Minnesota’s State Seal and Flag
September 12, 2023
Precursors

The Seal of the Northwest Territory, 1797

The Great Seal of Indiana, 1816

The Great Seal of Wisconsin Territory, ca. 1838
A Territorial Seal

Territorial Governor
Alexander Ramsey
(1849-1853)

Concept sketches commissioned from Col. James W. Abert, 1849

Henry H. Sibley, Territorial Delegate (1849-1853) and Minnesota Governor (1858-1859)
Minnesota State Seal, 1858
(Alternative Designs)

- Official Design, L. Buechner, C.F. Lowe and R. Sweeney, 1858
- Henry Sibley Design, 1858
- Alternative Design, L. Buechner, 1858
Minnesota’s State Flag, 1893

First Minnesota State Flag, Amelia Hyde Center, Pauline Fjeld, Thomane Fjeld, 1893

The Minnesota Women’s Auxiliary Board to the Chicago World’s Fair
1957 Flag Redesign

Minnesota State Flag, ca 1960
1983 Seal Revisions

Official State Seal Criticized by Rights Unit

The Minnesota State Seal, which depicts a pioneer farmer watching an Indian ride by on horseback, should be redesigned because “it illustrates a dark part of our history,” the state human rights board has declared.

The board, an advisory body to the state Human Rights Department, passed a resolution recommending “a modern state seal which will demonstrate and promote Minnesota’s current attributes and its potential for future development.”

Board members said the human rights department has received many complaints about the seal: Those who have complained indicate that the seal depicts warfare between the early white settlers and the Indians and “places the Indian in a derogatory light,” board members said.

Minneapolis Star, 11-21-1968

Minnesota Star Tribune, 11-11-1983
For a full list of primary and secondary sources, please refer to:
