



Willdan Creates Decarbonization Plan for 5 National Parks in Lake Superior Region

February 2, 2023

ANAHEIM, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Feb. 2, 2023-- Willdan Group, Inc. (NASDAQ: WLDN) announced today that it has created a plan for the National Parks of Lake Superior Foundation (NPLSF) to decarbonize land-based operations across five national parks in the Lake Superior region. The NPLSF announced this plan on Saturday, January 28 at the Great Northern Festival in Minneapolis with an address by U.S. Senator Tina Smith of Minnesota and by National Park Superintendent Denice Swanke from Isle Royale National Park.

Willdan's engineering team developed an investment plan for each of the parks to achieve 100% greenhouse gas emissions reduction in land-based operations by eliminating fossil fuel use and switching to renewable electricity. The plan proposes an estimated investment of \$15 million across the parks, a broad set of energy efficiency upgrades, and the electrification of space and water heating in 131 buildings and all land-based vehicles, including cars, trucks, and utility vehicles. Among a diverse set of technologies used to achieve this, the plan proposes air-source cold climate heat pumps as a cost-effective alternative to propane for space heating.

"Decarbonizing is not only the right thing to do for our five parks on Lake Superior, but it will also act as a realistic model for other National Parks and public lands," said Tom Irvine, the Executive Director of the NPLSF. "Once you see the visitor's center at the Grand Portage National Monument heated by an air-source heat pump instead of propane, you realize it can be done in your own home. When you are standing on the shores of the Isle Royale National Park at dusk . . . you won't hear the drone of a diesel generator kicking in, just the deafening silence of the most remote wilderness area in the continental United States."

U.S. Senator Tina Smith noted in her address at the Great Northern Festival that the plan for the region's National Parks echoes the decarbonization plan for the nation as a whole. The plan pursues economic energy efficiency, decarbonizes the electric power sector, and electrifies energy use in buildings and transportation. She also noted that all these investments are supported by the Inflation Reduction Act passed in 2022.

"By using air-source cold climate heat pumps in one of the coldest regions in the U.S., we're helping demonstrate that this technology is ready for nationwide adoption," said Tom Brisbin, Willdan's CEO and Chairman. "Other parks, businesses, and even cities can apply this plan's decarbonization strategies, such as combining solar photovoltaic energy generation with battery storage, electric vehicles, and using electric heat pumps to heat spaces and water."

The plan was catalyzed by a key investment from Askov Finlayson, a certified B Corporation and climate positive winter outerwear brand. Askov Finlayson Founder and CEO Eric Dayton said, "It's exciting to be a part of climate leadership in our own backyard. This initiative can serve as a model to inspire further action both here in Minnesota and across the country."

About the National Parks of Lake Superior Foundation (NPLSF)

The philanthropic partner of the five national parks of Lake Superior, NPLSF is a nonprofit that inspires people to create meaningful connections with the parks by providing funding for programming, educational initiatives, and outreach efforts, often with a climate resilience focus. NPLSF seeks to ensure the parks are nurtured and maintained so all may enjoy the captivating public lands today and for generations to come.

About Willdan

Willdan is a nationwide provider of professional, technical, and consulting services to utilities, government agencies, and private industry. Willdan's service offerings span a broad set of complementary disciplines that include electric grid solutions, energy efficiency and sustainability, engineering and planning, and municipal financial consulting. For additional information, visit Willdan's website at www.willdan.com.

Forward-Looking Statements

Statements in this press release that are not purely historical are forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. It is important to note that Willdan's actual results could differ materially from those in any such forward-looking statements. Factors that could cause actual results to differ materially include, but are not limited to, the risk factors listed from time to time in Willdan's reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including, but not limited to, the Annual Report on Form 10-K filed for the year ended December 31, 2021. Willdan cautions investors not to place undue reliance on the forward-looking statements contained in this press release. Willdan disclaims any obligation to, and does not undertake to, update or revise any forward-looking statements in this press release.

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