

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT: Congress Matters: Wisconsin Conservation Congress 2008 Spring Hearing Advisory Questions

FOR: JANUARY 2008 **BOARD MEETING**

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Matt Frank and Ed Harvey, Wisconsin Conservation Congress Chair

SUMMARY:

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress will present their 2008 Advisory Questions to the Natural Resources Board. The questions have been approved by the Congress Executive Council for inclusion on the Statewide Spring Hearing Questionnaire and will be presented to the public at the joint DNR Spring Hearings and Conservation Congress County Meetings on Monday, April 14, 2008.

In addition, the Congress will present the board with a local citizen resolution which was introduced and passed at the 2007 Spring Hearing regarding electric motor use at Willow river State Park. This resolution was endorsed by the Executive Council at their May 2007 meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: Informational

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

- No Fiscal Estimate Required
- No Environmental Assessment or Impact Statement Required
- No Background Memo

- Yes Attached
- Yes Attached
- Yes Attached

APPROVED:

/s/
Bureau Director, Richard Prorise

01/09/08
Date

n/a
Administrator,

Date

/s/
Secretary, Matt Frank

01/11/08
Date

- cc: Laurie J. Ross - AD/5
- WCC Exec. Council - 24 (c/o Thiede LS/5)
- Scott Loomans - WM/6
- Joe Hennessy - FH/4
- Mike Staggs - FH/4
- Tom Hauge - WM/6
- Tim Andryk - LS/5
- Laurie Osterndorf - AD/5
- Todd Ambs - AD/5
- Randy Stark - LE/5

- Tom Van Haren - LE/5
- Laurel Steffes - AD/5
- Signe Holtz - ER/6
- Bill Smith - PR/6



Edgar Harvey, Jr., Chair
N3635 Timberview Road
Waldo, WI 53093
920-528-7071

Robert Bohmann, Vice-Chair
1105 Melvin Ave.
Racine, WI 53402
262-681-2055

John Edelblute, Secretary
2332 Belfast Lane
Hartford, WI 53027
262-673-2813

DATE: January 9, 2008

TO: Natural Resources Board

FROM: Ed Harvey, Chair

SUBJECT: Informational: 2008 Conservation Congress Advisory Questions

As established by Wisconsin State Statutes, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress is officially recognized as the only natural resources advisory body in the state where citizens elect delegates to represent their interests on natural resources issues on a local and statewide level to the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources. Our mission is to represent the citizens of Wisconsin by working with the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources to effectively manage Wisconsin's greatest asset, our abundant natural resources, for present and future generations to enjoy.

In accordance with our purpose and mission I would like to take this opportunity to present the board with our 2008 Conservation Congress Advisory Questions (Attachment 1.). The Conservation Congress Executive Council approved these questions at their annual January meeting on Friday, January 4, 2008 in the Wisconsin Dells.

In the spirit of our state's history of citizen involvement in the establishment of natural resource policy, a majority of these questions were introduced and approved by citizens at our county meetings last April. At the 2007 April Congress county meetings, citizens introduced over 360 resolutions. Of those resolutions, approximately 230 received support within their county and were advanced to one of the Congress' 23 issue specific study committees. The questions that will appear on the Congress side of the questionnaire have passed the scrutiny of our study committees and the Executive Council. A couple of our other questions did not originate as citizen resolutions; rather these questions were developed at the study committee level and were advanced to the Executive Council for consideration.

The second issue that I present to the Board for consideration is a question that appeared previously as a Congress Advisory question in April 2004. It pertains to Willow River State Park and the use of electric motors on the lake located within the park (Attachment 2.). In 2004 the public supported the use of trolling motors by a vote of 1,486 in support and 517 opposed. Last May, the Congress Executive Council reviewed this new citizen resolution that was introduced in April 2007, and rather than advance the question for still another public vote, the Council voted to send this issue directly to the Board for your review and consideration. The Executive Council supports the resolution and request that the Board revisit the issue in the future.

