

Chapter Nine

Tribal Government

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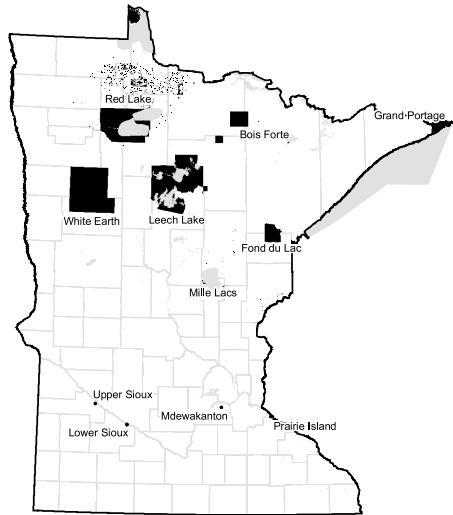
MINNESOTA'S FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES

“Recognition” is a legal term meaning that the United States recognizes a government-to-government relationship with a tribe and that a tribe exists politically in a “domestic dependent nation status.” A federally recognized tribe is one that was in existence, or evolved as a successor to a tribe at the time of original contact with non-Indians.

Federally recognized tribes possess certain inherent rights of self-government and entitlement to certain federal benefits, services, and protections because of the special trust relationship.

Tribes have the inherent right to operate under their own governmental systems. Many have adopted constitutions, while others operate under Articles of Association or other bodies of law, and some still have traditional systems of government. The chief executive of a tribe is generally called the tribal chairperson, but may also be called principal chief, governor, or president. The chief executive usually presides over what is typically called the tribal council. The tribal council performs the legislative function for the tribe, although some tribes require a referendum of the membership to enact laws.

There are 11 federally recognized American Indian tribes with reservations throughout Minnesota. Seven of these are Anishinaabe (Chippewa, Ojibwe) and four are Dakota (Sioux).



The seven communities of Grand Portage, Bois Forte, Red Lake, White Earth, Leech Lake, Fond du Lac and Mille Lacs comprise the Anishinaabe reservations. These reservations are located throughout northern Minnesota from the central lakes region of the state to the northeastern tip.

In the southern region of the state there are four Dakota reservations: Shakopee Mdewakanton, Prairie Island, Lower Sioux and Upper Sioux. Like the reservations in northern Minnesota, these areas of land were set aside by United States government treaties.



Bois Forte Band of Chippewa-Nett Lake

Tribal Chair: vacant

Vice Chair: Shane Drift, District I Representative

5344 Lakeshore Dr., Nett Lake 55772

Phone: (800) 221-8129 **Fax:** (218) 757-3312

Email: sdrift@boisforte-nsn.gov

Website: boisforte.com

Bois Forte, or “strong wood”, was the French name given to the Indians living in the densest forests of what is now extreme north-ern Minnesota. The Bois Forte reservation is located about 45 miles south of the Canadian border, and is divided into three sectors, Nett Lake, Vermilion, and Deer Creek. The largest section is around Nett Lake located in St. Louis and Koochiching counties. 50% of the Nett Lake sector is wetland and is said to be the largest producer of wild rice in the United States

The Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe (also referred to as Chippewa) has lived in northern Minnesota for centuries, but they did not originate there. The people journeyed from the east coast up the Saint Lawrence River, around the Great Lakes and followed rivers and lakes inland. To obtain Indian people’s rich land and natural resources, the U.S. government signed a series of treaties with Indian nations in the 1700s and 1800s. Under the terms of the Treaty of 1854, Indian people in north-ern Minnesota ceded land from International Falls to Duluth to Grand Portage. The Bois Forte Indians were given the right to select reservation lands in the vicinity of Lake Vermilion, which was the heart of their community, and they retained the right to hunt and fish in the ceded area. But when reports of gold beneath the Bois Forte people’s lands began to circulate, non-Indians wanted the land. That led to the Treaty of 1866, in which all claims to a reservation near Lake Vermilion were relinquished and a reservation of about 100,000 acres was established at Nett Lake. Even though the Vermilion reservation was reestablished by an 1881 Executive Order, the Bois Forte Indians were only given back about 1,000 acres in the Vermilion area, instead of the tens of thou-sands they had been promised in the Treaty of 1854.

