Monday, April 9, 2018

Agenda:

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2. WCC – Delegate Elections
   Conservation Congress Delegate Election Process
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3. County Deer Advisory Council Update
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4. DNR – Wildlife and Fisheries Public Hearing
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7. Wisconsin Conservation Congress County Meeting
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This hearing is not a debate but rather an opportunity for public input. Everyone will be given an opportunity to comment on the questions, but you will be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes for each question that you wish to discuss. If comments become repetitive, the hearing officer may limit comments to issues not previously presented. Written comments on all DNR advisory questions will be accepted until April 9, 2018.

The results of the 2018 Spring Hearings will be available online as soon as they are compiled.
Visit dnr.wi.gov – search for “Spring Hearings”
Your license to outdoor excitement.

go
WILD
GoWild.WI.Gov
The delegate elections take place at 7:00 p.m. prior to the start of the DNR portion of the Annual Spring Hearing/County Conservation Meeting.

If you are a resident of the county in which you are attending the meeting, and are at least 18 years of age, you may vote for the Wisconsin Conservation Congress delegates. Proof of residency within the county is required in order to receive ballots to vote for delegates. If you meet these criteria, you will receive:

Each April, there is one 2-year term and one 3-year term available on the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC), unless other vacancies occur. County residents in attendance at the annual county meeting have the opportunity to nominate a peer.

Nominees have the opportunity to say a few words (up to 3 minutes) on how they could best represent their county, and serve as a conduit for local citizen input concerning all natural resource issues at a local and statewide level.

As a county delegate, you agree 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.

Citizens in attendance at the county congress meetings have the opportunity to vote on nominees. In order for the nominee to be elected, they must receive a majority of the votes (at least 50% + 1) of participating voters in attendance.

Delegate Eligibility

Any citizen of the county who is able to represent the citizens of Wisconsin, and be a local avenue for citizen input and exchange of ideas concerning all natural resource issues through the WCC on a local and statewide level is eligible to be nominated and to run for election that evening.

A delegate must:
- Be a Wisconsin resident.
- Be an adult (at least 18 years of age), and a resident of the county he or she wishes to represent. To give the widest geographic representation, it is recommended that not more than three members of the county delegation be from the same town, city or village.
- Be willing to volunteer their time and efforts by:
  - Attending two district meetings per year (*one in March and one in August*); assisting with the annual spring hearings in April; attending the annual convention in May and one or more advisory committee meetings in the fall of the year.
  - Working with local citizens and organizations on natural resource issues on a local basis, and participating in outreach and outdoor initiatives of local and statewide significance.
  - Possibly serving as chair or alternate chair of their County Deer Advisory Council.

NOTE: The Conservation Congress is an equal opportunity organization, and welcomes participation from all individuals regardless of race, age, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, arrest, conviction, veteran status or political affiliation.
To ensure that you are able to provide your input on the proposals presented, make sure you read the instructions below before voting.

After you have registered, you will be provided with

- a **white ballot** for the Department of Natural Resources Wildlife & Fisheries advisory questions, Natural Resources Board advisory question, and Wisconsin Conservation Congress advisory questions.

- a **blue ballot** for any citizen introduced resolutions.

In order for ballots to be read correctly by the voting machine:

- Use a PENCIL on ballots - **not pen**
- DO NOT erase (If you make a mistake, please turn in your original ballot and request a new ballot)
- DO NOT circle answers
- DO NOT make notes or stray marks anywhere on the ballot
- If you DO NOT follow these directions your ballot may not be readable and therefore may not be counted.

Please see the following examples of the use of the ballots.

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### Sample WHITE BALLOT:

The white ballot is for Department of Natural Resources advisory questions, Natural Resources Board advisory questions, and Wisconsin Conservation Congress advisory questions in the questionnaire.

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**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES SPRING HEARING QUESTIONS**

To vote on a question, complete the arrow to the RIGHT of “YES” if in favor of the question or complete the arrow to the RIGHT of “NO” if opposed to the question.

**IMPORTANT:** USE A #2 PENCIL OR THE MARKING PEN PROVIDED. DO NOT USE BALL POINT PEN.

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**Question 1:** Do you support changing the dates of the turkey season?

1. **YES _____ No _____**

If you are in favor of the question, please mark **YES** as indicated above. If you are NOT in favor of the proposed question please mark **NO**.

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Whether it’s hunting, fishing, trapping, boating or just enjoying a hike, we know you appreciate fresh air and open spaces. Subscribe to Wisconsin Natural Resources, and we’ll bring you stories and photos about your favorite places and outdoor activities four times a year — Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter!

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1 year (4 issues) - $8.97    |    2 years (8 issues) - $15.97    |    3 years (12 issues) - $21.97

Mail check payable to DNR to Wisconsin Natural Resources, PO Box 7191, Madison, WI 53707.

For faster service and credit card billing, call toll free — 1-800-678-9472, or subscribe online at wnrmag.com.
The public hearings/meetings will be held on Monday, April 9, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. at the following locations:

The public hearings/meetings will be to gather public input on fisheries and wildlife management related advisory questions, which are being asked in order to gauge public opinion. The Conservation Congress County Meeting will convene following the close of the DNR informational meeting. Immediately following the close of the Conservation Congress County Meeting, the WCC delegates (including those newly elected) will meet to elect the county delegation’s chair and vice-chair.
The Department of Natural Resources is committed to serving people with disabilities and pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodations, including the provision of information material in an alternative format, will be provided for individuals with disabilities upon request. Please call Kari Lee-Zimmermann at (608) 266-0580 with specific information on your request by April 1, 2018.

Comments on DNR advisory questions may be submitted to the agency contact person no later than April 9, 2018:

- Fisheries Rule Coordinator, Scott Loomans, 101 South Webster St. PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921, (608) 266-5206, scott.loomans@wisconsin.gov
- Wildlife Rule Coordinator, Scott Karel, 101 South Webster St., PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921, (608) 267-2452, scottr.karel@wisconsin.gov.