Final 2008 Conservation Congress Advisory Questions

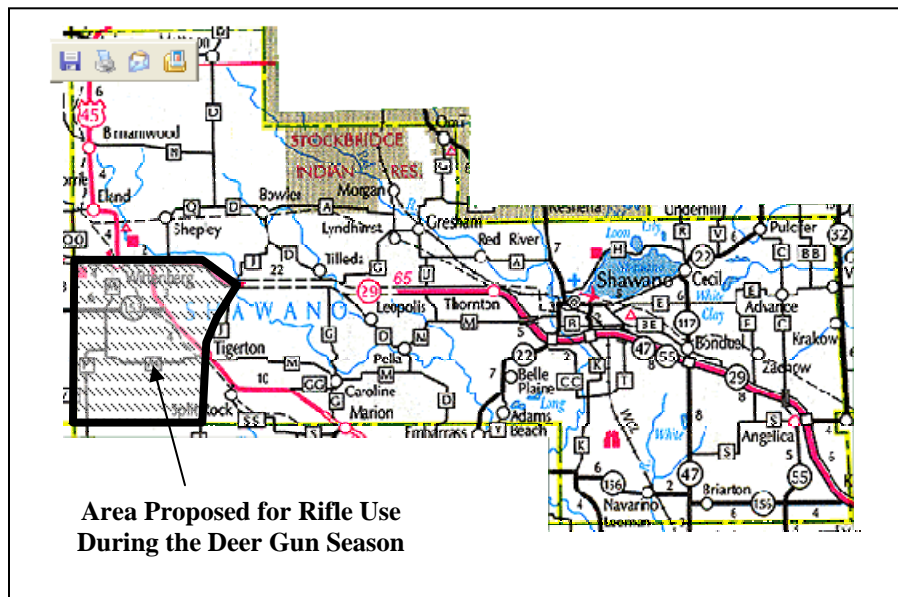
Executive Council

Question 1. Legalize Rifles for Deer Hunting in Shawano County

State law prohibits the use of rifles for deer hunting in the southern portion of Shawano County (Deer Management Unit (DMU) 62B); therefore deer hunters in this DMU are restricted to the use of shotguns, handguns, and muzzleloaders to harvest deer during the gun deer seasons. There are no biological or safety reasons for the current restriction. Rifles are currently allowed for use in the portion of Shawano County north of Hwy 29.

DMU 62B has been over its deer population goal for the past several years and there is potential for a greater harvest by allowing the use of rifles. This proposal would allow the use of rifles in the southwest corner of Shawano County during the gun deer season.

- Do support allowing the use of rifles in the southwest corner of Shawano County during the gun deer season?

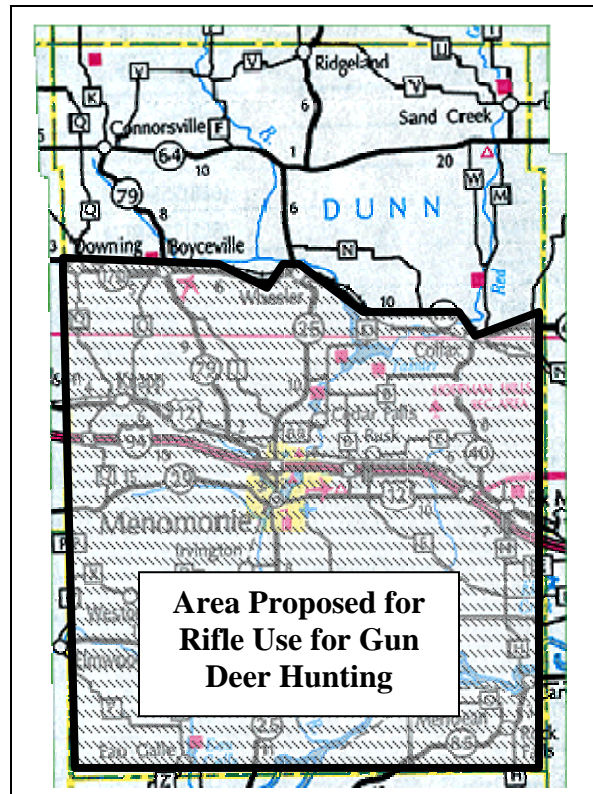


Question 2. Legalize Rifles for Deer Hunting in Dunn County

State law prohibits the use of rifles south of Hwy 170 in Dunn County; therefore deer hunters in this area are restricted to the use of shotguns, handguns, and muzzleloaders to harvest deer during the gun deer seasons. However, areas of Dunn County north of Hwy 170 are open to rifle hunting. There are no biological or safety reasons for the current restriction. Eau Claire County, which is adjacent to Dunn County, allows the use of rifles for their deer gun seasons.

This proposal would allow the use of rifles during the gun deer season for all of Dunn County.

- Do support allowing the use of rifles in all of Dunn County during the gun deer season?



Big Game Study Committee

Question 3. Use of Archery Equipment with a Gun Deer License

Currently, the Gun Deer License only allows you to use a rifle, shotgun, muzzleloader or pistol during the firearm deer seasons.

