



For Immediate Release

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Proposed Lake Michigan National Marine Sanctuary in Wisconsin Added to NOAA Inventory for Future Designation Consideration

The Cities of Port Washington, Sheboygan, Manitowoc, and Two Rivers jointly announced today their Regional Nomination for a National Marine Sanctuary, submitted by Governor Walker on behalf of the citizens of Wisconsin, has been officially added by NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) to the inventory of areas under consideration for future Sanctuary designations.

“This represents a very exciting milestone in our collective effort to bring a National Marine Sanctuary to the central shores of Wisconsin,” said City of Port Washington Mayor Tom Mlada. “We are immensely grateful to our partners at NOAA for accepting our Regional Nomination and acknowledging the robust nature of that nomination.”

“Our four communities have worked very hard in partnering on this effort, embracing a regional approach to best position us for eventual success,” said City of Sheboygan Mayor Mike Vandersteen. “While we are not there just yet, this is a great indication we are on the right path.”

This Regional Nomination as submitted to NOAA detailed a proposed 875-square mile area National Marine Sanctuary, stretching from Port Washington to Two Rivers. The Sanctuary would be only the second in the Great Lakes and the 14th in the United States. It would contain 34 known shipwrecks, including the two oldest shipwrecks in Wisconsin and 14 intact shipwrecks (four with standing masts). Fifteen of the 34 shipwrecks are on the National Register of Historic Places.

“A National Marine Sanctuary in our Mid-Lake Region would be a huge economic boon for our four communities, but far more importantly, it would serve as a source of pride and a basis of celebration for the entire State of Wisconsin,” said City of Manitowoc Mayor Justin Nickels.

“We believe a Sanctuary designation is truly fitting,” stated Two Rivers City Manager Greg Buckley. “Ours is indeed a marine environment rich in historical, cultural, and archaeological treasures.”

Once a nominated area is placed in the inventory, NOAA can consider it for designation – but it does not guarantee NOAA will begin the sanctuary designation process for that area. Designation occurs as a separate public and participatory process that often takes several years to complete.

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