



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Minnesota State Archives

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For details, please see the [restrictions](#).

## STATE LAND OFFICE: An Inventory of Its Approved Lists for Congressional Railroad Land Grants:

### OVERVIEW

- Agency:** Minnesota. State Land Office.
- Series Title:** Approved Lists for Congressional Railroad Land Grants.
- Dates:** 1860-1931.
- Abstract:** Lists of lands approved by the U.S. General Land Office for transfer to those railroad companies that had received grants of land from Congress to aid in construction of their lines.
- Quantity:** 2 microfilm reels; 3.0 cubic feet (1 box and 2 partial boxes); 41 microfiche.
- Location:** See Detailed Description section for shelf locations.

### SCOPE AND CONTENTS

Under the terms of its grant, a railroad company was entitled to a specified amount of public land for each mile of track constructed, usually the odd numbered sections within six miles each side of the track. When the route of its line was finally set, these alternate sections were reserved to the railroad pending completion of construction. If, however, any of these sections were deficient in area or had been pre-empted, homesteaded, or reserved to some other public purpose before the route of the line had been set, the railroad was entitled to select as indemnity an equivalent amount of public land within specified wider limits, usually 10, 15, 20, or 30 miles each side of the track. The railroad company filed selection lists with the local federal land office for these indemnity lands. The approved lists certified that the lands selected by the railroad were not subject to any prior claim or reservation.

The approved lists were issued for the Southern Minnesota Railroad; Winona and St. Peter Railroad; St. Paul & Sioux City Railroad; Minnesota Central Railway; Hastings and Dakota Railroad; Minnesota Valley Railroad; St. Paul and Pacific Railroad; Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad; Northern Pacific Railway; and their predecessors and successors.

Each list gives railroad name; land office through which the selections were made; citation to the original grant, including the "limits" encompassed in the list; legal descriptions of the parcels approved, citing principal meridian, range, town, section, and fractional section; area of each parcel; total acreage approved by the list; and dates the selections were approved by the commissioner of the General Land Office and the Secretary of the Interior.

Supplemented by approved lists for the Saint Paul and Pacific Railroad, Northern Pacific Railway, and St. Paul, Minneapolis & Manitoba Railway that are missing from the microfilmed set.

## **ARRANGEMENT**

These records are arranged in the following sections:

- Approved Lists for Congressional Railroad Land Grants, 1860-1931 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reels 57-58)
- Approved Lists Supplement, 1894-1906 (Unfilmed)
- Closed Originals
- Closed Master Microfiche

## **OTHER FINDING AIDS**

There is a consolidated location index to all parcels in the approved lists on pages 173-217 of the United States Land Grant Index, cataloged separately in the State Land Office's Indexes to State Land Records. This index is arranged by principal meridian, range, and township and cites the volume(s) and page(s) on which lands in a particular township can be found.

A second index, by railroad (67 pages), accompanied these approved lists.

As an aid to researchers, both these indexes have been filmed prior to the first volume. In addition, each volume is prefaced by its own location index.

## **INDEX TERMS**

*This collection is indexed under the following headings in the catalog of the Minnesota Historical Society. Researchers desiring materials about related topics, persons or places should search the catalog using these headings.*

### **Topics:**

- Public lands--Minnesota.
- Railroad land grants--Minnesota.

### **Organizations:**

- Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company.
- Hastings and Dakota Railway Company.
- Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad Company.
- Minneapolis and Cedar Valley Railroad Company.
- Minnesota and Pacific Railroad Company.
- Minnesota Central Railway Company.
- Minnesota Valley Railroad Company.

Northern Pacific Railway Company.  
Saint Paul and Pacific Railroad Company.  
Southern Minnesota Railroad Company.  
St. Paul and Duluth Railroad Company.  
St. Paul & Sioux City Railroad Company.  
St. Paul, Minneapolis & Manitoba Railway Company.  
Transit Railroad Company.  
United States. General Land Office.  
Winona and St. Peter Railroad Company.

**Types of Documents:**

Microforms.

**ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

**Restrictions:**

Microfilmed originals (2.75 cubic feet) and master microfiche (41 microfiche) are held by the Minnesota Historical Society and closed to general use. In the case of records being illegible on the microfilm, the original records may be consulted. They are located off site in Remote Storage, however, and advance arrangements are required in order to view the files.

**Preferred Citation:**

Minnesota. State Land Office. Approved Lists for Congressional Railroad Land Grants. *[Indicate the cited volume (microfilmed) or list (unmicrofilmed) number and page here].* *[For microfilm, add:]* SAM 45, *[Reel number]*. Minnesota Historical Society. State Archives.

*See the Chicago Manual of Style for additional examples.*

**Microfilm Production:**

Saint Paul, MN : Minnesota Historical Society, 1983.

Microfiche. Burbank, CA and Saint Paul, MN : P.F.A., Inc. and Minnesota Historical Society, 1984. 41 microfiche : 16 mm.

Microfilm available for sale or interlibrary loan from the Minnesota Historical Society.

