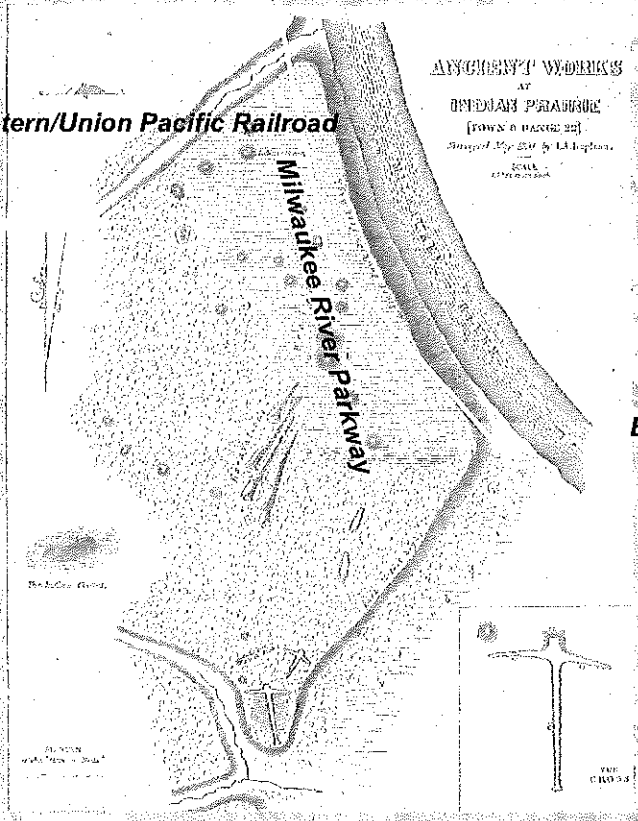

ANCIENT WORKS
AT
INDIAN PRAIRIE
[TOWN 8 RANGE 22]
Surveyed, May 1850 by I.A. Lapham.
SCALE
Indian Grave
The Indian Grave.
SECTION
of the "Garden Beds".
THE
CROSS

