



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Minnesota State Archives

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STATE LAND OFFICE: An Inventory of Its Approved Lists:

OVERVIEW

- Agency:** Minnesota. State Land Office.
- Series Title:** Approved Lists.
- Dates:** 1854-1963.
- Abstract:** Approved lists for various categories of state trust fund lands selected by the state of Minnesota from the federal domain for specified public purposes under a number of Congressional grants.
- Quantity:** 2 microfilm reels; 3.75 cubic feet (2 boxes and 4 partial boxes); 65 microfiche.
- Location:** See Detailed Description section for shelf locations.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS

The lists certify that the lands selected by the state were not subject to any prior claim or reservation. The primary set, available on microfilm, is supplemented by some additional, or more complete, microfilmed lists.

Approved lists are available on microfilm for indemnity school lands (1858-1960), agricultural college lands (1867-1879), internal improvement lands (1867-1874, 1906-1907), salt spring lands (1871-1916), public building lands (1863), university lands (1854-1915), Volstead lands (1963), and an incomplete set of swamp lands (1865-1912). They are supplemented by a more complete set of swamp land lists (1865-1959) and a state experimental forest list (1905), which have not been microfilmed.

Each approved list gives list number, federal land district through which the selections were made, date of selection, legal descriptions and acreages of the parcels selected, citing range, town, section, and fractional section; total acreage approved in the list; and dates the selections were approved by the Commissioner of the General Land Office and the secretary of the Interior.

Most of the approved lists were issued through the local and district offices of the U.S. General Land Office. As the state was settled, a number of federal land offices were opened.

Over the course of time some offices were closed, either by being moved to another town in the same district or by being incorporated into a larger district. When an office was closed, its records were transferred to the successor office. A list of the federal land offices in Minnesota supplements this inventory.

ARRANGEMENT

These records are arranged in the following sections:

- Indemnity School lands, 1858-1960 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)
- Agricultural College Lands, 1867-1879 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)
- Internal Improvement Lands, 1867-1874, 1906-1907 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 34, part)
- Salt Spring Lands, 1871-1916 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)
- Public Building Lands, 1863 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)
- University Lands, 1854-1915 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)
- Volstead Patent, 1863 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)
- Swamp Lands, 1865-1912 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 34, part)
- Swamp Lands (Set 2), 1865-1959 (Unfilmed)
- State Experimental Forest, 1905 (Unfilmed)
- Closed Originals
- Closed Master Microfiche

INDEX TERMS

These records are 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:

- Land grants--Minnesota.
- Public lands--Minnesota.
- Salt spring lands--Minnesota.
- School lands--Minnesota.
- Swamp lands--Minnesota.
- Trust fund lands--Minnesota.

Places:

- Burntside State Forest (Minn.).

Organizations:

- United States. General Land Office.

Types of Documents:

- Microforms.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Restrictions:

Microfilmed originals (2.25 cubic feet) and master microfiche (65 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. *[Indicate the cited volume and page or item and folder title 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, 1982.

Microfiche. Burbank, CA and Saint Paul, MN : P.F.A., Inc. and Minnesota Historical Society, 1984. 65 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.: 1735031

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

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

Indemnity School Lands, 1858-1960 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)

Under the Minnesota statehood act (11 Stat. 166, Enabling Act of February 26, 1857), sections 16 and 36 of every township (totaling 1280 acres per township) were dedicated to the state school fund. If any such section was deficient (less than a full section by reason of being located in a fractional township; covered by a lake, river, or swamp; reserved for some other public purpose; or pre-empted by settlement), the state could select "indemnity" lands from the public domain to make up the deficiency. The approved lists certify that the tracts selected by the state as indemnity school lands were not subject to any prior claim or reservation.

The lists were compiled into volumes corresponding approximately to the land districts in existence in 1903, as follows: Volume 1, Marshall, St. Cloud, Crookston, and predecessor districts; Volume 2, Duluth Land District; Volume 3, Cass Lake Land District. Within each district the lists are arranged by chronologically assigned list numbers.