Written comments, whether submitted electronically or by U.S. mail, will be summarized for the Natural Resources Board, however, they will not be tallied along with the votes received at the county hearings.
CDAC Charter

- Gather public opinion on deer populations and goals, antlerless quotas and herd management strategies.
- Review and consider scientific metrics on deer herd trends, impacts to habitat and agriculture and human-deer interactions.
- Provide the department with recommendations on deer population objectives, antlerless quotas and herd management strategies.

Visit [http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/hunt/cdac.html](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/hunt/cdac.html) to provide your comments.
voting members. All CDAC meetings are open to the public and offer opportunities to provide public comments.

**WEIGH IN ON 2018 ANTLERLESS HARVEST QUOTAS AND PERMIT LEVELS**

Councils are now developing 2018 antlerless harvest quota and permit level recommendations that will be used to achieve the county’s population objectives. CDACs consider a variety of indicators including harvest data, winter severity data and public input when developing quota recommendations for the 2018 deer seasons. The first round of meetings to discuss quota recommendations occurred in March. The public comment period on those recommendations is now open electronically at [www.dnr.wi.us/CDAC/](http://www.dnr.wi.us/CDAC/). CDACs will determine final recommendations for 2018 antlerless quotas and permit levels at their final meeting in April.

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**CDAC Resources**

**CDAC website:** visit [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov), keyword “CDAC.” The CDAC website is a portal to the meeting schedule, meeting minutes, CDAC recommendations, contact information, and other resources.

- CDAC members and contact information by county: click on the “Find” tab, then enter county name.
- Meeting schedule for spring 2018: click on the “Find” tab, then enter your county name to find meeting schedule, member contact information and county specific data.
- Online public input opportunities: check the CDAC website frequently for updates. Public review of preliminary quota recommendations runs from April 2 – 12, 2018.
- Learn more: check out the frequently asked questions (FAQ tab), or email DNRCDACWebmail@Wisconsin.gov with any other questions.

**Important dates:** spring meetings will be devoted to quota recommendations.

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<tr>
<td>April 2 – 12</td>
<td>Public comment period.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 16 – 19</td>
<td>Review public feedback and determine final recommendations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 23</td>
<td>Recommendations approved at NRB meeting.</td>
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**MEMBERSHIP** Some councils still have open seats for qualified candidates. If you are interested in applying, visit the CDAC website and determine if your county has seats available. When you are ready to apply, click on the application link. Paper applications may also be available; contact your county’s CDAC chair for more information.
DNR Habitat Improvement Programs...

Maximize habitat for wildlife.

Wisconsin’s Deer Management Assistance Program
Join hunters and conservationists like you to benefit Wisconsin’s wildlife.
Learn more and apply at dnr.wi.gov, search “DMAP.”

Creating wildlife habitat together
Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership
Contact us to learn about the various opportunities and programs available for private landowners to plan and carry out habitat management.

Learn more at www.youngforest.org/wi or email DNRYoungForest@wisconsin.gov
Think of the places that mean Wisconsin to you...

Our State Parks, State Natural Areas, State Wildlife Areas and State Fishery Areas. How much do these places matter? How much do you want them to thrive for the next generation, and the one after that?

The Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund provides for habitat management and ensures the future care and enjoyment of our publicly owned lands and waters.

Donations to the Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund are tax-deductible, and can be made when purchasing a hunting or fishing license or online at

CherishWisconsin.org
Please utilize the white ballot to provide your input.

STATEWIDE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ADVISORY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: Establish a statewide, continuous open season for bass fishing but allow harvest only during the current traditional season

Some people have expressed an interest in increasing fishing opportunity by allowing year-round fishing for largemouth and smallmouth bass. Under current rules, bass fishing is generally allowed during the traditional fishing season that begins on the first Saturday in May and continues through the first Sunday in March and is closed for two months in early spring. Many rivers, their impoundments, and Lake Winnebago currently have a continuous open season. There is already a catch-and-release season for smallmouth bass in the northern bass zone that begins on the first Saturday in May and continues through the Friday preceding the third Saturday in June. Our surrounding states do not have closed seasons for bass.

The current closed season does not protect bass from fishing pressure during their May to June spawning season and is not needed for that purpose. A catch-and-release bass season in March and April is not expected to result in an increase of bass mortality. A catch-and-release bass season could make it more difficult to enforce the closed season for other species such as walleyes and northern-pike during March and April. However, possession of bass, walleyes, or northern-pike would continue to be prohibited and would continue to be readily enforceable by conservation wardens.

1. Do you favor establishing a statewide, continuous open season for bass fishing but allow harvest only during the current traditional season? 1. YES___ NO____

QUESTION 2: Establishing alternate size and bag limits for permitted, catch-and-release bass fishing tournaments

In response to angler interest and department survey data for particular waterbodies, largemouth and smallmouth bass are often managed with regulations that are different than the statewide five fish bag limit and 14-inch minimum size limit. Tailoring management to the unique conditions on certain waters can result in higher quality fishing opportunities than would otherwise be available.
However, special regulations can be a disadvantage for organized fishing tournaments. For instance, a daily bag limit of one bass with an 18-inch size limit greatly reduces the number of fish that are available for tournament anglers to possess during an event.

To address this, the department could create an exception that allows participants in permitted fishing tournaments to adhere to the standard statewide five fish bag limit and 14-inch minimum size limit – as long as all bass are released back to the same waterbody.

An exception for permitted tournaments could result in improved fishing for everyone by eliminating a source of conflict between non-tournament and tournament anglers that can make it challenging to establish what some believe are the most appropriate regulations for a waterbody. Tournament regulations are readily enforceable because the department issues permits in advance of the events. Under state statute, bass are the only species for which tournament regulations can be less restrictive than the regulations for non-tournament anglers.

2. Do you favor an exception that allows participants in permitted fishing tournaments to adhere to the standard statewide five fish bag limit and 14-inch minimum size limit – as long as all bass are released back to the same waterbody?  

