

Upper Harbor Project

In 1937, Congress authorized the Minneapolis Upper Harbor Project which extended the Upper Mississippi River 9-Foot Navigation Project an additional 4.6 miles by constructing two locks to lift vessels over St. Anthony Falls and dredging the navigation channel. Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam was completed in 1956 and the upper lock in 1963.

The Upper Lock

Normal Lift49.2 Feet
Length400 Feet
Width56 Feet

The Lower Lock

Maximum Lift25 Feet
Length400 Feet
Width56 Feet

Location



St. Anthony Falls Locks & Dams

1 Portland Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55401-2528
Phone: (612) 333-5336

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

180 Fifth St. E., Ste. 700
St. Paul, MN 55101-1678
www.mvp.usace.army.mil

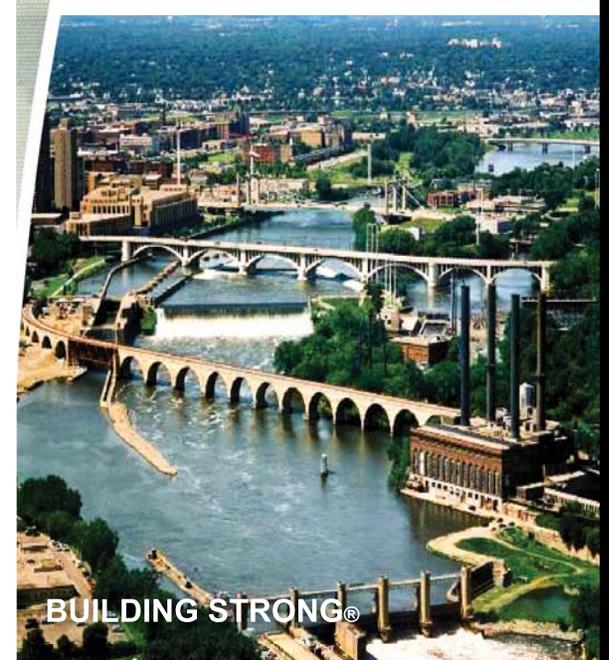
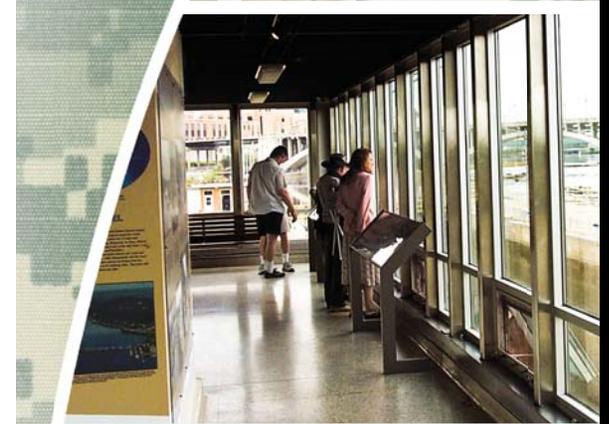
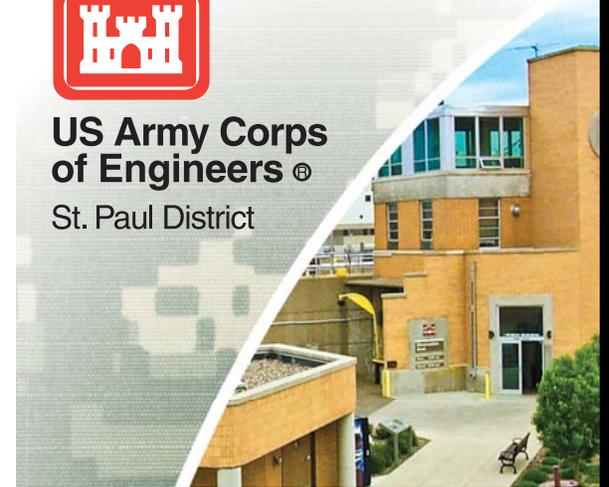
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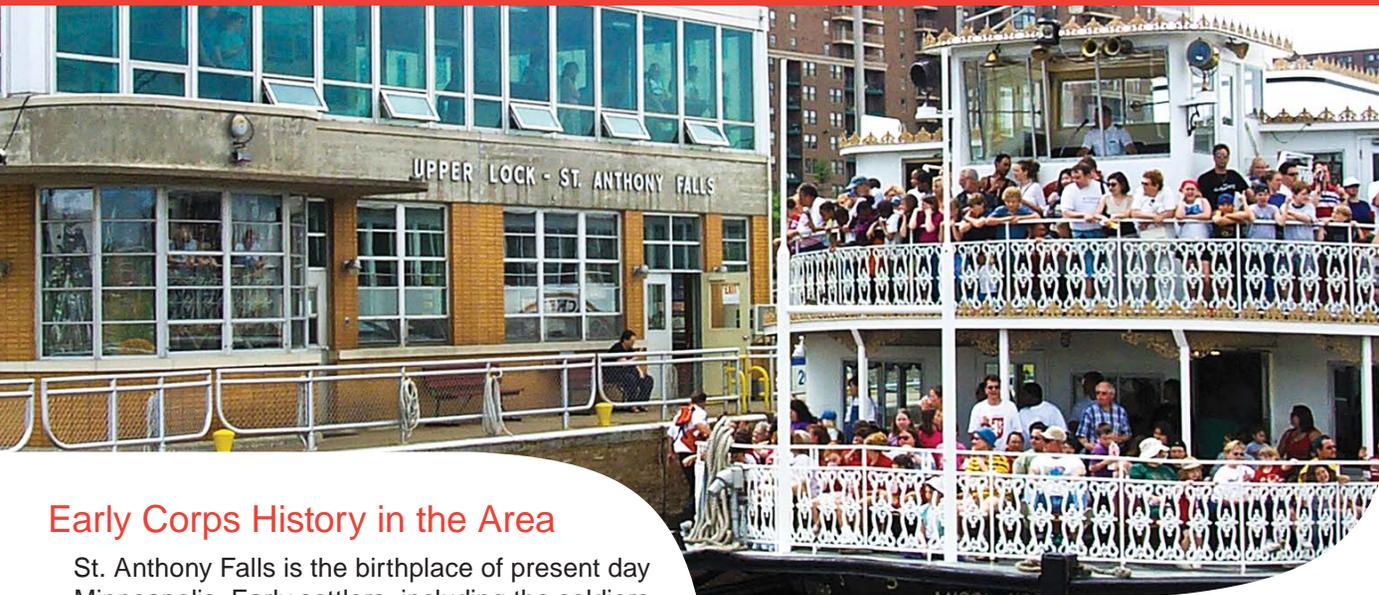


