

Inspiration Peak

Inspiration Peak, with its steep sides, affords visitors with spectacular views in three directions. A winding trail to the summit passes through a beautiful hardwood forest that opens to an expanse of rolling prairie hills.



Rustling Leaf Mountain

The hills that include Inspiration Peak were known to the Ojibwe as “Gaskibugwudjiwe.” An early missionary recorded and translated their name to mean “Rustling Leaf Mountains.” Early pioneers referred to the peak as *Leaf Mountain* until Sinclair Lewis, a Nobel Prize-winning novelist from Minnesota, shared his passion for the peak with his readers. Lewis cherished the “enchanted peace and seclusion of this place for contemplation.”

After Sinclair Lewis wrote about the peak, people began calling it *Inspiration Peak* and in 1932 this became the official name when the site was designated a Minnesota State Wayside.



A Transition Zone

Inspiration Peak is located on the prairie/forest transition zone that once stretched from the northwest to the southeast corners of Minnesota. To the west of this zone, prairie dominates, while conditions to the east favor forests.

The border between these two large biomes is always moving in response to the natural forces acting on the area. Dry periods and fire assist the prairie in making advances into the woods. Wetter periods favor the growth of forests.

The native prairie on the top of Inspiration Peak has been here for hundreds of years. Many beautiful prairie wildflowers are found here.

Inspiration Peak Area Map