2. YES____ NO_____

LOCAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ADVISORY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 3: Review panfish regulations on the Mississippi River

Mississippi River panfish regulations have not been revised in many years and may not provide adequate protection or distribution of harvest among anglers. Currently, Wisconsin allows harvest of 75 panfish in total per day; 25 yellow perch, rock bass, and crappie; 25 bluegill and pumpkinseed; and 25 white and yellow bass per day. The possession limit is twice the daily bag limit for all species listed.

Minnesota allows harvest of up to 125 panfish in total per day; 25 crappie, 25 rock bass, 25 sunfish (bluegill, pumpkinseed and hybrids), 25 yellow perch, and 25 white or yellow bass per day. The possession limit is the same as the daily bag limit for each species.

Iowa allows harvest of 25 bluegill, crappie and pumpkinseed, 25 yellow bass, white bass, rock bass, and hybrid (wiper bass), 25 yellow perch with no closed season. Possession is twice the daily bag for all three categories of fishes (75 panfish total).

The Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa natural resources departments are all interested in simplifying, unifying, and reducing the total daily bag limit for panfish species (bluegill, pumpkinseed, hybrid bluegill, yellow perch, rock bass, crappie); and white and yellow bass and hybrids on the Mississippi River and border waters. Specific recommendations from this project would be topics of spring hearing voting again prior to adoption by the department.

3. Do you support an effort by the department to develop panfish regulations for the Mississippi River that are consistent between the states, more simple than current rules, and with a lower bag limit than under current rules?  

3. YES____ NO_____
QUESTION 4: Review gamefish regulations on the Mississippi River

In recent years, department personnel from Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin have heard from the public that regulations for gamefish in the Mississippi River need to be changed to reflect current trends in angler attitude, habitat, fish populations and environment. Mississippi River fishing regulations have not been revised or reviewed comprehensively by all the surrounding states in more than 20 years. For example, the year-round fishing season was established in 1968 and minimum size limits for bass and walleye were established in 1990.

A joint review of regulations could result in recommendations that are more in line with angler expectations, consistent between the states, and proactive in protecting larger predators which are important in the native fish community as invasive carp ranges expand.

Specific recommendations from this project would be topics of spring hearing voting again prior to adoption by the department.

4. Do you support an effort by the department to develop gamefish regulations for the Mississippi River that are consistent between the states, reflect current angler interests, and which may protect larger predators? 4. YES____ NO____

QUESTION 5: Increasing the size limit for sturgeon on Lake Superior

Interest in fishing for lake sturgeon in Lake Superior had historically been low, but has increased in recent years with anglers successfully targeting and harvesting them. It is likely that the management goal to rehabilitate and maintain spawning, self-sustaining populations of lake sturgeon is not being met at the current level of harvest of these slow-growing, late-maturing fish.

Increasing the size limit for sturgeon on Lake Superior would reduce harvest without eliminating harvest opportunity and allow the lake sturgeon to reproduce at least once prior to being susceptible to harvest. This proposal would also make the Lake Superior size limit consistent with most other Wisconsin waters which already have a 60-inch size limit.

5. Do you favor increasing the minimum size limit for sturgeon on Lake Superior from 50 inches to 60 inches? 5. YES____ NO____

QUESTIONS 6-7: Walleye regulations on Koshkonong Lake and the Rock River from the Indianford Dam to the Jefferson Dam in Jefferson/Rock Counties

This proposal seeks to gather public input on the regulation of walleye, sauger and their hybrid on Lake Koshkonong and the Rock River from the Indianford Dam to the Jefferson Dam. Currently, these waters are managed at the statewide minimum length limit of 15 inches with a daily bag limit of 5. There is a year-round open season. These regulations attract high angling pressure, especially in the spring when the majority of other waters are closed. During a 2008-2009 creel survey, walleye were the species most frequently targeted by anglers. That creel survey showed above average catch and harvest rates of 61,396 walleyes caught and 19% or 11,455 of those fish harvested. Data collected from 2002 to 2016 showed average exploitation rates of 42%, which exceeds the widely accepted 35% maximum exploitation rate for sustainable walleye populations.
Recently, there has been local interest in exploring regulation changes to offer greater protection for this popular fishery. A three-fish daily bag limit and 18-inch size limit would provide that increased protection. A traditional open season instead of the current continuous season, but keeping the 5-fish bag and 15-inch size limits would also provide protection for the walleye population.

6. Do you favor increasing the minimum length limit for walleye, sauger and their hybrids from 15 inches to 18 inches and reducing the daily bag limit from 5 to 3 and maintaining the year round open season on Lake Koshkonong and the Rock River from the Indianford Dam to the Jefferson Dam?  
   6. YES____ NO_____

7. Do you favor a season closure during the standard gamefish closure for all gamefish on Lake Koshkonong and the Rock River from the Indianford Dam to the Jefferson Dam, but maintaining the 5 fish bag and 15-inch size limit for walleye, sauger and their hybrids?  
   7. YES____ NO_____

QUESTION 8: For walleyes on the Lake Winnebago system, reduce the walleye bag limit from 5 to 3

Although the Winnebago System has continued to maintain a strong self-sustaining walleye population, recent results from a reward tag study have indicated that there are years where the exploitation rate, particularly of immature and adult females, is very high. Reducing the bag limit to 3 should help to reduce exploitation levels and would help ensure that the system can continue to sustain a good walleye population despite the very heavy fishing pressure it receives on an annual basis.

Walleye exploitation has been tracked annually on the Winnebago System since 1993 and relies heavily on anglers returning tags from tagged fish that they catch. Recent study results indicate that the estimated angler tag reporting rate was 29% in 2016 and 42% in 2017, which is lower than previously estimated. This means that exploitation rates were higher than previously estimated. For adult female walleyes, annual exploitation surpassed 40% in 6 years since 1993, which is above the 35% threshold that is often suggested for maintaining sustainable walleye populations. In addition, the department has begun tagging immature female walleye and estimated annual exploitation at 59% in 2015, which was focused mainly on 15 to 18-inch fish from the 2011 walleye year class.