Kletsch Park Dam

Chicago & Northwestern/Union Pacific Railroad



Bender Road

MI-0021 Indian Prairie

Legend

Site Boundaries

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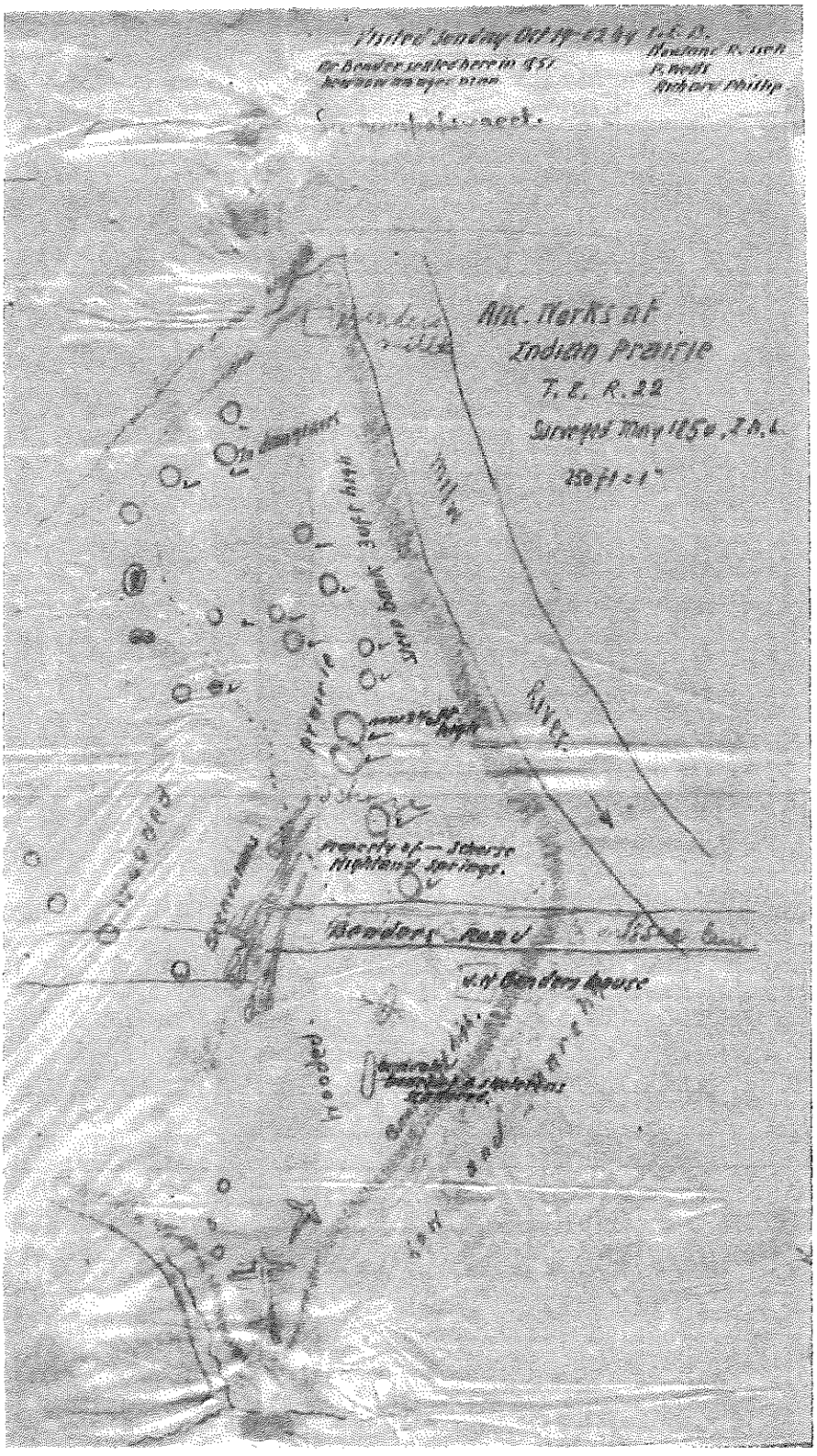
Feet


Mt. Marks at
Indian Prairie
T. 2. R. 22
Survey May 1852, T.D.L.
250 ft = 1"
Boulder Road

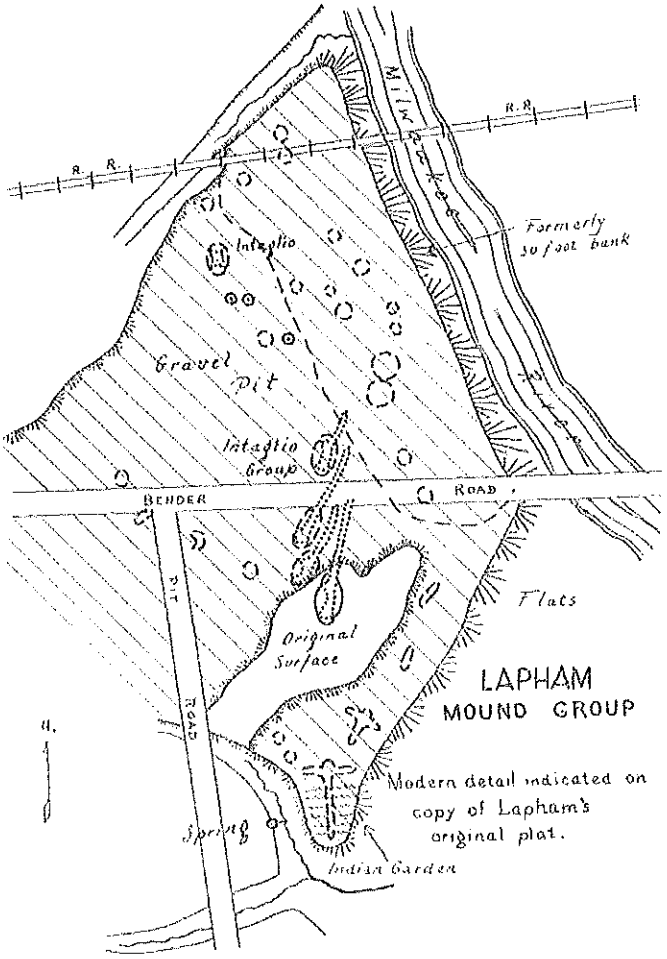


Fig. 9. Lapham's map of Milwaukee River mounds, showing surviving features.

