

Recreation Resources Study

Prairie River Hydroelectric Project
(FERC No. 2361)

November 2, 2021

Prepared for:
Minnesota Power

Contents

1	Introduction and Background	1
1.1	Introduction.....	1
1.2	Background	1
2	Study Goals and Objectives	2
3	Study Area	2
4	Methodology	4
5	Study Results	5
5.1	Recreation Facility Inventory and Condition Assessment.....	5
5.2	Recreational Use Observation	6
5.3	Recreational Survey	7
6	Summary	9
7	Literature Cited	9

List of Tables

Table 1.	Major ILP Milestones Completed	1
Table 2.	Survey requirements stated in the RSP (2019).	4
Table 3.	Recreation sites in the Prairie River Project area.	6

List of Figures

Figure 1.	Prairie River Project site and recreational resources maintained by MP.	3
Figure 2.	Group size of questionnaire respondents.....	8
Figure 3.	Site visit frequency of questionnaire respondents.	8
Figure 4.	Primary reason for site visit of questionnaire respondents.....	9

Appendices

- Appendix A: Recreational Use Observation Records
- Appendix B: Recreation Survey Records
- Appendix C: Photos

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1 Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

ALLETE Inc., doing business as Minnesota Power (“MP” or “Licensee”), is the Licensee, owner, and operator of the Prairie River Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2361).

The Prairie River Project (Project) is licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (“FERC” or “Commission”) under the authority granted to FERC by Congress through the Federal Power Act (FPA), 16 United States Code (USC) §791(a), et seq., to license and oversee the operation of non-federal hydroelectric projects on jurisdictional waters and/or federal land. There are no federal lands associated with the Project. The Project previously underwent licensing in the early 1990s, and the current operating license for the Project expires on December 31, 2023. Accordingly, MP is pursuing a subsequent license for the Prairie River Project pursuant to FERC’s Integrated Licensing Process (ILP), as described at 18 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 5.

This report describes the methods and results of the approved Recreation Resources Study conducted as part of obtaining a subsequent license for the Project.

1.2 Background

The Prairie River Project is a 1.1 MW, run of the river (ROR) facility located on the Prairie River, near the City of Grand Rapids in Arbo Township, Itasca County, Minnesota. On December 13, 2018, MP initiated the ILP by filing a Pre-Application Document (PAD) and Notice of Intent (NOI) with the Commission. Major ILP milestones to-date are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Major ILP Milestones Completed

12/13/2018	PAD and NOI Filed
02/07/2019	Scoping Document 1 (SD1) Issued by FERC
03/06-03/07/2019	FERC Agency and Public Scoping Meetings Conducted
03/06/2019	Project Site Visit Held
05/16/2019	Scoping Document 2 (SD2) Issued by FERC
05/28/2019	Proposed Study Plan (PSP) Filed
06/20/2019	PSP Meeting Conducted
09/23/2019	Revised Study Plan (RSP) Filed
10/16/2019	FERC Issues Study Plan Determination (SPD)
10/19/2020	Initial Study Report (ISR) filed
10/29/2020	ISR Meeting held
7/30/2021	Draft License Application (DLA) filed

2 Study Goals and Objectives

The Recreation Resources Study will collect information regarding current recreation use levels and the condition of the existing Project recreation facilities. The goals and objectives of this study are to:

- Gather information on the condition of the MP-managed, FERC-approved recreation facilities and identify any need for improvement; and
- Characterize current recreational use and future demand of the MP-managed, FERC-approved recreation facilities within the Project Boundary

3 Study Area

Pursuant to Article 411 of the current FERC license, MP provides a canoe self-portage trail at the Project, extending approximately 1,500 feet from the southern bank of Prairie River Reservoir to the Prairie River, 100 feet south of Prairie River Dam. Additionally, MP manages three shoreline fishing areas providing access to the reservoir and downstream of the Prairie River Dam. One shoreline fishing area is located adjacent to the canoe self-portage take-out, west-northwest of the dam. The other two shoreline fishing areas are located on the east and west sides of the peninsula leading to the canoe self-portage put-in on the Prairie River. All of the fishing areas are accessible from the canoe self-portage trail and include signage to direct anglers to the fishing areas. Figure 1 shows the Project site and recreational resources offered. The Public Access Plan defining each of these access areas was developed in consultation with the National Park Service (NPS), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and Arbo Township. The plan was approved by FERC in August 1995.