The Bois Forte Band has carefully reinvested their revenues and diversified their business portfolio as part of their commitment to strengthening the regions economy and increasing Band member employment. Under the management of the Bois Forte Development Corporation, the Band now owns and operates Fortune Bay Resort Casino, The Wilderness Golf Course, WELY- End of the Road Radio, Powerain Manufacturing, Inc., the Y-Store and Bois Forte Wild Rice. Fortune Bay Resort Casino officially opened in August of 1986 and currently employs over 500 people, annually injecting more than \$30 million into the economy of northern Minnesota.



Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Tribal Chair: Bruce Savage

1720 Big Lake Rd., Cloquet 55720

Phone: (218) 879-4593

Website: fdlrez.com

The Fond du Lac Reservation is located in Carlton and St. Louis counties about adjacent to the City of Cloquet on the east, and 15 miles west of Duluth. The tribal headquarters are in Cloquet, Minnesota. The LaPointe Treaty of September 24, 1854 (10 Stat. 1109) was the last principal treaty between the several bands of Chippewa inhabiting Northern Minnesota, Northern Wisconsin, and the Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan. In this treaty, the various bands of Lake Superior and Mississippi Chippewa ceded approximately 25% of the land areas of the present states of Minnesota and Wisconsin plus the balance of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to the United States. The

LaPointe Treaty established the Fond du Lac Reservation at 100,000 acres.

The Fond du Lac Reservation Business Committee is the Tribal Governing body. The Chairman and secretary-treasurer are elected at large. The three districts are Cloquet, where tribal headquarters are located, and the communities of Brookston and Sawyer.

A new building to house tribal government, community sports, and social activities was opened in 1997. There are also community centers at Sawyer and Brookston. The human service and health clinic programs operate from the Min-No-Aya-Win Health Clinic, which underwent major expansion in 1996. The health program is tribally-run and services are contracted from Indian Health Service. Sawyer is the location of Mash-Ka-Wisen, the nation's first Indian-owned and operated residential, primary treatment facility for chemical dependency. The Fond du Lac Tribe operates two casinos. The Tribe and the City of Duluth cooperated in building and sharing in the profits of the Fond du Lac Casino The Black Bear Casino and adjacent Black Bear Hotel, opened in 1995, make the Tribe the second largest employer in Carlton County.



Grand Portage Band of Chippewa

Tribal Chair: Robert "Bobby" Deschampe

P.O. Box 428, Grand Portage 55605

Phone: (218) 475-2277

Website: grandportage.com

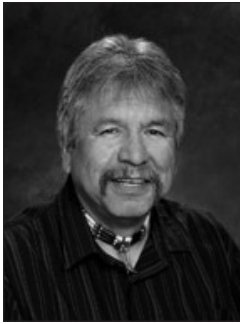
The Grand Portage Reservation is located in Cook County, in the extreme northeast corner of Minnesota, approximately 150 miles from Duluth. It is bordered on the north by Canada, on the south and east by Lake Superior and on the west by Grand Portage State Forest. The community of Grand Portage is the location of the tribal buildings and home sites, along with community centers and, since 1997, a K-6 school.

The Grand Portage Indians were members of the Lake Superior Band but were not participants in the early Ojibwe treaties with the United States. They protested being ignored in the 1842 Treaty when Isle Royale was ceded and they then received annuity rights. In the 1854 Treaty they ceded their lands in the Arrowhead region of Minnesota and accepted the Grand Portage reservation. During the allotment era, no serious attempt was made to relocate the people to White Earth.

The Grand Portage Tribal Council is the governing body of the reservation and is a member of the MCT. The Tribal Council consists of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer, Council man, and Council woman. In 1996, Grand Portage entered the Self-Governance Program by contracting to administer its own programs from the BIA. The State of Minnesota is responsible for criminal and some civil jurisdictions. The Tribe established its own court in September 1997. It collects its own sales tax. In February 2019, longtime tribal chairman Norman Deschampe passed away at age 65.