**Accession Information:**

Accession numbers: 984-41; 985-143

**Processing Information:**

Catalog ID No.: 1735030

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

*Note to Researchers: To request materials, please note the location and, if applicable, reel number shown below.*

### APPROVED LISTS FOR CONGRESSIONAL RAILROAD LAND GRANTS, 1860-1931 (MICROFILM SAM 45, REELS 57-58)

The railroad approved lists were compiled into nine numbered volumes. Within each volume, the lists are arranged by railroad, in approximate chronological order. Since these volumes are compilations of records from various land offices, there was no original pagination. At some point the agency with custody of the records assigned consecutive page numbers to the entire set of lists. The page numbers do not, however, correspond to the numerical sequence of the volumes. The lists have been microfilmed according to the consecutive pagination.

Location	Reel	
SAM 45	57	Index: Railroad Lands: Approved Lists, Congressional Grants (pages 174-217). Original index is cataloged separately in the State Land Office: Indexes to State Land Records. Index to Railroad Selections, Congressional Grants, by Railroad (pages 1-67). Original index is cataloged separately in the State Land Office: Indexes to State Land Records. Southern Minnesota Railroad and its successor, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway, 1860-1909 (pages 1-105, volume 4). Winona and St. Peter Railroad and its predecessor, Transit Railroad, 1860-1929 (pages 100-248, volume 5). St. Paul & Sioux City Railroad and its predecessor, Minnesota Valley Railroad, 1867-1925 (pages 261-350, volume 1). Minnesota Central Railway and its predecessor, Minneapolis and Cedar Valley Railroad, 1860-1875 (pages 361-385, volume 8). Hastings and Dakota Railroad, 1873-1931 (pages 401-459, volume 2). Southern Minnesota Railroad; Winona and St. Peter Railroad and its predecessor, Transit Railroad; Minnesota Valley Railroad and its successor, St. Paul & Sioux City Railroad; Minnesota Central Railway and its predecessor, Minneapolis and Cedar Valley Railroad (conflicting limits), 1860-1881 (pages 451-494, volume 6).
SAM 45	58	St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (main and branch lines) and its predecessor, Minnesota and Pacific Railroad; St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, First Division; St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, St. Vincent Extension, 1860-1880 (pages 500-745, volume 9). Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad and its successor, St. Paul and Duluth Railroad, 1868-1929 (pages 800-912, volume 3). Northern Pacific Railway, 1873-1926 (pages 919-1024, volume 7).

### APPROVED LISTS SUPPLEMENT (UNFILMED)

Additional approved lists for the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad and its successors, the Northern Pacific Railway, and the St. Paul, Minneapolis & Manitoba Railway that are missing from the microfilmed set.

#### Location

- 106.K.9.5B St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, 1903-1906. 1 folder.  
Lists 34-39, 41-42, 45-47, 49-50, 52-53. Titled "Minnesota Railway Lands."
- Northern Pacific Railway Company, 1894-1906. 1 folder.  
Lists 10-11, 16, 18, 24-25, 27-32, 34, 38, 40, 42-44, 50-54, 56, 62, and unnumbered.
- St. Paul, Minneapolis & Manitoba Railway, 1895-1903. 1 folder.  
Lists 13-15, 17-18, 21.

### CLOSED ORIGINALS

**Access restricted.** Closed to general use, researchers are directed to use the microfilm.

#### Location

- 304.G.12.6F Approved Lists: Congressional Railroad Land Grants, 1860-1931:  
Volume 1. St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad and its predecessor, Minnesota Valley Railroad, 1867-1925.  
Volume 2. Hastings and Dakota Railroad, 1873-1931.  
Volume 3. Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad and its successor, St. Paul and Duluth Railroad, 1868-1929.  
Volume 4. Southern Minnesota Railroad and its successor, Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway, 1860-1909.
- 304.G.12.7B Volume 5. Winona and St. Peter Railroad and its predecessor, Transit Railroad, 1860-1929.  
Volume 6. Southern Minnesota Railroad; Winona and St. Peter and its predecessor, Transit Railroad; Minnesota Valley Railroad and its successor, St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad; Minnesota Central Railway and its predecessor, Minneapolis & Cedar Valley Railroad (conflicting limits), 1860-1881.  
Volume 7. Northern Pacific Railway, 1873-1926.  
Volume 8. Minnesota Central Railway and its predecessor, Minneapolis & Cedar Valley Railroad, 1860-1875.  
Volume 9. St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (Main and branch lines) and its predecessor, Minnesota and Pacific Railroad; St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, First Division; St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, St. Vincent Extension, 1860-1880.

## **CLOSED MASTER MICROFICHE**

Created from the microfilm to distribute to Department of Natural Resources [DNR] field offices. Positive copies were given to the DNR; the Minnesota Historical Society retained the negative copies.

**Access restricted.** Closed to general use, researchers are directed to use the microfilm.

### **Location**

SAFN 6

1860-1931. 41 microfiche.

A listing of each microfiche's contents is housed in the State Archives accession file for these records.