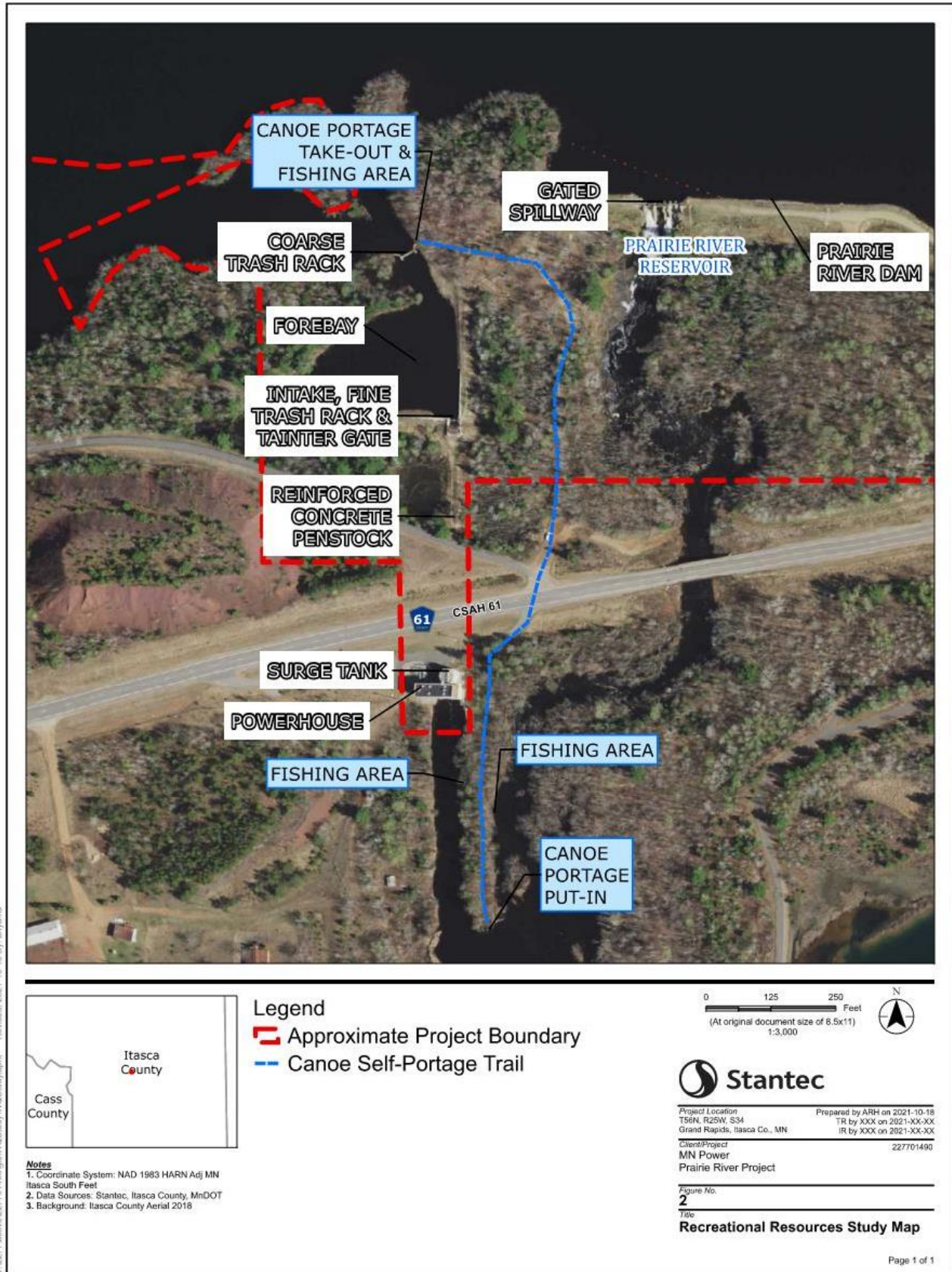


Figure 1. Prairie River Project site and recreational resources maintained by MP.

4 Methodology

Recreation surveys were completed at the Prairie River Project site following procedures outlined in the Recreation Resources Study Plan (2019) and listed below in Table 2. There were 20 total survey events May 22nd through September 11th, 2021. The surveys were originally scheduled for the 2020 season but were delayed a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 2. Survey requirements stated in the RSP (2019).

May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two weekend days, one during Memorial Day Weekend• Two randomly selected weekdays
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two weekend days• Two randomly selected weekdays
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two weekend days, one following the 4th of July• Two randomly selected weekdays
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two weekend days• Two randomly selected weekdays
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two weekend days, one during Labor Day Weekend• Two randomly selected weekdays

Surveys were performed at the Prairie River Project recreation sites on the following dates:

- May: 22nd, 25th, 27th, and 30th
- June: 2nd, 12th, 14th, 27th
- July: 3rd, 13th, 24th, 30th
- August: 8th, 12th, 21st, 24th
- September: 1st, 5th, 9th, 11th

During recreation surveys, the observer recorded the following information in an online form:

- Date and time;
- Observer;
- Weather conditions;
- Number of people observed;
- Observed activities; and
- Pertinent notes

An example of the online site observation form can be found in Appendix A.

In addition to site observations, an online form was developed to administer the survey to recreational users encountered during site visits. These surveys recorded the number of

people in a party, their primary reason (activity) for visiting the Project, their perception of level of use of the site, and their opinions with regard to the amount and types of recreation opportunities offered at the FERC-approved recreation facility. An example of the survey form is included in Appendix B.

