

### Department of Natural Resources

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

##### The Citizens of Northwest Wisconsin Request

The Department of Natural Resources create and submit legislation to the State Legislature reinstating local control for shoreland zoning for counties bordering Lake Superior.

##### Background

Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland and Iron Counties are blessed with abundant clean water resources, which are critical to their recreation based economies. Examples:

The four counties have all of the 325 miles of Wisconsin's Lake Superior shoreline.

Douglas County has:

- 431 inland lakes
- 101 streams and rivers with 705 miles of shoreline

Bayfield County has:

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

There are 4,256 lake frontage parcels with improvements on them in the Bayfield 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 schools, towns and the county.

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 their county shoreland zoning ordinances.

Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland and Iron 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 their 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 their counties' economies.