**Template Letter to the Tribal Historic Preservation Office**

Select date

Attention: Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) & Tribal Water Permit Specialist

Tribe(s) contact information from [Tribal Contacts List](https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/p-gen5-25.pdf)

RE: Enter project title and MPCA project number

 Enter City/Township, County

<Insert greeting: Hau (Dakota) or Boozhoo (Ojibwe) THPO/Water Permit Specialist name(s)>:

We are initiating consultation on this project under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and implementing federal regulations at 36 C.F.R. 800 and pursuant to the Guidance on Water Quality Consultation with Minnesota Tribal Nations (May 2, 2016). This project is being funded under the Clean Water State Revolving Fund administered by the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

**Project Information**:

* Project title;
* Agency Project Number (if applicable) and SHPO ERP Number (if one has been assigned);
* County;
* City or Township;
* Street address (if within a municipal boundary) or Township, Range, and Section of project location (if outside of a municipal boundary);
* Detailed description of the project including the extent of above-ground impacts and ground-disturbing activities,
* A clearly defined—in both narrative and on a map (see below)—project area boundary and/or a boundary delineating the Area of Potential Effects (APE), the latter of which is required for all Section 106 project review request submissions;
* Names of all government agencies involved (due to permits, funding, or licensing); and
* Name and email address of the government agency contact and/or authorized contact who should receive the THPO comment letter.

And attachments that consist of:

* High-resolution color photographs of the project site including all buildings and structures within the project’s boundary or APE. Photos should be keyed to a map.
* Dates of construction for all buildings and structures for which photographs have been provided (see previous bullet point). This is not necessary to include if inventory forms are being submitted for the buildings and structures.
* Maps indicating the project's location and APE. City maps are acceptable for rehabilitation and demolitions, but all projects involving ground disturbances require a copy of a USGS topographic map and/or aerial map with the project location and APE, if applicable, clearly marked.
* Archaeological and architecture-history survey reports, as applicable.
* Architectural/engineering design plans for proposed rehabilitation or construction projects.
* Spatial project boundary (shapefiles with coordinate system).
* Photos incorporating a 360-degree view from the center of the site.

Sincerely,

Enter Project Manager name, Title

Enter Company name

Enter Company mailing address

Enter Contact email address

Enter Contact phone number

Submit THPO information to section.106.mpca@state.mn.us MPCA will submit information directly to Tribes.

**Supplemental instructions for the template letter**

**Detailed project description:** Describe the entire project, all components. Describe any areas of ground disturbance.

**Area of Potential Effects (APE):** Define the geographic area or areas within which a project may directly or indirectly cause alterations in the character or use of historic or cultural properties, if any such properties exist. The APE is influenced by the scale and nature of the project and may be different for different kinds of effects caused by the project (direct effects include physical effects to a historic/cultural property and indirect effects may include visual effects, changes in noise levels, a change in the use or access to a historic/cultural property or cumulative effects due to major development, etc.). The APE must be delineated and clearly marked on a USGS map or city/county map, depending on the scale of the project. Aerial photographs with same APE marked are acceptable as supporting documentation.

**Submit a copy of the project plans including the following information:**

**Site plans:** Submit a copy of the site plans and/or construction plans if available, showing the footprint/extent of the new construction.

**Photos:** Submit photos of the project location and photos of the surrounding project area (360 degrees from project location).

**Identification of historic properties within the project APE:**

Historic properties of religious and cultural significance include archeological sites, burial grounds, sacred landscapes or features, ceremonial areas, traditional cultural places, traditional cultural landscapes, plant and animal communities, and buildings and structures with significant tribal association.

The MN Statewide Historic Inventory Portal (MnSHIP) is an online tool that can help identify previously recorded historic properties within the project area. Information regarding MnSHIP can be found on the Minnesota Department of Administration’s website at [Minnesota's Statewide Historic Inventory / Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (mn.gov)](https://mn.gov/admin/shpo/surveyandinventory/inventory/). Please be aware that MnSHIP is for previously identified above ground structures only. The state historic preservation office (SHPO) tracks some archaeological information in MnSHIP while the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) tracks archaeological and cemetery/burial site information in the OSA Portal. The two systems reference each other, and it is imperative that any research related to federal or state undertakings take full advantage of both applications. There may still be other historic/cultural areas within your project area that have not been previously identified. Not all Tribal historic/cultural areas are in the MnSHIP databases. THPOs will be able to help determine whether a particular APE’s ground disturbance will have an impact on culturally significant Tribal areas.

All projects with ground disturbances will be reviewed by the Tribal historic preservation officer and/or the Tribal water permit specialist. Tribes may respond within 30 days to provide comment on the project information. Tribes may provide comments to the MPCA. Tribal comments will be directly communicated to the project applicant and will be addressed as part of the environmental review process. If the project becomes an undertaking subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the lead federal agency (MPCA) may conduct a formal Tribal Consultation for this project.

**Preliminary finding of effect:** Any information gathered regarding historic/cultural properties within the project APE should be incorporated into your review submission along with an initial determination of whether historic/cultural properties will be affected by the proposed project.

**Directions for submitting projects to the MPCA for Tribal Coordination:**

* A copy of the project letter with all attachments should be submitted to the following email address: section.106.mpca@state.mn.us. All materials (except spatial data) should be submitted to the THPO in standard Portable Document Format (PDF).
* Spatial project boundary (shapefiles with coordinate system).
* Attachment sizes up to 25MB per email can be accepted in the Section 106 inbox. If PDF attachment is larger than 25MB the submitter will need to separate the documents into more than one email or provide an FTP link so that MPCA staff can download files. If the latter method is preferred by the submitter, then please send a separate notification email to section.106.mpca@state.mn.us to provide notice of impending Dropbox or FTP link.

**Questions:** Contact Pam Foster, Clean Water Revolving Fund Program Administrator, at 218-302-6619 or pamela.foster@state.mn.us with any questions regarding project submission or the THPO review process.