Methods developed for use in FERC Form 80 reporting were used to estimate the use of MP-managed, FERC-approved facilities on-site. Information collected from recreational use observations were used to determine the adequacy of current recreational opportunities and estimate future recreational demand.

5 Study Results

5.1 Recreation Facility Inventory and Condition Assessment

Minnesota Power owns and maintains a canoe self-portage take-out, 1,500-ft trail, and canoe put-in at the Project site. Additionally, MP owns and maintains three designated fishing areas, one at the canoe self-portage take-out and two near the canoe self-portage put-in. Figure 1 shows the Project site, Project boundary, and locations of MP-maintained recreation areas. The recreational areas owned and maintained by MP are open to the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and year-round. The portage trail and shore fishing areas are a mix of a hard packed gravel and grass covered surface with a gentle slope downward from the north to south.

The Project area provides numerous outdoor recreational opportunities, including fishing, hiking/walking, birdwatching, ATV access, canoeing/kayaking, photography and a peaceful place to enjoy nature.

Existing facilities on-site are there for MP staff to operate the hydroelectric dam and are not open to the public. There are no public restrooms or outhouses. MP provides a designated gravel parking area at the site just north of Highway 61 and west of the Prairie River bypass reach and in an open gravel area near the powerhouse. Canoe self-portage signage exists in two places along the portage trail to direct users from canoe take-out to the put-in. The Project portage trail is not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Photos of the Project site and MP-maintained recreational areas are provided in Appendix C.

In addition to recreation offered at the Project site, there are numerous recreation areas near the Project site operated by Arbo Township, Itasca County, and others (Table 3).

Table 3. Recreation sites in the Prairie River Project area.

Recreation Area	Distance to Prairie River Dam	Amenities	Owner/Operator	Relationship to Project Boundary	Operation Use and Condition
Mallard Point Road Boat Launch	Adjacent to Prairie River Reservoir	Contains 1 concrete ramp and 6 vehicle / trailer parking spaces	Arbo Township	Partially within	Year-round Good Condition
Arbo Township Boat Launch	Adjacent to Prairie River Reservoir	Contains 1 concrete boat launch and 3 vehicle / trailer parking spaces.	Arbo Township	Partially within	Year-round Good Condition
Arbo Township Park	0.6 miles west of the Prairie River Reservoir	Contains two benches, pavilion, interpretive signage, and an old turbine runner from the Prairie River Project donated by MP.	Arbo Township and Prairie Lake Associations	Outside	May through October Good Condition
Gunn Park	1.5 miles upstream	Contains several baseball and softball fields, a fishing pier, playground, pavilion, and picnic area.	Itasca County	Partially within	May through mid-October Good Condition
Itasca Trail	1.5 miles upstream	Multi-use bituminous trail from the County Fairgrounds in Grand Rapids to Gunn County Park.	Itasca County	Partially within & adjacent to	Year-round Good Condition
Mesabi Trail	0.2 miles downstream	The Mesabi Trail is a 135-mile multi-use trail that passes south of the dam, including connecting to the portage site.	Itasca County	Outside	Year-round Good Condition
Prairie Lake Campground and RV Park, LLC.	3.3 miles upstream	Privately owned campground and RV park with 55 camping sites, swimming beach, playground, restroom with showers, lodge, boat launch and docks	Private	Partially within	May through September Good Condition

5.2 Recreational Use Observation

In total, 106 people were observed at the Prairie River Project site during the 20 recreation surveys that totaled over 40 hours of observations. Observations occurred in 2-hour increments and captured every day of the week, holiday weekends, and various time windows throughout the day.

The majority of people were observed on weekend days (Saturday and Sunday), and holiday weekends were busier than non-holiday weekends. Fishing, walking/hiking, photography, ATV'ing through the gravel parking area, and biking were all observed at or near the Project recreation sites. No one was observed actively using the self-portage take-out and put-in for canoe or kayak portaging.

An online form was used to collect recreational use observations at each site on each day. See Appendix A for full survey data records.

Site capacity utilization was estimated using recreational use observations and methods developed for use in FERC Form 80. There was no observed canoe or kayak portage use of the trail. There were 41 users observed using the portage trail for non-portage uses and the trail uses capacity utilization is calculated at 3% (41 users divided by 1,500 feet of portage trail). To estimate use at the two designated shoreline fishing areas on the east and west sides of the peninsula leading to the canoe self-portage put-in, the total people observed using those areas was divided by the number of observation areas. A total of 4 people were observed at the designated fishing areas for an estimated use of 10%. Current uses of the portage trail and shore fishing areas do not exceed site capacity.

5.3 Recreational Survey

Thirty-five survey forms were administered to groups recreating at the Project site, representing 86 of the total 106 people observed. Group sizes ranged from 1 to 7 people (Figure 2). Most visitors had been to the site previously, with use ranging from daily to annually (Figure 3). The majority of site users (~91%) were at the Project site to fish and/or walk or hike (Figure 4). The remainder were at the site to take photographs or ride ATVs.