- Do you support legislation that would modify the Gun Deer License to allow the use of Archery Equipment during the regular firearm deer seasons?

Question 3. Yes _____ No _____

Question 4. Either-Sex Carcass Tag for Youth Deer Hunters

Currently, the Junior Gun Deer License includes one Gun Buck Deer Carcass Tag valid in any unit statewide and one Antlerless Deer Carcass Tag valid in Earn-A-Buck and Herd Control Units. In an effort to provide youth hunters with added opportunities to harvest a deer, their Gun Buck Deer Carcass Tag could be made to be an either sex carcass tag valid statewide.

Junior Gun Deer License holders would still receive one Antlerless Deer Carcass Tag valid in Earn-A-Buck and Herd Control Units. Junior Gun Deer License holders would still be required to shoot an Antlerless Deer first in Earn-A-Buck Units.

- Do you support the Department of Natural Resources take action to correct this situation by changing the Gun Buck Deer Carcass Tag that is currently issued with a Junior Gun Deer License to an Either Sex Deer Carcass Tag valid in any unit state wide?

Question 4. Yes _____ No _____

Question 5. Use of Crossbows for Non-Residents 65 Years of Age or Older

Currently, state statues allow resident and non-resident disabled hunters issued a Class A, B or C Disabled Permit or a Crossbow Permit, and resident hunters 65 years of age or older are allowed to use a crossbow during the archery hunting season provided they have an archery license. Non-Residents 65 years of age or older cannot legally use a crossbow unless they possess a disabled or special crossbow permit. In order to make the law the same for both resident and non-resident seniors, legislation would have to be passed to allow non-residents 65 years of age or older to use a crossbow.

- Do you support legislation that would allow non-residents hunters 65 years of age or older to use a crossbow during the archery season provided they have an Archery License?

Question 5. Yes _____ No _____

Question 6. Transfer of Earn-a-Buck Stickers to a Youth

Currently, a person who has earned a buck authorization sticker cannot transfer this approval to another hunter. Being able to transfer an Earn-a-Buck sticker from an adult to a youth may help young people get into or stay with the deer hunting tradition. Some youth, because of school activities don't have the time to qualify for an Earn-a-Buck sticker. Transferring of an Earn-a-Buck sticker wouldn't affect the Buck harvest, but it could help the Antlerless harvest, because the adult would have to re-qualify for an Earn-a-Buck sticker if they wanted to harvest a buck during the deer season.

- Would you support legislation that would allow an adult to transfer an Earn-a-Buck sticker to a youth ages 12 to 15 years of age?

Question 6. Yes _____ No _____

Question 7. Quartering of Deer before Removal from the Field

Deer taken in remote areas such as swamps are difficult to remove whole, especially if you are hunting alone and lacking in physical strength. Allowing deer to be quartered and packed out would help some hunters to more easily remove their deer from the field. Current law allows the quartering of bears.

- Do you support the Department of Natural Resources take action to correct this situation by allowing hunters to quarter their deer, after it is tagged, to remove it from the field?

Question 7. Yes _____ No _____

Question 8. Deer Stamp for Deer Research

One of the findings reported by the 2006 SAK Audit Team showed that there was a definite need to do research regarding the Buck Recovery Rate (BRR). The BRR is a vital factor in the SAK formula which the Wisconsin DNR uses to project deer population estimates. The Audit Team's suggested radio telemetry study would be expensive but would provide much needed data regarding hunting mortality, wounding loss, and etc. Although deer hunting license sales account for a considerable amount of DNR income, relatively little money in their budget is available to do this or any other deer research.

It has been suggested that a system similar to Wisconsin's Turkey Stamp might help fill the need. The Turkey Stamp provides for research, educational expenses, and management of Wisconsin's wild turkeys. With the sheer number of deer licenses sold yearly in Wisconsin, a \$1 Deer Stamp, earmarked for research only, could generate much needed funding for our State's number one big game animal. Deer hunting has a huge economic impact in Wisconsin.

- Would you support legislation that would create a \$1 Deer Stamp to fund deer research, which would to be required to be purchased with each deer hunting license?

Question 8. Yes _____ No _____

Question 9. Statewide Deer Feeding & Baiting Ban

The practice of feeding and baiting deer in Wisconsin has been controversial for decades. However, as far back as 1991, a group of wildlife biologists working for Midwest states identified baiting and feeding deer as problematic threats to deer hunting. The science is clear on this issue: baiting and feeding deer leads to increased risks of disease transmission, adds unnecessary amounts of energy to the landscape which supports artificially high deer populations, and complicates effective deer population management.

