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August 23, 2012

Dear Chairman Clausen and Members of the Natural Resources Board:

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress' Big Game Committee meeting was held on Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup> at the Comfort Inn in Plover, Wisconsin. A number of recommendations were acted upon at the Big Game Committee meeting. Following that meeting, I contacted all of our Executive Councilors who currently do not serve on our Big Game Committee in order to get their input on these recommendations. Based on the supportive feedback from each member, the Executive Committee held a conference call on Tuesday, August 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss these issues and adopted the Big Game Committee's recommendations as official Congress positions.

The Big Game Committee and the Congress are in favor of discontinuing the October antlerless hunt within the CWD unit. As background, the December antlerless hunt was initially created to replace the October antlerless hunt. However, that scenario has never been fully implemented. In 2009, the Congress had an advisory question on the Spring Hearings Questionnaire (#64) that read: Would you support the DNR eliminating Earn-a-Buck and special October antlerless deer hunts? This question was approved in all seventy-two counties. In addition, last year the Legislature passed legislation that removed earn-a-buck and the October antlerless hunt outside of the CWD unit. We strongly feel that it is time that the Board and the Department take action to do the same within the CWD unit.

The Big Game Committee and the Congress also took a position in favor of accepting and supporting Dr. Kroll's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Model for Deer Management in Wisconsin, Final Report and Recommendations in its entirety. The committee was very adamant in its desire to implement Dr. Kroll's recommendations. I think that most of us can agree that the sentiment among the majority of Wisconsin deer hunters is that the current deer management practices are not working. At each of the town hall meetings Dr. Kroll held around Wisconsin, he stated that it was time the DNR starts facilitating rather than regulating. We hope that the DNR sees this as an opportunity to implement change and improve on our state's deer management program. Additionally, we hope that the Board is willing to give Secretary Stepp and her leadership team the opportunity to implement Dr. Kroll's recommendations.

We are also requesting that the Department of Natural Resources seek \$100,000.00 of federal aid from the Pittman-Robertson fund to continue the deer research program. This also supports one of Dr. Kroll's recommendations for additional deer research within the state. A few years ago the Congress formed an ad-hoc committee that requested the Congress Executive Committee to ask the

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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. Their 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.

Natural Resources Board to consider ear marking \$0.25 of every deer hunting license sold be used to fund deer research in the state. We understand that a license fee increase was not included in the recent budget; however, we feel that funding the deer research program with Pittman-Robertson money is not only appropriate, but necessary. Allocating funding for this purpose would go a long way toward moving the DNR deer management program in the right direction.

Finally, the Big Game Committee requested that the WCC's Executive Committee form a task force made up of Congress delegates to work with the DNR on implementing Dr. Kroll's recommendations in its entirety. I will be contacting Secretary Stepp and her leadership team to work with her on a timeline in getting this task force formed.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rob Bohmann', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Rob Bohmann, Chair  
Wisconsin Conservation Congress

Cc: Secretary Stepp  
Governor Scott Walker