

# MINNESOTA

The land of a thousand lakes is about 90% empty wild woods, with scattered settlements along the rivers and lake shores. The northern woods and lakes provide wonderful places for wandering hunting/fishing groups. The thick snowfalls keep only the most determined people here year round. A few small coastal communities on Lake Superior are thriving as fishing towns. Large groups of bandits are rare, as there is little left to loot, but dangers come from the bitterly harsh winters and the mutant fauna in the woods.

## 1) NUCLEAR TARGETS

**Minneapolis**, SS-17

**Saint Paul**, SS-N-17

**Duluth**, SS-17

## 2) MORROW PROJECT ASSETS

**Shoreside Support Facility 1:** Support base for the larger Manned Resupply Base on Isle Royale. Located in Grand Portage, hidden beneath the ramshackle ruins of "Morrow Shipping and Storage", a typical pre-war small-time shipping operation, with two large warehouses, four lines of rental-storage lockers, some small piers, and the remains of a helipad. The underground facility is still fully operational, containing two disassembled fusion-powered LCACs and much heavy lift equipment to be used by Teams looking to resupply from Isle Royale.

**Recon Team G-23B:** Bolthole location unknown. Frozen September 8, 1984, they are one of several teams distributed through the Lake Superior region.

**Recon Team MR-MN-P1:** Bolthole location unknown.

## 3) NORTHERN MINNESOTA

The northern woods and lakes provide a wonderful place for wandering groups of hunting/fishing parties. The area still receives some lake-effect rains, as well, making agriculture possible. A few small coastal communities on Lake Superior are thriving fishing towns.

**Pre-War:** The region of Minnesota called the Iron Range, from Duluth to the Canadian border, was rich in iron ore and arable land. The rail and road system centered on Duluth and served to transport grain and ore to the port city on Lake Superior. The area was under-industrialized and under-populated. The Range was heavily hit by the recessions of the 1970s and 80s. Several universities and colleges served the Range. Principal among these was the University of Minnesota, Duluth. This school provided courses in medicine, nursing, agriculture, veterinary medicine, and military science (as part of the Air Force ROTC program).

**The War:** When the bombs fell, Duluth was preparing for the November storms. Many large vessels were preparing to end the shipping season with one last shipment to the seaway. The berths of the commercial docks were filled and pleasure craft were lining up to be pulled from the water. When the warhead struck Duluth Harbor, the Great Lakes merchant fleet was destroyed. In addition to the destruction of the ships, a cubic mile of mud was thrown into the air. This rained down on Northern [Wisconsin](#) and the upper peninsula of [Michigan](#). A tidal wave 300-feet tall swept through the basin, scouring the flood plain and leaving an eerie, desolate marsh.

**Post-War:** In the aftermath of the war, only one out of every ten people survived. Distribution of scarce resources was managed by the officer candidates from UMD. The best organized areas were under the control of the ROTC, who felt it necessary to declare martial law. At first the ROTC remained responsible to the chancellor of UMD and to local military authority. In time, however; they realized that they held real power and refused to be controlled. They took control of the resources and materials of survival, and set the stage for the return of a feudal society.

**Terrain and Environment:** This region is known for its rugged beauty. The Mesabi Range where the iron is mined continues to Lake Superior. It is not easily crossed without a road. Generally valleys run east to west, though there are some river valleys that snake a course across this terrain. Since the War, the forest has reclaimed the land. The climate has gotten colder since the War. There are some valleys that have snow on the southern slopes until July. The average high in summer is 70 degrees Fahrenheit. There have been sightings of Kodiak and polar bears. In the winter temperatures can drop to -65 degrees Fahrenheit and not rise above 0 for weeks.

**People of the Land:** In general the society of the area (Duluth, Virginia, and Hibbing) is identical to the feudal baronies of the middle ages. At the bottom of the social structure is the slave. The slave provides energy to do work considered too dangerous for horses or cattle. The slave can expect to be worked until he or she drops, and lacks all rights--even to food. Just above the slave is the serf. The only real difference between the two is that a serf is allowed to protest harsh treatment, if he can find someone to listen. Where a slave belongs to an owner, a serf belongs to the land he farms or the craft shop he operates. Above the serf is the soldier. These are the muscle behind the rulers. Soldiers take what they want, as long as their lord does not want it also. Soldiers are usually the task masters for slaves and press gangs of serfs. At the top of the social order is the ROTC or "Rot-Keys". These are feudal barons who maintain some of the trappings of their more honorable predecessors. They rise through the ranks through the extinction of their superiors, and assassination is not uncommon among the more power-mad. Not all the Rot-Keys are corrupt, but the corrupt are in power and more visible.