As time went on, the use of feed and bait grew and spread throughout the state. With the discovery of CWD in 2002, the Natural Resources Board banned all deer feeding and baiting statewide. The State Legislature overrode the statewide ban in 2003 by passing a law that explicitly authorized baiting and feeding deer. The ban remains in place for counties where CWD or bovine tuberculosis have been confirmed or in counties adjacent to counties where positive deer have been confirmed. Currently, deer baiting and feeding is prohibited in 26 counties.

When the Legislature stepped into the fray in 2003, they effectively took control of the issue. Well meaning legislation was put in place to restrict the use to 2 gallons per 40 acres. Illegal baiting has topped the list of violations during the 9-day gun deer season for four years in a row, with 2007 citations increasing thirty percent (30%) from the previous year.

In 2007, for a wide variety of reasons, the Executive Council of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, on the advice of its Big Game Study Committee, took a position in favor of a statewide deer feeding and baiting ban. The Conservation Congress believes in proactive, science based conservation. In March 2007 the Natural Resources Board voted unanimously to support a statewide prohibition on baiting and feeding deer and to encourage the Legislature to take action. Since that time, the State Legislature has failed to take up the issue.

- Do you favor action by the Wisconsin State Legislature to ban deer feeding and baiting statewide?

Question 9. Yes _____ No _____

Chronic Wasting Disease Ad-Hoc Study Committee

Question 10. Volunteer Sharpshooter Program

Current Department of Natural Resources policy only allows current DNR employees to be sharpshooters in the Chronic Wasting Disease zones. Agency shooters conduct shooting duties as part of their normal work duties and are paid their normal salary and hourly wage. With the significant reduction in the DNR's CWD operating budget in 2007, having a pool of volunteer non-agency shooters would save money and allow staff to perform their normal duties.

Under a new system, Wisconsin citizens would be allowed to volunteer as sharpshooters and undergo training to become certified to sharpshoot similar to the core of Hunter's Education Instructors and volunteer, have a background check, become certified and perform their duties without pay.

- Do you support the establishment of a volunteer sharpshooter program if the use of sharpshooters is deemed necessary?

Question 10. Yes _____ No _____

Endangered Resources and Law Enforcement Study Committee

Question 11. Prohibition on Shining from Public Roads

Shining and poaching violations and complaints continue to be a problem in the state. Poachers continue to take a limited, valuable resource from everyone in the state. Eliminating shining would make poaching more difficult and would make enforcement easier, because shining would be in violation of the law. A light would still be allowed at the point of kill for species legally hunted at night (raccoons, coyotes, fox and unprotected species).

- Do you support eliminating shining from public roads statewide?

Question 11. Yes _____ No _____

Question 12. Use of Pistol Cartridges in Rifles for Deer in Shotgun Only Areas

Pistols in a wide range of cartridges are currently allowed to be used during the deer gun season in shotgun only areas. Some of the pistol cartridges are also available in rifles that could be used in shotgun only areas without compromising safety. Use of a rifle chambered in 357 magnum, 41 magnum or 44 magnum would be no different than a pistol chambered in 30-30 or 30-06 in shotgun only areas.

- Do you support allowing rifles chambered in 357 magnum, 41 magnum and 44 magnum to be used during the deer gun season in shotgun only areas?

Question 12. Yes _____ No _____

Fur Harvest Study Committee

Question 13. Raccoon Season Extension

More private land is being closed to raccoon hunting as land owners are reluctant to allow raccoon hunting during any of the extended deer seasons. By extending the raccoon harvest season, more opportunity is provided to both hunters and trappers as a time of year when the pelts are still valuable.

- Do you support extending the raccoon hunting and trapping season to February 15?

Question 13. Yes _____ No _____

<p>Note: This question will not appear on the Congress side of the questionnaire if the DNR rule proposal is approved by the Board for inclusion on the statewide questionnaire.</p>

Question 14. Bobcat Season Structure

The following modifications have been suggested for the bobcat harvest seasons in Wisconsin.

Season Length: Currently the bobcat harvest season runs from the third Saturday in October to December 31. With an early start of the harvest season it is difficult to pursue bobcats with hounds, due to the lack of snow. Also, with the extension of the deer hunting seasons, many bobcat hunters choose to not hunt during these extended deer seasons to avoid potential conflicts with the late season deer hunter. A later ending date would decrease the chance of conflict with deer hunters, increase the chance of snow for better tracking and potentially allow more time for the fur to become prime if the pelt is sold. Under this proposal the bobcat harvest season would end on **January 31**.