The survey provided an opportunity for respondents to provide an opinion on the type and amount of existing recreational opportunities available at the site, and to provide any additional comments. In general, survey respondents had a positive view of the Project site and appreciated its accessibility and opportunities it provides. Some common suggestions for improving the site were to add additional trails for hiking, additional designated fishing areas, benches to provide seating, and trash cans to help keep the site clean. An online form was used to collect questionnaire responses. See Appendix B for full, detailed responses.

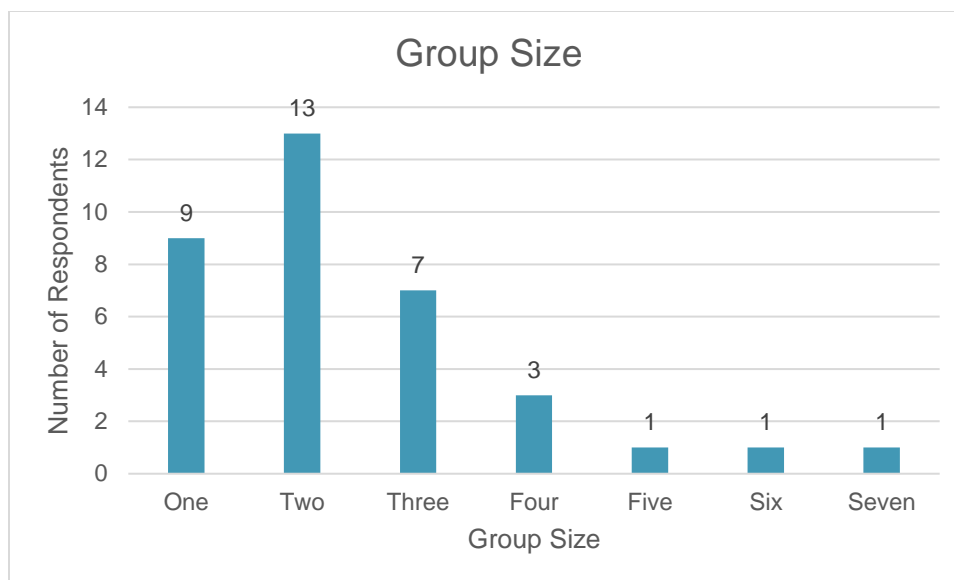


Figure 2. Group size of questionnaire respondents.

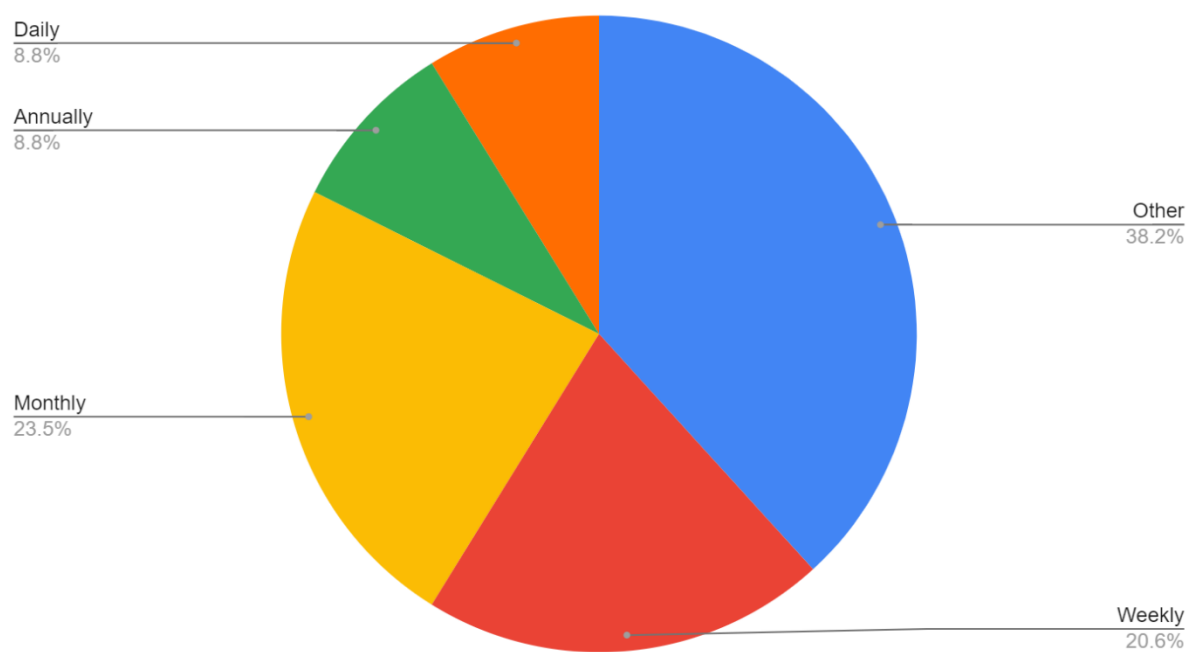


Figure 3. Site visit frequency of questionnaire respondents.

