

Standing Up for the Land:  
Gaylord Nelson, the Ojibwe and the  
Apostle Islands

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Since I was very young, I have had a fascination with the environment and I've wanted to make a change. For three years, I have worked to build a website, Infinite Turtle, to encourage other kids to conserve the environment. I have organized two annual Earth Day clean-ups. That's how I met Sheila Cohen, author of *Gaylord Nelson: Champion for Our Earth*. Saying I was carrying on his legacy, she gave me a signed copy. After reading that book I knew that Nelson was going to be my topic, but his life and Earth Day seemed too broad and had little controversy. Looking more into Senator Nelson, I learned about his work to create the Apostle Islands. When I came across an Ojibwe letter objecting to the Lakeshore, I knew I had found my topic.

Because Nelson had been U.S. Senator, State Senator and Governor of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Historical Society was filled with primary sources pertaining to Nelson's stand and the Apostle Islands, and the documents on the Ojibwe's stand were intertwined. After going to the Wisconsin Historical Society on a school field trip, I returned seven times. Also, I obtained photos of logging on the Apostle Islands from the Madeline Island Historical Society. I was fortunate enough to interview Professor Patty Loew, an Ojibwe member, Dennis Dresang, UW-Madison Professor Emeritus, and Sheila Cohen, author. Their viewpoints changed my perspective on my topic. After considering feedback from judges, I conducted targeted research to enhance my project, especially the question of impact. I was also able to visit the Apostle Islands after regionals (February 26) to view the beautiful islands myself, and plan to make trips this summer.

I chose to present my project as a website because I like computer programming and I want to link it to my website, Infinite Turtle. A website is easy to use, and it allows

you to update information as needed. I think websites are appealing to all ages. I have many photos to show what is happening rather than just explaining it with words: the photos and video/audio clips bring the project to life.

Nelson and the Ojibwe, taking many stands in history, fit perfectly into this year's NHD theme. Gaylord Nelson took a stand for the Apostle Islands and the environment by conserving twenty of the islands from logging and development, protecting the animals, and beauty of the Islands. Taking his second stand, Nelson guaranteed Northern Wisconsin a stable economic future, the Islands bringing in 82% of the economic worth. The Ojibwe took a stand for their land, enabling them to live, teach, work, hunt, and fish on their land. I learned after State that the National Lakeshore now acknowledges and educates visitors about the cultural history of the Lakeshore. The Ojibwe's fight for their land played a role in that change. Together Nelson and the Ojibwe changed history.