Permits and Zones: Permits would be available for the entire state, currently no bobcat harvest is permitted south of Hwy. 64. Under this proposal new bobcat harvest zones would be established. The new zones would be the same as the current fisher management zones (Figure 1). This would allow existing data, north of Hwy. 64 to continue to be used.

Quotas and Reporting: Quotas would be established for each of the new management zones, as well as an overall statewide quota. Once a tag has been filled, a hunter or trapper would have 48 hours to report their harvest. Once a quota is reached in a zone or in the state, the season would be closed. Once a season is declared closed, there would be a 48 hour grace period for permit holders who had harvested a bobcat during the 48 hour period.

Fees: To support this system an additional \$15 harvest permit fee is recommended.

- Do you support the changes to the bobcat season, permitting, zones, quotas, reporting and fees as described in this question?

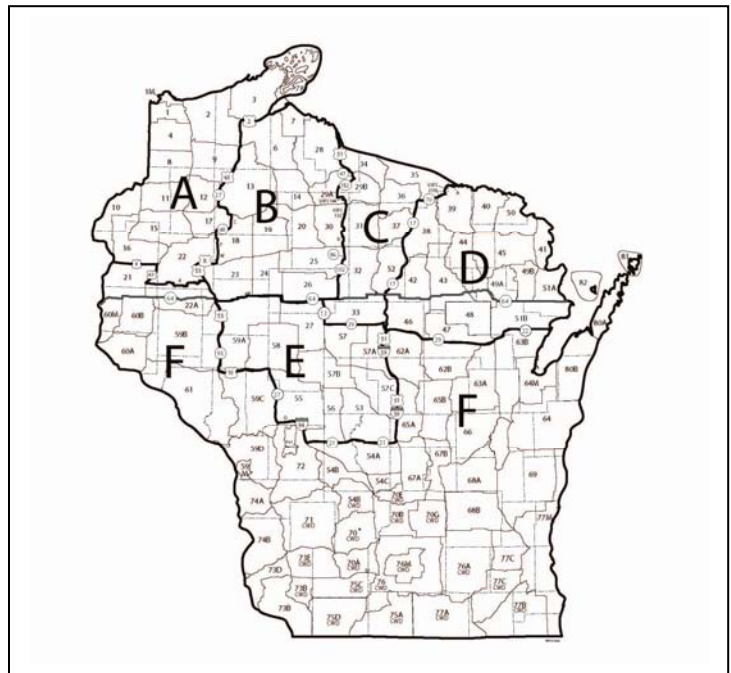


Figure 1. Current Fisher Management Zones and Proposed Bobcat Management Zones.

Question 14. Yes _____ No _____

Question 15. Legalize Colony Traps

Colony traps have been used in Canada and many other states with great success. Colony traps, as the term suggest, allow the capture of multiple muskrats in one day. Otters and raptors cannot gain access to trapped muskrats, yet muskrats are quickly dispatched through drowning.

The trap should be constricted so that it is no longer than 36 inches, and have openings no larger than 8 inches by 8 inches. The drowning portion of the trap must be completely submerged. As this is an open water set, a 4-day trap check would be required.

- Do you support legalizing the use of colony traps for muskrats as described?

Question 15. Yes _____ No _____

Great Lakes Study Committee

Question 16. Commercial Harvest of Yellow Perch on Lake Michigan

The yellow perch population in Lake Michigan has declined significantly since the late 1980's and early 1990's. While not all factors for the decline are known, biologists contribute much of this decline to poor recruitment and liberal harvest regulations. As a result, the Department of Natural Resources enacted special regulations on the sport harvest of perch (5 per day and season closed during spawning) on Lake Michigan. Additionally, the DNR closed the commercial harvest of yellow perch on Lake Michigan in 1996. Over the past few years the perch appear to be responding. The regulations are allowing for increased reproduction and recruitment, and as a result the yellow perch in Lake Michigan appear to be rebounding. Commercial fishing for yellow perch is considered temporarily closed on Lake Michigan, and with rebounding populations there may be interest in resuming commercial harvest of yellow perch on Lake Michigan. Sport anglers are concerned that reopening the commercial harvest would negatively impact recovery efforts.

- Do you support a permanent closure of commercial fishing for yellow perch on Lake Michigan waters?

Question 16. Yes _____ No _____

Hunting with Dogs Study Committee

Question 17. Protection of Private Property on Public Land

Currently, a landowner, lessee or occupant of private property may shoot and kill any gray wolf that is in the act of killing, wounding or biting a domestic animal. All shootings must be reported to the department within 24 hours and the carcass must be turned over to the department.