Winnebago System Waters include Poygan, Winneconne, Butte des Morts, Winnebago and all their tributaries from their mouths upstream to the first dam including the Fox river from Lake Winnebago upstream to the dam above Princeton and all its tributaries from their mouths upstream to the first dam; the Wolf river from its mouth upstream to the dam in the city of Shawano and all its tributaries from their mouths upstream to the first dam including Cincoe Lake, Partridge Crop Lake and Partridge Lake in Calumet, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago counties.

8. Do you favor reducing the walleye bag limit from 5 to 3 on the Lake Winnebago system?  
   8. YES____ NO_____

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QUESTION 9: Reduce mortality of flathead catfish by expanding the prohibition on use of whole/live fish for bait, when using setlines or bank poles, to include the upper Fox River in Winnebago, Green Lake, Marquette and Waushara counties and the Wolf River in Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, and Winnebago counties

For flathead catfish on the Lake Winnebago system there is currently a one fish bag limit, 30-inch minimum size limit, and 36 to 42-inch protected slot size limit. This means that it is necessary to release a number of fish that are caught because they are not the correct size or because a flathead catfish is already in possession. When whole or live fish are used for bait on setlines and bank poles, fish are often on the line for up to 24 hours or more and may have suffered deep hooking wounds, torn flesh in the mouth area, and may suffer mortality immediately or later because of secondary infection from those wounds. Additionally, it is very difficult to obtain whole or live fish for use as bait on setlines and bank poles because of restrictions on the movement of live fish and on possession of angling gear while setting, lifting, or attending setlines or bank poles.

Expanding the prohibition on use of whole or live fish for bait on the upper Fox and the Wolf rivers would reduce or eliminate waste of flathead catfish caught on set lines or bank poles that currently die after release. Flathead catfish are unlikely to be attracted to other baits that are effective at catching channel catfish. For channel catfish there is a 25-fish bag limit and no size limit and they would still be available for harvest on bank poles and set lines.

Use of whole or live fish is already prohibited on lakes Butte des Morts, Little Butte des Morts, Winnebago and Winneconne, Winnebago County, Poygan in Waushara and Winnebago counties, and the Black River in Jackson, La Crosse, and Trempealeau counties.

9. Do you favor expanding the prohibition on use of whole/live fish for bait on set lines and bank poles in order to reduce mortality of flathead catfish in the upper Fox River in Winnebago, Green Lake, Marquette and Waushara counties and the Wolf River in Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, and Winnebago counties?

9. YES___ NO_____

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WORKING TOGETHER

Keeping Wisconsin’s waters healthy (Inspect, remove, drain and don’t move)

STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!

- INSPECT boats, trailers and equipment
- REMOVE all attached aquatic plants and animals
- DRAIN all water from boats, vehicles and equipment
- NEVER MOVE plants or live fish away from a water body
#fishing #catchamemory #ifish #greatoutdoors #setthehook #whatafish #gofish #icaughtit #licensetorelax #lovetofish #getreel #fishwis #hooked #tailwalker #fishingislife #gethooked #luredoutdoors #fakethebait #gonefishing #bigfish #catchthefun #fishaholic #itscatching #hooklineandsinker #landthebigone #gotabite #theonethatgotaway #lure #gotanibble #tookthebait #feelin #offthehook #trolling #fishorcutbait #bottomfeeder #bigfishinalittlepond #littlefishinabigpond #fishstory #greatcatch #gotastrike #firstcatch

HASH IT OVER!

#fishon wisconsin
QUESTION 10: Require that deer harvested in a CWD-affected county must only be transported within that county or an adjacent CWD-affected county, unless taken to a licensed taxidermist or meat processor within 72 hours

Carcass movement restrictions were put into place to prevent tissues most likely to contain chronic wasting disease (CWD) infectious agents (prions) from being introduced to areas of the state where CWD does not yet exist. From 2002-2013, the CWD management zone consisted of south-central deer management units (DMUs). Starting September 1, 2009, regulations were put into place that only allowed movement of whole carcasses within the management zone and adjacent management units unless the carcass was brought to a licensed taxidermist or meat processor within 72 hours.

In 2014, the deer management units were changed to mostly county-based units. The CWD management zone was changed to CWD-affected counties. A county was considered CWD-affected if a wild or captive cervid had tested positive for CWD in the county or in a county within 10 miles. The CWD-affected counties encompassed a much larger area than the CWD management zone, including areas outside the southern endemic CWD area. This allowed hunters to move a whole carcass to more areas of the state than previously.

This rule change would limit the movement of carcasses as was the intent of the original carcass transportation restrictions centered on the CWD management zone. This would minimize the risk of moving CWD prions along with carcasses to areas of the state that have not had CWD-positive test results.

10. Do you support restricting the transportation of deer harvested in a CWD-affected county to within that CWD-affected county or an adjacent CWD-affected county, unless the carcass is taken to a licensed taxidermist or meat processor within 72 hours?  

10. YES____  NO_____ 

QUESTION 11: Move the close of pheasant season daily shooting hours on public properties stocked with pheasants from 2 p.m. to 12 p.m. on weekdays from the third day of the pheasant season through November 3

Currently, shooting hours close at 2 p.m. on public lands stocked with pheasants during the pheasant season to allow staff to stock birds without hunters pursuing them straight out of the stocking truck. In some cases, due to staff limitations and other logistics, DNR staff must begin stocking pheasants earlier. This rule would establish a noon closure on stocked properties to give staff more time and flexibility to stock while removing hunting pressure on the birds until the next morning.

11. Do you support establishing a 12 p.m. daily closure on public properties stocked with pheasants to reduce hunting pressure on the birds immediately following stocking?  

