



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0361R, **Version:** 1

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE NOMINATION OF THE ST. LOUIS RIVER CORRIDOR TO THE DULUTH NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM.

CITY PROPOSAL:

RESOLVED, that the Duluth City Council hereby makes the following findings of fact pertaining to the project areas shown on Exhibit A on file in the office of the city clerk and denominated thereon as the St. Louis River Natural Area.

- (a) The nomination is an area of special or unique ecological or environmental significance to the city of Duluth because it meets not just one, but all five of the science criteria defined in Article IV A of the Duluth Natural Area Program guidelines:
- (1) Significant Native Plant Communities Area - Plant surveys for the nomination identified 17 significant native plant communities including the Lake Superior estuary marsh community that exists predominantly in the St. Louis River estuary within the state.
 - (2) Special Species Area - Three special plant species (pale sedge, discoid beggarticks, and soapberry) and 52 special bird species were identified in the natural area in surveys conducted for this nomination.
 - (3) Important Bird Congregation Area - A plethora of bird species congregate in the proposed natural area for nesting, foraging, and migratory habitat including shorebirds, waterbirds, waterfowl, and migratory landbirds.
 - (4) Natural Water Features Area - The St. Louis River Estuary and four state designated trout streams (Keene, Kingsbury, Stewart, and Knowlton Creek), are located within the proposed natural area.
 - (5) Geologic Landform Area - The geologic formation of Duluth is represented by landforms present in the nominated natural area, particularly the backwater areas of Rask Bay, North Bay, Radio Tower Bay, and Kingsbury Bay. These bays visually indicate the drowned river mouth that once flowed into Glacial Lake Duluth.;
- (b) That the land constituting the area is eligible for nomination for the Duluth Natural Area Program because it is either owned by the city, or is owned by private or other public owners, in which owners have to provide consent to the designation of the property as a natural area under the program and to the imposition of controls in the form of a management plan thereon;
- (c) That the nominated area is in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to Section 2-55 (a) of the Duluth City Code, 1959, as amended, the St. Louis River Natural Area as described on Exhibit A is hereby provisionally designated as a Duluth Natural

Area, which designation shall continue to be provisional until program protections and a management plan for the area have been approved.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: This resolution authorizes city officials to approve the nomination of the St. Louis River for the Duluth Natural Areas Program. The Duluth Natural Areas Program was established in city code to preserve Duluth's natural heritage for the public good by protecting lands of special environmental significance. City code outlines a two-step process to designate a specific place as a Duluth Natural Area. This resolution completes step one: approval of a nomination. Step two is development and approval of a land protection and management plan. Approval of a nomination establishes a new Duluth Natural Area on a provisional basis. Step two, approval of the management plan, makes the designation permanent. The nomination was unanimously approved by the Planning Commission. Though not required by city code, Parks Commission also reviewed and unanimously approved the nomination.