Kletsch Park Dam

Chicago & Northwestern/Union Pacific Railroad

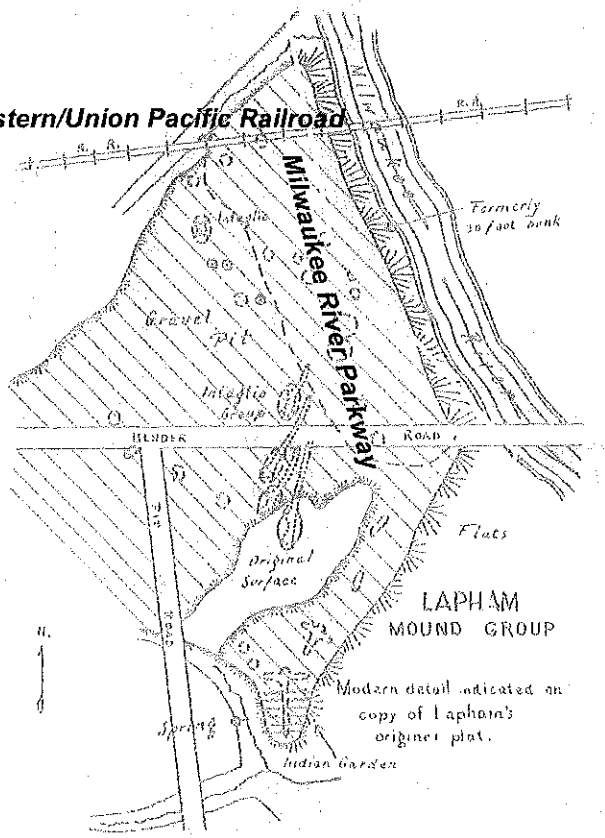


Fig. 9. Lapham's map of Milwaukee River mounds, showing surviving features.