11. YES____  NO_____
QUESTION 12: Modify the closed area on certain wildlife refuges to provide additional trapping opportunities

Current rules establish no-entry wildlife refuges from Sept. 1–Dec. 31 on the properties regulated in Chapter NR 15.022 (listed below). This question would modify these wildlife refuges to be closed to hunting, except for gun and muzzleloader deer hunting, only from Sept. 1—the end of the waterfowl season. This modification was originally proposed to allow trappers access to early ice muskrats, but will allow other recreational users to access the refuges earlier as well. The change is not anticipated to significantly affect waterfowl that use the refuges.

- Sportsman’s Lake (Clark County)
- Theresa Marsh (Dodge and Washington counties)
- Brule River (Douglas County)
- Meadow Valley (Juneau County)
- Necedah (Juneau County)
- Bong (Kenosha County)
- Collins Marsh (Manitowoc County)
- Beans Eddy (Marathon County)
- Townline reservoir/Berkhahn flowage (Marathon County)
- Honey Island Flowage (Marathon County)
- McMillan Marsh (Marathon County)
- Mead (Marathon and Wood counties)
- Powell Marsh (Vilas County)

12. Do you support reducing the time during which the wildlife refuges regulated in NR 15.022 are closed (except for firearm deer hunting) to Sept. 1—the end of the waterfowl season? 12. YES____ NO_____

QUESTION 13: Allow lures/baiting during the closed season for trapping furbearing animals for nuisance wildlife control purposes

Current law prevents the use of lures/bait outside of the trapping season. The landowner exemption, which allows a landowner to hunt or trap listed species on that landowner’s property, establishes a year-round open trapping season during which the use of bait and lure is allowed. This exemption does not extend to agents of the landowner. This is because agents/assistants do not receive any authorization from s. 29.337, Stats. The intention of this rule change is to allow nuisance wildlife control agents, working for a landowner, to use bait/lure outside of the open trapping season. Further, it would allow nuisance trappers called upon to remove nuisance wildlife from public property to use lure/bait outside of the open season. Nuisance trappers asked to remove beaver from public property, adjacent to roads that are having culvert plugging problems, is one example.

13. Do you support the use of lure/bait for trapping furbearing animals through nuisance wildlife control work conducted during the closed season? 13. YES____ NO_____
QUESTION 14: Allow trapping within 15 feet of beaver dams on private land, with permission from the landowner

Current law prevents the placement of traps, except enclosed trigger traps, at any time within 15 feet of any beaver dam. The landowner exemption does allow a landowner to trap on a dam, but this exemption does not extend to agents of the landowner. The United States Department of Agriculture-Wildlife Services can trap on dams as part of their beaver program as well. This proposal would allow both nuisance and fur trappers to trap on a beaver dam with written permission from the landowner.

14. Do you support the placement of traps, snares, colony traps or cable restraints at any time within 15 feet of any beaver dam found on private land, with written permission from the landowner?  

14. YES____  NO_____

QUESTION 15: Allow trappers to keep raccoon incidentally trapped in beaver sets during the closed season for raccoon

Current law allows muskrat taken while trapping beaver during the beaver season to be retained by the trapper. Allowing the possession of raccoon would be a similar exemption.

There are trap type restrictions that would allow law enforcement to determine if trappers were targeting raccoons. Allowing trappers to retain incidentally trapped raccoons during the beaver season would reduce incidental calls to wardens and allow incidental raccoon to be salvaged.

15. Would you support a rule change allowing raccoon incidentally taken in beaver sets, during the beaver trapping season and after the close of the raccoon season, to be legally kept?  

15. YES____  NO_____

WISCONSIN DNR  
Keep wildlife wild
QUESTION 16: Establish a funding source for management of state public lands *(requires legislation)*

The department manages more than 1.5 million acres of lands that are available to the public for a wide variety of nature-based outdoor activities including hunting, fishing, hiking, and wildlife-watching. The amount of public land has also grown since 1989 with the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program, a funding source dedicated to the purchase of land for public use. The contribution of these resources to Wisconsin’s quality of life and our economy are significant.

Department resources needed to manage these properties are limited. Hunters and anglers fund many of the current management activities through license purchases but the many other types of property users do not have a way to contribute directly. A $5.00 annual fee for users of state fishery, wildlife, natural areas and leased public hunting grounds could provide dedicated funds to directly support fish and wildlife habitat management and infrastructure such as trails, parking lots, boat landings and more on these properties. The fee could be assessed of all users age 16 to 64 through the existing statewide automated licensing system. The annual fee would cover visits to all areas under this program so users would not be required to pay additional fees to access multiple areas during the same calendar year.

Similar to hunting and fishing licenses, showing proof of having paid the state public lands fee could be as simple as possessing a validated driver’s license, conservation card, or paper receipt. It is difficult to precisely estimate how many state land users there are, but based on federal estimates of the number of people who participate in outdoor recreation and the amount of public land in this state, it is anticipated that a $5.00 fee could generate more than $3,000,000.

16. Would you support a $5.00 annual fee for all users between the ages of 16 and 64 of state fishery, wildlife, natural areas and leased public hunting grounds and dedicating that money to directly support fish and wildlife habitat management and infrastructure on those properties?  

16. YES____ NO____

QUESTION 17: Eliminate the group deer hunting law *(requires legislation)*

Group hunting is currently allowed during all firearm deer seasons. The law currently allows a member of group deer hunting party to fill an unused harvest authorization of another member of the group if they are in contact with each other when the deer is killed. Only a few states allow some sort of group hunting. Some feel that group hunting takes opportunity away from other hunters, promotes unethical behavior, leads to unlawful harvest, and complicates the rules.

17. Do you favor eliminating the group deer hunting law so that the only person who can fill a tag is the hunter that had been issued the deer harvest authorization?  

17. YES____ NO____
QUESTION 18: Crossbows

In 2014 the Wisconsin Legislature established a crossbow season for deer hunting to help recruit new hunters and provide additional deer hunting opportunity at a more clement time of the year.