The Grand Portage Development Corporation was established in 1971 to spur economic development on the reservation. Their most successful operation is the Grand Portage Lodge and Casino that opened in 1975. It has provided an ever-increasing source of employment for band members and income for the Tribe. The hotel is located on the shore of Lake Superior, off Highway 61.

The 300 year old Manito Geezhigaynce, a twisted cedar known as the little spirit cedar tree, has great significance to many generations of Grand Portage Indians and boatmen on Lake Superior. The land with the tree was offered for sale in 1987. A group raised \$100,000 to buy the land for the Tribe in 1990. To protect their heritage, the Grand Portage Indian community requires that to visit the tree, there must be a tribal guide. The John Beargrease Sled Dog race is held annually from Duluth to Grand Portage and back. It is in honor of John Beargrease, a Grand Portage member, who from 1887 to 1899 delivered the mail from Two Harbors to Grand Marais.



Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

Chairman: Faron Jackson, Sr.
190 Sailstar Drive NW, Cass Lake 56633
Phone: (218) 335-8200 **Fax:** (218) 335-8309
Website: llojibwe.org

The Leech Lake Reservation is in north-central Minnesota and covers parts of four counties: Beltrami, Cass, Itasca, and Hubbard, with the major portion located within Cass County. Located along US Highway 2, the reservation is southeast of Bemidji with Walker just outside on the southwest corner. Cass Lake is the largest community within the reservation. Eleven communities make up the reservation.

Drained by the headwaters of the Mississippi River, the area is generally swampy. With some 40 wild rice producing lakes, it has the largest natural wild rice production of any of the State's reservations. The land is mostly second growth. The Leech Lake Tribal Council is the governing body and consists of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and three district representatives. In the early 1990's, the Tribe contracted with the BIA to operate programs under self-governance procedures as one of the second groups of ten tribes allowed into the pilot project. The State is responsible for criminal and some civil jurisdiction over Indians on the reservation. The Leech Lake Tribe issues its own automobile license plates.

The reservation's smaller communities have facilities for community events and services such as medical clinics and programs for elders. The people have organized their own community councils to give a political voice to their concerns. Health services are provided at the IHS hospital and clinic in Cass Lake and clinics in the other communities. The Tribe operates a halfway house and an ambulance service, however, fire protection is from neighboring communities. In 1995, the Tribe began a burial insurance program for all enrolled members.

Education and programs for children are provided by two tribally run childcare facilities, Head Start programs in seven communities and the K-12 Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig tribal school. The Tribe sponsors and provides funding for the Leech Lake Tribal College since 1990. The Tribe operates the Palace Bingo & Casino in Cass Lake, Northern Lights Gaming Emporium near Walker, and White Oak Casino in Deer River. The casinos have made the Tribe the largest employer in Cass County.

For many years, the Tribe has operated the Che-wa-ka-e-gon service station, the Che-We restaurant, a convenience store, and a gift shop. A nearby retail center, built by the Tribe, houses Indian-run business and provides incubator services until they are successful enough to go out on their own. The Tribe also has an Indian-run archaeology firm, the Leech Lake Archaeological Company.



Lower Sioux Community

Tribal President: Robert Larsen
 P.O. Box 308, 39527 Res. Hwy. 1, Morton 56283
Phone: (507) 697-6185 **Fax:** (507) 697-8617
Website: lowersioux.com

The Lower Sioux Indian Community is located on the south side of the Minnesota River at the site of the U.S. Indian Agency and the Bishop Whipple Mission, a part of the original reservation established in the 1851 Treaty. It is in Redwood County, two miles south of Morton and six miles east of Redwood Falls. Across the river is the Birch Coulee battle site of the 1862 Sioux War. The Community, for purposes of determining membership and qualifying for some services, has a service area 10 miles beyond the actual trust lands. The land is primarily rich agricultural land in the river flood plain and the wooded bluffs behind. The community was built on the hillside and uplands. It centers around the tribal offices, a new community center, Tipi Maka Duta (the Lower Sioux Trading Post), and St. Cornelia Episcopal Church built in 1889 and now on the National Register of Historic sites. The church has been the recent site of reburials of Kaota people whose remains had been held by museums and universities. The Minnesota Historical society has an interpretive center in the area, explaining the 1862 battles.

