

# Sawyer County Lakes Forum

Waldo B. Asp, President

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Ms. Jullian Steffes  
WI DNR Northern Regional Office  
107 Sutliff Ave.  
Rinelander, WI 54501

Dear Ms. Steffes,

This letter is in support of the Bayfield Regional Conservancy's Callahan Lake Protection Project. This is a 699 acre property in the heart of the Chippewa River Headwaters of Sawyer County that the Bayfield Regional Conservancy is attempting to permanently protect via a Conservation Easement.

The property encompasses shorelines, wetlands and uplands along Callahan Lake as well as several islands including one 21 acre island zoned for residential development. Currently classified as a Class 3 undeveloped lake, the majority of Callahan's shorelines are heavily wooded and the lake's scenic nature is enhanced by numerous bog and tamarack islands. The ecological landscape includes Northern Dry-Mesic forest, Northern Mesic forest, Emergent Marsh, Sedge Meadow, and peatlands on some of the islands. The property provides forested riparian habitat for neotropical migratory birds and is situated in a priority focus area for waterfowl conservation.

By purchasing a Conservation Easement the Conservancy will limit development on the property to a total of three building sites. To complete the purchase the Conservancy intends to secure a WI DNR Knowles Nelson Stewardship Fund grant to provide 50% of the funds while the landowner has agreed to donate the remaining 50% of the value. Once the easement is acquired the property will remain in private ownership, stay on the tax rolls, yet be open to public access for hunting, hiking, cross country skiing, trapping and fishing, and a primitive boat access will be accessible for entry to the lake by small non-motorized craft. There is currently no other public access point to Callahan Lake.

The Sawyer County Lakes Forum Board unanimously endorses this project and wishes to announce it at the Forum's Fall Meeting in September.

Sincerely,

Waldo B. Asp, President