

# WAAWAATE

(Aurora borealis)

There are Northern Lights

Bíidasínookwe ~ Anna Martineau Merritt

Aurora Summit 2022

Image by Greg Ash



**Aaniin/Boozhoo indinawemaaganidog  
Biidasinookwe indigoo, Anna Martineau Merritt indizhinikaaz. Migizi  
indoodem, Miskwaabikaang indoongiba, Oulu/Iron River indaa noongom.**

**What I said there is a traditional protocol greeting. I said, Hello/greetings all of  
relatives!**

**Biidasinookwe is my Spirit name, Anna Martineau-Merritt is what I am called.  
Migizi (Eagle) is my clan/family, and I am from Miskwaabikaang /Red Cliff and  
Iron River is where I live nowadays.**





Descriptions you may see:

Anishinaabe(g) (original people(s)) is what the Ojibwe nation calls themselves.

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians (legal description)


Chippewa/Ochippewa/Ojibaway/Ojibwa/Ojibwe, are all names that others call the Anishinaabe(g).



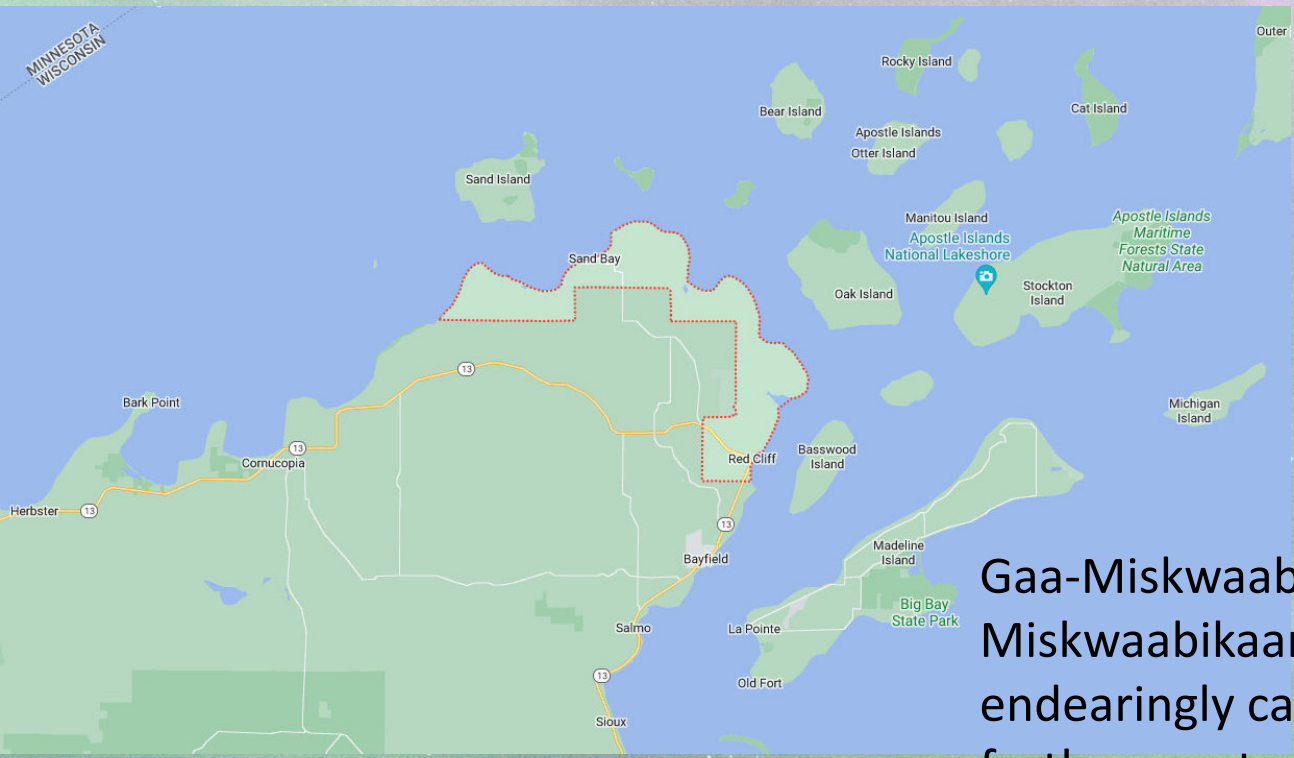
## **Our culture is very complex and yet, very simple**

