



KEWAUNEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

Jennifer Schneider
Tourism Coordinator/Public Information Officer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Proposed Lake Michigan National Marine Sanctuary Meeting With NOAA is Well-Attended in Kewaunee County

ALGOMA, WI – Despite a day of heavy snow along the lakeshore, a crowd of approximately 115 Kewaunee County residents and visitors, which included more than a dozen locally elected officials, as well as State Representative Joel Kitchens, came out for a public meeting with the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on Monday evening at Knudson Hall in Algoma.

The informational meeting that was held to offer more insight on the proposed Lake Michigan National Marine Sanctuary, was led by NOAA's Russ Green and Ellen Brody, who both touched on what the designation could mean for Kewaunee County, as well as, Manitowoc, Sheboygan and Ozaukee counties.

Currently, there are two proposals that would secure shipwrecks along the Lake Michigan shoreline, "Alternative A" that includes Manitowoc, Sheboygan and Ozaukee counties, which is NOAA's "Preferred Alternative" and "Alternative B" that puts Kewaunee County on the map, in addition to the three other counties outlined.

NOAA officials noted that a National Marine Sanctuary designation would help increase protection for the Great Lakes and create more awareness with education outreach.

Nearly 20 people weighed in during the public comment portion of the meeting. And, aside from Kewaunee County residents who spoke, there were also a great number of representatives from Door and Manitowoc counties, as well as the Fox Cities.

The call for action to have Kewaunee County included in this proposal was spearheaded by Kewaunee County Board Supervisor Lee Luft who notes that this would be a great asset to the community, "With the Kewaunee Harbor Project well underway, and the Main Street initiatives in Luxemburg, the events planned by the Friends of Crescent Beach and our other key tourist assets (Winter Park, the Ahnapee State Trail, inland lakes, new restaurants and breweries, etc.), Kewaunee County is poised to be a true tourism destination and a U.S. Marine Sanctuary in our area would be just one more very positive development," said Supervisor Luft.

Officials from NOAA also shared that they are currently in the designation phase of the proposal and that once they are done gathering public input, they will then submit their final recommendation for this proposal, which could be either this spring or summer.

“We need this, it just makes sense for Kewaunee County to be included,” said Jennifer Schneider, Kewaunee County Tourism Coordinator/Public Information Officer. “I believe that the number of people who helped pack Knudson Hall, as well as the beautiful art that was on display greatly helped show our appreciation for Lake Michigan and that we really mean it, when we say, we want to be a part of the proposed Lake Michigan National Marine Sanctuary,” said Schneider.

A special thank you to local artists who submitted drawings, paintings and photos to be put on display during the meeting, as well as, the Kewaunee School District students and art teacher Terry Worth, who supplied “Welcome” banners.

The public has until March 31st to submit comments to NOAA either online or by mail. To read more on how to share your thoughts, visit: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/wisconsin/>

Kewaunee County has more information on their “National Marine Sanctuary” web page: <http://www.co.kewaunee.wi.gov/section.asp?linkid=2425&locid=192>

NOAA officials will finish the week hosting public meetings in Manitowoc, Sheboygan and Ozaukee counties.

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