

**Statement in Opposition to S.F. 1191 for the  
Senate Rules and Administration Committee  
May 12, 2011**

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is deeply concerned to learn about the proposal of S.F. 1191, which requires the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) to approve a lease agreement for a hydroelectric facility on their property no later than May 31, 2011. It is our opinion that this legislation will only harm Minnesota's natural resources, and it could have unintended and very negative consequences on effective local government regulatory processes.

The Crown Hydro hydroelectric project is obviously the intended beneficiary of this legislation, since this project's request for use of Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board ("Park Board") property in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District was denied. Repeated challenges to this decision have only reinforced the appropriateness of the Park Board's decisions to deny a permit for a new hydroelectric facility on Park Board land in a highly-visible and sensitive area of the riverfront that contains many natural and historic resources.

While we strongly support renewable energy production through alternative sources such as wind, geothermal, and hydroelectric power, we do not support the destruction of our state's limited and nonrenewable cultural resources for the creation of renewable energy. Although this project has been many years in development, we have yet to see the full plans for the Crown Hydro project or comprehensive evaluation of the impact it will have on the Mill Ruins area. It is clear that this project requires significant environmental review before it can move forward, so as not to destroy one nonrenewable resource for the benefit of renewable energy generation, which could feasibly be located elsewhere.

We also feel strongly that Minnesota's natural resources should be utilized in ways that are effective and sustainable. Based upon an analysis of the project by engineer John Gulliver (attached), the proposed location for the Crown Hydro project is very problematic. His assessment concludes that "energy generation projections of Crown Hydro LLC are optimistic and the risks are ignored." In addition, the flow of water over the St. Anthony Falls will be significantly reduced by the operation of the Crown Hydro project. This will eliminate the defining feature of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District and compromise one of Minneapolis' most prominent viewsheds.

Most importantly, the proposed legislation will deliberately subvert the regulatory review processes established to ensure a thorough and transparent public process based on established criteria. Approving S.F. 1191 would greatly diminish the ability of local government and state agencies to assess the appropriateness of proposed projects on property that has been set aside for public use and benefit..

For all of these reasons, we respectfully request that you do not support S.F. 1191

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina Morris". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Christina Morris

Minnesota Program Officer

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Cc: John Erwin, Board President, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board  
John Anfinson, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area  
Bonnie McDonald, Executive Director, Preservation Alliance of Minnesota  
Edna Brazaitis, Friends of the Riverfront  
Lisa Hondros, Friends of the Riverfront  
Cynthia Kriha