- ❖ Verb based language/thought process
- ❖ Genderless language
- ❖ Learning is from gichi-aya'aa (elder)/aadizookewinini (storyteller) through
  - ❖ Stories – why and how we do things a certain way
  - ❖ Sacred stories – also called Wenabozho stories (can only be told at certain times)
- ❖ Spirit based lifestyle
- ❖ Spiritual/Spirit based faith



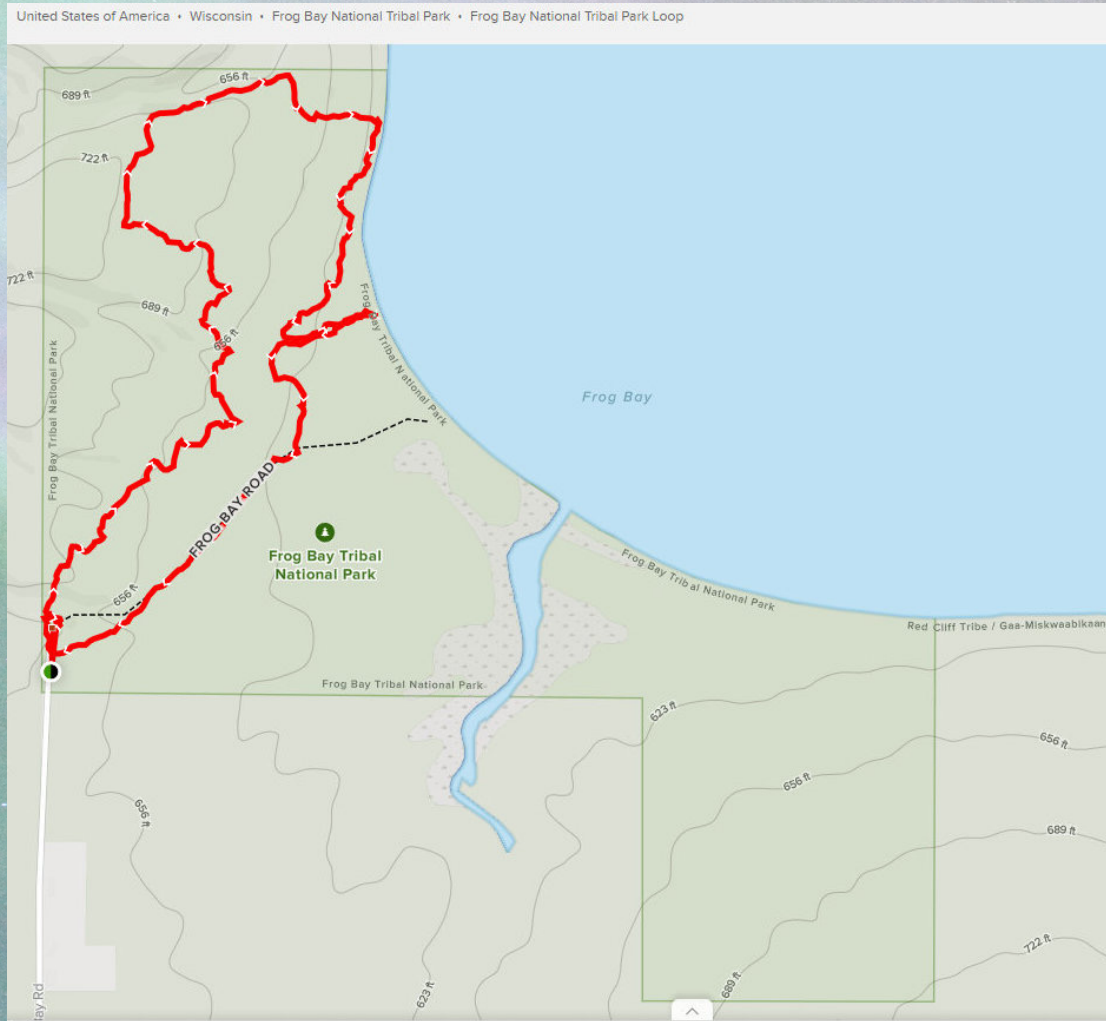
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- Aki – Earth (earth/land/ground)
  - Giizis – Sun. The sun is also known as Mishomis, our grandfather
  - Dibikaa Giizis – Moon . The moon is also known to us as Nookomis, our grandmother
  - Anang – Star
  - Ojiig – Fisher, Big Dipper/Ursa Major
  - Jiibay-miikana – Spirit Path, Milky Way
  - Maang – Loon, little dipper
  - Madoodiswan – Sweat Lodge, Corona borealis
  - Bagonegiizhig – Hole in the Sky, Pleiades/7 sisters





Gaa-Miskwaabikaang – “the place where there is red rock cliffs.” Miskwaabikaang is the center of the Anishinaabeg nation and is endearingly called “Hub of the Ojibwe Nation.” It is at the further most point in the state of Wisconsin overlooking the Apostle Islands. There are roughly 1,200 members living on the reservation, about 575 living in Bayfield County and close to 5,850 living outside of Bayfield County.