However, a person on public land does not currently have the ability to protect their personal property if a wolf is attacking their domestic animal whether it be a dog, or in the case of livestock in central Wisconsin, cattle that maybe grazing on public lands.

- Do you support the department introducing administrative rule changes that would allow a person to protect their personal property on public land as they are currently allowed to do on private land?

Question 17. Yes _____ No _____

Mississippi River Study Committee

Question 18. Proposed Mississippi River Corridor 345KV Power Line Study

A proposed new 345 KV power line study includes potential routes from Rochester to Alma to La Crosse or Rochester to La Crosse. CapX2020 a consortium of utilities is seeking public comment on the study. The proposed routes would require crossing the Mississippi River as well a potential Alma to La Crosse line in either the Mississippi river valley or river bluffs. Using an existing power line corridor should minimize the effective impact on migrating birds, habitat and aesthetic values.

- Do you favor the power companies utilizing an existing power line corridor for any proposed new power line crossing or power line transecting the Mississippi river valley or bluffs?

Question 18. Yes _____ No _____

Private and Public Land Use Study Committee

Question 19. Discontinue Closing of Managed Forest Law (MFL) Lands

Managed Forest Law (MFL) encourages sustainable forestry on private lands by providing property tax incentives to landowners. This is accomplished with a binding agreement between the state Department of Natural Resources and private landowners.

Lands entered under MFL are required to have written management plans that landowners must follow. The management plans can address harvesting and thinning timber, tree planting, erosion control, and wildlife measures. These plans must be prepared either by a certified plan writer or a DNR Forester. Under the Managed Forest Law, the landowner agrees to a management plan for a period of 25 or 50 years.

Under the current MFL, the landowner has the choice to enroll the land as either open to the public or closed (at a higher property tax rate). Closed MFL lands may be posted as such. On open MFL land, public access for hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, sight-seeing, and hiking is allowed.

Considering enrollees in the MFL program are provided a significant property tax break, and that there is a well documented need for providing land for nature based activities such as hunting, fishing and trapping, it has been suggested that all future MFL contracts should require access for nature based activities in return for lower taxes to the woodland owner.

- Do you support legislation that would require all future Managed Forest Law (MFL) contracts to allow public access as currently defined in state statute?

Question 19. Yes _____ No _____

Question 20. Review Urban Deer Shooting Permit Procedures

Currently, municipalities can petition the Department of Natural Resources for shooting permits to control burgeoning deer populations within the city, town or village. The municipality is allowed to put certain conditions on these permits including timing of the hunt, permit levels and weapon restrictions.

However, in certain instances, some hunters have reported that municipalities have unreasonably restricted participation in these hunts. A review of current policies and procedures may help to standardize the administration of these permits and provide equitable use of the resource.

- Do you support a review, by the Natural Resources Board, of the Department of Natural Resources urban deer shooting permit process statewide, where permits are issued to municipalities that unreasonably deny the public access to a public resource?

Question 20. Yes _____ No _____

Trout Study Committee

Question 21. Eliminate the Barbless Hook Requirement during the Early Catch and Release Trout Season

Numerous scientific studies have been conducted that show that the use of barbed vs. barbless hooks has little effect on trout mortality following release. In a 1997 study published in the North American Journal of Fisheries Management, for flies and lures combined, the average hook related mortality was 4.5% for barbed hooks and 4.2% for barbless hooks. Because natural mortality rates for wild trout range from 30-65% annually, the 0.3% difference in the two hook types is irrelevant in the population level, even when fish are subjected to repeat capture. According to department biologists, where a fish is hooked, has more to do with mortality than what type of hook is used. Restricting barbed hooks appear to be a social issue and the elimination of that restriction would simplify trout fishing regulations and eliminate law enforcement issues.

- Do you support the elimination of the barbless hook requirement for the early catch and release trout season in Wisconsin?

Question 21. Yes _____ No _____

Turkey Study Committee

Question 22. Non-Resident Student Turkey License

Currently, non-resident students may not purchase a resident turkey license in Wisconsin. However, non-resident students attending school in Wisconsin may purchase deer gun, archery, small game, fishing and sports licenses at resident prices.

Considering the turkey population in Wisconsin is healthy, with zones now established across the state, full time undergraduate students in residence at a public or private Wisconsin college or university offering a bachelor's or associate's degree or foreign citizens residing in the state and attending a Wisconsin high school or a university agricultural short course or post graduate students could be allowed to purchase a resident turkey license and without negatively impacting the ability for resident hunters to obtain a turkey license or negatively impacting the turkey population.

