



April 12, 2021

Board of Directors

Sally O'Brien
Chair

Dick Egan
Vice Chair

Grace Rossman
Secretary

Jeff Ottum
Treasurer

Marcia Smith
Past Chair

Fred Anderson

Inge Bacon

Rob Davis

John Herlache

Roger Johnson

Sharon Lutsey

Keith Mutchler

Barb Sajna

Jim Vander Heiden

Vicki Wilson

Bret N. Bicoy
President & CEO

The Honorable David J. Ward
Mayor, City of Sturgeon Bay
421 Michigan Street
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

Dear Mayor Ward,

Please accept this letter as an indication of our enthusiastic endorsement for Sturgeon Bay's proposal to play an essential role in the Green Bay Ecosystem National Estuarine Research Reserve.

More than a year ago the Community Foundation first became aware of the possibility of a NERR facility being established in Door County. We immediately began discussing ways we might be able to help.

We reached out to Athan Barkoukis, Executive Director of the Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Naples, Florida. Our goal was to better understand the role private philanthropy plays in helping foster the work of that particular NERR facility in hopes we could learn how the Community Foundation could best assist a similar effort in Door County.

We scheduled a trip to visit Rookery Bay on March 19, 2020 and were to be joined by one of our community's great philanthropists who has a deep passion for this issue. Unfortunately, we had to cancel just a few days in advance as the nation began shutting down in response to the early days of the global pandemic. Regardless, this should be seen as a testament to the seriousness of our commitment to fostering private philanthropic support for a NERR facility in Door County.

Living on a peninsula, we are literally surrounded by water. Door County's unique geography makes our water vulnerable. As a peninsula situated on the Niagara Escarpment, our thin soil layer, combined with the vertical and horizontal fracturing common in our bedrock, makes protecting our water a priority for us all.

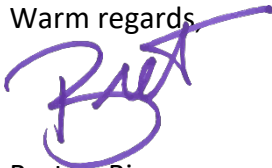
Through our Healthy Water Door County granting program, the Community Foundation has awarded financial assistance to numerous community projects relating to our water including the restoration of Bradley Lake, free well-testing for county residents, invasive species eradication efforts along our shorelines, and countless other projects.

In 2017, we launched Celebrate Water, a 15-month calendar of activities to educate the community about the importance of water to life on our peninsula. This effort culminated in a two-day Water Summit during which we brought national and international experts to Door County to teach our local leaders about the best practices of protecting our rivers and lakes.

While it is too early to articulate a specific role that the Community Foundation will play, I share this so you can be confident that our commitment to protecting our water is unwavering and our enthusiasm for bringing a NERR facility to Door County is overflowing.

If our friends at the University of Wisconsin Green Bay have any questions or would like to discuss roles we might play in support of this effort, please don't hesitate to have them reach out to me at bret@givedoorcounty.org or call (920) 746-1786.

Warm regards

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Bret", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right from the top of the signature.

Bret N. Bicoy
President & CEO