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## **Great Lakes States kept in the dark about Lake Michigan sanctuary**

**SHEBOYGAN, Wis.** – The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) continues to deny public debates concerning a proposed National Marine Sanctuary (NMS) for Lake Michigan. The sanctuary will start in Wisconsin but based on the history of other sanctuaries, it will expand within a few years. While refusing public discourse NOAA is actively pursuing additional jurisdiction in Lake Superior, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario.

NOAA has a responsibility to involve all the states, commercial interests, businesses and interested persons in a debate for the sanctuary. The voluminous rules and regulations and the fact a sanctuary can change existing rules or create new regulations based on their concerns a designation will forever affect economic activity and future uses of the lakes. To this date, Citizens for Responsible Zoning and Landowner Rights (CRZLR) has found numerous people and organizations in other Great Lakes states that are unaware of the sanctuary and its ominous implications.

CRZLR representative James Zeiler said, “There appears to be widespread misinformation and talking points not supported by reality or by an economic study funded by NOAA and the Thunder Bay Sanctuary.” The study conducted by the University of Michigan Institute for Research on Labor, Employment and the Economy (IRLEE), found that after 12 years the Thunder Bay Sanctuary had been established no boom happened. The misleading economic impact statements are a constant refrain from politicians and other

supporters selling the sanctuary concept. Zeiler also stated, "It appears NOAA's idea of worldwide advertising consists of a paragraph or two about each sanctuary on their NMS website. This hardly constitutes extensive advertising, tourism promotion or job creation."

Senator James Coburn (R-OK) in his 2010 edition of *Wastebook*, an annual compilation of wasteful spending of taxpayer money, gave NOAA and the Thunder Bay museum an award for their waste of taxpayer dollars. In addition to foolish spending the government funded museum now competes with multiple privately operated museums and lighthouses along the coast of Lake Huron.

CRZLR representative James Zeiler raised another serious point. NOAA is desperately rushing sanctuary proposals through the bureaucratic process while ignoring the best interests of the states, the shipping industry, fishing interests and the citizens. NOAA has not presented a clear picture and demonstrated that there is a present danger to shipwrecks, which demands immediate action necessitating the need for sanctuaries. He also noted, if NOAA fails to gain jurisdiction, they no longer care about shipwrecks and marine heritage and instead withdraw back to their distant offices.