

# Sen. Jacque: Door County's historic Rock Island Boat House restoration project to receive over \$1.4 million

Posted on Friday, Feb 3, 2023

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DE PERE, Wis. – Senator and State Building Commission member André Jacque (R-De Pere) announced the Commission today approved over \$1.4 million to renovate the historic Rock Island Boat House, along with over \$100,000 in grant funds to help maintain other state parks in and around the 1<sup>st</sup> Senate District. Senator Jacque successfully moved all the state park project funding forward to the full Commission from the Administrative Affairs Subcommittee with unanimous consent.

“Today, promoting outdoor recreation is more important than ever,” said Sen. Jacque, who was appointed to the Commission at the start of 2021. “I appreciate my fellow members recognizing the need to repair the exterior of the Boat House, including windows, the building sill, apron, and masonry to preserve the exterior of this historic structure from further deterioration.”

Sen. Jacque said the 1930 Thordarson Estate Boat House, listed as part of the National Register of Historic Places Thordarson Estate Historic District, is an iconic structure requiring exterior repairs and renovations to protect the structure from the harsh elements. It has served as the arrival and departure location for most visitors to the park, and is situated within the Lake Michigan shoreline, with a large concrete pier for the public ferry and visitor boats.

“As the State Senator for the area – and an active proponent of preserving our historic places – I believe this is the very type of project the Commission should fund to preserve,” Sen. Jacque said. “Places like the Rock Island Boat House help keep the story of Wisconsin alive for future generations, along with other sites across the State, and serve as important reminders of our history.”

Sen. Jacque said the Commission also approved \$117,151 in Stewardship matching grants to 8 different area non-profit “Friends” of State Parks organizations for improvements at those state properties, including the Fox River Trail, High Cliff State Park, and the Ice Age Trail and Newport, Peninsula, Potawatomi, Rock Island and Whitefish Dunes state parks in Door County.

“Our area receiving nearly over a third of the \$326,776 approved shows how active we are in supporting our natural recreation areas, and how highly we value them,” Sen. Jacque said. “It also highlights the importance of the natural environmental features that make our area so unique in Wisconsin.”

“Friends” and other non-profit organizations “adopt” state recreation properties in their area – such as parks, trails and wildlife areas – and donate their time and money to improve them. Local Friends groups leverage Stewardship funds (up to a maximum of \$20,000 annually) with private donations for projects such as piers, signage and harbors. At the same time, these local initiatives must preserve the environmentally-sensitive lands, waters, and habitats on which outdoor recreation activities depend.

“I commend our Friends groups for their efforts to improve our public park properties so that more of us may enjoy them for years to come,” Sen. Jacque said. “These community volunteers do outstanding work that preserves these areas for generations to come.”