Bender Road

MI-0021 Indian Prairie

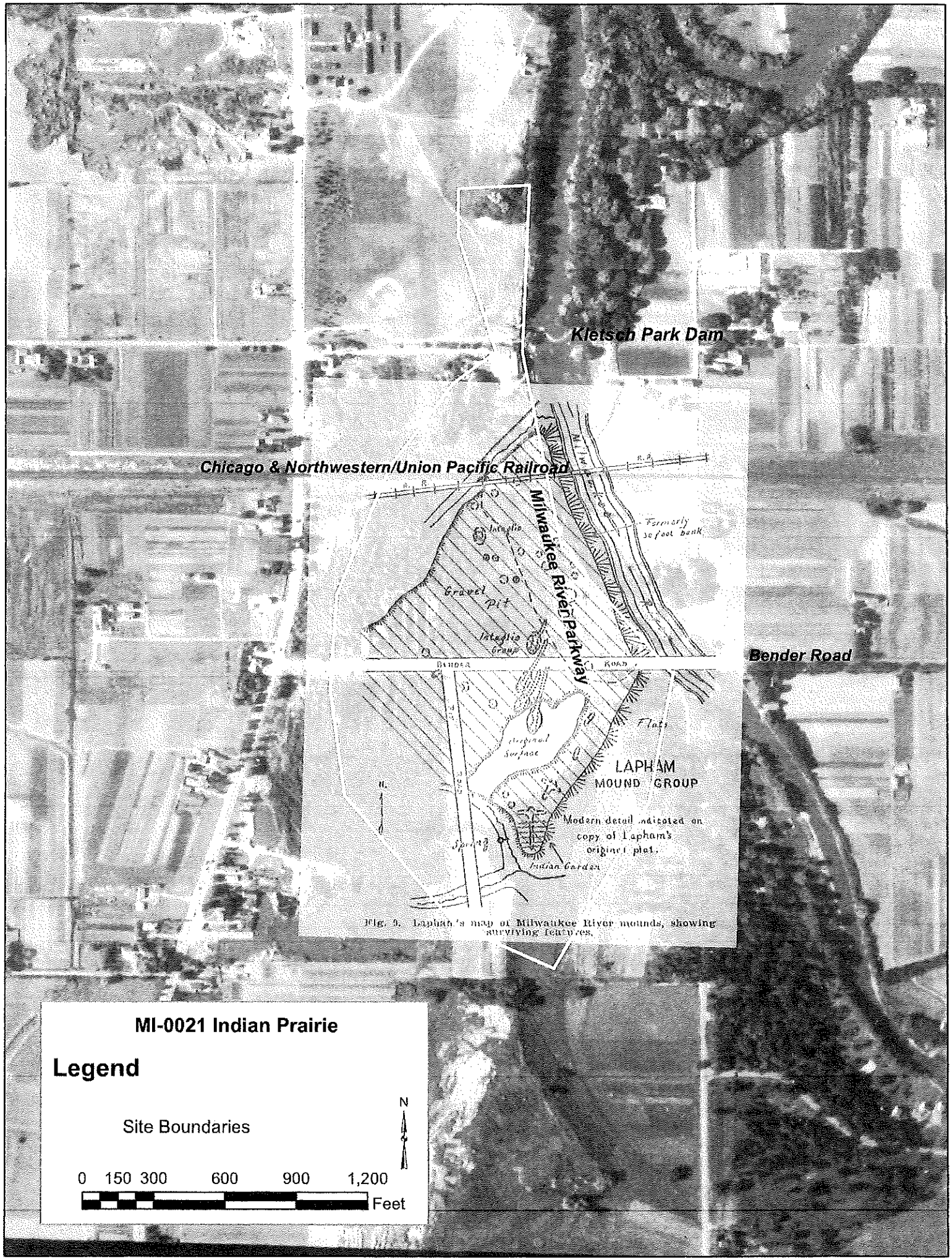
Legend

Site Boundaries

N

0 150 300 600 900 1,200

Feet



MI-0021 Indian Prairie

Legend

Site Boundaries

N

0 150 300 600 900 1,200

Feet

Hello Ms. Smith,

Thank you for your email regarding Kletzsch Park. Attached is a copy of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) letter to the DNR's request for comment including maps.

To give a little background the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulation, 36 CFR 800, cannot stop a project. The SHPO can request mitigation and through consultation try and minimize the impact of a project on cultural resources listed on or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). There are three areas of concern identified with the plans as submitted for Kletzsch Park.

The dam itself is listed as a contributing feature for the Milwaukee River Parkway which is on the NRHP. The removal of part of the dam for a fish passage is an adverse effect, and we are working with the DNR, and EPA to arrive at a solution to mitigate impact and reuse materials from the dam.

The nomination for the parkway lists the landscape architecture as a contributing feature. The current conditions in the park have eroded informal paths, the overlook is worn from use, there is soil filling that is impacting the large oak trees, and a fair amount of buckthorn (a non-native invasive shrub) has established itself. The DNR is consulting with Milwaukee County forestry on how best to stabilize and protect the oaks, remove the buckthorn and stabilize the overlook and paths. The SHPO is very supportive of preserving the oaks, removing the invasives to open up the viewshed, and stabilizing the eroded areas. To that end, the SHPO office has suggested trying to locate the original landscaping plan, and follow that to the best extent practical. If the original plan cannot be located we recommend using non-permanent materials (floating boardwalks or crushed gravel) to stabilize the paths, preserving the oaks (including root zone protection, Low Pressure Footprint machinery during construction, and removing fill to open up the root flare), and removal of invasive buckthorn. Installing an interpretive sign at the overlook is also under consideration.

