

Local students attend biennial lake symposium

By Joan Chadde

Thirty high school students and teachers from three Copper Country schools attended the 12th Biennial Lake Superior Youth Symposium held April 27-30 and hosted by Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin. The students and teachers were from Houghton, Jeffers and Lake Linden-Hubbell high schools.

On Friday, students and teachers were offered a variety of presentations on topics ranging from wolf ecology, climate change, stream monitoring, wild rice, preserving local history through art, and leadership qualities of the voyageurs. Also on Friday afternoon, student groups were invited to present their stewardship projects.

On Saturday, participants were offered four day-long field-trip choices-- ecological restoration; land management & tribal perspectives; forest to farm; historic preservation. All field trips included opportunities to participate in service projects. Saturday also featured a presentation by three groups of adventurers and their respective stories of circumnavigating Lake Superior.

The symposium wrapped up on Sunday morning with students sharing how they were inspired and how they wanted to share what they had learned back in their schools and communities. Their ideas ranged from taking a wild rice field trip with their class, to starting a Green Club, making a garden, to increasing recycling and starting composting at their schools.

The symposium began in 1995 at Northland College and takes place every two years, rotating between Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Ontario. The Western UP Center for Science, Math & Environmental Education partnered with Michigan Tech to host the symposium twice-- in 2001 and 2013. Tentative plans are for the next symposium to be hosted by University of Minnesota Duluth in May 2019.

###