



---

# Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

---

88455 Pike Road, Highway 13  
Red Cliff, WI 54814  
Phone: 715-779-3700  
Fax: 715-779-3704  
Website: [www.redcliff-nsn.gov](http://www.redcliff-nsn.gov)

Richard "Rick" Peterson, Chair  
Nathan Gordon, Vice-Chairman  
Johanna M. Wilson, Treasurer  
Mercie Gordon, Secretary

At large Members:

Anthony "Antone" Basina  
Nicholas Richard DePerry, Sr.  
Daniel Duffy  
Carolyn Lee Charette-Gouge  
Jeanne Gordon

Location: Bayfield County, northwest Wisconsin



---

# Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

## Tribal Statistics

There are currently 5,312 Red Cliff tribal members.  
Within Bayfield County, the tribal population breaks down as follows:

- 16 and under = 882
- Ages 16 - 64 = 1,463
- 65 and older = 168

The Red Cliff Reservation totals 14,541 acres.

- 6,404 acres are tribally owned
- 1,917 acres are individually allotted
- 6,220 acres are considered fee land
- Approximately 2,513 tribal members live on reservation, trust, or fee land lands.
- Additionally, large numbers of tribal members live in the City of Bayfield and the Belanger Settlement

Red Cliff is the largest employer in Bayfield County. They employ approximately 300 people.

## Tribal Government

A nine-member council governs Red Cliff.

- Decisions are made by majority rule
- The council is elected to two-year staggered terms with elections held annually

## Brief History

The Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians retains rights under various treaties it signed with the United States in 1836, 1837, 1842, and 1854. This series of treaties ceded large tracts of land in northern Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota to the federal government. In exchange for these vast land cessions, the tribes were given promises of small amounts of money, schooling, equipment, and the like. In addition, the 1854 treaty included the reservation of land as a permanent home for many of the Chippewa bands, including Red Cliff. It is under this treaty that the current reservation was established at Red Cliff. In addition, under the various treaties the tribes, including Red Cliff, reserved certain "usufructuary" rights, namely, the right to hunt, fish, and gather on the lands ceded to the federal government. These treaty rights to hunt, fish, and gather within the ceded territory have been upheld in a series of federal and state court decisions over the past three decades.

The tribe's sovereign immunity from suit is akin to the immunity of the United States and is jurisdictional in nature. Sovereign immunity is an absolute bar to a lawsuit against the

tribe. The doctrine of sovereign immunity from suit as it applies to Indian tribes has received continued and unqualified adherence by the U.S. Supreme Court for well over the last half-century. The tribe's sovereign immunity from suit can only be waived by Congress, or by the tribe itself. Sovereign immunity from suit extends to state court subpoenas seeking to hail tribal officials and/or documents into state court.

## **Tribal Services**

### **Law Enforcement**

- Two officers
- Authorized as a law enforcement agency under Wisconsin statute.
- Funded by Federal funds, with some grant assistance from the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance.

### **Court System**

- One judge and two associate judges
- Practitioners must be admitted to the tribal bar
- The Red Cliff Court System handles cases such as conservation violations, child welfare, etc.
- Funded by Federal funds

### **Education**

- Red Cliff youth are primarily educated in the Bayfield School District (337 students/68.2% of the student population)
- Early Childhood Center – Day Care, Head Start & Early Head Start
- Tribal library
- Red Cliff has a 98% high school graduation rate

### **Healthcare**

- Clinic services include: outpatient ambulatory services such as access to physicians, family nurse practitioners, pediatricians, labs, x-rays, pharmacy, dentists, mental health and Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) outpatient and residential services
- Community health program services include community health representatives; nursing; immunization; Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and Wisconsin Well Women's Program coordination; diabetes programs and maternal and child health services are provided through the Honoring Our Children Program
- Funded by Federal funds, with some funds coming from the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services
- Non-Native Americans are eligible to take advantage of services provided they meet certain requirements

### **Social Services**

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program
- Child Care and Development Fund
- Funded through a variety of sources including state and federal monies

## Economic Enterprises

- Red Cliff employs approximately 300 people in their operations
- 25% are non-Native American
- 75% are Native American

<u>Business</u>	<u>Type of Business</u>
Legendary Waters Resort and Casino (under construction) Red Cliff, WI	Gaming and Hotel
Isle Vista Casino Red Cliff, WI	Gaming
Red Cliff Marina Red Cliff, WI	Marina
Business Park Red Cliff, WI	
Fish Hatchery Red Cliff, WI	