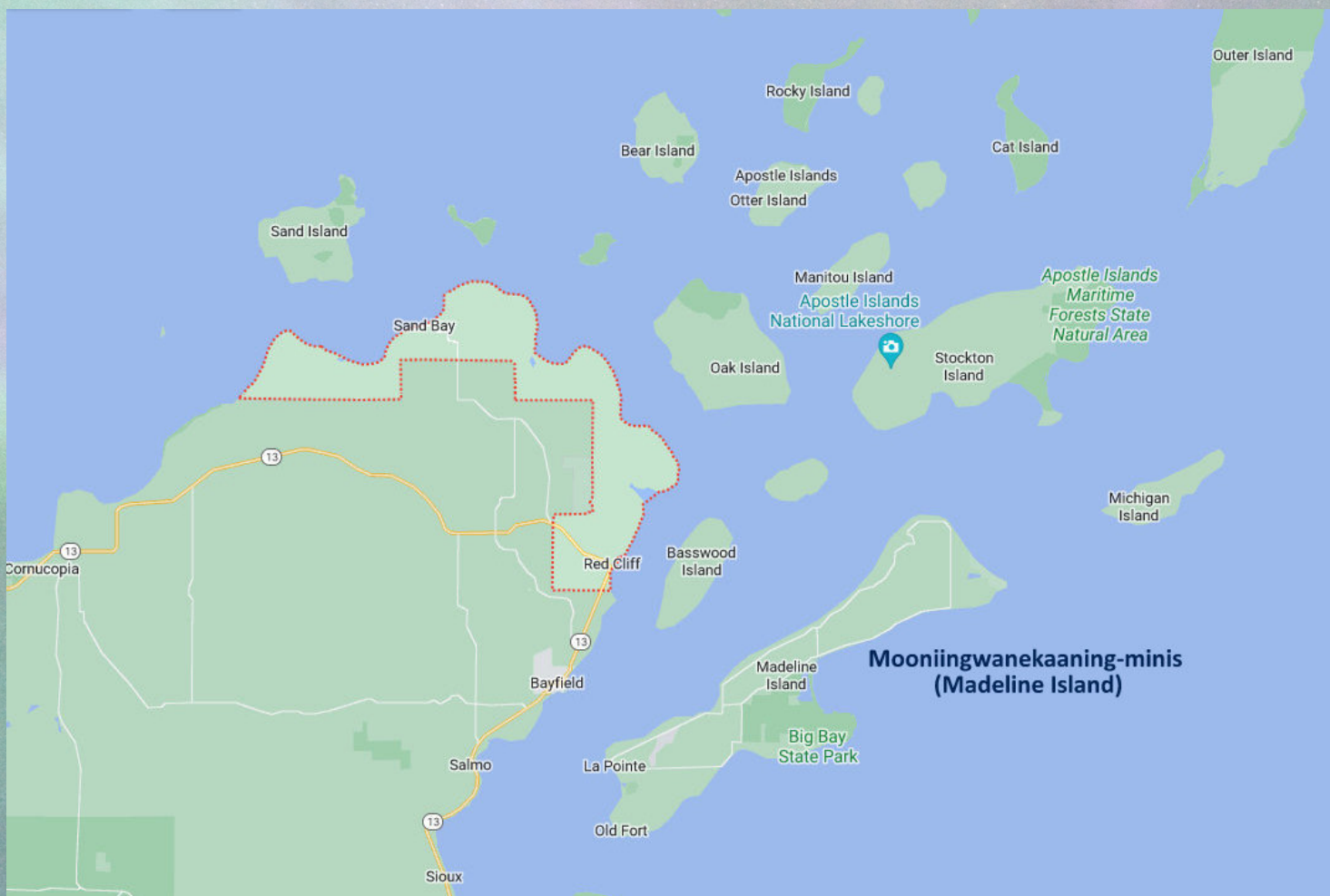


Frog Bay Tribal National Park (FBTNP) is the first tribal national park in the United States.

FBTNP celebrates the cultural importance of water and spirituality that is associated with Lake Superior.