The Lower Sioux Community Council is elected and operates under an IRA constitution. The State exercises criminal and some civil jurisdiction on the reservation. The tribal court was organized in 1993. It deals with civil cases including contract law and workers' compensation cases as well as tribal governance matters. Social programs and community health services are administered by the Tribe, funded by various governmental programs and the Tribe. Tribally funded health insurance policies cover the medical costs for resident members as well as tribal and casino employees. Redwood Falls and Wilmar hospitals are used.

Until the mid-1980's the Tribe had very limited funds and there were hardly any opportunities for employment on the reservation. Government programs, operated by the Tribe, were the major source of employment. Since 1972 the Tribe has been manufacturing hand thrown, hand painted, traditional Dakota pottery. This still continues and is sold at Tipi Maka Duta, the Lower Sioux Trading Post along with other gift items. The Tribe generates additional revenue from leasing a gravel pit.

A major bingo facility, Jackpot Junction opened in 1984. Building on this, it was expanded to a casino on the signing of the State compact in 1989. The Tribe then went to court to force another state compact allowing blackjack. A service station and convenience store built in 1991 are adjacent to the casino as well as a nearby motel, hotel, and convention center.



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

Tribal Chief Executive: Virgil Wind
 43408 Oodena Dr., Onamia 56359
Phone: (320) 532-4181 **Fax:** (320) 532-5800
Website: millelacsojibwe.org

The Mille Lacs Reservation is located in east central Minnesota. The tribal headquarters is near Onamia. The reservation was established by the 1855 Treaty. The Tribe owns approximately 16,000 acres of land located within four townships on the south end of Mille Lacs Lake. Additional communities exist in Aitkin and Pine counties and three islands. The reservation has a community center, schools, clinic, museum, casino/hotel complex and Government Center.

The ancestors of all these people were members of Anishinabe or Chippewa bands who made their homes in Minnesota in the 18th century. At that time, each band or group carried on its own political, economic, and cultural life, although close ties existed between those living in the same general area. In the 19th century, when white settlement and development of Minnesota threatened their existence, the Anishinabe leaders in the Mille Lacs region were pressured to cede their lands to the United States government and relocate on lands to other parts of the State. Some Band leaders decided to move while others refused to leave the places where their people had lived for generations.

Mille Lacs tribal government consists of executive, judicial and legislative branches. A chief executive is elected for a 4-year term. The legislative branch is made up of the Band Assembly, which passes all laws and tribal resolutions and appropriates funds for all tribal programs. The judicial branch is made up of the judges and officials of the Tribal Court. Mille Lacs Tribal Law Enforcement Officials have concurrent jurisdiction in Mille Lacs County, meaning that tribal police have the authority to pursue charges either through County Court or Tribal Court.

The Mille Lacs Band has helped build and diversify the East Central Minnesota economy through Grand Casino Mille Lacs, Grand Casino Hinckley, and other Band-owned businesses such as a cinema, a grocery store, convenience stores, a travel agency, and a golf course. The Mille Lacs Band Corporate Commission owns ML Wastewater Management, Inc., a nonprofit corporation that provides wastewater treatment services to thousands of residents and businesses on the west side of Mille Lacs Lake and helps protect the lake from pollutants.

In District I of the reservation, the Mille Lacs Band operates the Nay Ah Shing Schools, whose standard academic curriculum is enhanced by Ojibwe language and culture programming. The Band also operates the Mille Lacs Tribal College and three reservation-area clinics and public health services that help Band members with fitness, nutrition education, family planning, tobacco cessation, chemical dependency, and other needs.



