



Other Things to Do!

As you're planning your trip to/from the conference in Duluth, we've compiled a list of some things to consider in Duluth/Superior, in the greater Duluth/Superior area, on the way to/from Duluth, and in the Twin Cities area. Read on for

- Iconic/unique things in the immediate Duluth/Superior area
- Iconic/unique things in the greater Duluth/Superior area
- On the way to Duluth/Twin Cities
- Iconic/unique things in the Twin Cities area
- Book/map recommendations – to read before, during, or after your time in Duluth

Iconic/unique things in the immediate Duluth/Superior area

Agate hunting – hunt for some Lake Superior Agates (state gemstone) at the local

- Brighton Beach (<https://northshorevisitor.com/activities/lake-superior-agates/>)
- Wisconsin Point (<https://www.superiorwi.gov/226/Wisconsin-Point>)

If you strike out, you can pick through piles at Get Pickin in Cloquet by appointment (<https://www.facebook.com/getpickin/>)

Checkout this online agate hunting resource: <https://lakesuperiorcircuitour.info/hunting-lake-superior-agates/>

Checkout these books agate-related books

- **Amazing Agates: Lake Superior's Banded Gemstone**, by Scott Wolter (<https://www.kollathstensaas.com/book.php?bookID=16>)
- **Lake Superior Agates Field Guide**, by Dan Lynch and Bob Lynch (<https://shop.adventurewithkeen.com/product/lake-superior-agates-field-guide/>)
- **A Is for Agates: A Lake Superior Alphabet Book**, by Patti Baraks (<https://itascabooks.com/products/a-is-for-agates-a-lake-superior-alphabet-book-1>)

Shipping – you can track shipping activity in the harbor on the Duluth Seaway Port Authority's Ship Schedule page (<https://harborlookout.com/ships#0>)

- Live webcams: <https://visitduluth.com/lake-superior/live-webcams/>
- View ships from Canal Park, Park Point, the Lakewalk, and other places around town

Canal Park – Lots of shops and restaurants in Canal Park.

- You may not be running the marathon, but you can visit Grandma's Saloon & Grill (<https://grandmasrestaurants.com/>)
- Canal Park Brewery – a brownfield redevelopment site, try the Clean Dirt Pub Draught if available (<https://canalparkbrewery.com/>)
- Lake Superior Marine Visitor Center (<https://www.lsmma.com/>)

Lakewalk – walk or bike the entire 8-miles or take in portions of it (<https://duluthmn.gov/parks/parks-trails/parks-listing/lakewalk/>)

Bayfront Festival Park – The annual Tribute Fest will be playing on August 28-29, 2026 (<https://www.thetributefest.com/main-stage/> & <https://www.thetributefest.com/bent-paddle-2nd-stage/>)



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Biking - You can rent bikes and e-bikes at Skihut (www.theskihut.com) and then explore local biking trails (<https://duluthmn.gov/parks/trail-pages-list/paved-trails/>)

Charter Fishing – fish the lake or tributaries (<https://duluthcharterfishing.com/>)

North Shore Scenic Railroad – four trips available (<https://duluthtrains.com/>)

Great Lakes Aquarium – features animals and habitats found within the Great Lakes Basin as well as animals from other freshwater ecosystems. The Aquarium is home to North America's largest sturgeon touchpool and several marine touchpools (<https://glaquarium.org/>)

Spirit Mountain – mountain biking, zip lining, alpine rollercoaster, and more (<https://spiritmt.com/summer/adventure-park/>)

Superior Hiking Trail – hike portions of the trail around Duluth, or plan a longer adventure (<https://superiorhiking.org/>)

Hiking/Walking in Duluth/Superior– some great day hikes

- Park Point Nature Trail (<https://lakesuperiorcircuitour.info/location/park-point/>)
- Hartley Nature Center/Park (<https://hartleynature.org/hartley-park/>)
- Chester Park (<https://lakesuperiorcircuitour.info/location/chester-park-loop/> & <https://www.chesterbowl.org/trail-maps/>)
- Lester Falls at Lester Park (<https://duluthmn.gov/parks/parks-trails/parks-listing/lester-park/>)
- Rose Garden at Lief Erickson Park (along the Lakewalk) and on the shore of the lake (<https://duluthmn.gov/parks/parks-trails/parks-listing/leif-erikson-park/>)
- Billings Point Trail in Billings Park (<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/wisconsin/billings-point-trail>)
- Superior Municipal Forest (<https://www.superiorwi.gov/224/Superior-Municipal-Forest>)

Jay Cook State Park – can be visited as a day trip from Duluth or on your way to/from Duluth (https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/park.html?id=spk00187#homepage). This is an iconic structural geology trip for many geology students (<https://youtu.be/XBW6kfCXQvs> & <https://roadmarker.geosocmn.org/content/jay-cooke-state-park>).

Lake Superior Zoo – 19th oldest zoo in the US (<https://lszoo.org/>)



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Iconic/unique things in the greater Duluth/Superior area

Agate Hunting – further afield from Duluth at these public beaches

- Cutface Creek & Rest Area, south of Grand Marais, but be sure not to collect from the state park across the highway (<https://greatlakesdrive.com/GLD/property/cut-face-creek-rest-area/>)
- Beaver River Beach at the Beavery Bay Wayside: <https://greatlakesdrive.com/GLD/property/beaver-bay-river-shoreline/>
- Stoney Point (<https://visitduluth.com/listings/stoney-point/>) part of a 1-mile gravel loop along the lakeshore, about 25 miles northeast of Duluth, along Minnesota Highway 61. Also a popular lake viewing area.