The legislation required the crossbow season run concurrent with the archery season for a minimum of two years to analyze the results and granted the DNR the authority and responsibility to adjust the crossbow season after the two-year trial. The Legislature recognized crossbow technology would continue to advance and today some crossbows already rival shotguns with slugs in both range and accuracy.

The data is in. Crossbows did not produce the anticipated increase in deer hunter numbers. The long season did create a dramatic shift of both gun hunters and bowhunters into the crossbow season where their odds (success rate) of harvesting a buck are approaching approximately 50% greater than those of either gun hunters or bowhunters in their respective seasons. This imbalance and the increased harvest of bucks before the traditional gun season has created frustration, concern and a further breakdown of Wisconsin’s deer hunting traditions.

In order to give all deer hunters an equal chance to harvest a buck, and to return the exclusive advantage of a long crossbow season to the disabled and elderly, it has been suggested to shorten the season for the able-bodied to reflect the effectiveness of the weapon based on harvest data.

18. Do you support the DNR adjusting the length of the crossbow season, for those that are not disabled or elderly, to better reflect harvest success rates of bucks similar to the gun season and archery season? 18. YES_____ NO_____
The Voluntary Public Access & Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP) provides 32,000 acres of public access for hunting, fishing, trapping and wildlife observation on 228 private properties across the southern 2/3 of Wisconsin. Enrolled landowners receive lease payments for opening their land to the public and technical assistance and funding to create and maintain wildlife habitat. Funding for VPA-HIP is authorized through the Farm Bill and provided by U.S. Department of Agriculture NRCS. New landowners are encouraged to apply to enroll on the website. Visit dnr.wi.gov and search “VPA”. Share the land, keep traditions alive and earn money by enrolling in VPA-HIP today.
Please utilize the blue ballot to provide your input on any citizen introduced resolutions.

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 in conjunction with the DNR Spring Fish and Wildlife Public Hearings annually in April.

Results of citizen resolutions introduced at the 2018 Spring Hearings will be posted on the WCC website (dnr.wi.gov – search for “Spring Hearings”) by April 20, 2018.

Resolutions are introduced and voted on by the public in attendance at local Conservation Congress meetings in April.

- Resolutions that do not receive a passing vote are referred back to the author and are not advanced further.
- Authors are encouraged to work with their local county Conservation Congress delegates to reevaluate the idea and perhaps reintroduce the resolution in a subsequent year.

Resolutions that pass are assigned to a WCC advisory committee for further examination and vetting.

- Resolutions that do not pass out of committee are referred back to the author and are not advanced further.

Resolutions that pass out of WCC committees are referred to the District Leadership Council and recommended for statewide input as an advisory question on the next April’s questionnaire.

- Resolutions that do not pass the District Leadership Council are referred back to the author and are not advanced further.

Questions that pass the District Leadership Council are placed on the questionnaire and the public in attendance at the Conservation Congress County Meetings in April can vote on those advisory questions.

- The full body of the Conservation Congress meets in May to take a Congress position on the issue based on the public's opinion and the results of the advisory questions.
- All questions and results from the annual convention in May are then forwarded to the Natural Resources Board as advisement from the Conservation Congress.
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 Rules 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.

- The resolutions must be typed or legible hand written 8 ½ x 11 white paper.
- Resolutions must be 250 words or less, on one side of an 8 ½ x 11 white sheet of paper and there will be no attachments or additional sheets accepted for the same resolution.
- The author’s name, mailing address, county, telephone number and signature is required to be at the bottom of the resolution.

- Only the individual author or designated representative may present the resolution within the county. The author or designated representative must be present at the time the resolution is introduced.
- No more than two resolutions may be introduced by any person during the Congress portion of the spring hearings.
- Written resolutions not meeting the above criteria and/or verbal resolutions will not be accepted.
- Provide the Congress County Chair with TWO COPIES of the resolution for submission at the beginning of the evening, one to be part of the official record and the other to be posted for public viewing.
- Individuals in attendance at the meeting can vote on the resolution being introduced within the county.

**Designating the morel as the state fungus (requires legislation)**

At present, Wisconsin does not have a designated state fungus.

The morel is important to many citizens; from the thousands of Wisconsin mushroom hunters that take to the woods to look for these edible wild mushrooms to the thousands of others that consume them and consider them a seasonal delicacy.

Morels typically grow in sandy soils near ash, aspen, elm and oak trees (usually dead or dying trees) and they require very specific temperatures, site and weather conditions to grow, so the quantity and time period that they are available is limited. Given the challenges associated with finding and harvesting these mushrooms, as well as the fluctuation in the number produced annually, the ability to locate and sell morels to other citizens provides an economic boost to successful hunters.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting held in ________ County on April 9, 2018 recommends that the Conservation Congress work with the state legislature to designate the morel as the state fungus.

Name of Author: John Q. Public
Name of Organization (optional): Private Citizen
Address: W12345 State Road 6
City, State, Zip Code: Hometown, Wisconsin 54321
Name of the County Introducing In: ________ County
Telephone Number (including area code): 123-456-0789
Email (optional) JQP@gmail.com

*Resolutions introduced at each Spring Hearing are public documents under Wisconsin's Open Records law [ss. 19.31-19.39, Wis. Stats.] and will be posted online for the public to review. Any personally identifiable information will be available to the public but will only be used by the Department for administrative purposes.*
Please utilize the white ballot to provide your input.

(Please note: any numbers in parenthesis following the question title are referencing the resolution(s) from which the question originated.)

**DISTRICT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL ADVISORY QUESTIONS**

**QUESTION 19-20: Support for climate change science** (580417)

There are many potential negative impacts of climate change which include threatening cool and cold water fisheries, negative impacts on local economies due to shorter winters, less snow and ice for recreation, more intense precipitation increasing runoff, shorter winters that favor invasive species and disease carrying insects. These are just a few of the negative outcomes to fish and wildlife.