US Army Corps of Engineers ®

St. Paul District



BUILDING STRONG®



Early Corps History in the Area

St. Anthony Falls is the birthplace of present day Minneapolis. Early settlers, including the soldiers at Ft. Snelling, used the falls for hydropower. By the mid 1800s, lumber mills and grain mills crowded the shores of the area, each wanting the power of the falls. In 1876, a tunnel collapse threatened the existence of the falls. The Corps became involved in the efforts to save the falls and constructed an underground cutoff wall, two roller dams and other protective works. After an absence of nearly a century, the Corps returned, constructing the locks and dam.

The Visitor Center

An observation deck was added to the roof of the Control Building at the upper lock. From this vantage point, visitors have a panoramic view of St. Anthony Falls, the historic Stone Arch Bridge and the historic milling district with the Minneapolis skyline as a backdrop. It is also an ideal vantage point to watch vessels "locking through." There are interpretive panels in the visitor center, providing information the Corps efforts to save the falls and the history of the area.

Balancing Interests

The area was once the grain milling capital of the world. It was the birthplace of General Mills and Pillsbury. It was the first place hydroelectric was generated for distribution (one of the turbines is on display on the plaza outside the visitor center). Water power is still being used to generate electricity in a plant across the river from the upper lock. Immediately across the falls from the Visitor Center is the University of Minnesota's St. Anthony Falls Hydraulic Laboratory, a world renown research facility. The entire area is part of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, administered by the National Park Service. The Great River Road is adjacent to the district and provides access to the river at numerous points.

The Historic Area

The surrounding area has a rich history. The St. Anthony Falls Historic District, which includes the locks, was created to preserve and interpret the many historical features in this location. One of the key features in the district is the Stone Arch Bridge. Constructed as a railroad bridge in 1883 by James. J. Hill, it has been converted to a pedestrian/bicycle/trolley bridge and offers yet another outstanding vantage point. The ruins of some of the mills have been excavated for the development of Mill Ruins Park, which interpret how the mills operated.

