

Your Tour

History and tradition suggest that the Headwaters Region of Minnesota was the homeland of the Eastern Dakota. This location is one of their ancestral villages and burial grounds.

The types of pottery sherds, or fragments of pottery vessels, found at this site are common to the region. Their decorative patterns and the shape of the vessels they represent are characteristic of particular groups of people belonging to the Woodland Tradition from 800 B.C. to 900 A.D.

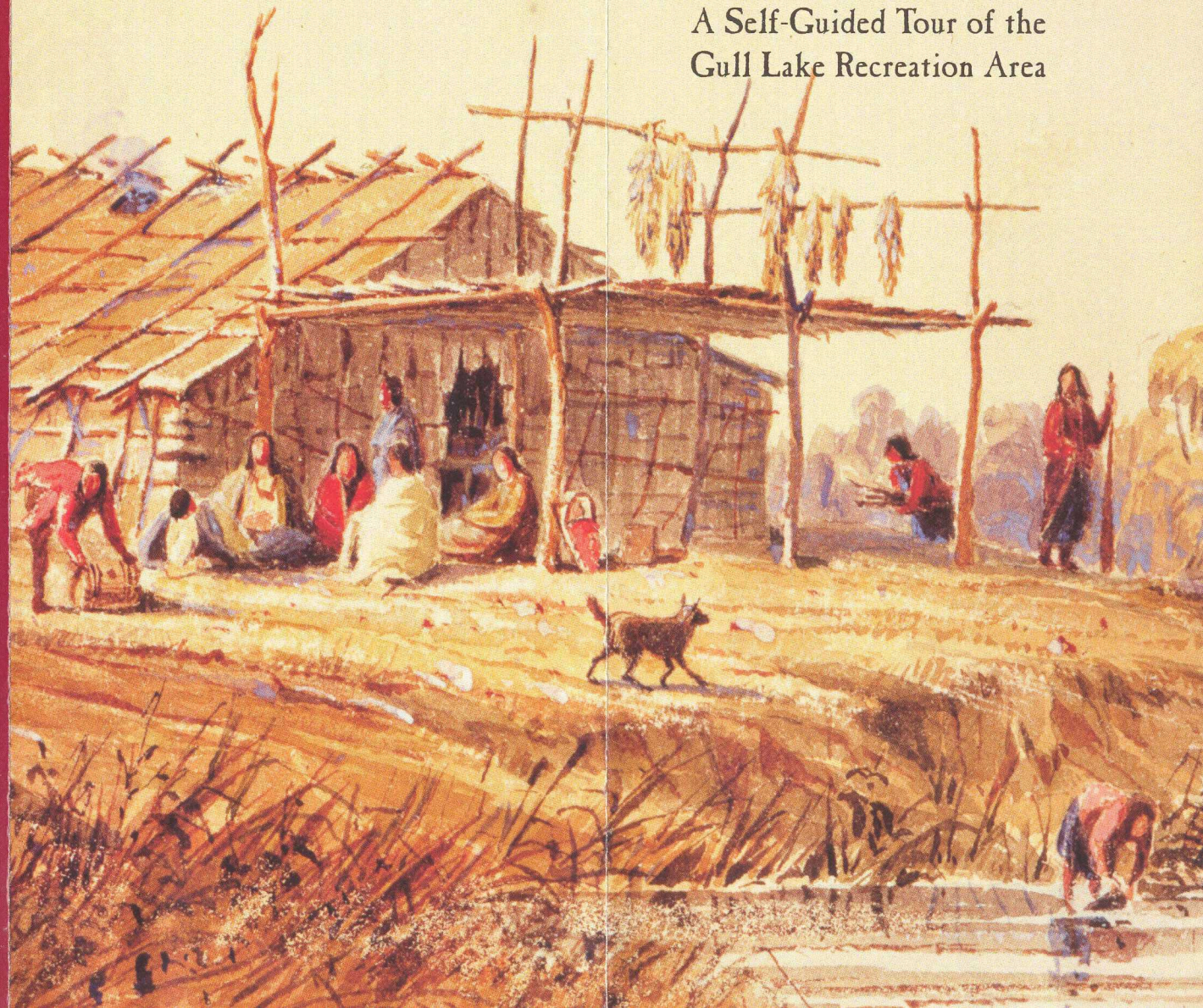
Woodland Tradition is a general term given by archaeologists to the later prehistoric people of the eastern North American woodlands. This tradition is generally thought to begin with the introduction of pottery vessels and burial of the dead in mounds. It was a period of population increase and more established villages based on horticulture, or in northern Minnesota, the gathering of wild rice.



