

**Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary
Advisory Council
- July 20, 2023 Meeting Minutes -**

Date: July 20, 2023

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: City Hall, 1717 East Park Street, Third Floor Council Chambers, Two Rivers, Wisconsin

Meeting Attendees

NOAA: Russ Green

SAC Members: Brendon Baillod, John Broihahn, Roland Chaloupka, Mary Ellen Giffels, Scott Huebner, John Janssen, Jeff Lamont, Tom Mlada, Patrick Neu

SAC Alternates: Dave Bennett, Kevin Cullen, Michelle Damian, Letitia Hase, Chris Houghton, James Falkowski, Travis Gross, Mike Jajtner, Mike Vandersteen, Vanessa VanderWeele, John Wyrostek

Government Agency and Tribe Members: Aaron Brault – Sheboygan County, Greg Buckley – City of Two Rivers, Paul Hacker – Manitowoc County, Daina Penkiunas – State of Wisconsin

Guests: Brian Dean, Gabriele Lubach

Media: None

WELCOME AND SAC BUSINESS:

Russ opened meeting thanking City of Two Rivers for hosting a get together prior to the meeting.

SAC Chair Scott Huebner made a motion to approve the May meeting minutes.

Russ provided an update on recruitment for six open council seats. Several applicants were in attendance.

Scott started a discussion regarding SAC working groups that could explore the potential for a Friends of WSCNMS group, Film Festival and Outreach coordination among SAC members.

Several questions were asked about the types of Friends groups across ONMS and how they differ from a National Marine Sanctuary Foundation chapter. Mary Ellen Giffels offered to lead

a working group to explore these options and make recommendations. Jeff Lamont, Letitia Hase and John Wyrostek offered to join the group. SAC thought it would be a good first step to reach out to the Friends of Thunder Bay NMS. Russ offered to arrange that.

John Wyrostek mentioned that state Friends groups, such as Friends of Point Beach State Forest would be good groups to engage with. Perhaps we could piggyback an existing Friends group? The state's Friends Group Association would have lots of contacts.

A similar discussion was had regarding bringing a film festival to the sanctuary area. Members suggested that it could rotate among communities, involve students, be a draw for communities, showcase special presentations, leverage TBNMS film festival at the outset, and discussed whether summer vs. winter would be better, etc. Roland Chaloupka, Kevin Cullen and Mary Ellen Giffels offered to explore this concept and make recommendations. Kevin offered to lead the group.

Brendon Baillod let the group know that the Ghost Ships Festival was being revived. A team is exploring what this former dive show may look like. Could feature more presentations/workshops and less dive industry-related topics. Should reach a broad audience, and the sanctuary should be involved. A question about the sanctuary helping with costs came up. Russ said he would look into that, and that the sanctuary can support in other ways too.

John Janssen mentioned that the Coordinated Science and Monitoring Initiative will be in Lake Michigan in 2025 and could be a way to get speakers.

A discussion about identifying outreach opportunities/events that council members could attend on behalf of the sanctuary followed. It was recommended that the council generate a list of possible events, such as farmer's markets, Wisconsin State Fair, fishing tournaments/events, etc. Vanessa VanderWheele offered to lead a working group on this topic. Brendon Baillod, Paul Hacker, Dave Bennett and John Wyrostek offered to participate.

Action item: when sanctuary staff attend such events, put a call out to council members so they could participate and train.

COMMUNITY UPDATE – City of Two Rivers:

Greg Buckley (Two Rivers City Manager) gave a presentation about Two Rivers' maritime connections and linking this to tourism and recreation. The city is "turning its face to the lake", and considers Lake Michigan one of its biggest assets. Greg shared a couple examples of projects. His presentation is attached to the meeting minutes.

SANCTUARY UPDATE/SAC DISCUSSION:

A discussion was had regarding social media and ways council members could help grow the sanctuary's social media presence.

A discussion was had about adding SAC member bios to the sanctuary website. There was general agreement on this, as it helps the public understand who makes up the council. Other sanctuaries have done this.

Action Item: Russ and Jean will work with the ONMS web team to pave the way for that.