- Do you support legislation that would allow eligible non-resident students to obtain a turkey license at resident prices?

Question 22. Yes _____ No _____

Question 23. Phone in Turkey Registration

Currently, when a turkey is harvested, it must be taken to a registration station to be registered similar to how a deer or a bear is registered. However, other species, such as geese, are registered via phone, through what is known as call-in registration. With the recent extension of hunting hours for spring turkey, some hunters have had difficulty finding an open registration in the evenings.

Considering the health of the states current turkey population and the difficulties encountered by some hunters to find registration stations, having a call-in registration system for turkeys could be considered.

- Do you support the establishment of a call-in system to register turkeys through the use of a telephone?

Question 23. Yes _____ No _____

Warm Water Study Committee

Question 24. Panfish Limit on Loon Lake, Ashland County

Loon Lake is a 33-acre lake that is nearly surrounded by the Copper Falls State Park. There are six private cabins on the lake and they comprise the Loon Lake Protective Association. The lake receives heavy year round fishing pressure. The local DNR fisheries biologist conducted a lake survey in 2005. The results of that study determined a very modest population of fish that were slow growing.

The panfish population is small because of fishing pressure. Largemouth bass in the lake do not reach maturity until they pass the 12” length, this combined with the slow growth allows very few bass to reach reproductive maturity and often fisherman takes those mature fish. The lake association, the park manager and the DNR fish manger support a fisheries regulation change for this lake.

- Do you support reducing the panfish limit from 25 to 10 and change the bass regulation from statewide limits to a one fish per day no less than 18” on Loon Lake in Ashland County?

Question 24. Yes _____ No _____

Question 25. Transportation of Invasive Species

Eurasian Water Milfoil {EWM} is spreading to Wisconsin's water bodies, primarily by boat trailers. It degrades the fishery, and eliminates recreation. Once introduced, it is there to stay. Temporary treatment costs about \$1000.00 per acre.

Although Wisconsin prohibits trailers from carrying EWM from launching, a warden must witness the launch. It is not possible to have a warden watching every landing. This proposal would allow citation of any boat trailer owner carrying EWM on public roads and would help stop the spread of aquatic invasive species.

EWM is rapidly infesting Wisconsin Water bodies, impacting recreational use of our waters, the fishery, and water quality. Similar regulations in Minnesota have been very successful.

- Do you support giving the DNR the authority to issue citations to anyone transporting Eurasian Water Milfoil and other aquatic vegetation visible on boat trailers traveling roadways in Wisconsin?

Question 25. Yes _____ No _____

Question 26. Fishing Regulations Between Kings and Grandfather Dams

Currently, the Wisconsin River and its flowages between the Kings and Grandfather dams do not have closed fishing seasons for bass, walleye, and northern pike like other lakes and rivers do in this area {Lincoln County}. This concentrates fishing pressure on the Wisconsin River and its flowages before and during the spawning periods for walleye, northern pike, and bass when they are more vulnerable to harvest and before they have had a chance to spawn or guard their nest (bass). Other lakes and streams in this area have closed seasons for these species to protect them from harvest until after they have spawned, and in the case of bass are on their own.

The fishing season structure on the Wisconsin River and its flowages between the Kings and Grandfather dams should be consistent with the other lakes and rivers in this area and have closed fishing seasons for walleye, northern pike, and bass. These species should be offered the same protection that they have in other lakes and rivers in this area.

- Do you support changing the current regulation of no closed season on game fish on the Wisconsin River between the Kings and Grandfather dams to the statewide seasons on bass, walleye, and northern pike on these flowages?

Question 26. Yes _____ No _____

Question 27. Bass Size Limit on Big Sissabagama Lake, Sawyer County

An explosive population of largemouth bass on Big Sissabagama Lake is in direct proportion to a sharp decline in walleye populations.

The DNR has documented a lower walleye population, and a drastic increase of largemouth bass on Big Sissabagama Lake.

Largemouth bass populations have steadily grown on the lake. Numbers have reached a disproportionate level to other fish. Current populations of bass are bottle necked as sizes are below the 14” minimum. Removing the size limit on bass would provide for a quality bass fishery by reducing the number of undersize fish.

The largemouth bass feed on walleye fingerlings, thus undercutting that population the lake owners association solicited donations and paid for private walleye restocking of the lake. The Lac Du Flambeau tribal fisheries donated additional extended growth walleyes to help in the attempt to encourage rebuilding of the dwindling walleye population. The DNR is scheduled to stock fingerlings walleye in Big Sissabagama Lake. Reducing the number of undersized bass will assist in the walleye stocking effort.

