RESOLUTION: Support a National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) Designation for Northeast Wisconsin

TO THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

WHEREAS, the designation of Wisconsin’s Lake Superior Estuarine Research Reserve in 2010 provides an outstanding example of the broader impacts National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) sites provide to local communities; and

WHEREAS, the University of Wisconsin—Green Bay is currently exploring the feasibility of developing a National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) in Northeast Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, our region’s ecosystem is home to the largest freshwater estuary in the world, the vitality of which is critical to the current and future prosperity of ecological sustainability and the broader region impacted by the Great Lakes; and

WHEREAS, research activities associated with a Door County-based NERR will attract scholars on both the national and international stage, providing employment opportunities to the region, stronger connectivity to the University of Wisconsin—Green Bay, and ultimately inject money into local economies; and

WHEREAS, many individuals currently enrolled in local school districts value Wisconsin’s natural resources for the quality of life opportunities these resources provide, by shaping decisions about where they live, seek employment, further their education, and raise their families; and

WHEREAS, eco-tourism is an established and growing industry in Northeast Wisconsin, and a research reserve would fit well with Door County’s five state parks and natural features such as the Niagara Escarpment; and

WHEREAS, a locally-based NERR will enhance place-based identity, contributing directly to talent recruitment and retention efforts; and

WHEREAS, Sturgeon Bay is the Door County Seat and home to Door County’s infrastructure, airport, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Office, and high-speed internet.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors that it hereby supports the efforts of the University of Wisconsin—Green Bay as it seeks a letter from the US Department of Commerce’s National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration Coastal Management Office (NOAA) requesting their assistance in exploring the feasibility of an NERR designation for Northeast Wisconsin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors that should the NERR designation be incurred for Northeast Wisconsin, Winnebago County supports Door County’s enthusiastic desire to host an NERR site.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors that it hereby directs the Winnebago County Clerk to forward a copy of this Resolution to all Wisconsin County Clerks, the Wisconsin Counties Association, each state and federal legislator representing Winnebago County constituents, the Office of the Governor for the State of Wisconsin, and Chancellor Gary Miller and Vice-Chancellor Matthew Dornbush of the University of Wisconsin—Green Bay.
Respectfully submitted by:

LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Respectfully submitted by:

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Committee Vote: 6-0

Vote Required for Passage: Majority of Those Present

Approved by the Winnebago County Executive this 27th day of June, 2019.

Mark L. Harris
Winnebago County Executive