

### Reinstate Ability for Counties to Enact Local Control Over Shoreland Zoning Ordinance Standards

#### The Citizens of Northwest Wisconsin Request

That the legislature enacts legislation reinstating local control for shoreland zoning for Douglas, Bayfield, and Ashland counties.

#### Background

Douglas, Bayfield, and Ashland counties are blessed with abundant clean water resources which is critical to our recreation based economy. For example, Bayfield County has:

- 962 in-land lakes
- 105 miles of Lake Superior shoreline
- 125 streams and rivers with 531 miles of shoreline

There are 4,256 lake frontage parcels with improvement on them in the county. Seasonal/non-residents own 76% of the parcels. The real estate taxes paid on season/non-resident and unimproved parcels are \$11.9 million dollars. These real estate taxes provide a substantial portion of the finances for county schools and towns and for the county, in Bayfield County alone.

The state budget bill passed in 2015 (Act 55) contained a provision that changed shoreland zoning standards in NR 115 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code from minimum standards to maximum standards, thereby removing local control which many counties had used to enact more stringent standards in county shoreland zoning ordinances.

Douglas, Bayfield, and Ashland counties previously had exercised their local control authority to develop and adopt more stringent standards, incorporating lake classification provisions, in their shoreland ordinances. These provisions were developed and adopted after extensive review of the nature and characteristics of the lakes, and after extensive public input and support. It was determined to be necessary to adopt different standards for lakes with different characteristics to adequately protect them which is critical to our counties' economies.

#### Request

We request the return of local control to allow Douglas, Bayfield, and Ashland counties to reinstate the shoreland zoning standards that they had in place prior to Act 55.