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Wisconsin Conservation Congress Bolsters Youth Congress Initiative

Madison—The Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) is pleased to announce it is partnering with the Department of Natural Resource (DNR) to expand the Youth Conservation Congress (YCC) program and provide a more robust experience for interested participants. The Youth Conservation Congress is an initiative to engage, educate, and involve youth in the management and protection of our natural resources and foster in them a conservation ethic.

“This partnership with the DNR will allow us to offer youth delegates more opportunities to participate in important resource management activities and give them some hands-on experience with what goes into resource management as well as the decision making behind it,” stated Rob Bohmann, Chair of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, a citizen group that advises the DNR and NRB. “We want to get young people engaged civically as well as physically in conservation.”

YCC delegates will now have the preferential opportunity to work with DNR staff on a wide variety of service-learning opportunities such as fish netting or wildlife surveys, tagging or marking fish at a hatchery facility, assisting with habitat assessments, air monitoring, ride-alongs, or water quality sampling. In addition, DNR staff will host an annual all-day “field day” in each DNR region to expose youth delegates to the many facets and factors involved in natural resource management, show them various career options available in natural resource fields, give them the opportunity to interact with professionals in those fields, and give them a chance to participate in typical work done by natural resource professionals. YCC delegates will also be given Natural Resource Foundation memberships and will be able to attend NRF educational field trips at a reduced rate. At some schools, participation in the YCC may be used for independent study, school credit, or volunteer hours.

“We are very excited for this partnership and the opportunities it will afford youth. Through this program, youth delegates will be able to strengthen valuable problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and leadership skills. These transferable skills are important to have, whatever you may do in life,” stated Bohmann.

Youth Conservation Congress delegates will continue to represent the young people within their WCC districts on issues relating to natural resource management. They currently attend and participate in the annual Spring Hearings/WCC County Meetings, the statewide convention, and WCC advisory committee meetings.

“We hope through this program we can inform the next generation of dedicated and conservation-minded citizens that will help to serve as the voice of the citizens of this state on natural resource issues.”

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress is officially recognized as the only 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.

For more information on the Youth Conservation Congress go to dnr.wi.gov and search “Youth Congress.”

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