The final area of concern is the archaeology in the area. The Indian Prairie site was a very unique mound group originally mapped in the 1850's. Agricultural practices, quarrying, road, and railroad construction, and housing development over time have destroyed the mound group. Based on available information the mounds were located south of the railroad and not in the area of the dam and landscaping changes. An archaeological survey was conducted resulting in a disturbed context of Late Woodland and modern debris. As such the archaeological integrity of the site near the dam is not intact. Modern debris with prehistoric materials is indicative of past soil filling taking place from somewhere else. The discovery of the materials in 2015,

however, resulted in the expansion of the site boundaries to include the area near and adjacent to the dam. Even though the additional area is not considered a part of the burial area, the SHPO takes the protection of burial sites very seriously. As part of the undertaking we are requiring archaeological monitoring on site when any ground disturbance is taking place. The monitor will have the authority to stop work in the event human remains are encountered. While we do not expect that to happen we are erring on the side of caution.

All agencies involved with the project welcome the input from the Native American nations in Wisconsin. Letters, emails, and phone calls have gone out to the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices in Wisconsin.

The letter that "signed off" on the project is not the final approval. It is acknowledging the work is taking place, and that the DNR, EPA and WI SHPO need to work together to come to an agreement so the work can take place while preserving the character of the landscape and protecting the unique features of the park. I hope this answers some of your questions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me if you have additional comments or questions.

Thank you,

Felipe

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Wawrzyn

To:
Members of the Milwaukee County Board
Standing Committee of the Parks, Energy and Environment
Jason Haas, Chair
Sheldon A. Wasserman, Vice Chair
Marcelia Nicholson
Felesia A. Martin
Steven Shea

Mr. Chairman and members of the Standing Committee of the Parks, Energy and Environment thank you for the opportunity to voice my support for the proposed construction of a fish passage facility at the Milwaukee River's Kletzsch Park Dam. My name is Will Wawrzyn and I am a long time resident of Milwaukee County. My formative years were spent growing up in Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood and the County parks along the Milwaukee River. I am currently a resident of Cudahy.

Prior to my retirement in 2015, I was employed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) for over 37-years as a water resources and fishery biologist. I spent the lion's share of my time with the WDNR assessing fish and aquatic life populations and implementing projects that enhanced their habitats in the Milwaukee River Basin, including the Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern (AOC). I contributed to 22 fish passage projects in the Milwaukee River Basin that included dam and concrete stream channel removals, and fish passage facilities. Ten of the projects were located in or tributary to the Estuary AOC boundary, and seven were located in Milwaukee County.

I currently volunteer my time serving on the WDNR's Milwaukee Estuary Fish and Wildlife Technical Team. Members of the Technical Team include scientists, engineers and managers from the US EPA, Wisconsin DNR, US Geological Survey, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), UWM School of Freshwater Science, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD), NGOs, consultants, Ozaukee Co. Parks and Planning (OCPP) and Milwaukee County. The Technical Team developed fish and wildlife population assessments and a list of priority habitat projects, **including the Kletzsch Dam fish passage project**, to address degraded habitat and fish and wildlife populations. Restoration of habitats and removal or modification of barriers to fish spawning and nursery habitat are critical to meeting these goals.

You previously read or heard objections to the Kletzsch Dam fish passage project because of concerns over disturbance to historic cultural resources, aesthetics of the dam and potential impact to a group of large oak tree specimens should the fishway be constructed. Most of the objectors supported fish passage but not the recommended alternative. I have attended all of the project informational meetings, reviewed and commented on the various technical design reports. The design process leading up to the recommended alternative was exhaustive and expensive. The design process considered at least 12 alternatives. The recommended design alternative is a compromise that meets a wide array of technical, environmental, cultural and regulatory constraints of the site, as well as public concerns to the greatest extent possible.

I would like to try and impress upon you why the Kletzsch Dam fish passage project is critical for meeting the goals of the Milwaukee Estuary. Prior to European settlement, the Milwaukee Estuary totaled over 6,000 acres (over 9 square miles) of deep and shallow water marsh that extended from the today's outer harbor to beyond Miller Park on the Menomonee R. and the former North Ave. Dam on the Milwaukee R. The valley terraces were lined by countless trees and shrubs. The Menomonee and Milwaukee Rivers were narrow, deep, and wetland bordered meandering channels.