Prairie Island Indian Community

Tribal President: Grant Johnson
5636 Sturgeon Lake Rd., Welch 55089
Phone: (800) 554-5473 **Fax:** (651) 385-4180
Website: prairieisland.org

The Prairie Island Indian Community is located on the banks of the Mississippi River, 14 miles north of Red Wing and 30 miles southeast of St. Paul. Prairie Island, and its surrounding area, have been home to the Bdewakantunwan (Mdewakanton), “those who were born of the waters,” for countless generations.

Dakota ancestors from throughout the region gathered in the area to live, hunt, worship, and raise their families. Prairie Island is a spiritual place and a final resting spot for many Dakota Oyate (people).

Members of the Prairie Island Indian Community descend from the Bdewakantunwan Band of Eastern Dakota. They consider themselves one with the land. The waters, the bluffs, the prairies, and the buffalo shape and define who they are as Dakota Oyate.

The 1851 Treaties of Mendota and Traverse des Sioux stripped the Dakota of their ancestral lands. The failure of the U.S. government to uphold its treaty obligations led to war with the Dakota people and, ultimately, the largest mass execution in American history – the hanging of 38 Dakota men in Mankato, Minnesota, on December 26, 1862. Soon after, Congress invalidated all treaties, and the Dakota were driven from Minnesota. However, a small group of Dakota remained and settled near Prairie Island.

The foundation for the Prairie Island reservation was formed when the Secretary of the Interior purchased nearly 120 acres of land for the landless Dakota who stayed in Minnesota. Around 1880, additional Dakota families began to return to Prairie Island, buying back small parcels of the Dakota's ancestral home. Following Congress passing the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934, the Prairie Island Dakota adopted a Constitution and By-laws, and the federal government formally recognized the Tribe. Additional lands were put into trust for the Tribe, and the Prairie Island Reservation was established.

Soon after the Tribe's government was formed and its reservation established, new threats emerged.

The first threat came after the federal government failed in its trust responsibility to protect the Tribe's interests and allowed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to build Lock and Dam #3 just downstream from the reservation, intentionally flooding a portion of Tribal land. Congress never authorized the illegal taking and destruction of the land nor compensated the Tribe for the loss.

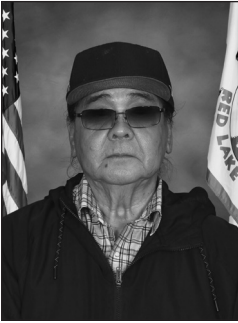
Unfortunately, that was not the last time the federal government looked the other way when it was supposed to protect the Tribe's interests. The second threat emerged in 1973, when the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, with its twin nuclear reactors, began operating less than 700 yards from the Community. The federal government approved and licensed the plant with no consideration given to the Tribe.

The trifecta of threats for the Prairie Island Indian Community is completed by a railroad that runs adjacent to the reservation. The railroad crosses the only reliable road on and off Prairie Island. It is one of the busiest rail lines in the state, with trains often carrying hazardous materials, including crude oil.

Despite these constant threats, the Dakota Oyate of Prairie Island remains resilient and focused on preserving the Dakota way of life for the next seven generations.

Creating a sustainable economy that allows the Tribe to provide for its members is a top priority for the Tribal government. The Tribe owns and operates a diverse collection of enterprises and is proud to be the largest employer of Goodhue County. Treasure Island Resort & Casino is a premier destination resort and casino in the Upper Midwest, attracting hundreds of thousands of guests each year and featuring the second-largest hotel property in Minnesota. Importantly, the revenue received from these tribal gaming activities goes directly toward funding the operation of tribal government services. Additionally, the Tribe owns and operates Mount Frontenac Golf Course, Dakota Station – a gas and convenience store, and Tinta Wita Tipi – an elder independent and assisted living community.

Growing the Community's land base and providing members with safer housing options is also a priority for the Tribal government. Today's reservation consists of approximately 534 acres of original reservation land and 2,774 acres of other trust lands close to the existing reservation. Much of that land is in the 100-year floodplain, including 1,295 acres of non-buildable land and open water. The Tribe has purchased additional off-reservation properties, totaling more than 1,700 acres, to provide members a safer option for living as a community. The Tribal government is working hard to get the additional lands into trust and recognized as Prairie Island reservation land.