The council discussed a potential trip to Thunder Bay NMS so they could learn about that sanctuary, meet council members, stakeholders, etc. This would help jump start some of our working groups.

Action Item: Russ to work with Thunder Bay to find some dates in late September early October and send a poll to the council.

SEPTEMBER MEETING AGENDA DISCUSSION:

Scott Huebner asked for ideas for next meeting's agenda topics and closed the meeting out.

Choose a few key ones to start. Great ideas, awareness creates advocates.

PUBLIC COMMENT: n/a

ADJOURN:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm. The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, September 21 at 6pm**, in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, exact location to be determined.

Action Items:

When sanctuary staff attend community/outreach events, put a call out to council members so they could participate and train.

Russ and Jean will work with the ONMS web team to add member bios to the webpage.

Russ to work with Thunder Bay to find some dates for a visit to Alpena in late September early October and send a poll to the council.

Turning Our Face Back to the Water

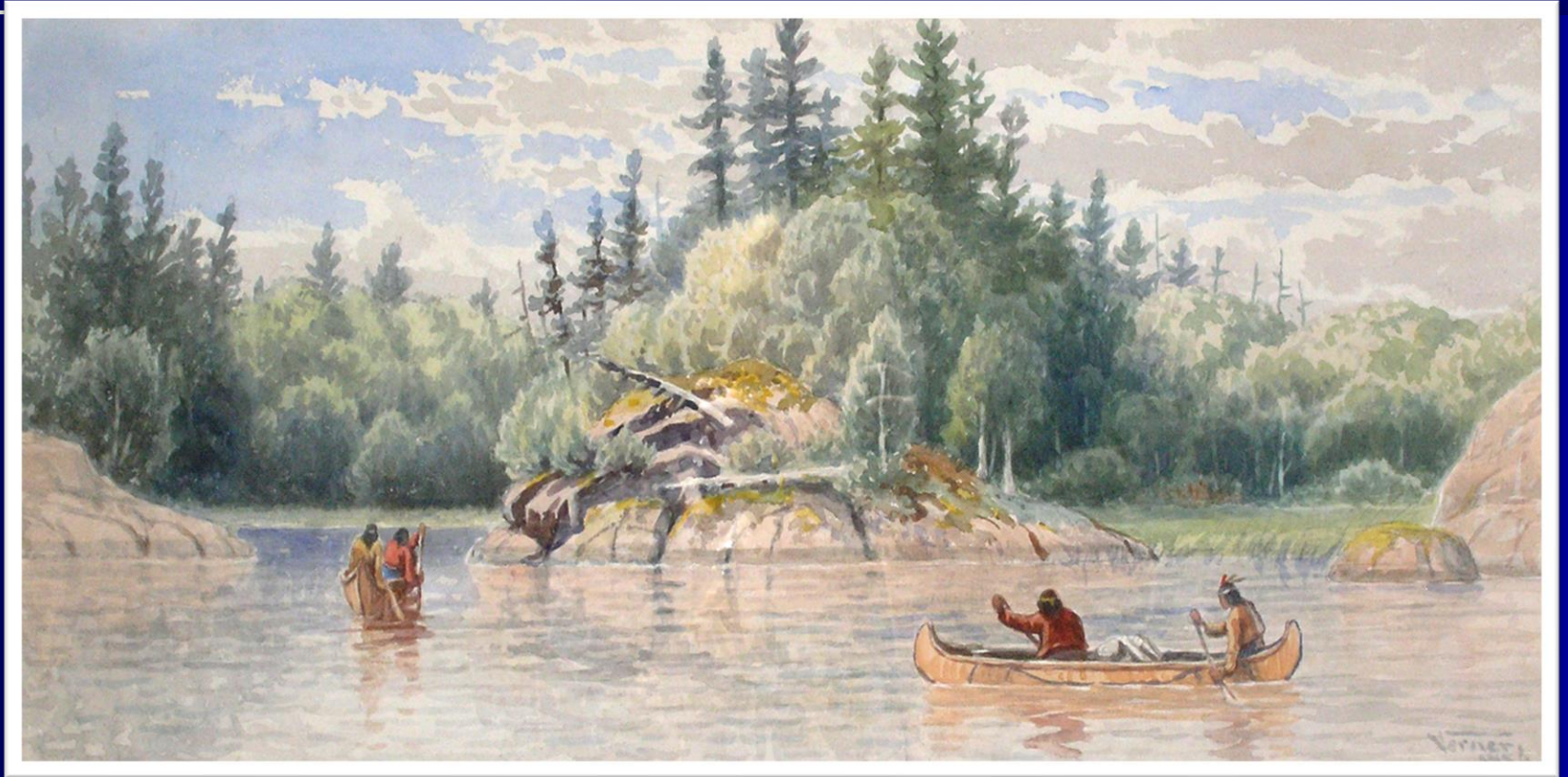


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Presentation to Sanctuary Advisory Council,
Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary
July 20, 2023

Two Rivers, Wisconsin

