

## Historical Marker - L63 - Escanaba River: The Legend / Escanaba River: The Lumbermen (Marker ID#:L63)



### Front - Title/Description

#### *Escanaba River: The Legend*

This is the land of the Chippewa Indians and the legendary Hiawatha. Indian villages existed along the banks of the river, and Indians were living here when the first white men came to this region in the 1600s. The Indians named the river for the flat rocks over which it runs. In "The Song of Hiawatha," Longfellow described how Hiawatha "crossed the rushing Esconaba" in pursuit of Mudjekeewis, whom he slew to avenge the death of his mother. The last Indian lands in the Upper Peninsula were ceded to the United States in 1842. This closed an era that began about ten thousand years ago.

#### **Significant Date:**

Native People and the French (< 1760)

**Registry Year:** 1966    **Erected Date:** 1967

### Marker Location

**Address:** Pioneer Trail Park west side US-2

**City:** Escanaba

**State:** MI    **ZipCode:**

**County:** Delta

**Township:**

**Lat:** 45.79858800 / **Long:** -87.07428900

**Web URL:**

### Back - Title/Description

#### *Escanaba River: The Lumbermen*

A short distance upriver from this marker, Alden Chandler built the first sawmill about 1835. Another mill was built in the early 1840s where this power dam now stands. Government surveyors were surprised to discover these mills and a small settlement here in 1844. These mills were all water-powered. The region was at first famous for its vast white pine forests. Lumber sawed here helped build Chicago and rebuild that city after the great fire of 1871. Hardwood flooring in large quantity was also produced here. At the turn of the century the I. Stephenson Company, with mills at the river mouth, was the largest producer of lumber in the world.