19. Would you support the WCC take a position and encourage legislators and DNR to support science and market based legislation and rules to reduce the risk of global warming and increase the use of renewable energy resources?  

19. YES___ NO____

20. Would you support water basin management plans to reduce and control run off as partial mitigation for damage that has already or will occur?  

20. YES___ NO____

**QUESTION 21: Panfish daily bag of 10 on Sherwood Lake, Clark County** (100317, 720417)

Sherwood Lake has had significant fishing pressure over the years. Its small size, along with less than optimal reproduction capabilities, has resulted in a below average fish population. Sherwood Lake is currently under the general statewide panfish regulations of 25 fish in total. A panfish bag restriction may help to promote a long-term quality fishing opportunity.

21. Would you favor creating a panfish daily limit of 10 in aggregate on Sherwood Lake?  

21. YES___ NO____
QUESTION 22: **Add the Black River to the priority list of Lake Sturgeon Rehabilitation Waters** (270117)

Lake sturgeon occur in the Mississippi River, Lake Michigan and Lake Superior drainage basins. Lake Sturgeon are regularly an incidental catch in the Black River downstream from the Hatfield Dam. Over the years, sturgeon populations have declined because of habitat degradation, dam construction, water quality problems and possible over harvest. Conservation efforts are being made to reestablish sturgeon populations in waters within their original range where there is a reasonable possibility of developing self-sustaining populations through natural reproduction. The Black River is not currently identified as a priority water.

22. Would you support adding the waters of the Black River upstream from the Hatfield Dam to the priority list of Wisconsin Lake Sturgeon Rehabilitation Waters?  
22. YES___ NO____

QUESTION 23: **Quality panfish management for the Chippewa Flowage, Sawyer County** (580217)

Note: If supported, this regulation could be implemented following the initial evaluation of the experimental panfish regulations (2020).

With the decline of the walleye population in the Chippewa Flowage, panfish have become the primary target for anglers. Increased fishing pressure for panfish species may result in smaller size structures and declining populations. Reducing the daily species bag limit to 10 fish, but retaining the 25-fish total bag would allow for the most recreation opportunity while protecting the quality of the fishery.

23. Do you favor a daily bag limit of 25 panfish with only 10 total per species (crappie, bluegill, and perch) on the Chippewa Flowage?  
23. YES___ NO____

QUESTION 24: **Reduce the combined daily panfish bag limit on Long Lake, Waushara County** (700317)

Note: If supported, this regulation could be implemented following the initial evaluation of the experimental panfish regulations (2020).

In recent years, the panfish population has been severely reduced due to fishing pressure and an increase in the number of predator game fish that feed on panfish. Lake associations and Friends groups have provided funding for stocking panfish, trout and forage fish, but this has not kept up with increased fishing pressure.

24. Would you favor changing the daily bag limit for panfish to 25 panfish may be kept, but no more than 10 of any one species on Long Lake in Saxeville and Springwater townships?  
24. YES___ NO____
QUESTION 25: Raise the minimum size limit for musky to 50 inches on White Sand Lake, Vilas County (640617)

Wisconsin manages certain lakes as trophy muskellunge waters. Big Sand and Long Lake are currently the only two lakes in Vilas County that employ a 50-inch size limit as a management tool. White Sand Lake has the size, musky population density and forage base consistent with development of fish to a trophy size of 50 inches or more.

25. Would you favor raising the minimum size limit for muskies on White Sand Lake to 50 inches and a daily bag limit of one fish?  
   YES___ NO____

QUESTION 26: Raise the minimum size limit for musky to 50 inches on the Cisco Chain of Lakes (includes Big, Mamie, and West Bay Lakes), Vilas County (640717)

Wisconsin manages certain lakes as trophy muskellunge waters. Big Sand and Long Lake are currently the only two lakes in Vilas County that employ a 50-inch size limit as a management tool. The Cisco Chain has the size, musky population density, and forage base consistent with development of a fish to a trophy size of 50 inches or more. Recent consideration on the Michigan side of the chain to increase to a 50-inch size limit is a further indication of strong interest in the trophy potential of the chain.

26. Would you favor increasing the size limit for musky to 50 inches and a daily bag limit of one fish on the Cisco Chain of Lakes?  
   YES___ NO____

QUESTION 27: Largemouth and smallmouth bass slot limit on Pike Lake, Chippewa County (090417)

Pike Lake has a high density of largemouth bass with poor size structure. A recent DNR survey conducted in 2014 showed that largemouth bass density was high (52 per square mile) with only 1.4% greater than 14 inches. Local residents and the Pike Lake Bass Club are in favor of a regulation change to increase bass harvest with the ultimate goal of reducing bass density and increasing size structure.

27. Do you favor implementing a slot limit for largemouth and smallmouth bass on Pike Lake where only bass less than 14 inches may be kept except one fish may be over 18 inches with a daily bag limit of five in total?  
   YES___ NO____

QUESTIONS 28: Establish a statewide 12-inch size limit and a three-fish bag limit per day on largemouth bass (430417)

The general statewide size limit of for largemouth bass on inland waters is 14 inches with a daily bag limit of five fish (this is a combined daily bag with smallmouth bass).

28. Would you favor a statewide 12-inch size limit, three-fish per day bag limit for largemouth bass on inland waters? The bag limit would be for largemouth bass only and would not be combined with smallmouth bass.  
   YES___ NO____
QUESTION 29: Northern pike size limit reduction on Tuttle Lake, Marquette County (390517)

Tuttle Lake in Marquette County currently has a minimum size limit of 26 inches and a daily bag limit of five northern pike per day. Tuttle Lake has a high density of Northern pike which are slow growing, and anglers report that those caught are rarely over 26 inches.