Red Lake Band of Ojibwe

Tribal Chair: Darrell G. Seki, Sr.

Box 550, Red Lake 56671

Phone: (218) 679-1889 **Fax:** (218) 679-3378

Website: www.redlakenation.org

The Red Lake Reservation is located in northern Minnesota, within Beltrami and Clearwater Counties. The land, slightly rolling and heavily wooded, has many lakes, swamps, peat bogs, and prairies. Land to the west is suitable for farming. There are four reservation communities: Little Rock, Ponemah, Redby, and Red Lake, which is home of the Tribal Government and several tribal programs and businesses. An elementary, middle and high school operated by the state of Minnesota is located at Red Lake.

The Red Band resides on aboriginal land and has lived in the area since the Dakota moved from the region in the mid-1700's. The Red Lake Band, through various treaties and land agreements from 1863 to 1902 gave up millions of acres of land but never ceded the diminished reservation. This fact makes Red Lake unique in Indian Country. All land is held in common by the members of the Band. Red Lake is the largest fresh water lake in the country wholly contained within one state. The lake, Mis-qua-ga-me-we-saga-ch-ganing to the Red Lake Ojibwe, is held sacred. The tribal government has full sovereignty over the reservation, subject only to the federal government. Red Lake, because of its unique status is often referred to as a "closed" reservation. Because the land is held in common, few non-members live at Red Lake.

An eleven-member Tribal Council, three officers elected at large and eight council members, two from each of the four communities, governs the Red Lake Band. Seven Hereditary Chiefs, descendants from those who negotiated the 1889 Land Agreement, serve for life in an advisory capacity to the Tribal Council.

Employment on the reservation is very limited, resulting in high unemployment rates. The Tribal Council is the main employer through government operations and tribally-owned businesses such as Red Lake Builders which constructs both buildings and roads, retail centers, Red Lake Nation Foods, and others. The Tribe has three casino operations: Seven Clans Casino Thief River, Seven Clans Casino Warroad, and Seven Clans Casino Red Lake.

Red Lake has a history of leadership among Indian Tribes and has been at the vanguard of many initiatives in Indian Country. These include the first tribe in the Country to have tribal auto license plates; the first Indian County Commissioner in the State, and the first non-Judeo-Christian chaplain of the State Senate. It is the first reservation in Minnesota to build an archives-library program to preserve tribal records and historical material.



Shakopee-Mdewakanton Sioux (Dakota) Community

Tribal Chair: Cole W. Miller

2330 Sioux Tr. N.W., Prior Lake 55372

Phone: (952) 445-8900

Website: shakopeedakota.org

The Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) is a sovereign Dakota tribal government located southwest of Minneapolis/St. Paul. The tribe is dedicated to serving its members, giving to tribes and organizations across the country, creating strong partnerships, and protecting the earth's resources—now and for generations to come.

The SMSC is a community of Mdewakanton Dakota people who have lived in the region near Shakopee for centuries. In 1969, the tribe formally became a federally recognized Indian tribe and began the process of creating a government and economic system that would support Community Members.

The General Council, consisting of all members of the tribe aged 18 and older, is the highest governing body of the SMSC and is responsible for setting bylaws, developing policies, and making decisions on all significant tribal matters. Every four years, the General Council elects three members to serve on the SMSC Business Council, which oversees the day-to-day operations of the tribal government and its relationships with its members, other governments and elected officials, and its thousands of employees. Chairman Cole W. Miller, Vice-Chairwoman Natasha K. Hacker and Secretary/Treasurer Ashley J. Cornforth currently serve on the SMSC Business Council.

The SMSC owns and operates more than a dozen business enterprises that play a significant role in the region's economy by providing jobs, attracting visitors and stimulating economic development. This includes Mystic Lake Casino Hotel and Little Six Casino, as well as many non-gaming enterprises, including a golf course, an ice center and a composting facility. The SMSC is the largest employer in Scott County, employing thousands of people, the majority of whom live in Scott and Dakota counties.