The indemnity school lands lists contain the following information: list number; land district through which the selections were made; legal description of the deficient section(s) (16 and/or 36), citing range, town, section, and fractional section; area of section(s) 16 and/or 36 in place; acreage by which these sections were deficient; legal description of the land selected to

supply the deficiency; total acreage of the indemnity selections; cause of the deficiency in the original school lands; and date(s) the selections were approved. For a few land offices, the total indemnity lands entitled within each county and the total selected to date have been written in at the bottom of each page.

Since these volumes are compilations from various land offices, there was no original pagination. At some point, however, the agency with custody of the records penciled in consecutive page numbers.

There is a general index to the indemnity school lands approved lists, keyed to these page numbers, on pages 4-25 of the United States Land Grant Index, cataloged separately as in the State Land Office's Indexes to State Land Records. It is organized by range and town of the selected indemnity lands and cites the volume(s) and page(s) on which the selections for a particular township can be found. As an aid to researchers, it has been filmed prior to Volume 1. There are also indexes to individual volumes at the beginning of each volume.

Location	Reel	
SAM 45	33	Index. Original index is cataloged separately in the State Land Office: Indexes to State Land Records. Volume 1. Marshall, St. Cloud, Crookston, and Predecessor Land Districts. Stillwater Land Office: List numbers "K", 1. Winnebago Land Office: List number 1. St. Peter Land Office: List number 1. Forest City Land Office: List number 1. Litchfield Land Office: List number 1. New Ulm Land Office: List number 1. Taylors Falls Land Office: List number 1. Alexandria Land Office: List number 1. Redwood Falls Land Office: List number 1. Worthington Land Office: List number 2. Marshall Land Office: List numbers 1-3. St. Cloud Land Office: List numbers 1-10. Crookston Land Office: List numbers 1-7. Volume 2. Duluth Land District. Duluth Land Office: List numbers 1-14. Volume 3. Cass Lake Land District. Cass Lake Land Office: List numbers 1-7, 13, 15-17.

Agricultural College Lands, 1867-1879 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)

By an act of Congress approved July 2, 1862, entitled "An Act Donating Public Land to the several States and Territories which may provide Colleges for the benefit of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts" (12 Stat. 503, the Morrill Act), Minnesota was entitled to select land from the public domain to support such colleges. The approved lists certify that the tracts selected were not subject to any prior claim or reservation. They are arranged by land district and

chronologically assigned list number. Within each list the selected tracts are arranged by county, range, town, section, and fractional section.

The lists contain the following information: land district through which selections were made; list number; date the selections were made; legal description of the parcels selected, citing range, town, section, and fractional section; total acre value of the parcel and actual acreage (some land designated "double minimum" was accounted twice its actual acreage against the original grant; the "actual acreage" figures were added by the State Land Office); and dates the selections were approved.

Included are two indexes to these lists: the first is organized by range and township and cites the page(s) on which selections in a particular township can be found; the other index is also by range and township, but cites the list number, land district, and date of approval for selections in a particular township.

Location	Reel	
SAM 45	33	Volume 4. Approved Lists, Agricultural College Lands.

Internal Improvement Lands, 1867-1874, 1906-1907 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 34, part)

By an act of Congress approved September 4, 1841 (5 Stat. 453), Minnesota was entitled to select 500,000 acres of land from the public domain for the purpose of financing "such internal improvements as the legislature might direct." The approved lists certify that the selected tracts were not subject to any prior claim or reservation.

The lists are arranged by land district and list number. Within each list the selected tracts are arranged by range, town, section, and fractional section.

The lists contain the following information: land district through which the selections were made; list number (sometimes called "report number"); legal descriptions of the parcels selected, citing range, town, section, and fractional section; acres in the parcel; actual acreage if the selected parcel was deficient (this figure was added by the State Land Office); and dates the selections were approved.

Location	Reel	
SAM 45	34	Volume 5. Internal Improvement Lands, 1867-1874, 1906-1907.