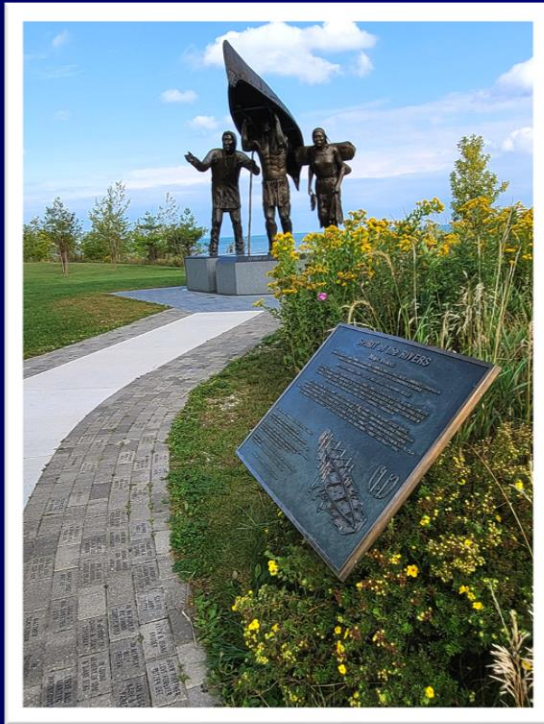
Turning Our Face Back to the Water



Native Americans fished, hunted and traded along our shoreline and river corridors long before the first white settlers.
(Frederick A. Verner, "Lake Joseph, Muskoka")

Two Rivers, Wisconsin

Turning Our Face Back to the Water



Spirit of the Rivers Monument pays tribute to the Native peoples of the Great Lakes and to the role of the birch bark canoe in Great Lakes exploration and commerce



Right: Artist R.T. "Skip" Wallen at work in his Manitowoc Studio

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Turning Our Face Back to the Water



French Canadian fishing families came to Two Rivers from communities along the St. Lawrence in the mid-1800's, bringing a fleet of Mackinaw fishing boats to our shores (from *Images of America: Two Rivers*, by Patrick Gagnon and Cassandra Gagnon Kronforst)

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George LeClair (1890 -1971) with a six-foot sturgeon in 1934

(from Images of America: Two Rivers, by Patrick Gagnon and Cassandra Gagnon Kronforst)



In the 1940s along the river on Rogers Street, two boys put net reels to good use. The man at the right—leading Two Rivers commercial fisherman Everett “Butch” LaFond—seems to be amused.

East Side kids grew up playing on the net reels

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Turning Our Face Back to the Water