The SMSC is one of the largest charitable givers in Minnesota and is dedicated to helping build strong, healthy communities. The tribe contributes to causes that promote education, health and wellness, cultural preservation, environmental stewardship, and community and economic development.

The tribe also regularly partners with neighboring governments and organizations to benefit the region. The SMSC has more than 60 agreements with local governments related to shared priorities such as public safety, natural resources and infrastructure. It also maintains Mdewakanton Public Safety, a full-time fire department, paramedic-level ambulance service and fully operational emergency management organization.



Upper Sioux Community Pezihutazizi Oyate

Tribal Chair: Kevin Jensvold

Box 147, 5722 Travers Lane, Granite Falls 56241

Phone: (320) 564-3853

Website: uppersiouxcommunity-nsn.gov

The Upper Sioux Community Reservation tribal headquarters is located five miles south of Granite Falls, Minnesota, on the Minnesota River in Yellow Medicine County. This land is called Pezihutazizi Kapi (The place where they dig for yellow medicine) and has been the homeland for the Dakota Oyate (Nation) for thousands of years. In 1938, 746 acres of original Dakota lands in Minnesota were returned

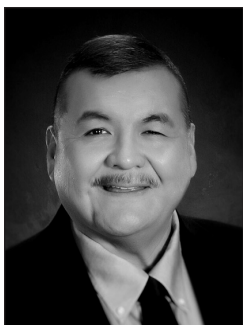
to the Dakota, and the Upper Sioux Indian Community came into existence. Provisions for governing the Upper Sioux Indian Community were adopted, and a Board of Trustees was elected to carry out the responsibilities identified in these Provisions. In 1995, the Provisions were modified and the governing document is now called the Constitution of the Upper Sioux Community.

Since its formal designation as an Indian community, Upper Sioux has struggled with poverty, substandard housing, inadequate health care, and the subtleties of racism. Through the 1970's and 80's, conditions improved very little despite many vocal supporters, both Indian and non-Indian, and they continued to struggle for survival on the small tract of land along the Minnesota River.

In the late 1980's the legal standing of tribes as a sovereign nations had been acknowledged in the highest federal courts, and following these court decisions, the Upper Sioux Community did as many other tribes had done—capitalized on a financial opportunity by building and opening Firefly Creek Casino.

Since that time, the Upper Sioux Community has relocated their gaming enterprise out of the Minnesota River flood plain. In 2003, Prairie's Edge Casino Resort opened on the bluff overlooking the Minnesota River valley. In addition, USC Propane was formed to service the propane needs of the Upper Sioux Community and the surrounding area. To further diversification, the Upper Sioux Community opened Prairie View RV Park in 2006.

The development of the tribal enterprises over the last several years has helped to revitalize and energize the Upper Sioux Community, allowing an opportunity to obtain economic independence. During this dynamic period for the Upper Sioux Community, there has been substantial growth in employment opportunities and Tribal services. Through the creation of the Tribal Police department, they can now exercise the inherent sovereign rights for the protection of Tribal members and Tribal lands. The Upper Sioux Community has been able to reacquire and obtain an additional 1,579 acres of Dakota ancestral land. On March 15th, 2024 the State of Minnesota returned 1400 acres ancestral lands formerly known as the Upper Sioux Agency State Park to the People of the Yellow Medicine, giving a total land base of 3,725 acres, further strengthening their ability to address the growth of Tribal membership, which now stands at 577. The People of Yellow Medicine, now and into the future, will continue to enhance and strengthen their culture and traditions; and finding ways to preserve their dignity, free from the burden of meeting basic survival needs; and establish stability for future generations of the Pezihutazizi Oyate.



White Earth Band of Ojibwe

Tribal Chair: Michael Fairbanks

Box 418, White Earth 56591

Phone: (218) 983-3285

Website: whiteearth.com

The White Earth Reservation contains 829,440 acres and is located in northwestern Minnesota. It encompasses all of Mahnomen County and portions of Becker, and Clearwater Counties. The Tribal headquarters is located in White Earth, Minnesota, along with the IHS clinic, the K-12 tribal school, and a senior's housing project and a community center. Because of the widely scattered settlement pattern

on the reservation, government services, social programs, Head Start and daycare are provided at various centers.