If you strikeout, perhaps visit Agate City Rocks & Gifts in Two Harbors (<https://www.agatecity.com/location-and-hours>)

Thomsonite Hunting – can generally be found on the beaches between Lutsen and Grand Marais

- Cutface Creek & Rest Area, south of Grand Marais, but be sure not to collect from the state park across the highway (<https://greatlakesdrive.com/GLD/property/cut-face-creek-rest-area/>)

Geologic Markers – explore geologic markers wherever you are in Minnesota

(<https://roadmarker.geosocmn.org/content/do-it-yourself-geology-field-trips-minnesota>)

Scenic Drive – take a drive along Minnesota Highway 61 as it follows the shoreline from Duluth to Grand Portage. If you plan to make it a multi-day adventure, plan your lodging early as the summer months fill up.

Split Rock Lighthouse – visit the North Shore's most famous lighthouse, <https://www.mnhs.org/splitrock>

- About an hour north of Duluth along Minnesota Highway 61
- Geology overview from the Historical Marker Database: <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=204164>

Minnesota Museum of Mining – located in Chisholm, MN this museum has lots of exhibits for non-geologists too (<https://www.mnmuseumofmining.org/>)

Mountain Biking – some iconic trails

- Cuyuna Range: <https://www.cuyunalakesmtb.com/>
- Redhead Mountain Bike Park: <https://www.redheadmtbpark.com/>
- Mesabi Trail: <https://ironrange.org/listings/mesabi-trail/>

Dark Sky Parks/Sanctuaries and Low-Light Pollution Parks – want to seek the Milky Way...the new moon phase is August 24-September 1 (best between 11 pm – 3 am) in the east/southeast sky

- Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/r09/superior/recreation>
- Voyageurs National Park: <https://www.nps.gov/voya/index.htm>
- Rural areas of the North Shore

Soudan Underground Mine State Park – go on a 90 minute tour of the Soudan Underground Mine and experience the life of the miner as you travel 2,341 feet — nearly one half mile — underground. A former



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underground iron mine, known as the "Cadillac of Mines."

(https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/tours/lake_vermilion_soudan.html)



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On the way to Duluth/Twin Cities

Moose Lake State Park – visit the Agate and Geological Center

(https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/park.html?id=spk00239#homepage)

Iconic/unique things in the Twin Cities area

Minnesota State Fair – the “Great Minnesota Get-Together,” runs August 27-September 7 and is the largest state fair in the US by average daily attendance (<https://www.mnstatefair.org/>)

Minnehaha Falls – a short drive from MSP Airport with lovely trails and a restaurant (https://www.minneapolis-parks.org/parks-destinations/parks-lakes/minnehaha_regional_park/) with some fun, accessible geology (<https://www.nps.gov/miss/learn/nature/twingeol.htm> and <https://www.sierraclub.org/minnesota/blog/2022/07/geology-tour-minneapolis-parks>)

Coldwater Spring/Mni Owe Sni – near Minnehaha Falls and a sacred area of the Dakota/ (<https://www.nps.gov/places/mni-owe-sni.htm> and <http://friendsofcoldwater.org/>)

St. Anthony Falls/Lock & Dam – visit the Upper and Lower St. Anthony Falls lock and dam (<https://www.nps.gov/miss/planyourvisit/stanfall.htm> and <https://www.nps.gov/miss/learn/historyculture/river-of-history-chapter-6.htm>)

Taylor’s Falls/Interstate Park – see evidence of glacial rivers in the park’s potholes (https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/park.html?id=spk00178#homepage and https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/destinations/state_parks/interstate/interstate_geology.pdf)

Bell Museum – a natural history museum and planetarium (<https://www.bellmuseum.umn.edu/>)

Science Museum of Minnesota – has some great exhibits, an Omnitheater, and Backyard exhibit area outside that has a groundwater component (<https://smm.org/>)



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Book/map recommendations

Please contact us at webmaster@aipgmn.org to add your favorites to the list, as this will be published on the AIPG MN Section website after the conference!

Roadside Geology of Minnesota, by Richard Ojakangas (<https://mountain-press.com/products/roadside-geology-minnesota>)

Geology on Display: Geology and Scenery of Minnesota's North Shore State Parks, by John Green (<https://www.amazon.com/Geology-display-scenery-Minnesotas-North/dp/0965712702>)

Minnesota's Geology, by Richard Ojakangas and Charles Matsch (<https://www.upress.umn.edu/9780816609536/minnesotas-geology/>)

Geology of Minnesota, A Guide for Teachers, by G.B. Morey and Henk Dahlberg (https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/lands_minerals/geologyhandbook.pdf)

Minnesota's Geologist: The Life of Newton Horace Winchell, by Sue Leaf (<https://www.upress.umn.edu/9781517922030/minnesotas-geologist/>)

Minnesota History Along the Highways, by S.P. Rubinstein (presents the locations and texts of 60 geologic markers, and nearly 300 historic markers in Minnesota) (

Minnesota Mineral Club's "Dr. Bill's MN Geology Snapshots" - Dr. Bill Cordua is an Emeritus Professor of Geology and an Honorary member of the MMC who writes brief, fun and informative "snapshots" about Minnesota Geology (<https://minnesotamineralclub.org/geology/>)