



Politicizing Natural Resource Management

Wisconsin has a long, proud, history of bipartisan measures that protect our air, land, and water. When the agencies and programs that protect our natural resources are weakened, our health, our recreational opportunities, and our economy are all put at risk.

The changes to the Department of Natural Resources in Governor Walker's proposed budget do just that by impairing the department that is responsible for overseeing clean air and water, managing wildlife, and protecting public lands.

Eliminating Science Staff at DNR

The Department of Natural Resources is responsible for, among other things, managing wildlife, pollution, and land conservation. Protecting our air, land, and water requires science-based oversight of not only our natural resources, but the polluters who threaten their safety.

DNR staff conduct studies to ensure safe, fact-based management and oversight of everything from the air we breathe to the deer we hunt.

Just a few of these studies in recent years include researching chronic wasting disease in deer populations, identifying potential pollution problems from emerging industries such as frac sand and open-pit mining, and developing management practices for old growth forests.

For the DNR to implement sound management, the department needs qualified staff – not politics – driving environmental protocol. The proposed budget would:



- Cut 18.4 of the 59.4 currently budgeted staff scientist positions in the Bureau of Scientific Services – a 31% reduction.
- Impact the agency's capacity for scientific analysis.
- Kneecap the department's ability to continue researching and developing the management practices that keep our air, land, and water safe.



Ask your legislator: Will you support restoring staff scientist positions at the DNR?

Removing Authority of the Natural Resources Board

Wisconsin has always been a leader in conservation, in large part because Aldo Leopold and other leaders created the Natural Resources Board to give citizens a voice in natural resource management. The seven member board – made up of a diverse geographic and professional cross-section of well-informed people – helps the DNR set sound natural resource management policies by helping to direct the agency and providing public input on natural resource decisions.

Governor Walker's proposed budget would convert the Natural Resources Board into a purely advisory entity, stripping citizen oversight of the DNR. This proposal has no financial implications and should not have been included in the budget in the first place.

Eliminating the Board's ability to oversee and set policy for the DNR would:

- Allow the Governor-appointed DNR secretary to unilaterally set natural resource policy for the agency, including the sale of public lands.
- Eliminate input of Wisconsin citizens, allowing all DNR policy directives to be set internally.



Ask your legislator: Will you oppose Governor Walker's proposal to turn the DNR Board into a solely advisory council?