

# 2011 International Community Congress

Balancing Nature & Commerce in Communities that Neighbour Public Lands

October 24-27, 2011 \* Thunder Bay, Ontario & Grand Portage, Minnesota

Heart of the Continent Partnership's Sustainable Gateway Communities Initiative

## What Area Leaders Have to Say ...

*"Responding to an invitation from Voyageurs National Park superintendent Kate Miller, my County Board selected me to attend a Gateway Communities workshop a few years ago. With some hesitation I agreed to participate. It turned out to be one of the best decisions I have ever made. I have had the honor to serve as a County Commissioner for nearly two decades, and have attended countless events, training sessions and seminars, but none have compared to the value and insight I took home from that Gateway workshop.*

*The workshop is intense but enjoyable. The program provides wonderful insight and examples of planning and achieving common goals to improve communities, advance commerce and protect our natural resources. As an added benefit and perhaps the biggest accomplishment of all, I can attest that the Gateway Program has provided the foundation for a new era of cooperation and greatly improved relations between the Park, and local units of government in our area. We are now full partners working together to improve our communities for the benefit of all.*

*In summation the Gateway Communities program provides the road map, and if the communities provide the commitment, the positive results will speak for themselves."*

Wade Pavleck  
Koochiching County Commissioner  
January 5, 2011

*"As part of planning for the 2011 Congress, I had the opportunity to participate in a similar session in West Virginia. The workshops provided all the participating groups with professional guidance and inspiration as they worked on their individual projects. Each group's efforts benefited the others and by the end of the workshop each team seemed to be leaving with fresh ideas and renewed vigour."*

Robin Reilly, Superintendent,  
Quetico Provincial Park  
January 5, 2011

## Benefits of Conference Attendance

**Economic Boost:** Increase your community's ability to financially profit from the outdoor and cultural features of the area

**New Insights:** Help local residents to gain an appreciation of the historical, cultural and natural resources of the region to enhance stewardship

**More Capacity:** Build capacity in your community by developing the leadership skills necessary to work across boundaries toward mutual goals

**New Partners:** Expand and diversify the base of partners and leaders in your community

**Wider Collaboration:** Build new partnerships and identify areas for future collaborations

**Regional Network:** Meet with peers from similar communities to establish a regional network of contacts and tools

**Community Character:** Learn to balance growth and development with smart conservation practices to maintain your community's sense of place, cultural legacy and environmental integrity

**Real World Outcomes:** Explore practical, sustainable financial growth in your community that will provide a solid economic base for future generations

**New Business:** Identify new business opportunities that allow for sustainable growth/development

**Support Who's Here:** Plan with new partners how your community can support local entrepreneurship and attract businesses

**Enhance Community:** A forum for people to build community in the very best sense of the word, at the local level, between communities, and within the larger region

**Join forces:** Participants won't just comment on someone else's proposal; they can build proposals together.

**Read About Results Elsewhere:** To learn how this workshop has helped communities in other regions launch new projects, visit [http://www.conservationfund.org/training\\_education/projects](http://www.conservationfund.org/training_education/projects)

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## Why is the 2011 International Community Congress effort important?

Comments from leaders of more than 20 organizations at recent planning meetings in Thunder Bay and Grand Portage

Peter Boyle  
Kimberly Byrd  
John Cameron  
Ben Cascio  
Cameron Clark  
Tim Cochrane  
Sarah Crow  
Paul Danicic  
Norman Deschampe  
Deborah Duplaisie  
Doug Franchot  
Janice Hall  
Svenja Hansen  
Bret Hesla  
Kris Hoellen  
Lynda Horman  
Andy Hubley  
Mark Hummel  
Michael Jimenez  
Jim Johnson  
Holly Larson  
Bob Lindahl  
Michael McKinnon  
Brian McLaren  
Claudia Mielke  
Sally Nankivell  
Paul Pepe  
Kathleen Przybylski  
Lisa Radosevich-Craig  
Robin Reilly  
Ann Schwaller  
Chris Stromberg  
Okey Ukaga  
Frank Vecchio

*"We all have separate chapters, but it's the book that people will want to read, the whole book is where the story makes sense."*

*"It's important to get beyond the borders of our separate little realms, to take the silos apart, to leverage our resources together."*

*"We stand a lot to gain if we brand the whole region, the Heart of the continent, as a total package."*

*"No one has all the land; no one has all the money they need to reach their vision: so we need to all work together--build new working relationships with leaders in nearby regions, and leaders from other sectors."*

*"We can help catalyze each other's communities to get projects started."*

*"Together we have a wide mix of attractions, and that wider mix is needed to attract someone from as far away as Europe."*

*"This provides an opportunity to solve problems and build quality of life together. Another way to put that is to build a sense of community beyond a certain location, into a sense of involvement, belonging, and taking personal initiative to make a positive difference. And the agencies don't run the show; they're just one more player at the table, looking for ways to contribute to the larger goals of healthy people, healthy communities, and healthy landscapes."*

*"This brings a new avenue of communication to all these separate groups: versus the lawsuit approach, where there are always winners and losers."*

*"The international quality of this natural area makes it distinctive: the border is part of the story."*

*"Seems like right now, judges make decisions, which creates winners or losers. That works against the idea of working together on an outcome that works for all of us. We need to find a way to work on what we share in common rather than focusing on our differences. Right now, each group has its own management plan, its own way of doing things. This is a chance to start building a bigger picture, a more inclusive plan, together. Even the most contrary group adds value by providing checks and balances to the process."*

*"This project can connect urban industry folks to natural resources folks."*

*"This will encourage communities to work together in new ways."*

*"Organizations will better see the whole region, not just their little piece of it."*

*"We're focusing on our commonalities, not our differences."*

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[www.heartofthecontinent.org](http://www.heartofthecontinent.org)

## Heart of the Continent Partnership

Working together to sustain and celebrate the lakes, forests and communities on the Ontario-Minnesota border