Salt Spring Lands, 1871-1916 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)

Under the Minnesota statehood act (11 Stat. 166, Enabling Act of February 26, 1857), Minnesota was entitled to select from the public domain certain tracts of land containing salt springs. This grant was later modified by an act of March 3, 1879, entitled "An Act granting lands to the state of Minnesota in lieu of certain lands heretofore granted to said State." This act allowed Minnesota to relinquish its claim to some of the salt spring lands and to select an equivalent amount of land as indemnity. This volume contains approved lists for lands selected under both of these acts. The approved lists certify that the selected lands were not subject to any prior claim or reservation.

The lists are arranged in approximate chronological order by date of approval. Within each list the selected tracts are arranged by range, town, section, and fractional section.

The salt spring approved lists contain the following information: spring number; legal description of the parcels selected; total acreage of the selection; and dates the selections were approved.

The approved lists for indemnity selections include the following information: land office through which the selections were made; list number; date the selections were made; legal description of the parcels selected; area of the parcel; spring number; area and date of the original salt spring selection for which the indemnity selection was made; total acreage selected in the indemnity list; and dates the indemnity selections were approved.

The index to these lists is arranged by range and township and cites the page(s) on which selections in a particular township appear.

Location	Reel	
SAM 45	33	Volume 6. Approved Lists, Salt Spring Lands, 1871-1916.

Public Buildings Lands, 1863 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)

Under terms of the statehood act (11 Stat. 166, Enabling Act of February 26), Minnesota was entitled to select ten entire sections of land from the public domain "for the purpose of completing the Public Buildings, or for the erection of public buildings at the seat of government." The approved lists certify that the lands selected were not subject to any prior claim or reservation. They are certified copies of the original lists, made in 1901. This volume also includes a record of leases given on the public buildings lands, ca. 1891-1893.

The lands selected for public buildings are recorded in two lists, the first containing nine sections of land and the second a single section. They provide the following information: list number; land district through which the selections were made; date the selections were made; legal description of the parcels selected, citing range, town, section, and fractional section; acreage of the parcel; and dates the selections were approved.

The record of leases is arranged by range, town, section, and fractional section and contains the following information: lease number; legal description of the parcel leased; acreage of the parcel; rent per acre; annual rent for the entire parcel; lessee; date of lease; and duration of the lease.

Location	Reel	
SAM 45	33	Volume 7. Approved Lists, Public Buildings Lands, 1863.

University Lands, 1854-1915 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)

Under the terms of the Minnesota statehood act (11 Stat. 166, Enabling Act of February 26) and an act of Congress of July 8, 1870 (16 Stat. 196), Minnesota was entitled to select lands from the public domain for the purpose of supporting a university. The approved lists certify that the tracts selected in each land district were not subject to any prior claim or reservation. They are accompanied by a lengthy report (1908) on the history and disposition of the university lands.

The lists are arranged chronologically, in the approximate order in which the selections were approved. Within each list the selected lands are arranged by legal description (range, town, section, and fractional section). The lists contain the following information: list number; land district through which the selections were made; legal description of the parcels selected;

acres in the parcels; date the selections were approved; and occasional items of supporting documentation.

The index to the university lands approved lists is organized by range and township and cites the page(s) on which selections in a particular township can be found.

Location	Reel	
SAM 45	33	Volume 8. University Lands, 1854-1915. The contents of this volume are listed in the order in which they were bound into the volume and appear on the microfilm. Stillwater Land District: Lists nos. 1, 2, 3. Sauk Rapids Land District: List no. 1. Stillwater Land District: List no. 4. Winona Land District: List no. 1. Red Wing Land District: List no. 1. Stillwater Land District: List no. 5. Forest City Land District: List nos. 1, 2. Alexandria Land District: List no. 2. Duluth Land District: List nos. 2, 4, 5, 6. Crookston Land District: List no. 7. Alexandria Land District: List no. 1. Duluth Land District: List no. 1. St. Cloud Land District: List no. 1. Oak Lake Land District: List no. 1. New Ulm Land District: List no. 1. Duluth Land District: List no. 3. Duluth Land District: List no. 11. Auditor's Report on Disposition on University Lands, 1908.

