



1st Ave W

Lake Ave

1st Ave E

2nd Ave E

3rd Ave E

Superior St

The 1854 Treaty with the Chippewa allowed Chief Buffalo to select a square mile of land anywhere in the large territory that was ceded under the treaty. The area that Chief Buffalo chose would later become the city of Duluth, Minnesota. At the time, the land had not yet been platted, so Chief Buffalo used a large rock as a landmark to establish the location of his square mile of land. The consensus of testimony indicates that the Chief Buffalo rock was indeed located on the southwest corner of First Avenue West and Michigan Street.²

Lake Avenue, which extends from the ship canal, through Downtown, and up the hill to Duluth Heights, was originally an Indian trail. This trail system extended to Pike Lake and Grand Lakes, an area used by Indians as a wintering ground.¹

In 1888 a single Ojibwe burial was discovered the foot of Minnesota Point. The burial was accompanied by a musket, stone pipe, steel flint, and tomahawk.⁶


Minnesota Point Campsite
Minnesota Point is referred to as the site of an Ojibwe summer camp and it is said that at one time "wigwams were located all over the point." R.E. Carey's map of 1865 Duluth includes wigwams near the portage across Minnesota Point.⁷

Creation of Minnesota Point
A young Ojibwe brave was being chased by a group of Sioux from the South Shore of Lake Superior. As he ran into the water, the Great Spirit turned the water into land, creating the long strip of land. When the Sioux attempted to follow, part of the land washed away, creating what is now the Superior entry into the harbor.⁵

Lake Superior served as a significant source of travel for the local Indians who often used canoes to go from one Indian village to another. The lake and the St. Louis River, which flows into Lake Superior, were also a major source for food.³

Minnesota Point Portage
The Ojibwe name for the Duluth area is Onigamiinsing or "little portage", which refers to the short crossing over Minnesota Point from Lake Superior to the Bay of Superior. It is presumed that the site of the portage was destroyed when the artificial ship canal was constructed across the narrow neck of the point.⁸

Minnesota Point is the world's longest natural fresh water sand bar. Native Americans had lived along the seven-mile long peninsula for an untold number of centuries.⁴

 Boundary of Lake Place Park

The Duluth Indigenous Commission enlisted Dr. Bruce White, of Turnstone Historical Research, to investigate and compile Indigenous Peoples' significant historical and cultural contributions to Duluth. Dr. White published An Ethnographic Study of Indigenous Contributions to the City of Duluth [Ethnographic Study] in July 2015, along with the supporting Archaeological Literature Search prepared by Two Pines Resource Group, LLC. The information on this map comes from those two documents and is cited below:

1 Lake Avenue: Ethnographic Study, page 53

2 Chief Buffalo's Rock: Ethnographic Study, pages 96-97

3 Lake Superior: Ethnographic Study, page 46

4 Minnesota Point: Ethnographic Study, pages 46-47

5 Creation of Minnesota Point: Ethnographic Study, page 81

6 Minnesota Point Burial Site: Archaeological Literature Search, page 34

7 Minnesota Point Campsite: Archaeological Literature Search, page 31

8 Minnesota Point Portage: Archaeological Literature Search, page 30