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Bayfield County Lakes Forum

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Resolution

4/11/2011

Title: Stewardship Trust must be protected

Wisconsin has a rich history of protecting wild lands for public use, including lakes, shorelands and wetlands, through the Wisconsin Land Stewardship Trust.

The Problem: That Trust is now under threat. Present plans call for changes in the Stewardship Trust funding. Under the Governor's proposed budget, the state will drop payments to local municipalities that now make up for the loss in property taxes that our communities suffer when land is acquired for public use.

Our wild lands are now being developed for private use at an alarming rate. These lands are key to the future of all outdoor activities for residents and visitors to our state.

Resources acquired through the Stewardship Trust attract visitors from other states, fueling northern Wisconsin's largest industry, tourism.

Although beneficial to corporate land developers, the proposed cuts in the Stewardship Trust fund will negatively impact tourism and jobs for Wisconsin citizens, especially in the northern half of the state.

Once our wild lands are gone, they are gone forever. It is wrong to sacrifice our woods and waters for the benefit of the few. Without our 15,000 healthy lakes, rivers, streams, fields and forests, Wisconsin becomes just another Illinois.

The Solution: Retain that pre-2011 budget wording as it applies to the Wisconsin Stewardship fund and assure municipalities that they will not suffer any loss when they set aside lands for use by those who hunt, fish and pursue other outdoor sports.

Question: Do you feel that the Conservation Congress and Wisconsin Legislature should require that the Wisconsin Stewardship Fund be spared from the proposed 2011 budget cuts and assure municipalities that they will not suffer any loss when they set aside lands for public use?

_____ YES _____ No

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