

The schooner *Walter B. Allen* rests intact on the lakebed, well preserved by Lake Michigan's cold, freshwater. Photo: Tamara Thomsen/WHS



The public enjoys free deck tours on Discovery World's schooner *Denis Sullivan* during a "Get in Your Sanctuary" event. Photo: Matt McIntosh/NOAA



In partnership with local communities, the sanctuary helps create new educational opportunities. Photo: Matt McIntosh/NOAA

## National Maritime Heritage, Local Impacts

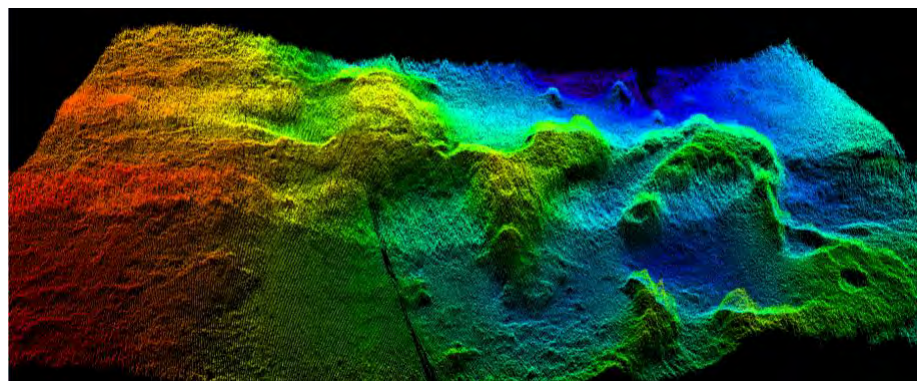
The 962 square-mile Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary conserves 36 historic shipwrecks with exceptional archaeological, recreational, and national significance. Co-managed by NOAA and the state of Wisconsin, the sanctuary expands on the state's 30-year stewardship of these historic sites, bringing new opportunities for research, resource protection, education, and community engagement.

From permanent moorings at shipwrecks sites, to high-resolution lakebed mapping, to real-time wind and wave data buoys, the sanctuary seeks to facilitate recreation and deepen our understanding of Lake Michigan. In partnership with local communities, the sanctuary provides a venue for unique educational experiences and a national stage for promoting heritage tourism.

## A Museum Beneath the Waves

For millennia, humans have utilized the immense Great Lakes water highway. Sanctuary shipwrecks represent a cross-section of vessel types that played a central role in developing and expanding the U.S. between the 1830s and 1930s. The earliest vessels traded locally, creating essential economic and cultural links between Wisconsin's developing lakeshore communities. Later, innovative sailing vessels and steel-hulled freighters transported America's business and industry between the Midwest, Eastern Seaboard, and beyond. Passenger ships brought thousands of immigrants to Wisconsin, making possible the dramatic growth of the Midwest's cities, industries, and farms.

Lake Michigan's cold freshwater has preserved sanctuary shipwrecks as unique historical, archaeological, and recreational sites. These sites are a tangible connection to past generations whose tenacity and entrepreneurial spirit help build the nation. Twenty-one are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Research suggests that another 60 shipwrecks may lie undiscovered in the sanctuary.



Ongoing lakebed mapping by the sanctuary and its partners provides new information to support Lake Michigan conservation. Photo: NOAA

# Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary

## Location

Wisconsin mid-Lake  
Michigan coast

## Protected Area

962 square miles

## Designation

Fall 2021

## By the Numbers

36 known shipwrecks

60 shipwrecks not  
yet located



## Find Us

University of Wisconsin-Green Bay  
Sheboygan Campus  
One University Drive  
Sheboygan, WI 53081

## On the Web

Contact: Russ Green  
[russ.green@noaa.gov](mailto:russ.green@noaa.gov)  
[sanctuaries.noaa.gov/wisconsin](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/wisconsin)

## Office of National Marine Sanctuaries

Network of marine protected areas  
Encompasses more than 600,000 square miles  
Established October 1972

## On the Web

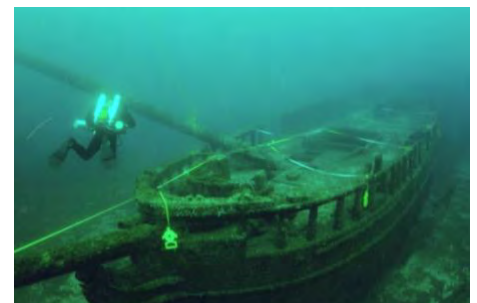
[sanctuaries.noaa.gov](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov)  
Facebook: NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
Instagram: @noaasanctuaries  
Twitter: @sanctuaries  
Tumblr: @noaasanctuaries  
YouTube: [youtube.com/user/sanctuaries](https://www.youtube.com/user/sanctuaries)



Students from Merrill, Wisconsin learn about sonar technology during a NOAA lakebed mapping project. Photo: NOAA



Shipwrecks within the sanctuary connect us to the thousands of men and women who took risks to build the nation. Photo: Chicago Historical Society



Co-managed with the state of Wisconsin, the sanctuary brings new resources to the conservation of 36 shipwrecks. Photo: Tamara Thomsen/WHS