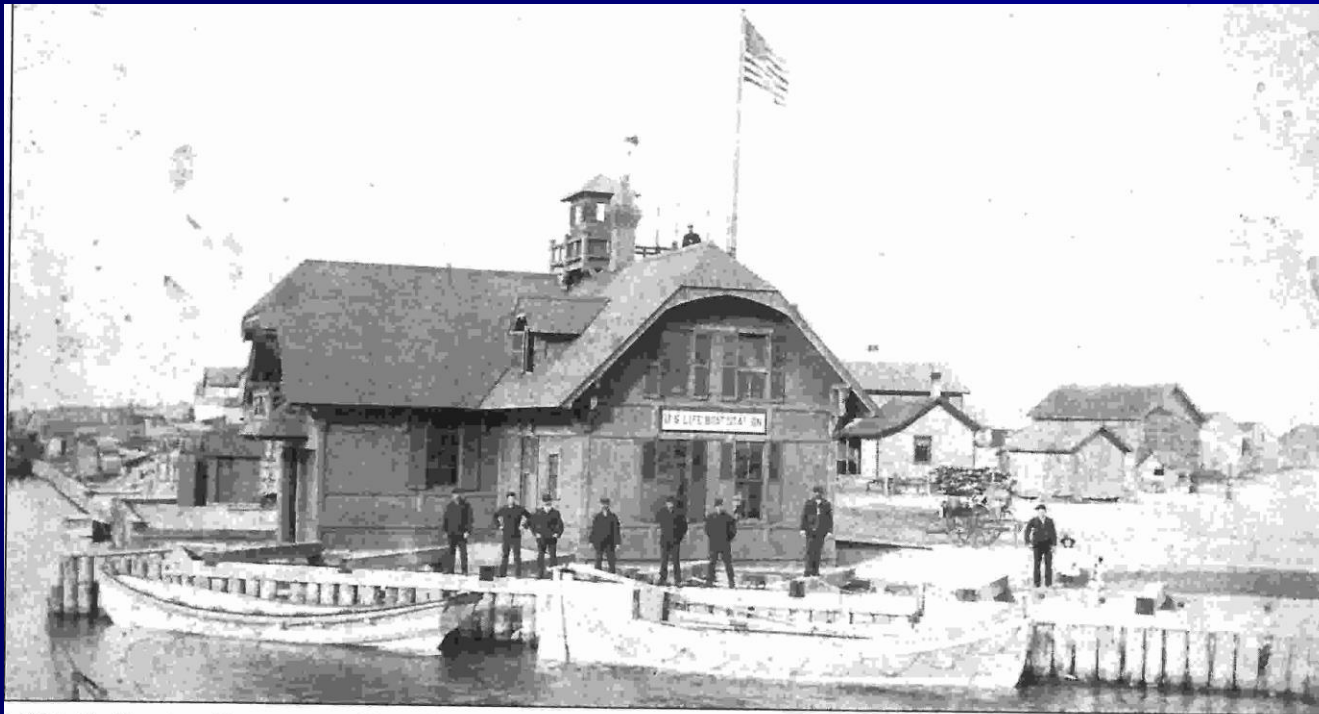
We still like our fishing...



**Launch Ramp and Fish Cleaning
Station Improvements, 2015-16**

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*(From
Images of
America:
Two
Rivers)*

US Life Saving Service in Two Rivers was established in 1880. Oliver Pilon was the first keeper; he died of pneumonia contracted during a rescue. This station dates from 1876 and is representative of the clipped-gable style designed by architect Francis W. Chandler. When a new station was constructed, this building was purchased for a private home and moved to 724 Zlatnik Drive. (Authors' collection.)

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U.S. Coast Guard Station Two Rivers

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New, wood-related industries developed rapidly in the late 1800's: Logs in the Harbor, circa 1890

