



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT**  
**Darcy Dwyer**  
**218-822-7025**  
**Darcy.Dwyer@crowwing.us**

## **Crow Wing County Gets the Green Light to Purchase the Historic Pequot Lakes Fire Tower and Adjoining 40 Acres**

Crow Wing County's purchase of the Historic Pequot Lakes fire tower and surrounding 41.4 acres from the Minnesota DNR has been finalized.

"Yesterday's reception of the documents that transfers title of the fire tower to the county is a huge step forward," County Board Chairman Paul Thiede, Pequot Lakes, states. "We can now begin to move toward a process which will eventually see it open to the public."

Crow Wing County purchased the land and fire tower for one dollar with the intent to renovate and reopen the tower and surrounding site. Improvements will be made with the support of local community organizations, donations and county park dollars. The Pequot Lakes Historical Society, the Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway Association and several local units of government have shown support for the tower since its future came into question. Crow Wing County carries liability insurance and the tower site will fall under its umbrella of coverage.

The DNR has provided maintenance, repair and rehabilitation records for this property to help with safety improvements. A team of architectural historians plan to produce a preservation manual that can be applied to all Minnesota's historic fire lookouts. The manual should be available in the spring of 2019 and will provide recommendations to help Crow Wing County preserve the historic integrity of the Pequot Fire tower.

"This is going to be a project that will restore an icon of local history to a useable working monument to all who worked in the fire suppression field," Thiede said, "and it will let the many who have enjoyed the view continue that enjoyment."

The 100-foot-tall tower was built in 1934 and was once used by the DNR forestry staff to watch for wildfires. It was recently added to the National Register of Historic Places. The tower has been on the National Historic Lookout Register since 1993. The fire tower is located on a 40-acre parcel of land near Pequot Lakes north of County Highway 11 and east of Highway 371.

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