- Do you support removing the bass size limit on Big Sissabagama Lake in Sawyer County, to help promote the walleye population on the lake?

Question 27. Yes _____ No _____

Question 28. Walleye Bag Limit on Milwaukee River

The walleye fishery in the Milwaukee River Basin was all but wiped out as the city became industrialized. This historic fishery is now being restored but is extremely fragile at this point. It makes no sense to allow anglers to harvest multiple walleye per day from such an unstable adult population, (estimated in the hundreds). Furthermore, health concerns make it unwise for anyone to eat these fish more than occasionally- adding to the argument that the current, five walleye daily bag limit is unwise. Given its location- in the middle of Wisconsin’s largest population center-this fishery is clearly of statewide importance.

The solution to this problem would be to introduce a rule change reducing the daily bag limit for walleye from five to one fish in the Milwaukee River and its tributaries where current Lake Michigan regulation apply. Specifically, these rule changes would apply to: the Milwaukee River upstream to the HWY 60 Grafton Dam in the village of Grafton, and tributaries of the Milwaukee River upstream to the Lepper Dam in the village of Menomonee Falls and the tributaries of the Menomonee River upstream to the first dam or lake.

- Do you support a lower daily bag limit from five walleye to one walleye on the Milwaukee River upstream to the HWY 60 Grafton Dam in the village of Grafton, and tributaries of the Milwaukee River upstream to the Lepper Dam in the village of Menomonee Falls and the tributaries of the Menomonee River upstream to the first dam or lake?

Question 28. Yes _____ No _____

Wolf Study Committee

Question 29. Wolf Management

The gray wolf has made a dramatic come back in Wisconsin. Wolves in Wisconsin have recently been taken off the Federal Threatened and Endangered Species List. The wolf population is predicted to continue to increase if no control methods are implemented. Currently there is no public harvest system set up to have sportsman assist in maintaining the population of wolves at the population goals established in the wolf management plan.

- Do you favor the Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Conservation Congress, and the Wisconsin Legislature develop a season framework and harvest goals to maintain the wolf population within management objectives?

Question 29. Yes _____ No _____

Question 30. Wolf Lawsuit

The gray wolf has recently been delisted by the US Fish & Wildlife Service as an endangered or threatened species in our region. Under provisions of the delisting process wolves will be managed by the state wildlife agencies according to pre-approved plans that must insure a viable continuing population.

This relief from the rigid and absolute restrictions of the Endangered Species Act is long overdue and has been delayed at every turn by animal-rights groups. Despite the fact that individual states, including Wisconsin, have filed plans to manage and protect gray wolves, the USFWS is now being sued again, this time to reverse the delisting process. Legal experts agree that if the states involved joined the suit with USFWS supporting delisting, it would strengthen their case and help defeat this latest challenge.

The Governor and Attorney General of Wisconsin have been strongly encouraged by the DNR, the Conservation Congress, and many other hunting, wildlife and livestock groups to join in the suit and support their own DNR's management plan and the interests of the conservation and farming communities. To date, they have not yet done so, which strengthens the position of the politically active animal rights groups.

- Do you support another recommendation to the Governor and the Attorney General, this time from the general public at these Spring Hearings, to support the conservation and farming communities, as well as their own DNR, by joining with the USFWS in defending the delisting of gray wolves in this region?

Question 30. Yes _____ No _____

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The Problem:

There is limited opportunity for fishing in the Willow River State Park. Currently it is illegal to use any motors including electric motors on the 175 acre lake located in the Willow River State Park. This rule is archaic and out of date, as electric motors have no emissions and no sound. Electric motors do not emit any carbon and are a good solution to help global warming.

This resolution was passed unanimously in both St. Croix and Pierce Counties when it was introduced in 2003. When it was put on the statewide questionnaire in 2004 it passed by an 85% margin.

Whereas, The fishing public of this State believes this is a statewide issue.

Whereas, The construction of the boat landing and parking lot were funded by the Sport Fish Restoration Fund.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting held in Pierce County on April 16, 2007 recommends that the Department of Natural Resources take action to correct this problem by introducing a rule that allows the use of electric trolling motors on the lake in the Willow River State Park.

Submitted by: Ken Snow

Address: W4703 850th. Ave.
Spring Valley, WI. 54767

Telephone Number: 715-684-4988

County Vote

yes 27 no 1