



Restore Conservation Integrity

Just as unique as the whooping cranes, Hines-emerald dragonflies, and lady slipper orchids that call Wisconsin home are the sheer number of outdoorsmen and women who hunt and fish in Wisconsin's wilderness. These 2.7 million men and women understand the importance of managing, enjoying, and preserving the outdoors for future generations.

Unfortunately, in the last several years, legislative actions have eroded the integrity of Wisconsin's conservation and outdoor traditions. Such actions unnecessarily jeopardize the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the places where we hunt, fish, and hike.

In 1995, the legislature took authority away from the Natural Resources Board (NRB) to choose the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Instead, they made the Secretary a political appointee of the Governor, which reduced the DNR's credibility. Whether you're a hunter, an angler, or just like to enjoy time outdoors, a DNR Secretary that best represents your interests is one that bases natural resource decisions on science, not on the winds of politics.

The Natural Resources Board does maintain its oversight of the DNR. In recent years however, the Senate has refused to hold votes on NRB appointees as members' six-year staggered terms expire. Staggered terms help temper abrupt changes in management philosophy and retain experience as new members join. Unfortunately, the approval of some appointees has taken three to four years, voiding this transition strategy and placing political pressure on nominees to change natural resource policies.

In the next two years, legislators have an opportunity to restore confidence that natural resource decisions will be based on science and not politics by restoring the independent DNR Secretary and ensuring timely DNR Board appointments. Both of these provisions were a part of the Hunter, Angler, Trapper Bill of Rights, which has been promoted by virtually every conservation group in Wisconsin.

Solution

To properly manage natural resources so that they will be here for future generations, legislators must enact legislation that will:

- 1) Restore appointment authority of the Department of Natural Resources Secretary to the Natural Resources Board;
- 2) Require that the state Senate vote on the Natural Resource Board nominees within six months of their nomination.

Results

Restoring integrity to natural resource management will:

- Help remove partisan politics from natural resource decision-making.
- Restore credibility to the DNR and protect all conservation interests, from hunting and fishing to hiking and biking.
- Ensure that Wisconsin's outdoor traditions remain viable and strong for future generations.

**Let your legislators know you want to Restore Conservation Integrity -
Join us for Conservation Lobby Day 2009 on Wednesday, February 25th!**

*For more information about **Conservation Lobby Day** or this issue, visit www.conservationvoters.org, or call (608) 661-0845 with questions or to receive a copy of the **Wisconsin Conservation Priorities 2009-2010** in the mail.*