Volstead Lands, 1963 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 33, part)

A Volstead lands patent, United States to Minnesota, records the transfer of designated lands from the federal government to the state of Minnesota under terms of the Volstead Act of May 20, 1908 (35 Stat. 169) and a Congressional act of May 1, 1958 (72 Stat. 99). The Volstead Act authorized the establishment of liens against unpatented public lands to defray the costs of drainage projects. The 1958 act specified the conditions under which lands subject to such liens could be patented to the state.

The Volstead lands patent provides the following information: patent number; legal descriptions of the parcels patented, citing principal meridian, range, town, section, and fractional section; list of those parcels on which the United States retained the right to flood and overflow; aggregate acreage in the entire patent; and date the patent was executed. The parcels patented are arranged by legal description.

This patent was originally filed in volume 6 of the Approved Lists.

Location	Reel	
SAM 45	33	Volume 6. Volstead Lands Patent, 1963.

Swamp Lands, 1865-1912 (Microfilm SAM 45, Reel 34, part)

This is an incomplete set of lists of swamp lands submitted to the U.S. General Land Office and certified by that office as qualifying for transfer to the state of Minnesota. They were originally disbursed among the records of the U.S. General Land Office (state copies) and the Minnesota state auditor's office, and have been brought together in a single file.

The swamp land grant, authorized by a Congressional act of September 28, 1850 and extended to Minnesota by act of March 12, 1860 (12 Stat. 3), entitled the state of Minnesota to select from the public domain all "swamp and overflowed lands" unsuitable for cultivation and to dispose of the land for such purposes as the legislature saw fit. The lists certify that the tracts enumerated in the selection lists submitted by the state surveyor general qualified under the grant's definition of swamp and overflowed lands and were not subject to any adverse claim. The approved lists did not transfer title, but were a preliminary step to the issuance of a patent.

The lists are arranged by land district and thereunder by date of approval by the secretary of the interior. They provide the following information: list number; land district through which the selections were made; legal description of the tracts selected, citing range, town, section, and fractional section; acreage of the tract; total acreage approved in the list; and date approved.

Location	Reel	
SAM 45	34	Duluth Land District, 1865-1912 (nos. 1-199, incomplete). Taylors Falls Land District, 1865-1891 (nos. 1-7). St. Cloud Land District, 1865-1904 (nos. 1-158 and unnumbered, incomplete). Alexandria Land District, 1873 (nos. 1-3). Fergus Falls Land District, 1889 (no. 4). Winnebago Land District, 1865 (no. 1). Jackson Land District, 1872 (no. 2). Marshall Land District, 1894-1901 (nos. 27-124, incomplete). Crookston Land District, 1880-1905 (nos. 3-176, incomplete). Cass Lake Land District, 1903-1907 (nos. 153, 154, 162).

Swamp Lands (Set 2), 1865-1959 (Unfilmed)

This set of swamp land approved lists was originally in the custody of the Department of Natural Resources, Land Bureau, and is more complete than the microfilmed set.

Arranged by land district, thereunder by list number. The list numbers were originally assigned in separate sequences for each land district. After about 1895, list numbers were assigned in a single sequence encompassing all land districts. In the list below, the volumes have been assigned arbitrary sequential numbers to differentiate them from each other.

The volumes and/or individual lists include tract indexes.

