State of Wisconsin
Natural Resources Board

April 8, 2015 Natural Resources Board Meeting

7. Board Members' Matters
7.A. Resolution on Board Authority

April 2015 Natural Resources Board meeting agenda

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RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, in 1927 some of the most respected conservationist in history had the fore sight to create this independent body to insulate conservation from political influences.

WHEREAS, for 88 years the Natural Resources Board has retained the policy and regulatory making authority for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Wisconsin has continuously been a national leader in environmental protection and wildlife conservation.

WHEREAS, nowhere else in Wisconsin state government do the people of this state have such a direct avenue for input as through the Natural Resources Board.

WHEREAS, this unparalleled level of public involvement is vital for the long-term management of the state's resources, which are held in public trust, belonging to all citizens of the state.

WHEREAS, under the present system, natural resource policy decisions are made in full view of the public, broadcast online, and afford citizens the opportunity to provide testimony or written comments.

WHEREAS, the proposed change to eliminate the Natural Resources Board's policy and regulatory making authority and give it to the DNR secretary could result in important natural resource decisions being made behind closed doors without any public input.

WHEREAS, this proposed change puts the onus of decision making on one individual, while the more robust Natural Resources Board system, comprised of seven volunteer members from various backgrounds and various perspectives, allows for the division of power.

WHEREAS, stripping the Natural Resources Board of its policy making authority would undermine this proven system of checks and balances essential for the long-term management of the state's resources.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the State of Wisconsin Natural Resources Board hereby opposes the item in the proposed 2015-17 State Budget Bill that makes the Natural Resources Board advisory to the DNR Secretary and request that it be removed and that the Natural Resource Board retain their policy and regulatory making authority for the DNR.

Approved this 8th day of April, 2015 by the Natural Resources Board at its meeting in Madison, Wisconsin.

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD

Preston D. Cole, Chairman