

PORT AND SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT

Brown County

2561 SOUTH BROADWAY
GREEN BAY, WI 54304

PHONE: (920) 492-4950 FAX: (920) 492-4957

CHARLES J. LARSCHIED

PORT AND SOLID WASTE DIRECTOR

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Contact: Dean Haen, Port Manager
Port & Solid Waste Dept., (920) 492-4953

PORT OF GREEN BAY RECEIVES \$1.5 MILLION GRANT FOR CAT ISLAND CHAIN RESTORATION

(Green Bay) – The Port of Green Bay has been awarded a \$1.5 million grant to restore the Cat Island chain located in lower Green Bay. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant was awarded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI).

Funding from the grant will be used to construct a wave barrier to provide immediate protection to the islands, which have been eroding over the last three decades. “A wave barrier will protect and help to restore about 1,225 acres of shallow water and wetland habitat,” stated Dean Haen, manager of the Port of Green Bay. “It will protect the area from negative effects that severe storms, shoreland development and high lake levels can bring.”

After a wave barrier, called a rock spine, is established, the Cat Island chain will be rebuilt using clean dredge material that will be taken from the Green Bay Harbor to allow ships to enter the port. The clean dredge material will be placed over the spine to create the upland island habitats and will occur annually. “This project provides a safe and beneficial place to deposit clean dredge material,” Haen stated. “This is a great example of how dredging material can be re-purposed for the benefit of the environment and keep our port economically viable at the same time.”

In addition, a complete restoration of the 272 acres of islands will provide nesting for waterfowl, shorebirds and water birds and will reestablish wetlands which are home to marsh nesting birds, amphibians, turtles, and other mammals.

(More)

The project is a partnership between Brown County, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Army Corps of Engineers, University of Wisconsin-Sea Grant, the University of Wisconsin Green Bay and the Fox River Group of paper mills. “We are very pleased to be receiving additional funding for this project,” Haen stated. “It is a positive step towards reestablishing environmental habitats in lower Green Bay.”

The restoration of the Cat Island chain could begin as soon as 2012. Additional funding sources for the Cat Island chain restoration include Brown County, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation Harbor Assistance Program and the Natural Resource Damage Assessment. The project is projected to cost approximately \$10 million to complete.

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Media Contacts:

Dean Haen
Manager, Port of Green Bay
(920) 492-4953
www.portofgreenbay.com

Kristen Paquet
Leonard & Finco Public Relations
(920) 965-7750
kpaquet@lfpublishrelations.com
www.LFpublicrelations.com

