

Silver Bay and Grand Marais Reach for Next Green Step

By Kitty Mayo

Grand Marais and Silver Bay had the good fortune of working with a student intern from the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERT) during this summer. Travis Black, University of Minnesota - Duluth student, and sustainability intern met with community leaders, who completed reports for both cities detailing their progress and goals in the Green Steps program.

The CERT intern worked along with Colby Abasz, CERT's NE Region coordinator to evaluate where they are at in their Green Step program, and how they can put into action more sustainability procedures that will help them work to the next level, or Green Step Three.

Both cities are currently certified at the second level of the statewide voluntary Green Step program, for which there are five defined steps.

Black worked with Grand Marais with a focus on their Climate Action Plan that had already been developed, with an accounting of what has already been accomplished, as well as evaluating how the Green Steps program can fit within those goals.

“Green Steps has a lot of support

available that can help in enacting Grand Marais' goals, and can identify the best practices that can be utilized as a framework that will help meet their Climate Action Plan goals,” said Abasz.

In Silver Bay, Black compiled a report of what Green Steps actions the city had already taken, as well as outlining what it would take for them to get to Step Three.

“The main culmination of the project highlights and is a road map to action that Silver Bay would need to take to get to the next step,” said Abasz.

Abasz says that Silver Bay is interested in making progress in sustainability goals and will be able to use the organized information from the CERT's reports to highlight their achievements for future grant applications.

“These things that Silver Bay will be able to feature highlights for grants as they look for support for other businesses for the business park with a mindset toward sustainability and resilience, they will be able to show they are taking a proactive approach to preparing for the future with the best practices for a Green Step city,” said Abasz.

Abasz emphasizes that there are many motivating reasons for cities to participate in the Green Steps program so that each community can customize their approach.

“It is a sustainability program, but Green Steps actions also have a really tangible results for many good reasons for health, beautification, aesthetics, and saving money,” said Abasz.

Despite the many differences between the two cities of Grand Marais and Silver Bay, Abasz says that Green Steps is such a flexible program that it works well for both. With around 120 different actionable items under 28 different best practices categories, personalizing the program to meet individual community priorities is possible.

“Grand Marais and Silver Bay are very different communities, but the Green Steps program is flexible in each and reflects actions that resonate with each community and how it will be beneficial to that community,” said Abasz.

Some of the resources offered through Green Steps include access to expert information. One of the actions Silver Bay has

prioritized is to work on ordinance and zoning rules to more closely match their Green Steps goals. They will be able to use templates through Green Steps, as well as consulting with an expert on ordinance and zoning.

Going forward, Abasz says he hopes to engage an intern that is a local student or resident, so as to leverage their existing knowledge of the area.

“It's great to recognize each city's accomplishments because it gives a city an opportunity to shine and stand in the spotlight they deserve, but this isn't just a plaque on the wall. And CERT does not just say 'Here's a report', and walk away. We are ready to work with each city as they continually evolve their Green Steps actions,” said Abasz.

Abasz is encouraging local groups or individuals to put in their application for the CERTs Seed Grants, with an October 11th deadline. Abasz says that anyone with a community clean energy project idea can apply at: <https://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/seedgrants#projects>. If you have an idea and want to discuss, email Abasz at: colby@cleanenergyresourceteams.org, or call (218)353-1448.



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Be the Help Until Help Arrives

BJ Kohlstedt, Lake County Emergency Manager, 218-220-7811, bj.kohlstedt@co.lake.mn.us.

Not every day goes as planned. Bad weather, medical emergencies, power failures, and other unexpected events can demand our quick action to save ourselves or others.

Emergency responders are trained to help, but they can sometimes be too few or too far away. 95% of the time, emergency first help comes from our own family, friends and neighbors. Fortunately, we can all learn to be the help until help arrives.

Lake County will offer Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) on Friday-Sunday, October 11-13 in Silver Bay. This 20-hour weekend course teaches us what to do during emergencies at

home, school, or work until professional responders arrive... or in case they can't.

Practice triage and first aid, basic search & rescue, and fire extinguisher use in a casual hands-on atmosphere. Work with others on realistic scenarios to assess injuries, stop the bleed, provide support, and get more help. Also build your own preparedness kits for evacuation or sheltering-in-place. It's a good use of \$10.00 and might make the difference on some future bad day.

In addition to learning personal skills, course graduates can apply to join the Lake County CERT team, which meets regularly and serves at public events,

exercises and, if necessary, real disasters. CERT team members are further trained in community damage assessment, traffic and crowd management for large events, evacuations and pet sheltering, and Emergency Operations Center support.

The CERT course is for ages 15 and up. Register through Community Education at www.ISD381.org. Click on COM ED / Adults / Register / Silver Bay / Health & Safety, or call 226-4437, ext. 8137 to reach the Silver Bay Community Education office.

For more information on course content, contact BJ Kohlstedt at 218-226-4444 or bj.kohlstedt@co.lake.mn.us.