Two Rivers, Wisconsin

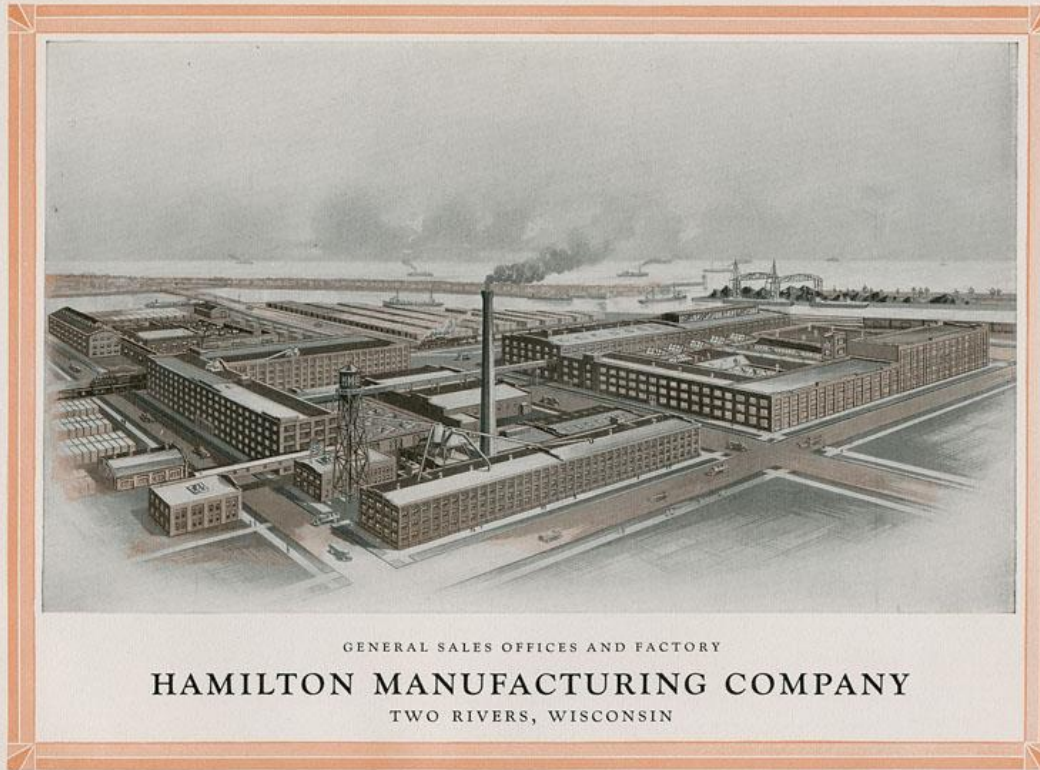
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Mann Brothers Pail Factory, circa 1892

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1880 marked the beginning of the Hamilton Manufacturing

Company, which soon grew to become Two Rivers' largest employer

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Hamilton remained THE dominant force in the local economy until the company closed in 2013, and occupied a sprawling, 12-acre complex on the East Twin River, between downtown and the harbor.

Aerial view of the Hamilton plant, with confluence of the rivers and Lake Michigan in background

Two Rivers, Wisconsin

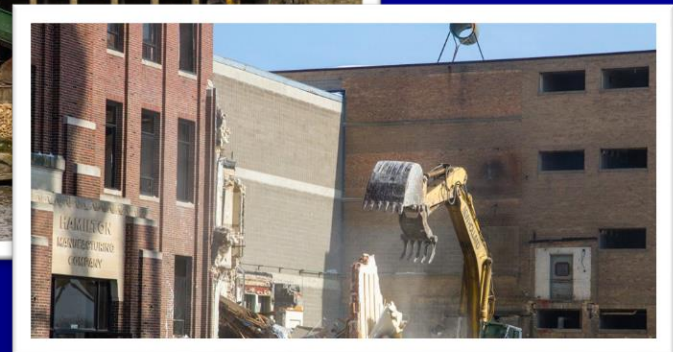
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2013-14 The sun sets on an era in Two Rivers...133 years of Hamilton

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52 buildings, comprising 1.2 mm SF of factory and office space, were razed.

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Thousands witnessed the implosion of the venerable Hamilton smokestack, May 2015

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The current view from City Hall: harbor and lake vistas not seen in a century

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Hamilton's legacy is still celebrated at the Wood Type and Printing Museum

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Keepers of the flame: Historic Rogers Street Fishing Village Museum

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RSFV, the City and State have partnered on many projects, including Coastal Management funding for the Boardwalk

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...And Coastal Management funding for a new Fresnel lens for the historic North Pier Lighthouse



