Citizen Resolution # 09-01-16

(For Hearing Officer Completion)

DNR Enforcement of the Clean Water Act

Each year the Conservation Congress accepts written resolutions from the public, in each county throughout the state regarding natural resource issues of statewide concern. These resolutions are introduced by the public in attendance during the Conservation Congress county meeting that is held annually in conjunction with the DNR Spring Fish and Wildlife Hearings in April.

In order for a resolution to be accepted for further consideration by the Conservation Congress and for public vote at the annual Conservation Congress county meeting, all resolutions introduced must meet the following requirements:

1. The concern must be of statewide impact.
2. The concern must be practical, achievable and reasonable.
3. The resolution must have a clear title.
4. The resolution must clearly define the concern.
5. Current state statutes and laws must be considered, with reasonable cause for change being presented.
6. The resolution must clearly suggest a solution to the concern and a description of further action desired.
7. Resolutions must be **250 words** or less exclusive of the title and author contact information. (This guidance is not included in the word count.)

WHEREAS, in July 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) deficient in enforcing **75** provisions of the Clean Water Act, specifically the Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) Program. In its letter, the EPA requested that the DNR's improper deviations from federal requirements "be corrected quickly." To date, the DNR has failed to comprehensively remedy these deficiencies.

Wisconsin's abundant surface and ground water resources are indispensable for recreation, drinking, and economic activity. Due in large part to the DNR's ineffective oversight and enforcement within the WPDES Program, many Wisconsin waterways suffer from quality degradation. Wisconsin's 2016 Impaired Waters List will likely include, per the DNR's recommendation, 209 more waterways than included in the corresponding 2015 list and more than double the number of impaired waters listed in the 2004. The bases of impairment include but are not limited to: phosphorus pollution and resulting algal blooms; high levels of nitrate pollution ground water and many private drinking water wells; and overuse of ground water and destruction of surface water from overuse of high capacity wells.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting in Chippewa County on April 11, 2016, recommends that the Conservation Congress call upon DNR to take immediate remedial action to address its 75 deficiencies in enforcing the CWA, and call upon the State Legislature to pass legislation to further enable DNR to cure WPDES Program deficiencies as identified by the EPA in 2011.

Respectfully submitted,
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