The significance of these wetlands and natural river channels on the diversity and abundance native fish populations is best described by the historic accounts of others:

- "Lake sturgeon were shot from bridge at Walker's Point and suckers and pickerel were observed running upstream in spring, and as the water receded, fish stranded in shallow marshes became easy prey for fisherman." (1844 confluence of Menomonee & Milwaukee Rivers)
- "Following jettisoning of a deck load of bacon, catfish abounded for several years and were caught when the lake was roiled using live frogs for bait." (1876 Menomonee R. Reeds Landing, present day Burnham Canal)
- "What a place it was below the dam of that old mill, in the early spring for fish, pike (northern pike), pickerel (walleye), muscalonge and suckers used to come up there by the million, and were taken out by the cart load by the settlers living near there, a sight that will never be witnessed again in Milwaukee." (1835 Menomonee R. at present day Hawley Rd. Wauwatosa)
- "...of the quantities of fish that came on the marshes, they would go up the Milwaukee, Menomonee and Kinnickinnic rivers in the spring, by the million, remaining about a month, covering all the marsh as thick as they could lay...I have waded out often and shot them as they lay upon the grassy bottom,..."
- "All the marsh proper, was covered with at least two feet of water in every part, and would, in the spring, be literally alive with fish, that came in from the lake, great numbers of which were caught..."

Beginning in the late-1800s, Milwaukee Estuary wetlands and connecting channels were dredged and filled, and engineered embankments were constructed for developing commercial shipping and urban land uses. **Today, all but one acre of wetland habitat remains in the Estuary and all 8 miles of river channel have been modified providing little habitat value.** Present day land and water uses and values, technical and environmental constraints and costs do not allow for extensive wetland and other habitat restorations in the Estuary proper. However, suitable fish spawning and nursery wetland and river habitats do exist upstream of the Estuary. **With regards to the requisite spawning and nursery habitat requirements of the two focal species, northern pike and lake sturgeon, the highest quality and quantity of these habitats on the Milwaukee River are present upstream of the Kletzsch Park Dam (WDNR, 2006 and 2015).** There are 16 other native Lake Michigan and Milwaukee Estuary migratory species that have similar habitat requirements as northern pike and lake sturgeon that will benefit from this project, including smallmouth and largemouth bass, walleye, longnose and white sucker, flathead and channel catfish, brook trout, muskellunge and four species of Redhorse. These and other native species have been observed migrating through the Thiensville Dam Fish Passage Facility located nine

miles upstream of the Kletzsch Park Dam (see link at Thiensville Dam Fishway fish passage photos and videos).

By my conservative estimate, since 1990 over **$18 million has been spent removing barriers to fish passage in the Milwaukee River Basin.** These projects included four large dams and construction of one fish passage structure on the Milwaukee River and five low-head barriers on the Menomonee River. When Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District flood control and concrete river channel projects are included, **well over $100 million has been spent on restoring fish passage in the Milwaukee Estuary AOC alone.** While these projects are of great benefit to meeting the goals of the Milwaukee Estuary AOC, the lion's share of funding was provided by non-AOC related sources.

While monetary support for getting on-the-ground projects completed is extremely important to achieving AOC goals, including unrestrictive fish passage, it is important to accurately represent why and how this and other projects are selected for funding. I have heard some members of the public state to me and at public meetings that the Kletzsch Dam Fish Passage project is being chosen because the agencies have all this money that needs to be spent ("Use it or lose it") and to justify their bureaucratic jobs. I absolutely resent that remark and thought process. This project was selected a priority years before receiving any dollars. It was based on scientific-based fish and habitat assessments, fish management goals, the vetting by local partners and state entities, and most important, the unbiased members of the Milwaukee Estuary AOC Fish and Wildlife Technical Team.

It has taken over 150-years to remove or mitigate dam fish passage barriers along the Milwaukee River. The proposed fish passage at the 80-year old Kletzsch Park Dam is the last remaining dam impediment to fish passage on the lower 32-miles of the Milwaukee River, its tributaries and riparian wetlands. Based on my review of this project and in consultation with other entities that are not part of the project team in front of you today (SEWRPC, MMSD, OCPP), I believe that this generational project is important for not only fish passage, but the overall health of the Milwaukee River that benefits all of Milwaukee County residents. I trust you will base your decision on the weight of scientific, accurate and factual information.