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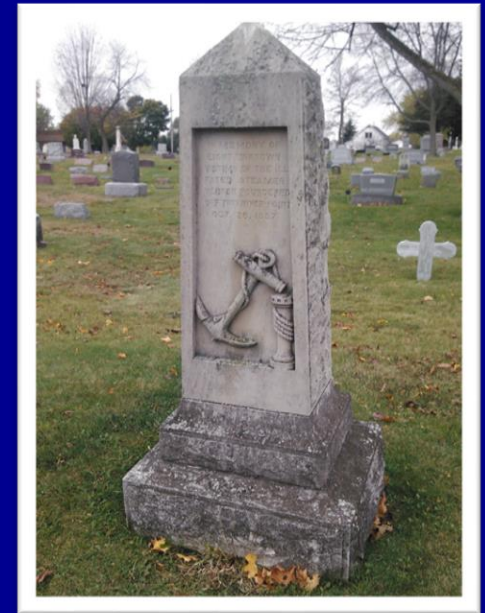
Rogers Street
is the location
of the
Wisconsin
Maritime Trails
marker
memorializing
the sinking of
the steamer
Vernon off
Two Rivers in
1887

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Monument erected by residents of Two Rivers at the gravesite of eight victims of the *Vernon* tragedy, whose bodies were unclaimed—Pioneer Rest Cemetery



Two Rivers, Wisconsin

Turning Our Face Back to the Water



The *Rouse Simmons* drying her sails or posing for photos.
Historical Collections of the Great Lakes, Bowling Green State University

About 12 miles northeast of this spot, 165 feet below the waves, lies one of the most celebrated shipwrecks in Lake Michigan. The three-masted *Rouse Simmons* spent her career like many lumber schooners of her day, hauling forest products from isolated towns on Lake Michigan to the hungry markets of Milwaukee and Chicago. She disappeared one late November day with a special cargo in her hold, and ever since she has been fondly remembered as the "Christmas Tree Ship."



An underwater archaeologist inspects the ship's windows. A window is used to raise and lower the anchors.

Wisconsin's Maritime Trails

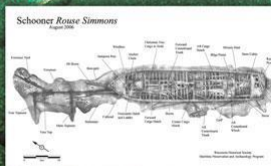
Historic Shipwreck

Schooner *Rouse Simmons*

Type: Wooden schooner, three-masted
Built: 1868, Allen McClelland and Company, Milwaukee
Sank: November 23, 1912
Length: 124' Beam: 27'
Cargo: Lumber, wood products, Christmas trees
Depth of Wreckage: 165'
Lives lost: 16
Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

On November 22, 1912, the *Rouse Simmons* departed Thompson, Mich., with her annual load of Christmas pines and firs. Two captains (each one-eighth owners) shared command of the vessel, Herman Scheunemann and Charles Nelson. Scheunemann intended to sell the trees in Chicago, from the ship's deck directly to his customers, as he had done from several vessels for 20 years.

On her second day out, the *Rouse Simmons* encountered a northwest gale. She was spotted flying a distress flag at about 3 p.m., as she passed the Kewaunee Life-Saving Station. The station telephoned the life saving crew in Two Rivers, who set out to help the struggling vessel. However, by the time the crew rounded Two Rivers Point (now Rawley Point), the *Rouse Simmons* was nowhere to be seen. She was lost without a trace.



The site plan uses a photo mosaic assembled from 242 individual images.

For many years afterwards, Christmas trees from the "ghost ship" washed up along this beach. The *Rouse Simmons* was discovered by divers in 1971. She is still celebrated today in songs, stories, and plays, her myth and mystery growing with the passing years.

Underwater images courtesy Tamara Thomack, Wisconsin Historical Society



www.wisconsinshipwrecks.org
www.maritimetrails.org

Marker for the historic schooner ***Rouse Simmons***, the famous Christmas Tree Ship, at Neshotah Beach

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Rawley Point Trail, a 5 mile crushed limestone connecting Two Rivers and Point Beach State Forest (constructed 2000)

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Rawley Point Lighthouse, Point Beach State Forest