**Virginia:** The supplies for raw iron for the Rot-Keys come from the taconite mines near Virginia. Virginia is an almost deserted town. It serves as a garrison for the mines and a supply depot for the soldiers. About 100 soldiers operate out of the town, half to guard the mines, the other half to protect the town and the route to Duluth. The civilian population numbers 700 serfs, craftsmen, and peasants, and 100 slaves in the mines and serving the garrison.

**The Mines:** To the west of Virginia, approximately 15km, are the mines operated by the Rot-Keys. The mines are built within a pre-war open pit mine, and use the high wall created for part of the prison. Surrounding the camp is a wooden palisade 12-feet high with one opening to allow traffic in and out. A guard in a shack at the gate screens traffic coming in during the day. The gates are closed and barred a few hours after sunset. Inside the wall there are watch towers. The towers are 10 to 20-feet high, except the two on top of the ridge, which are at ground level.

**White Earth Indian Reservation:** Generations ago, a Council of Elders met to determine that the tribes living here would take up a nomadic life. They have wandered about northwestern Minnesota and eastern [North Dakota](#) ever since, though they return to the reservation every winter to consolidate and raise their cattle.

**The "Lanterns":** A small band of fishermen and farmers dedicated to doing good in their area, from their home on a small island in Lake Superior. The Lanterns were originally influenced by a cache of ancient comic books called "Justice League". Their leader wears a venerable costume of Green Lantern, hand sewn by the founding father's mother. This costume, complete with cape and mask, has been passed down from leader to leader in an increasingly elaborate ceremony.

**International Falls:** A relatively prosperous, teeming trade town, its population currently numbers some 700. Of that, 500 live in a "suburb" of newly-built houses across the Rainy River in Fort Francis, Ontario. The river and the nearby Rainy Lake provide ample fish and a great trade route, and the thick forests still provide ample game and nuts. Surprisingly, there is little disease and few have starved over the years. There is running water for two hours every afternoon and public buildings have it all the time. The hospital, schools, and roads are in reasonable repair, and the citizens are happy. The Militia unit here is well respected and efficient. Winters are harsh, but houses are well-insulated and people are used to stockpiling food. This might be one of the few places in America that would turn down help from the Project.

**Maxwell's Militia:** International Falls is home to a northern outpost of the Militia. The base is on the major portage from Lake of the Woods to Lake Superior, and the Militia exact a small toll from all traders and voyageurs who pass their way; in return, the Militia police their area and make sure whatever crimes that do occur don't go unpunished. Indeed, the Militia trading post at Fort Frances, Ontario is well known for being a safe haven for travelers. The Militia leader is Baron Robert Fitzgerald and his unit still possesses two operational M60 tanks and about half a dozen M35 and M151

trucks.

**Bemidji:** Home of a band of local thugs who have recently decided that the Native Indians in the area need to be pushed out, mainly to insure that all crops go to the town and not the nomadic Indians. They now patrol an area roughly 30 square miles, centered on the town. They are armed with a variety of weapons, including bows, percussion cap rifles and homemade swords.

**Eagle Mountain Lodge:** When the war came, there were few people at the fancy Eagle Mountain Lodge on Minnesota's northeastern peninsula. Some left, others died, but a dozen or so stayed and settled down. Over the decades the population has increased from this mere handful to several hundred, by refugees and by simple procreation. Having been forced to fend for themselves after the war, the savvy trail guides and canoeists carved out a workable if often difficult life in the rugged Superior National Forest. Over the generations, the lodge was expanded and improved, becoming a virtual castle in the woods. A simple democracy evolved, with everyone working together for the common good. Their two main goals are to eat well and to make healthy babies. There is infrequent contact with trappers and hunters from other areas, but not enough to make a difference. Shipmen on the lake have been met, but so far the Lodge hasn't had much to offer them, and vice versa.

**Grand Portage:** A mostly abandoned city slipping slowly back into Lake Superior, due to erosion and a steadily rising lake level.