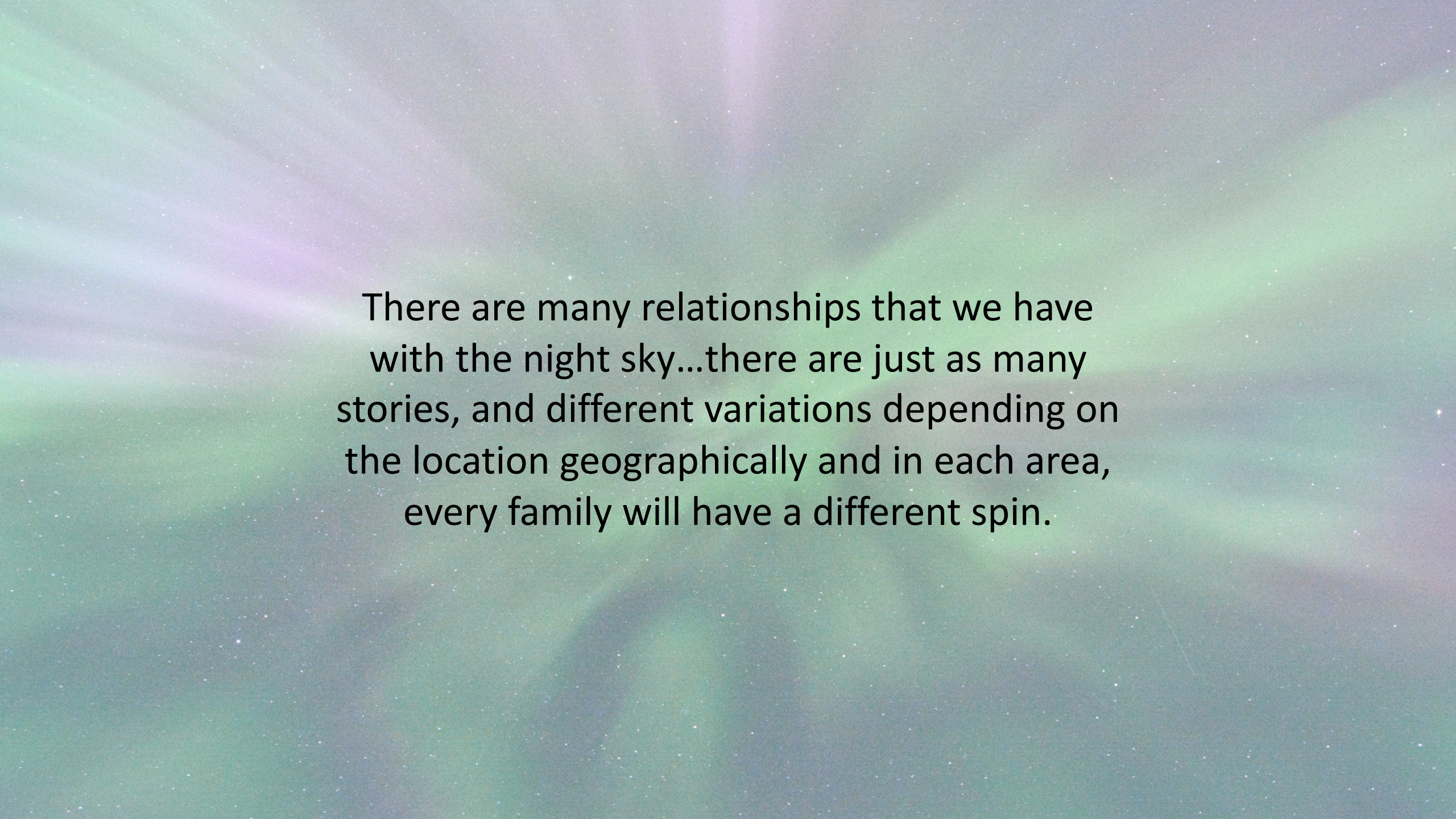
The park protects 300 acres, consisting of: a large tract of at-risk boreal forest, over a mile of riparian corridor, nearly 120 acres of wetlands and freshwater estuary habitat. The almost 4,000 feet of undeveloped shoreline with a view of Oak Island, one of the Apostle Islands is a must see!





Mooniingwanekaaning-minis (Madeline Island), in some of our Anishinaabeg stories, refers to the very place that the first Anishinaabeg were placed. Making this area/location even more significant spiritually and culturally.