Two Rivers, Wisconsin

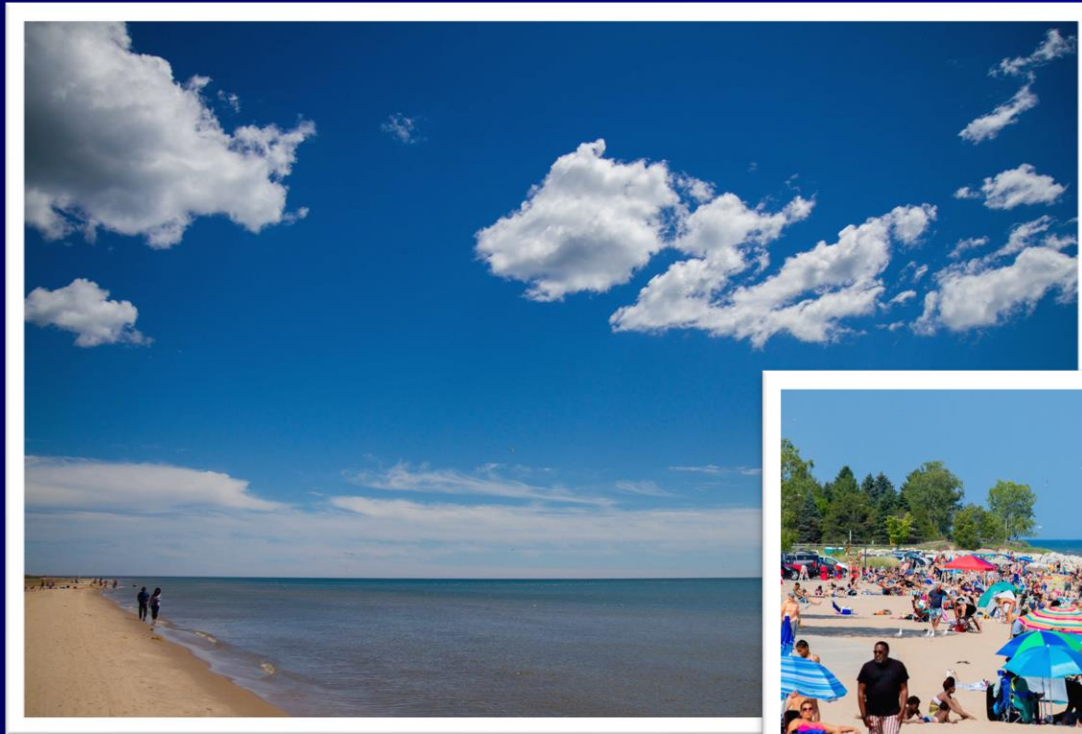
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Mariners Trail, a 6-mile paved trail connecting Two Rivers and Manitowoc, built 2002; over 50 flower gardens planted and tended by volunteers

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And we love our Neshotah Beach, a half-mile groomed urban beach at Neshotah Park, north of the harbor

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Best Beach in Wisconsin

TURN RIGHT AT 22ND ST.
& HEAD FOR THE LAKE



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Rotary Beach Pavilion at Neshotah Beach

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Woodland Dunes
Nature Center and Preserve



Proud to partner with Woodland Dunes Nature Center on habitat restoration and environmental education projects

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Out With the Old...



Harbor Infrastructure

Harbor Park Seawall
and Park Improvements

...In With the New



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Replacement of the 17th Street lift bridge, 2012-13

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Harbor Study with US Army Corps



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Recent access project assisted by Wisconsin Coastal Management: South Breakwater trail, with access to the south pier and an amazing fish mural

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Upcoming project
assisted by
Wisconsin Coast
Management
Program

Governor Tony Evers and Dept. of Administration Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld visited Two Rivers in June 2023 to announce a Coastal Management Grant for an adaptive kayaking initiative—an application in cooperation with Woodland Dunes and the Shipwreck Coast NMS



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Current Waterfront Residential
Development Proposals:

West Twin River Lofts, left

The Confluence on the East Twin
River, below



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Two Rivers Investment Opportunity as Identified in NOAA's Facility Strategy: Renovation of Historic Water Pumping Station as Visitor Center/Trailhead/Interpretive Center



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Conceptual Interior View:
Visitor Center/Trailhead/Interpretive Center

