

## Development of Renewable Energy Infrastructure

*The citizens of Northwest Wisconsin request:*

- **Additional incentives, support and funding for development of renewable energy infrastructure, including technology development, manufacturing, processing, storage and distribution of renewable energy sources and technologies.**

Many of the communities in Northwest Wisconsin are rural, isolated, and below state averages for income, employment and education. Poverty levels are higher than statewide averages, energy costs are higher, and winters are colder and more likely to limit access to outside communities and resources. Because of the relative isolation of population dense areas in northern Wisconsin, dependable access to outside resources is extremely important, but limited and expensive year-round. The alternative for these communities is to become increasingly self-sufficient in many aspects, but especially in independent energy production.

In 2007, the State of Wisconsin spent nearly \$21.5 BILLION dollars out of state to provide energy to Wisconsin communities. Governor Doyle has issued a challenge to Wisconsin communities to develop renewable energy sources that will provide for at least 25% of our fuel and energy needs by the year 2025 (25x25). The communities of the Chequamegon Bay area participated in the Energy Independent Communities Pilot Project in 2009, and have committed time and resources to establishing energy and fuel baselines in order to plan for reaching 25x25 Goals. These same communities have been working to achieve regional sustainability for many years, and are now in need of the resources to take the next steps toward energy independence.

With increased resources for renewable energy infrastructure, isolated communities like those in northern Wisconsin can do many things to benefit local economies while developing home-grown energy sources: develop training/educational programs for renewable energy technologies; create manufacturing, processing, installation, and maintenance jobs for biofuel and other RE infrastructure; reduce operating costs for multiple sectors by supplying locally sourced, non-fossil fuel based energy; keep energy dollars in Wisconsin; and achieve real energy independence while reducing the negative impacts on the natural environment bordering Lake Superior.

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