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Gull Lake Native American Burial Mounds

A Self-Guided Tour of the
Gull Lake Recreation Area

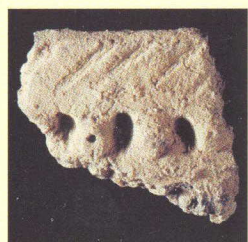


A Self-Guided Tour of the Gull Lake Native American Burial Mounds

The Gull Lake Mounds were excavated in 1969 by the University of Minnesota. This excavation was one of the last large-scale mound excavations conducted in Minnesota. The human remains and many of the artifacts removed from these mounds were returned by the St. Paul District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to the Dakota people for reburial in 1998.

The Gull Lake Burial Mounds were built in episodes over time. Mound #8 incorporated several smaller mounds into a linear shape as additions were made horizontally. Mound #1 began as two separate mounds joined to form an elongated shape. Most of the other mounds are considered circular.

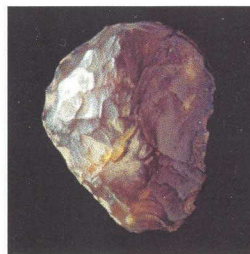
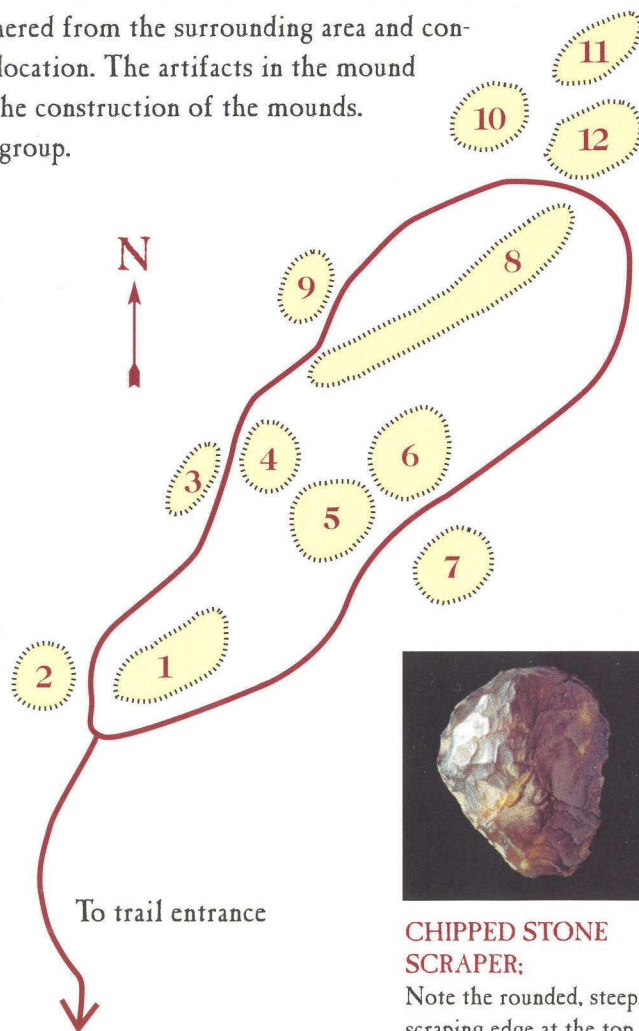
The earth used to construct the mounds was gathered from the surrounding area and contained artifacts from centuries of village life at this location. The artifacts in the mound fill, as well as those placed with the dead, help date the construction of the mounds. Mound #1 is believed to be the oldest mound in the group.



MALMO/KERN POTTERY;
800 B.C. – A.D. 200
(Middle Woodland period)
Vessel rim fragment, or rim sherd, with diagonal slashes and punctates over a smooth surface.



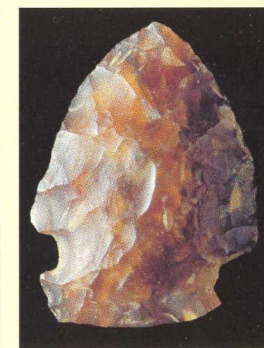
BRAINERD NET IMPRESSED POTTERY;
ORIGINALLY DATED TO A.D. 600 – A.D. 800
(late-Middle Woodland period) However, recent radiocarbon dates suggest a much earlier origin.
Left; smoothed-over net impressed rim sherd, note the remaining knot impressions.
Right; rim sherd with multiple net impressions on exterior and horizontal band of punctates just below the lip.



CHIPPED STONE SCRAPER;
Note the rounded, steep, scraping edge at the top of the photograph.



ST. CROIX STAMPED POTTERY;
A.D. 500 – A.D. 800 (late-Middle Woodland period).
Rim sherd with dentate stamping that forms horizontal bands of decoration. The stamp was carved from a piece of wood. Common to northwestern Wisconsin, Central Minnesota, and eastern portions of the Dakotas.



SIDE-NOTCHED PROJECTILE POINTS:
Typical of the Prairie Side-Notched type common to the Gull Lake site and the late-Middle Woodland period in Central Minnesota.