There are many relationships that we have  
with the night sky...there are just as many  
stories, and different variations depending on  
the location geographically and in each area,  
every family will have a different spin.



Waawaate, Aurora borealis.

When Jiibayag niimi'idiwag (spirits/ghosts dancing) across the night sky, known as Waawaate, the spirits of our ancestors are said to be dancing and rejoicing with spirits that have recently walked on. Sometimes we can see spirits in Waawaate, animals, trees, clan animals, the face of a loved one that has walked on. All said to be delivering the viewer a message.

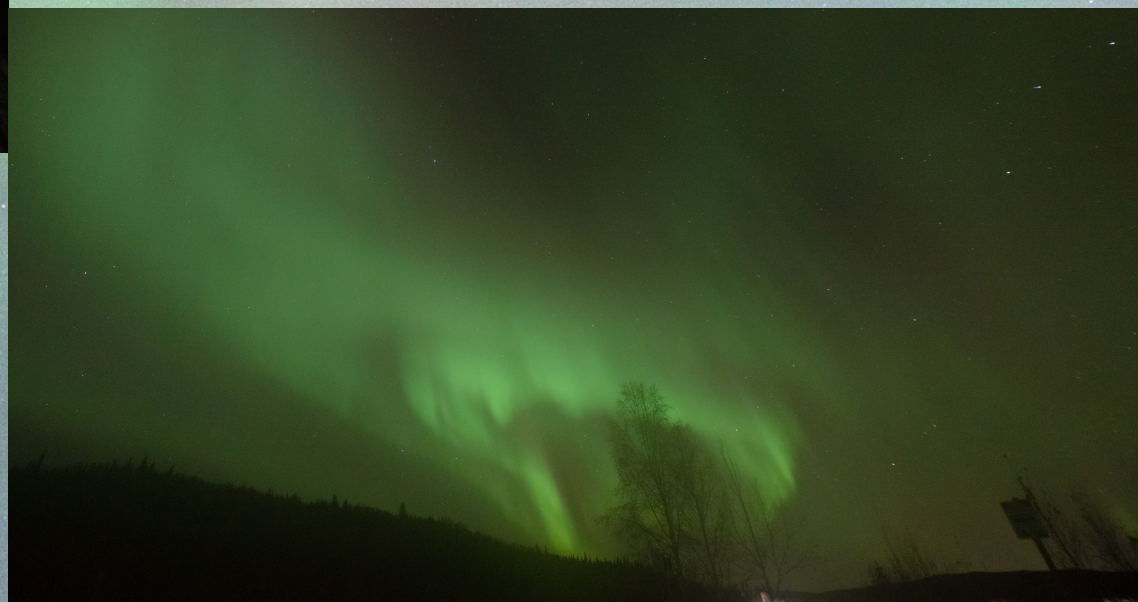




See Bigfoot in this image...



There is an elephant in this image...







They will meet up and dance along Jiibay-miikana (The Spirit Path), also known as the Milky Way and through Bagonegiizhig (hole in the sky), to the Spirit World.

Bagonegiizhig is also known as the 7 sisters/Pleiades. There are many sacred stories that talk about just Bagonegiizhig.



Aapíchí go-míigwech bízindawíyeg  
Thank you all so much for listening.  
Bíidasínookwe/Anna Martíneau Merritt



## Resources:

Red Cliff Tribal Tourism/business page [https://www.redcliff-nsn.gov/community/tourism/business\\_directory.php](https://www.redcliff-nsn.gov/community/tourism/business_directory.php)

Frog Bay Tribal National Park <https://www.redcliff-nsn.gov/frogbay/>

Map of Frog Bay: [www.alltrails.com/trail/us/wisconsin/frog-bay-national-tribal-park-loop](http://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/wisconsin/frog-bay-national-tribal-park-loop)

Gitchi Ojiig – “great fisher” (big dipper) James Vukelich  
[www.facebook.com/james.vukelich.7/videos/10224423799118173](https://www.facebook.com/james.vukelich.7/videos/10224423799118173)

Star Stories, Part 25: The Mighty Winds from our Grandfather in the sky  
[www.zhaawanart.com/blog](http://www.zhaawanart.com/blog)

Ojibwe Double Vowel Sound Chart:  
[https://www.fdlrezk12.com/documents/Ojibwe\\_Double\\_Vowel\\_Sound\\_Chart.pdf](https://www.fdlrezk12.com/documents/Ojibwe_Double_Vowel_Sound_Chart.pdf)

The Ojibwe People’s Dictionary: <https://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/>