Location

106.K.10.5B

- Volume 1. Various land districts.
Root River Land District, 1865-1876, Lists 1-3.
Includes Winnebago City, Jackson, Worthington.
List 3 (Worthington) is missing from the microfilmed set.
Winona Land District, 1865-1901, Lists 1-124.
Includes St. Peter, New Ulm, Tracy, Marshall.
Lists 1-3 (St. Peter, New Ulm) are missing from the microfilmed set.
Red Wing Land District, 1865-1879, Lists 1, 1-2.
Includes Henderson and Redwood Falls. These lists are missing from the microfilmed set.
Minneapolis Land District, 1865-1877, Lists 1-4.
Includes Forest City, Litchfield, Benson.
These lists are missing from the microfilmed set.
- Volume 2. Crookston Land District, 1880-1905, Lists 3-179.
See also Oak Lake Land Office.
- Volume 3. Various land districts.
Oak Lake Land Office, 1877, List 1.
Belongs in Crookston Land District.
Stillwater Land District (Taylors Falls), 1865-1891, Lists 1-7.
Alexandria Land District, 1873-1892, Lists 1-5.
Includes Alexandria, Fergus Falls.
St. Cloud Land District, 1888-1904, Lists 20[?]-158.
- Volume 4. St. Cloud Land District, 1865-1883, Lists 1-20[?].
- Volume 5. Duluth Land District, 1865-1883, Lists 1-15.
- Volume 6. Duluth Land District, 1884-1896, Lists 16-71.
The following districts are missing from the microfilmed set: 24, 25, 30, 33, 34.
- Volume 7. Duluth Land District, 1897-1903, Lists 73-138; St. Cloud Land District, 1901, List 126.
The following Duluth districts are missing from the microfilmed set: 83, 87, 89, 90, 92-96, 102, 104-106, 111, 113, 114, 122, 126, 131, 132.

106.K.10.6F

- Folder 1. Duluth Land District, 1903-1904, Lists 140-162.
Folder 2. Duluth Land District, 1904-1959, Lists 164-250.
The following districts are missing from the microfilmed set:
170, 203, 241-246, 249, 250.
- Folder 3. Cass Lake Land District, 1904-1910, Lists 153-193.
Folder 4. Cass Lake Land District, 1912-1927, Lists 194-209.
Folder 5. Cass Lake Land District, 1927-1932, Lists 210-240.

State Experimental Forest, 1905 (Unfilmed)

A list and plats of lands approved for patenting to Minnesota for use as a state experimental forest as provided by a Congressional act of April 28, 1904 (33 Stat. 536). This act allowed the state to select up to 20,000 acres from the federal public domain for this purpose. The approved list certifies that the selected tracts were not subject to any other claim or reservation. The list gives the legal description of the approved tracts, and the plats illustrate their location in townships 63 and 64, range 13, St. Louis County (the present Burntside State Forest.)

Location

112.C.1.7 Approved Lists, State Experimental Forest, 1905. 1 folder.

Closed Originals

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

Location

304.G.12.3B Approved Lists, 1858-1963.
 Indemnity School Lands, 1858-1960.
 Volumes 1-2.

304.G.12.4F Volume 3.
 Volume 4. Agricultural College Lands, 1867-1879.
 Volume 5. Internal Improvement Lands, 1867-1874, 1906-1907.
 Volume 6. Salt Spring Lands, 1871-1916; Volstead Patent, 1963.
 Volume 7. Public Building Lands, 1863.
 Volume 8. University Lands, 1854-1915.
 Includes 1908 report on the lands' history and disposition.

304.G.5.4F Approved Lists, Swamp Lands, 1865-1912.
 Duluth Land District, Nos. 1-199, 1865-1912. 7 folders.
 Incomplete.
 Taylors Falls Land District, Nos. 1-7, 1865-1891.
 St. Cloud Land District, Nos. 1-158 and unnumbered, 1865-1904. 4 folders.
 Incomplete.
 Alexandria Land District, Nos. 1-3, 1873.
 Fergus Falls Land District, No. 4, 1889.
 Winnebago Land District, No. 1, 1865.
 Jackson Land District, No. 2, 1872.
 Marshall Land District, Nos. 27-124, 1894-1901.
 Incomplete.
 Crookston Land District, Nos. 3-176, 1880-1905. 2 folders.
 Incomplete.
 Cass Lake Land District, Nos. 153, 154, 162, 1903-1907.

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

1858-1963. 65 microfiche.

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