

Research Facility at the U.S. Geological Survey Vessel Dock Site in Ashland

The citizens of Northwest Wisconsin request:

- **That the Legislature assist in securing sufficient funding to complete a Research Facility at the U.S. Geological Survey Vessel Dock Site in Ashland, Wisconsin and to support the educational and research programs that arise from it.**

A Congressionally-funded dock facility for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) research vessel Kiyi was constructed in Ashland, Wisconsin in 2008-2009. This facility is a joint venture between the City of Ashland, Ashland County, Ashland Area Development Corporation and the USGS, which has operated out of Ashland since 1957 and has a federal mandate to study the fish populations of Lake Superior.

The USGS dock facility is available for use by other federal, Canadian, state, tribal, and local governmental agencies and enhances the Lake Superior and other Bi-national Great Lakes fisheries and environmental research and monitoring programs. The USGS dock facility compliments Ashland's Waterfront Development Plan, and benefits the region and its economy by ensuring a continued presence of the USGS program in Ashland and increasing the use of Ashland as a port for the Great Lakes research vessels.

Future plans for the dock facility include construction of a research facility for the USGS program to be co-located in Ashland. Currently, the USGS science and support facility is located more than a mile away from the dock facility and does not provide adequate office, meeting, and laboratory space to effectively support the USGS Lake Superior research program. The cost of the proposed research facility is estimated to be ~\$6 million. The City proposes to donate an adjoining parcel of land to the dock facility that will accommodate the proposed research facility. Co-location of the vessel dock, warehouse, laboratories, offices and meeting rooms into one facility is a common feature of many well-known maritime research centers (e.g., Woods Hole Institute, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute) and enhances the quality of the USGS research program, the integration of the USGSD vessel and research facilities will also enhance educational and research capabilities for the Wisconsin's schools, colleges, and universities. Particularly, the research facility will be beneficial to educational and research programs at Northland College, Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute, and the University of Wisconsin institutions at Superior, Stevens Point and Madison.

The combined facility will be operated jointly by USGS, City of Ashland, and Northland College and will be a public outreach program that seeks to increase public awareness of Lake Superior and its fish and aquatic resources. The combined USGS research and dock facility will benefit the regional economy by serving as a regional, national, and international center for research and education focused on Lake Superior and will attract many scientists, students and visitors annually.

The City of Ashland intends to seek Congressional funding to construct this research facility and also seeks partners in the State of Wisconsin to join with them in securing sufficient funding to complete the facility and to support the educational and research programs that arise from it.

For more information contact:

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