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## **NORTHERN GREAT LAKES VISITOR CENTER TO NAME THEATER AFTER MARTIN HANSON**

The Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center in Ashland, Wis. will name its theater after conservationist Martin Hanson.

On Feb. 1, 2003 at 3 p.m., a dedication ceremony will be held at the center honoring video producer Martin Hanson's lifelong commitment to the environment and environmental causes. Steve Hoecker, director of the center, says: "This is a fitting tribute to a man who has dedicated his life to wild places and educating others of their value."

Hanson, a longtime resident of northern Wisconsin living near Mellen in the Chequamegon National Forest, has provided leadership on a wide variety of regional and national conservation efforts for more than 40 years. Hanson has:

- Donated, along with his brother and sister, more than 1,000 acres of northern Wisconsin pristine wilderness and lakefront property to the University of Wisconsin as a research area. This gift alone was valued at over \$2 million.
- Played host to top UW researchers and their students, who did significant studies on bear, deer and other animals.
- Provided leadership to establish the Apostle Island National Lakeshore and joined then-Sen. Gaylord Nelson in escorting President John Kennedy on a tour of the Islands after which the president announced his support of the National Lakeshore designation. Hanson also was instrumental in securing "Wild and Scenic" status for the Saint Croix River.
- Played a central role in establishing the Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge at the head of Chequamegon Bay of Lake Superior. And he led a fundraising effort that supported Trout Unlimited's Coaster brook trout restoration efforts.
- Provided influential support in re-establishing elk to Wisconsin in the early 1990s. The elk herd now numbers over 100 animals.
- Helped secure funding for the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center.
- Produced more than 50 video educational and conservationist video tapes.
- With his brother, helped bring Dall Sheep to the Brookfield Zoo in Chicago.

"I often sit at Martin's house and watch the deer and the birds come by. He doesn't just mouth the word 'conservation,' he lives and breathes it," says state Rep. David Travis, D-Town of Westport. "Martin has been an adviser to countless public officials from presidents, senators and Congressmembers on down. ...He has achieved incredible successes in protecting wildlife and wilderness, often at a great personal cost to himself. And he has sensitized innumerable public officials and citizens to issues of conservation and the environment."

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