Respectfully,

Will Wawrzyn
4444 S. Packard Ave.
Cudahy, WI 53110

Figure 1. Pre-European settlement map and features of the Milwaukee Estuary and near-shore waters of Lake Michigan. Source: S. Buck and Dr. L. Chase Map of Milwaukee 1835-36, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee Digital Library.

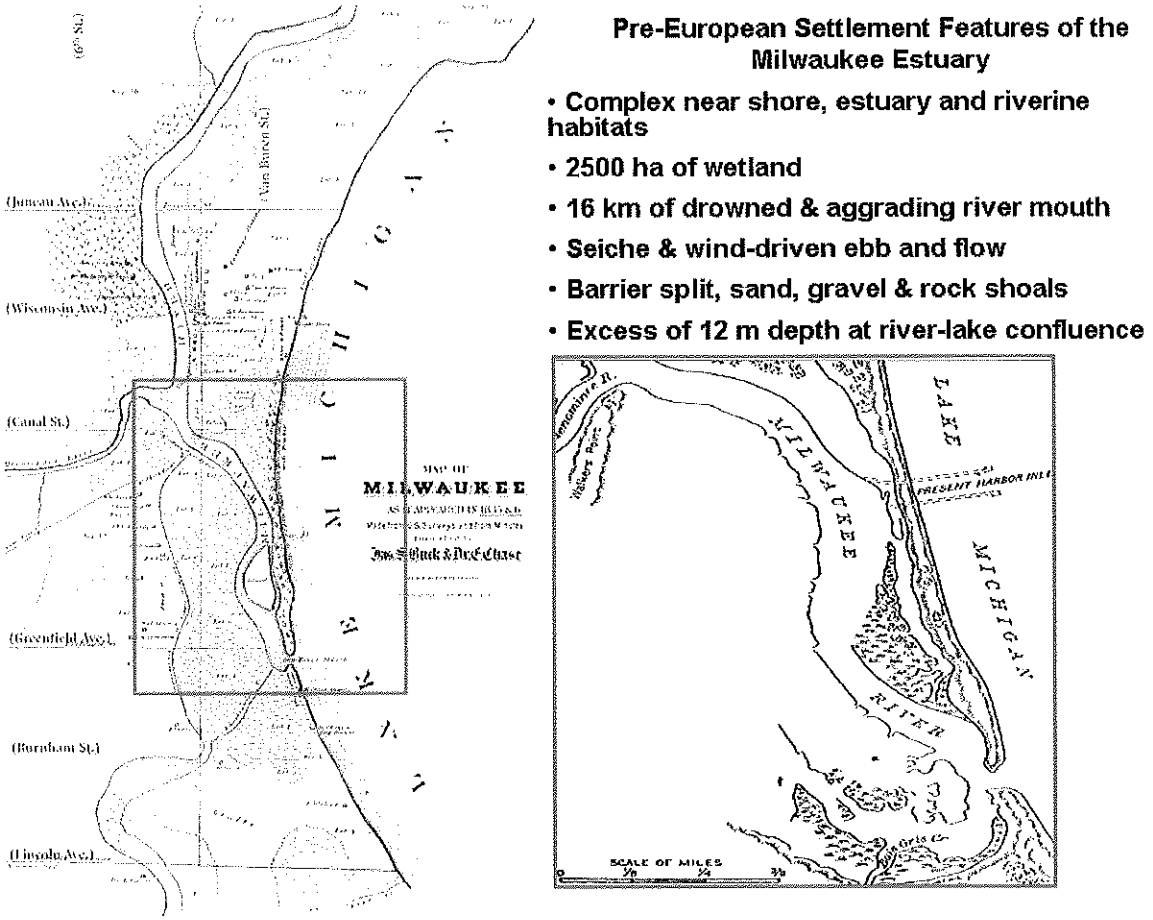

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Image of a Wolf River mature female Lake sturgeon radio tagged and transplanted to Milwaukee River at Locust Street on Oct.ober 26, 2005