

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kelly Westlund, Ashland City Council Member, Ward 11  
Phone: 715-209-6821

## **Elected officials ask Superior Days organizers to drop mining issue** Mayors, City and County officials say lobby issue lacks consensus

**Ashland, WI - February 18, 2013:** The Superior Days citizen lobby effort is gearing up to celebrate its 28<sup>th</sup> year in Madison this week. At least one issue is causing a rift in the otherwise united front the group has had in years past.

While delegates have been asked to lobby legislators in favor of expeditious mining legislation, more than 20 local elected officials from the region have signed on to a letter asking Superior Days organizers to remove the issue from the agenda. Over two hundred area citizens have echoed this request by signing an online petition directed at the co-chairs of the Superior Days effort.

“For over 25 years, Superior Days has been an effective citizen-led lobby effort, trusted by legislators who know that the issues we bring forward are non-partisan and based on grassroots consensus,” says the letter. “We do not believe that presenting the mining issue as a consensus-based proposal is an accurate portrayal of the will of the citizens of Northwestern Wisconsin,” say local officials, citing the anti-mine sentiments expressed at the recent public hearing held in Ashland, as well as the rejection of a mining resolution with similar language by the Bayfield County Board in January.

Elected officials who signed the letter include:

Mayor Larry MacDonald, City of Bayfield  
Mayor Scott Griffiths, City of Washburn  
Pat Kinney, Ashland City Council President – Ward 7  
Richard Ketring, Ashland City Council – Ward 2  
Carl Doersch, Ashland City Council – Ward 5  
Rick Dowd, Ashland City Council – Ward 8  
David Eades, Ashland City Council – Ward 9  
Richard Pufall, Ashland City Council – Ward 10 & Ashland County Board – District 10  
Kelly Westlund, Ashland City Council – Ward 11  
Jim Oakley, Ashland County Board Supervisor – District 4  
Charles Ortman, Ashland County Board Supervisor – District 8  
Donna Williamson, Ashland County Board Supervisor – District 9  
Kristy Jensch, Washburn City Council – Ward 1  
Jeremy Oswald, Washburn City Council – Ward 4  
Richard Avol, Washburn City Council – At Large

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Dee Kittleson, Bayfield County Board Vice Chair – District 5  
Beth Meyers, Bayfield County Board Supervisor – District 1  
William Bussey, Bayfield County Board Supervisor – District 2  
Charly Ray, Town of Bayview Supervisor  
Terry W. White, Douglas County Board Supervisor – District 2  
David Conley, Douglas County Board Supervisor – District 20  
Tom Bridge, Superior City Council – Ward 2  
Bob Browne, Superior City Council – Ward 10

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February 15, 2013

TO: Superior Days  
Linda Bruce, Coordinator

CC: Douglas Finn, Co-Chair  
Bruce Hagen, Co-Chair  
Andy Lisak, Issues Identification Committee  
Dave Minor, Issues Identification Committee

Superior Days Main Office  
Douglas County Courthouse  
131 Belknap Street, Room 107  
Superior, WI 54880

Dear Ms. Bruce,

We, the undersigned, wish to express our concerns regarding inclusion of the mining issue submitted by the Ashland Area Development Corporation in Superior Days 2013.

For over 25 years, Superior Days has been an effective citizen-led lobby effort, trusted by legislators who know that the issues we bring forward are non-partisan and based on grassroots consensus. The defined criteria for Superior Days issues are as follows:

- 1) Issues must have major impact or unique implications for Northwest Wisconsin.
- 2) Issues must have community-wide consensus.
- 3) Resolution of the issue requires resources that exceed local capacity.

We do not believe that presenting the mining issue as a consensus-based proposal is an accurate portrayal of the will of the citizens of Northwestern Wisconsin, based on the following items:

- 1) The Bayfield County Board recently rejected a mining resolution with language nearly identical to the Superior Days issue on January 29, 2013.
- 2) The Town of La Pointe passed a resolution on January 10, 2012 formally opposing "any mining operation that could cause irreparable and long-term damage to the future security of the Chequamegon Bay area and its freshwater heritage."
- 3) In 2011, the Ashland County Board adopted a resolution to support "responsible iron ore mining," which a special committee on mining then voted unanimously to rescind.
- 4) The Ashland and Washburn City Councils are currently considering resolutions in opposition to a number of the provisions in the proposed mining bill (AB1/SB1).

- 5) The recent listening session on mining legislation in Ashland on February 9, 2013 featured hundreds of Ashland area residents who, over 10 hours of testimony, expressed their opposition to mining in the Penokees and pending legislation by a nearly 10 to 1 margin.

Clearly, the actual consensus (if indeed, there is one) is not reflected in the issue to be put forth by Superior Days. This is demonstrative of the very real need to reform the issue submission process to be more inclusive of the stakeholders in the region. If Superior Days delegates are asked to present a united front on lobby issues, they deserve to have the opportunity to review and edit or reject each of the issues presented before the printed materials are prepared.

By taking this issue forward as written, we feel that Superior Days is doing a terrible disservice to the citizens of Northwestern Wisconsin and to the legacy of this great citizen effort.

Please remove the issue from the agenda. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mayor Larry MacDonald, City of Bayfield  
Mayor Scott Griffiths, City of Washburn  
Pat Kinney, Ashland City Council President – Ward 7  
Richard Ketring, Ashland City Council – Ward 2  
Carl Doersch, Ashland City Council – Ward 5  
Rick Dowd, Ashland City Council – Ward 8  
David Eades, Ashland City Council – Ward 9  
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