

## Development of Renewable Energy Infrastructure

*The citizens of Northwest Wisconsin request:*

- **Additional research, incentives, technical support and funding for development of renewable energy facilities and supporting infrastructure in our region.**

A dependable biomass supply chain and development of distribution infrastructure for biodiesel are two current needs. Wind energy is being studied at several sites in the region and the area will need assistance to commercialize this resource if the data proves an adequate supply.

Many of the communities in Northwest Wisconsin are rural, isolated, and below state averages for income, employment and education. Poverty levels are higher than statewide averages, energy costs are higher, and winters are colder and more likely to limit access to outside communities and resources. Because of the relative isolation of population dense areas in northern Wisconsin, dependable access to outside energy resources is extremely important, but often limited and expensive year-round. The alternative for these communities is to become increasingly self-sufficient in many aspects, but especially in independent energy production.

In 2007, the State of Wisconsin spent nearly \$21.5 billion dollars out of state to provide energy to Wisconsin communities. Governor Doyle has issued a challenge to Wisconsin communities to develop renewable energy sources that will provide for at least 25% of our fuel and energy needs by the year 2025 (25x25). The communities of the Chequamegon Bay area participated in the Energy Independent Communities Pilot Project in 2009, and have committed time and resources to establishing energy and fuel baselines in order to plan for reaching 25x25 Goals. These same communities have been working to achieve regional sustainability for many years, and are now in need of the resources to take the next steps toward energy independence.

With increased resources for renewable energy infrastructure, isolated communities like those in northern Wisconsin can do many things to benefit local economies while developing home-grown energy sources:

- develop training/educational programs for renewable energy technologies;
- create jobs with the development of infrastructure for biofuels and other renewable energy options;
- reduce operating costs for multiple sectors by supplying locally sourced, non-fossil fuel based energy;
- keep energy dollars in Wisconsin; and
- achieve real energy independence while reducing the negative impacts on the natural environment bordering Lake Superior.

For more information contact:

Kelly Westlund, Alliance for Sustainability Executive Director

Telephone: (715) 682-1189

Email: [kelly@allianceforsustainability.org](mailto:kelly@allianceforsustainability.org)