Two Rivers, Wisconsin

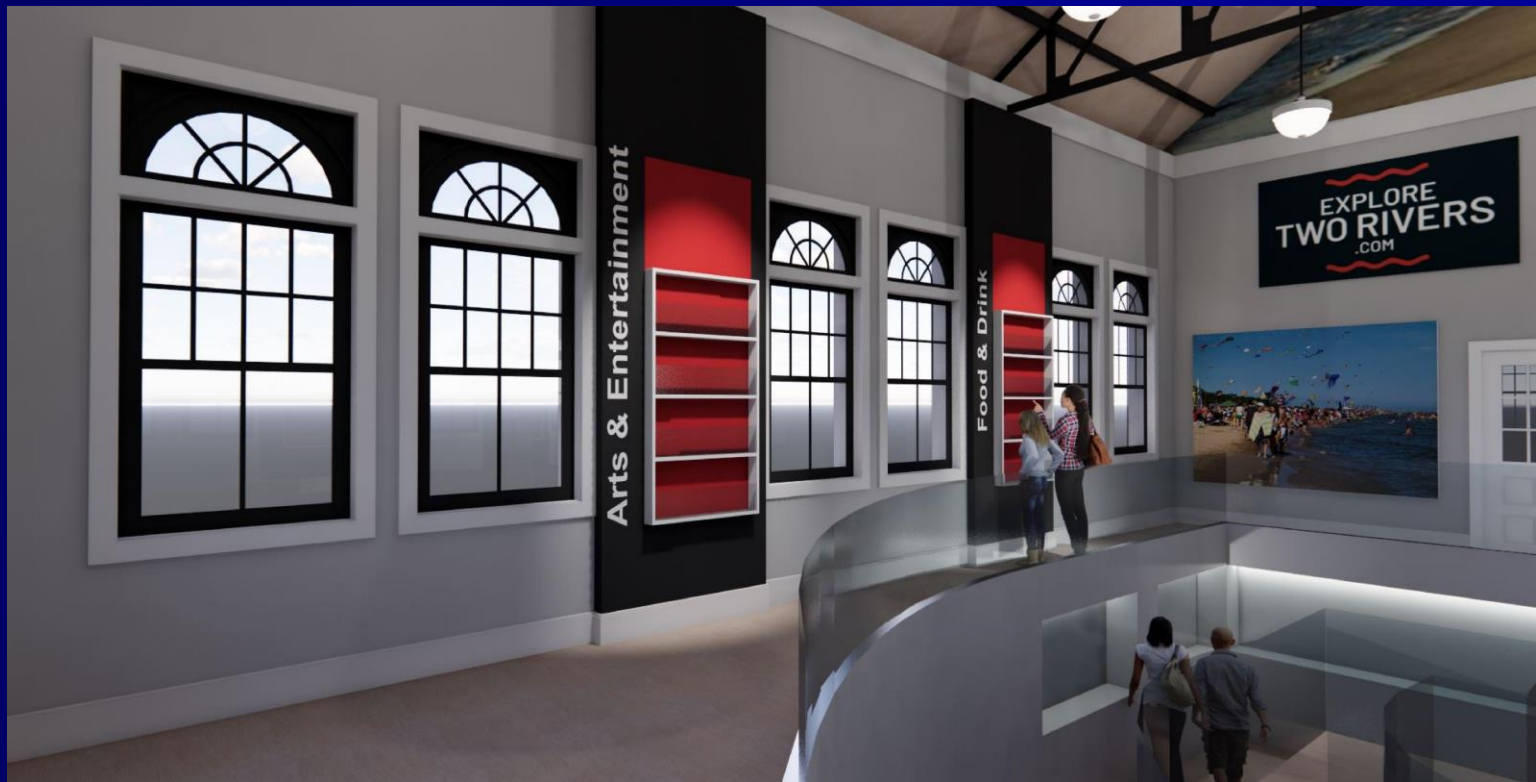
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Conceptual Interior View:
Visitor Center/Trailhead/Interpretive Center

Two Rivers, Wisconsin

Turning Our Face Back to the Water



Conceptual Interior View:
Visitor Center/Trailhead/Interpretive Center

Two Rivers, Wisconsin

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