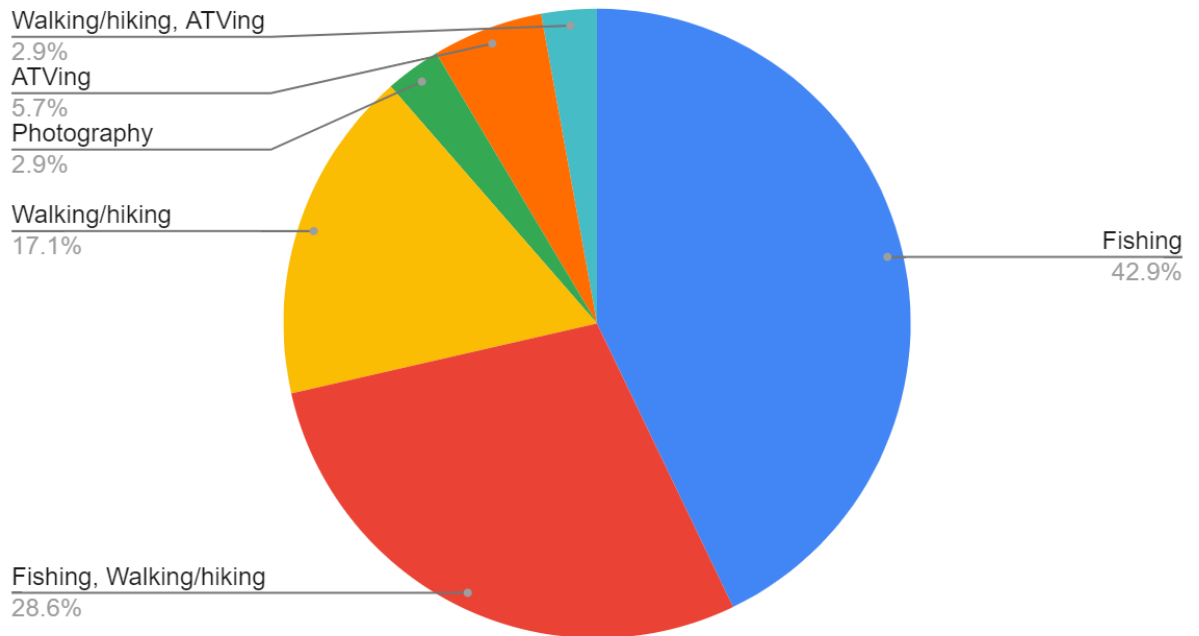


Figure 4. Primary reason for site visit of questionnaire respondents.

6 Summary

The Prairie River Project site provides many opportunities for recreation. There were 110 users observed over the total 40 hours of observations. The majority of recreation users during the survey consisted of fishing and/or walking/hiking.

Site users were generally agreeable to a survey and had positive opinions of the Project site and the opportunities it provides.

7 Literature Cited

Minnesota Power (2019). Revised Study Plan: Grand Rapids Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2362) and Prairie River Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2361). Prepared by HDR Engineering, Inc. for Minnesota Power. September 23, 2019.

Appendix A: Recreational Use Observation Records

MN Power Recreation Study: Site Observation Form

* Required

1. Site Name *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam
- ☐ Grand Rapids Hydroelectric Dam

2. Name *

3. Date *

Example: January 7, 2019

4. Time Arrived at Site *

Example: 8:30 AM

5. Weather Conditions *

Check all that apply.

	Bright Sun	Sunny	Overcast	Rain	Snow
Weather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Weather Conditions *

Check all that apply.

	<32	32-50	50-70	70-85	85-100	>100
Air Temp (degrees F)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Weather Conditions *

Check all that apply.

	Still	Moderate	High
Wind	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Weather Conditions *

Check all that apply.

	Dry	Moderate	Humid
Humidity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Number of people observed and approximate time of visit: *

10. Observed Activities (fishing, canoeing, walking, etc.) *

11. Notes

12. Time Leaving Site *

Example: 8:30 AM

Link to user survey if/when users are spotted.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSedMYUD3ZTKnUKwodPLEnKnLsALNojOhpXVLVpoU0XAVsSL3g/viewform?usp=sf_link