#### **4) MAXWELL'S MILITIA**

This is the "western seat" of the once-great Maxwell Empire. See [Indiana](#) for a full description of the origins of Maxwell. The Minnesota branch of the Empire has been independent for the better part of 125 years, since the breakup of the Empire following the death of its founder. At one time Maxwell controlled nearly the entire southern half of the state with a series of well-placed garrisons and administrative centers. That was too much infrastructure to sustain long-term, however, and over the years that territory has shrunk considerably. Today, the Maxwell sphere of influence is centered around the central Minnesota town of Brainerd and the nearby Camp Ripley Army National Guard Training Center. A smaller Militia outpost is located up near the Canadian border (see above).

**Brainerd:** The region around Brainerd and the Camp (basically all of Crow Wing and Wadena Counties) has a population of about 5,400, with some 1,200 of those serving in Maxwell's Militia. They are the most technically advanced people in the region by far, and have the most secure borders. They have a fair amount of motorized vehicles still operational, but mainly use horse-drawn transport except in emergencies. They have extensive industry in Brainerd, and these products are traded throughout the area for food and grain. They also make dynamite and small arms--shotguns and smoothbore percussion cap rifles mostly. Most of the surrounding towns in a twenty-mile circle have small garrisons, about ten to twenty militiamen, except for Motley, Little Falls and Altkin. Those last three have about 50 men each.

**The Camp:** Camp Ripley is the prize of the empire. By the time Maxwell arrived here a few years after the war, much of the staff of the camp had wandered off. Left behind were some loyal soldiers who were guarding the camp's well-hidden stockpiles of weapons. After a bloodless standoff, these men and weapons were incorporated in the Militia, boosting the chances that the Minnesota branch would survive. Today, many of these weapons still survive, mostly M-1 Garand training rifles and some M2 heavy machine guns. The camp is where the Militia is quartered and trained.

**The Militia:** The modern version of the Militia is a powerful organization, more than capable of defending the area and even mounting effective offensive operations. It is, however, rarely needed for either of those activities. Of the some 1,200 men who are members of the militia, only about a quarter are actively on duty at any given time. The rest are farmers and townspeople who keep their uniforms and weapons at home waiting to be called up. The militia consists of ten companies of soldiers, with 100 enlisted and five officers per company. These are grouped into three battalions of three companies each. The extra company is the headquarters company for the militia's leaders.

#### **5) SOUTHERN MINNESOTA**

**The Twin Cities:** The state's lone metro area was nuked by seven blasts, and subsequently burned and abandoned in the chaos. The ruins were left to the dregs. If 400 people are still alive in the entire metropolitan area, then it's a miracle.

**The residents:** Only the far southeastern suburbs of the city are currently supporting any sort of population. The area around Saint Paul Park along the northern bank of the Mississippi River is currently held by the "Twins", a 150-strong settlement of farmers and fishermen. To their northeast, most of the suburb of Woodbury is home to a Jehovah's Witness enclave, one of the last in the nation. The Jehovah's Witnesses have been active in the city for 200 years and following the chaos of the nuclear war, they were one of the only groups that actually wanted to stay in the blasted city. There are about 100 people living here now, living in the areas around Carver Lake and the Prestwick Country Club. Further north, the suburb of Lake Elmo is loosely held by a tribe of Native American Indians, who moved down here a few generations ago from the northern part of the state. They are just 40 strong and they have all of one single rifle, having forsaken the way of violence for a peaceful way.

**The threat:** Miles to the south, in the ruined town of Rosemount, are a pack of violent Grunts. These mutants usually just kill each other for fun and hunt rabbits and deer, but lately they have been casting evil gazes at the settlements to their north.

## 6) SOUTHERN PLAINS

The open, rolling hills south of Interstate 94 are noted for a scattering of settlements and miles and miles of nothing. Maxwell's Militia used to be strong in this part of the state, but their influence has not been dominant for nearly a century. Trade and travel are limited, especially during the harsh winter months when people pretty much hole up in their homes and make babies. The occasional Krell raiding party can be found here, but never outside of the summer months, and not for the last 13 years.