The White Earth Reservation is named for the layer of white clay underneath the surface on the western half of the reservation. The land is typical of west-central Minnesota of prairie in the west, rolling hills and many lakes and rivers in the middle, and conifer forest in the east. Indian communities include White Earth, Pine Point/Ponsford, Naytahwaush, Elbow Lake, and Rice Lake. Mississippi Band members from Gull Lake were the first group to come and settle around White Earth Village in 1868.

In 1986 the White Earth Land Settlement Act (WELSA) required transferring 10,000 acres of state/county held land to the Tribe in exchange the Tribe allowed for cleared titles of 100,000 acres of privately owned land, although the titles have been cleared, the Tribe is still waiting for the Federal Government to complete the transfer of the 10,000 acres of land into trust status. The Tribe also received \$6.5m for economic development, which was used to start their Shooting Star Casino.

The White Earth Reservation is in an area of especially severe continuous unemployment. The Tribe's Shooting Star Casino and Hotel in Mahnomen has been a successful operation and is the largest employer in Mahnomen County. A great deal of investment in infrastructure has been required, resulting in expanded water and waste treatment facilities, telephone systems, and highway development.

As a community development project, the Manitok Mall was built adjacent to the casino complex. It has shops and other amenities for those coming to the casino. The Tribe also owns and operates the Ojibwe Building Supplies, Ojibwe Office Supplies, a solid waste transfer station and their own third-party health insurance claims administration office. Minnesota's lieutenant governor, Peggy Flanagan, is a member of the White Earth Band.

STATE TRIBAL-RELATED AGENCIES

AMERICAN INDIAN ADVISORY COUNCILS

Minnesota Department of Human Services, 540 Cedar St., St. Paul 55164

Chemical Dependency

Phone: (651) 431-2460

Law provides: The 17-member council provides advice on policies, goals, and the operation of chemical health program services. (*Minnesota Statutes*, 254A.035, Subd. 2)

Child Welfare

Phone: (651) 431-4675

Law provides: The 17-member council assists the commissioner of Human Services in formulating policies and procedures relating to Indian child welfare services. (*Minnesota Statutes*, 260.835)

Mental Health

Phone: (651) 431-2246

Law provides: The 15-member council assists the commissioner of Human Services in formulating policies and procedures relating to American Indian mental health services and programs. (*Minnesota Statutes*, 260.835)

INDIAN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

St. Paul Office: 161 Rondo Ave., Suite 919, St. Paul 55103

Bemidji Office: 616 Beltrami Ave, Suite 170, Bemidji 56601

Phone: (651) 539-2200 Website: mn.gov/indianaffairs

Law provides: The council includes representatives from Minnesota's 11 tribal governments to advise the governor, Legislature, and state agencies regarding policies, programs and services affecting Indian citizens, and to create public awareness of their needs. (*Minnesota Statutes*, 3.922)

Executive Director: Shannon Geshick

URBAN INDIAN ADVISORY BOARD

161 Rondo Ave., Suite 919, St. Paul 55103

Phone: (651) 539-2200 Website: <https://mn.gov/indian-affairs/about-us/urban-indian-advisory-board>

Law provides: The council advises the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council board of directors on the concerns of Minnesota Indians who reside in the urban areas of the state. The council must be appointed by the board and consists of six Indians residing in the vicinity of Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth and Bemidji. At least one member of the council must be a resident of each city. (*Minnesota Statutes*, 3.922, Subd. 8.)

OMBUDSPERSON FOR INDIAN FAMILIES

1450 Energy Park Dr., Ste 106, St. Paul 55108

Phone: (651) 643-2523 Email: intake.oaif@state.mn.us

Law provides: The ombudsperson shall monitor agency compliance with all laws governing child protection and placement, as they impact Indian children through work with the courts, court officials, policy makers, service providers, social workers, and guardians ad litem. (*Minnesota Statutes*, 257.0755)

Ombudsperson: Jill Kehaulani Esch, Esq.