



Crossroads at Big Creek

LEARNING CENTER NATURE PRESERVE

March 18, 2021

Dear Mayor Ward,

I am writing on behalf of the Crossroads at Big Creek Board of Directors to express our support for Sturgeon Bay as a National Estuarine Research Reserve site.

Crossroads at Big Creek is a learning center and nature preserve located in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. We offer education, conduct research and provide outdoor experiences to inspire environmental stewardship in learners of all ages and backgrounds. Crossroads encompasses nearly 200 acres of woods, wetlands, meadows, creek and shoreline – including the Big Creek Estuary.

We are also actively and increasingly engaged in ecological restoration. We were fortunate last year to have been awarded a large U. S. Fish and Wildlife grant and a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Sustain Our Great Lakes grant to help with this work. Over the course of the next four years, we will be removing invasive species, planting thousands of native trees, shrubs and other plants, and monitoring water quality and species use. We will be engaging the community in this work.

We have been a part of numerous water-related research projects over the past 20 years and have connections with institutes like the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago and many universities and colleges.

As an environmental learning center, we are well aware of the ecological attributes that make Door County unique. We are also aware of the interconnectedness of our area with the rest of the Great Lakes region. We are extremely excited about the possibility of a NERR center in our area and about the scientists and researchers it will attract. We also appreciate that having a NERR here will have a positive impact on our natural environment.

We are more than willing to help in any way we can with the site selection process and we would look forward to interacting with a NERR. We are pleased to offer our Collins Learning Center laboratory and auditorium at any time and to make our staff available, as well.

Feel free to contact me if you'd like any additional information.

Sincerely,

Laurel Duffin Hauser
Executive Director

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