**Mankato:** Home base of an ultra-fundamentalist Christian sect following a twisted view of their Bible. They suspect everyone who doesn't know every passage of the Bible to be sent from Satan and kill all unbelievers they come across. The leader is called the "Prophet" and he currently has over 290 fanatical followers. They extort the local communities in southern Minnesota out of food and young women. They have numbers on their side and they have outposts all over the area. They are not producing any weapons more sophisticated than pikes, but they do have a gunsmith working to repair the few firearms that they have.

**Windom:** Home to 850 people, Windom and the surrounding Des Moines River valley are rich in agriculture, and the area feeds much of the surrounding countryside. The nearby County Corrections Facility was transformed into a fort for the local militia. It is now very formidable and would be difficult to take. They have been able to withstand several half-hearted attempts by the "Christians" in Mankato to "cleanse them of their sins."

**Morris:** This small town on the Pomme de Terre River is home to an unusual community of farmers and hunters called the "Cathays". When the bombs fell in 1989, a group of native Chinese, former students and families who were attending colleges in Minnesota, were meeting in Morris for a kind of group retreat organized by the Chinese Student Association at the University of Minnesota. During the first winter, many left for other places, but most of them, realizing that getting back to either China or even Minneapolis was simply out of the question, stayed here. They and their descendents formed a tight-knit community of traders and farmers, married local girls and boys and tried very hard to maintain their language and heritage. This is one of the very few places in America where nearly everyone speaks Mandarin as well as English. They have contact with Maxwell's Militia in Brainerd, and several trade caravans a month make the trek over to that enclave.

**Granite Falls:** This small town is currently the winter home of a group of 5 traveling Emdees and their escorts. They are traveling in a convoy of four specially outfitted vehicles. The vehicles have been armored and armed with guns, which are usually kept out of sight. These Emdees have been traveling around the state for the last two years, offering medical services to the scattered communities. They were trained by descendants of the Army Corpsmen at Camp Riley. So far they have been able to avoid any confrontations out in the hinterlands, as even the bandits need stitching up. They do avoid the Christians of Mankato, however, as they think the Emdees are "witch doctors". Unfortunately, they are planning on traveling down to Marshall this season.

**Marshall:** Home to a small enclave of Breeders, conducting horrible and inhumane experiments in the old biology labs of Southwest State University here. This group was originally from the main Area 27 Breeder compound in Colorado, but left there nearly many years ago after a philosophical disagreement. They wandered throughout the Midwest, searching for a place to settle down and resume their work. Once they set up shop in Marshall, they continued their experiments on local children, cross-breeding them with mutant strains in an attempt to create a "super-human". The first generation of these hybrids is now reaching maturity, with mixed results. In a strange practice, those experiments which "failed" are not killed, but abandoned out into the local woods to either die or fend for themselves. Most perished quickly, but some are still out there. There are just a handful of "scientists" left here, the group having suffered numerous losses in their time wandering the region. One of these is Essie Harris, great grand daughter of Doctor Judith Harris, who led the group out of Colorado more than a hundred years ago. The scientific equipment is breaking down from a lack of regular maintenance and a lack of spare parts, and only one of the Breeders left has the nuts and bolts knowledge to fix mechanical things. There is only one operational "power source" left, which has to be shared between the machines. This power source is a type of RTG reactor like what runs Project boltholes, developed by the scientists themselves many years ago. If the Emdees from Granite Falls come here, the Breeders will most likely try and kidnap them and force them to help in their experiments.

**"Number 32-B":** One of the failed genetic hybrids that was released into the wild for not progressing well enough. This eight-year old boy simply called Number 32-B by the scientists has been living in the woods for at least nine months, surviving remarkably well on foraging. He has a few characteristics that set him apart from a normal child, including a long-range sensitivity to emotions and an erratic gift of telepathy. The woods in this area are full of mutant wild dogs, and even a group mutant skunks that have seemed to have congregated together. There are also some people living here and there, nomads who are adept at scavenging and surviving. Number-32B was taken in by one of these families and raised for a few months, given the name Jonah. Soon, however, they tossed him back out because of his "weird powers". Jonah learned enough from his time with the humans to know that he is "different" but also that being alone is no fun.

**"Site-T":** There is a secret multi-level underground [Snakeeater](#) base located somewhere in Camden State Park in the southwestern corner of the state, known as "Site-T".

People who have contributed to this entry:

John Raner

Thomas Kozak

Don Harden