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Site Name	Name	Date	Time Arrived at Site	Weather Conditions [Weather]	Weather Conditions [Air Temp (degrees F)]	Weather Conditions [Wind]	Weather Conditions [Humidity]	Number of people observed and approximate time of visit:	Observed Activities (fishing, canoeing, walking, etc.)	Notes	Time Leaving Site
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Kathrine Kemmitt	5/22/2021	11:25:00 AM	Sunny	70-85	Moderate	Humid	9	Fishing, picnicking, hanging out in folding chairs	Only 3 people actually at MN power site, fishing area most downstream. Filled out survey. 6 others were just below the overflow. Didn't talk to them.	1:30:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Elizabeth Mitchell	5/25/2021	11:00:00 AM	Bright Sun, Overcast	70-85	Moderate, High	Moderate	3 men, 1 at 11:40, 2 at 12:23	The solo person was there on a walk during his lunch break he said. The other two were fishing	Started out very bright and warm (73F), wind started to pick up and the cloud came soon after. Never complete cover, but intermittent throughout the 2 hours. Spent 40 mins at each 3 spots at the dam, gave all three men QR code cards, will ask survey questions on the spot from now on...	1:00:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Elizabeth Mitchell	5/27/2021	12:07:00 AM	Overcast	32-50	Still, Moderate	Moderate	1 man around 1:20ish, near the dam outlet	Fishing	He was very enthusiastic about providing feedback!	2:03:00 AM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Jim Potter	5/30/2021	12:45:00 PM	Sunny	50-70	Moderate	Moderate	15	Fishing, relaxing, hiking, lake above dam some pontoons and 1 fishing boat	Bike trail very busy - people not cleaning up after their dogs	2:45:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Elizabeth Mitchell	6/2/2021	11:00:00 AM	Bright Sun	70-85	Moderate	Moderate	Saw 4 people fishing at 12:20ish on dam side of PR	fishing	Positive feedback overall, asked about steps and a trash can being added to the area	1:12:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Elizabeth Mitchell	6/12/2021	1:03:00 PM	Sunny	70-85	Still, Moderate	Dry	I saw 6 people in two separate parties, 4 minors and 2 adults total, between 2:30-2:45pm	Fishing and picnicking on dam side of PR site	Saw cars on the other side of the site, but never saw the owners of the vehicles while I was at the site	2:45:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Elizabeth Mitchell	6/14/2021	1:15:00 PM	Bright Sun, Sunny	70-85	Still, Moderate	Moderate	I saw 8 people total. 2 parties of 2 at 1:30ish and 1 party of 4 at 3pm	Fishing, picnicking and walking	6 adults and 2 minors total, positive feedback overall with a consistent recommendation of cleaning up the site more and maintaining it better	3:15:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Elizabeth Mitchell	6/27/2021	3:30:00 PM	Sunny	70-85	Still	Moderate	1 man around 4:30 and 2 men around 5:20	Fishing and walking around the site		5:29:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Elizabeth Mitchell	7/3/2021	12:00:00 PM	Sunny	85-100	Still	Moderate	Saw 9 people total between 1-1:30pm, 4 adults, 5 kids	Fishing and walking	It was really hot out!! Also though I'd see a lot more people...	2:15:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Elizabeth Mitchell	7/13/2021	1:00:00 PM	Sunny, Overcast	70-85	Moderate	Moderate	- 3 older folks at 2pm - Dad & son at 2:30pm	Both groups were walking around and fishing on the west side of site	There was construction on the bridge, it wasn't too noisy, but could've deferred users away from the site for the day. Visible sheen noticed on east side of site along the rocky shore.	3:00:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Katie Kemmitt	7/24/2021	7:47:00 AM	Sunny	50-70	Still	Humid	One man fishing at most downstream fishing area (0810)	Fishing	Man at 0810 was changing so I turned around and left to give him privacy. Did not survey him. There was a decent thunderstorm last night. Sat in gravel parking area before gate, didn't see anyone else besides the man fishing.	9:47:00 AM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Elizabeth Mitchell	7/30/2021	1:05:00 PM	Overcast	70-85	Moderate	Moderate	3 groups of people - 2 people around 1:10pm - 3 people around 1:30pm - 1 person around 2:45 pm	Walking and fishing on both sides of dam	Very hazy at the site today, might have prevented people from being outdoors because of air quality warning from MPCA	3:00:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Ali Stone	8/8/2021	8:10:00 AM	Overcast	50-70	Still	Humid	8:30, saw man fishing with a dog in a boat 9:15, saw ATVer drive by 9:50, saw (i think) the same ATVer drive back in the other direction	fishing, ATVing	saw a cat with two kittens in the south portion of site It's tall timber days today (big town festival) rained the night before	10:10:00 AM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Anna Healy	8/12/2021	10:15:00 AM	Sunny	50-70	Moderate	Moderate	3 people doing a photoshoot at 10:50 AM 1 person fishing at 11:00 AM 1 person fishing at 11:35 AM	Photography, fishing, walking	Saw a MN Power guy doing maintenance at the site	12:15:00 PM

Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Kurt Krautmann	8/21/2021	12:45:00 PM	Overcast	50-70	Moderate	Moderate	6	Walking, ATV off roading, and fishing. Two bikers went by, but these are no included as they didn't interact with the site.	Activity picked up as the day began to get sunnier at the end of the two hours.	2:45:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Anna Healy	8/24/2021	9:30:00 AM	Overcast	50-70	Moderate	Humid	11:10 AM: 2 people	Walking	Rain earlier in the morning likely deterred people	11:30:00 AM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Anna Healy	9/1/2021	9:30:00 AM	Sunny	50-70	Moderate	Moderate	11:00-2 people	Fishing (magnetic fishing)	People wanted to know the history of the area	11:30:00 AM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Anna Healy	9/5/2021	11:15:00 AM	Overcast	50-70	Moderate	Moderate	11:30-2 people rode by in an ATV (didn't talk to them) 11:45-3 people walking 12:30-2 people doing a photoshoot 1:00-3 people walking dogs 1:10-1 biker	ATV, walking, photography, biking	Photographer had already been interviewed by me a few weeks ago so did not ask her to do the survey again	1:15:00 PM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Katie Kemmitt	9/9/2021	8:48:00 AM	Sunny	50-70	Still	Humid	0	N/A	Mn Power truck with boat trailer pulled up to powerhouse, dropped off boat, then drove to other side of 61 (to do maintenance?). Didn't see any bikers, walkers, etc. using trail adjacent to site, either.	10:48:00 AM
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	Katie Kemmitt	9/11/2021	9:54:00 AM	Sunny	50-70	Moderate	Moderate	2 people @ 0954 getting in car (young couple, high school?) 1 person @ 1002 fishing just above dam in fishing boat 1 person @ 1007 pulling out of parking lot with van and trailer loaded with kayaks 2 people @ 1027 fishing below dam (dad and kid, filled out survey) 2 people @ 1111 fishing on boat in river just south of southernmost fishing point 2 people @ 1126 on 4x4 ATV, drove through Creek on north side of 61.	Fishing, walking, ATVing	Van with a bunch of kayaks on trailer pulling out of parking lot as I walked up to them at 1007. The buoys above dam have been pulled out since I was here on Thursday. Saw a few cyclists and ATVs go by on trail near site.	11:54:00 AM

Appendix B: Recreational Survey Records

MN Power Recreation Study: User Survey

* Required

1. Site Name *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam
- ☐ Grand Rapids Hydroelectric Dam

2. Today's date (or date you were at the dam site)

Example: January 7, 2019

3. 1. How many people are in your party?

4. 2. About how often do you visit this site?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Annually
- ☐ Other: _____

5. 3. How much do you perceive this area is used for recreation?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Infrequently	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Frequently

6. 4. What are your primary activities at the site today?

Check all that apply.

☐ Fishing

☐ Kayaking

☐ Canoeing

☐ Walking/hiking

☐ Birdwatching

Other: ☐ _____

7. 5. What is your opinion of the amount and type of existing recreational opportunities at the dam site?

8. 6. Other Comments

Thank you for participating in this survey!

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Site Name	Today's date (or date you were at the dam site)	1. How many people are in your party?	2. About how often do you visit this site?	3. How much do you perceive this area is used for recreation?	4. What are your primary activities at the site today?	5. What is your opinion of the amount and type of existing recreational opportunities at the dam site?	6. Other Comments
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	5/22/2021	3	Couple times a year	4	Fishing	Positive, great space for hanging out	Add a fire pit or benches
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	5/25/2021	1	Weekly	4	Fishing		Thank you
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	5/25/2021	2	Weekly	5	Fishing	Very happy with the amount of walking trails and spots to fish! Overall very satisfied with the opportunities that exist.	Improving the maintenance of grass, i.e. cutting it more frequently
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	5/27/2021	2		3	Fishing, Walking/hiking, ATV trail comes right to dam power area	Accesibility - upkeep could be better. Nice place to bring teenagers.	Would be nice to see better upkeep and maybe some benches along river would be nice.
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	5/30/2021	1	Weekly	4	Fishing, Just relaxing	Enjoy it	
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	5/30/2021	4	1st time	1	Fishing	No opinion since first time here	Heard good things about the area
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	5/30/2021	1	5 times a week	4	Fishing	Like it just the way it is!	Hope they keep it an open area.
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	5/30/2021	2	about once or twice a week	4	Fishing, relaxing	Leave it the way it is.	
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	5/30/2021	6	Two or three times during summer	3	Walking/hiking	great area	great getaway and quiet time
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	6/2/2021	4	Weekly	5	Fishing	Satisfied with the number of spots to fish on the dam side of 61.	Possibly building steps to the river so it's easier and safer for people to use. Having a trash can available so trash isn't left everywhere. Otherwise positive feedback and praise for how MN Power has maintained the rec area!
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	6/12/2021	3	Monthly	2	Fishing	New to area, but happy with the available fishing spots.	None
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	6/12/2021	3	Monthly	3	Fishing	Happy with the existing places to fish on site, but would like to see more spots in the future...wasn't specific on where the new spots should be on the site...	None
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	6/14/2021	2	Monthly	2	Fishing, Walking/hiking	Happy with the amount of activities available to enjoy!	Less graffiti (clean it up) and a garbage can would be nice
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	6/14/2021	2	Annually	5	Walking/hiking	Happy with the fishing spots, trails available and was happy to see the canoe portage on the other side of the site.	Wish it was cleaner, graffiti should be removed from the trails and trash needs to be picked up more often.
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	6/14/2021	4	Daily	5	Fishing, Walking/hiking	They're happy with the amount of walking trails that are available and don't think anymore should be implemented to preserve the natural area.	They mentioned they were happy that it's secluded and that not a lot of people know about it, that means the walking traffic is usually pretty low. One member of the party has been coming to this area since he was a kid and was happy about how it's being maintained.
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	6/27/2021	1	Monthly	5	Fishing	Happy with the amount of fishing spots and trails at the site and emphasized that no more need to be made to preserve the area.	Would like to see a trash can or trash maintenance at the site
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	6/27/2021	2	Weekly	5	Fishing, Walking/hiking	Satisfied, the dad has been coming to the site since he was born and the son has also been coming to the site for as long as he can remember. Not happy with the fishing spot right next to the dam since the dam is closed.	Wanted to know why the damn isn't open and when they'll open it back up. Very disappointed with the amount of trash and glass at the site, not safe for small children, would really like to see a trash can or trash maintenance.

Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	7/3/2021	2	Monthly	5	Fishing, Walking/hiking	Good amount of trails, don't feel the need for more to be made.	
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	7/3/2021	7, 5 kids, 2 adults	Weekly	5	Fishing	More spots to fish on the north side of the road, more trails if possible	Like how accessible the river is
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	7/13/2021	2	Daily	5	Fishing, Walking/hiking	Plenty of opportunities, but wouldn't be opposed to more access to the river.	Trash can/maintenance would be a nice addition. Emphasized that a lot of people use the site.
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	7/13/2021	3	2x weekly	5	Fishing, Walking/hiking	Has been coming to site for a long times, loves it, happy with the existing areas, but wouldn't be opposed to more opportunities being added to the site.	There's an unstable railing along the pond between the branch gate and dam that should be fixed. This survey may be a duplicate because I believe the first one submitted accidentally had Grand Rapids marked, not Prairie River for the site location.
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	7/30/2021	2	first time at site (visiting MN)	3	Walking/hiking	Site has a lot of options for people it seems and the access to the river on both sides looks good for fishing.	Trash maintenance!
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	7/30/2021	3	Monthly	4	Fishing, Walking/hiking	Lots of access to the river, more spots wouldn't be a bad idea but not necessary	Make it easier to walk down closer to the river on south side of dam (right after opening) for older people or small kids.
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	7/30/2021	1	Weekly	2	Fishing, Walking/hiking	Likes how private each spot is and likes that there isn't too much access to the river, doesn't want more trails made	
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	8/12/2021	3: 1 photographer, 2 clients	Monthly	5	Photography	Good amount, would take advantage if there were more hiking trails	Very pretty site
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	8/12/2021	1	1 time only, not from the area	2	Fishing	Enjoyed the site, would come back if he lived in the area	
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	8/12/2021	1	Monthly	3	Fishing, Walking/hiking	Likes the site a lot! Would maybe use hiking trails if there were more. Likes mountain biking but does have a place to do that	
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	8/21/2021	1	Annually	3	Growing up they used to put in their canoes at the dam. Was on an ATV exploring today.	There is decent opportunity for different recreation and they used to canoe at the area	They wished there was an ATV trail at the site.
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	8/21/2021	2	First time and they couldnt comment on how often the site is used.		Two people on one ATV with a cooler.	They were aware that kayakers use the area	
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	8/21/2021	1	Daily	3	Walking/hiking	They think the area is pretty accessible and sees a variety of recreation.	They commented that they usually see people around on their almost daily walks.
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	8/24/2021	2	Annually	3	Walking/hiking, ATV	Could use trail maps for ATVs, more hiking trails Love the area	From Washington, fly out to parents' lakehouse Have also fished in the past
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	9/1/2021	2	First time	3	Fishing, Magnet fishing	No opinion-first time	Heard about area from son
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	9/5/2021	3-woman and 2 teenage daughters	First time	3	Walking/hiking	Very pretty and mostly clean but could use a trash can	Woman said it looked like no one took care of site Heard about area from parents
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	9/5/2021	3	Twice a week	4	Walking/hiking	Great trails, love the area	Beautiful area, love to see it being used
Prairie River Hydroelectric Dam	9/14/2021	2	2nd time this summer	5	Fishing	N/A	Site is a big party spot at night. Don't catch much of any fish there; just something to get out of house

Appendix C: Photos



Canoe self-portage take-out looking south from Lower Prairie Lake towards powerhouse.



Lower Prairie Lake looking south towards canoe portage take-out.



Canoe portage signage leading users from take-out to put-in on trail.



Minnesota Power-maintained fishing area on east side of peninsula leading to canoe self-portage put-in, looking south.



Minnesota Power-maintained fishing area on west side of peninsula leading to canoe self-portage put-in, looking west.



Minnesota Power-maintained canoe self-portage put-in, looking south at Prairie River.