29. Would you support eliminating the 26-inch size limit on northern pike and replacing it with a no minimum size, five-fish bag limit to help reduce the northern pike population in Tuttle Lake? 29. YES___ NO_____

QUESTIONS 30: Increase daily bag from 10 to 25 on channel catfish on Beaver Dam Lake, Dodge County (140317)

Observations by anglers suggest a large population of channel catfish in Beaver Dam Lake. This is supported by a 2015 DNR fyke net survey. Underwater cameras also reveal a large number of catfish, especially young of the year. Increasing the daily bag limit from 10 to 25 on Beaver Dam Lake may help reduce the number of catfish and thus help the lake sustain a more balanced panfish and game fish population.

30. Would you support an increase in the daily bag limit of channel catfish from 10 to 25 on Beaver Dam Lake in Dodge County? 30. YES___ NO_____

TROUT COMMITTEE ADVISORY QUESTION

QUESTION 31: Open the inland trout season statewide on the first Saturday in April

For several years, an early catch and release season for inland trout has preceded the regular inland trout season. The early season restricted anglers to the use of artificial lures only, the use of live bait was prohibited. More fishing opportunities could be provided for trout anglers who wish to use live bait or keep their catch if the regular inland trout season were opened earlier. Moreover, opening the inland trout season before the general fishing season may lead to increased trout stamp sales. Stream regulations and bag limits would remain the same as those in effect during the current regular inland trout season.

31. Do you support opening the Wisconsin inland trout regular harvest season statewide on the first Saturday in April with existing bag limits, size limits and gear restrictions? 31. YES___ NO_____
QUESTION 32: Return to a three zone mink and muskrat season framework

Historically, Wisconsin has managed mink and muskrats in three geographic zones. The north zone, central zone, and south zone had progressively later starting dates. Additionally, there were at least two local zones with later closing dates.

Recently, as part of a larger rule simplification program, Wisconsin switched to a one zone, one opening day format. This resulted in earlier opening dates in the central and southern zones. Trappers in the southern part of the state found themselves harvesting immature animals with less prime furs. Over the last two years, a number of resolutions were submitted at the annual spring hearings to initiate a return to a multiple zone system. An advisory question placed on the 2017 questionnaire, seeking a two zone arrangement passed, however some trappers would still like to return to a three zone system and extend the spring season to allow the harvest of high quality "wintered over" muskrats.

The south part of the state is Wisconsin's greatest muskrat production area. Muskrats there are significantly larger and more valuable than those in northern areas. They also exist in much greater numbers. Some southern marshes are the size of townships, or larger. Yet, trappers everywhere in the state want to experience a reasonable period of open water at the start of the season. An appropriate opening day in the south might result in a very short open water period in the north, or may even find marshes already frozen over. The average low temperature in Janesville on November 1 is 37°. On the same day, the average low, in Park Falls, is 29°. On November 1, northern areas are also experiencing 15 to 20 minutes less daylight than areas in the south. On average, there is 27 more days of open water each year, in the south than there are in the north.

Below is the suggested framework for the mink and muskrat seasons as proposed by the WCC Fur Harvest Committee to attempt to accommodate the needs and requests of trappers across Wisconsin.

1) To return to three zones.
2) The line between the south and central zones should be STH 60, to STH 12, to STH 19, to I-94.
3) The line between the central and north zones should be STH 64
4) The south zone should open on the Saturday on, or the first Saturday following November 1, and should close on March 15.
5) The Central zone should open on the Saturday on, or the first Saturday following October 25, and should close on March 22.
6) The Northern zone should open on the Saturday on, or the first Saturday following October 18, and should close on April 15.

32. Do you support changes to the mink and muskrat season framework as described above? YES____ NO_____
QUESTION 33: Require in-person field day for all students under 16 in safety classes (requires legislation)

Currently there is a demand for online hunter, bowhunter, ATV and boater safety classes. There are qualified instructors available to do hands-on education for these classes. There is no substitution for in-person, hands-on education when it comes to retention of information and ensuring knowledge of proper safety practices, especially in youth with little or no experience. This year the legislature passed a law at the request of the Wisconsin Snowmobile Association to require anyone under age of 16 to take the snowmobile safety class in person. Some would like this required of other safety classes as well.

33. Do you support the Conservation Congress working with the legislature to require all students under the age of 16 to have a minimum of one field day of hands-on experience in hunter, bowhunter, ATV and boater safety classes in order to become certified? 33. YES_____ NO_____

QUESTION 34: Change season limits for youth turkey tags

Currently youth turkey hunters 10 to 15 years old may use their tag to hunt during the youth hunt. If unsuccessful, they can use their tag during the time period for which the tag was issued. In Minnesota, youth can use their tag for any time period until they harvest a bird, giving them more opportunity to be successful.

34. Do you support the Conservation Congress work with the DNR to make turkey tags for hunters age 10 to 15 years of age valid for all season time periods? 34. YES_____ NO_____

QUESTION 35: Create lifetime hunting and fishing license (requires legislation)

Wisconsin currently has no lifetime license options as some other states do. In Minnesota, you can purchase license options for a one-time fee based on the activity you choose and your age. You can even purchase a lifetime license for a child or grandchild. Once purchased, the license remains valid for life, regardless of changes in residency. Money from these license sales goes into a wildlife trust fund to support wildlife programs in the future.

35. Do you support the Conservation Congress encouraging the legislature to direct the DNR to complete a feasibility study including a fee structure based on actuarial estimates for a lifetime license fee structure that is age and privileged based, with trust fund implications, and consideration given for possible impacts on wildlife and sport fish restoration funding? 35. YES_____ NO_____
**QUESTION 36:** Create a “last chance” outdoor opportunity (610117) *(requires legislation)*

Currently the state of Wisconsin does not have an established hunting, fishing or trapping opportunity for the terminally ill to participate in outside of the regular season framework in cases where the person is not expected to live to the regular season. Creating one would give a terminally ill person a chance to participate in a “make a wish” type sport of their choice outside of regular season frameworks.

36. Do you support the Conservation Congress working with the DNR and state legislature to develop a framework for a “last chance” opportunity in which a person with a terminal prognosis would be allowed to hunt, fish or trap a non-migratory species of their choice outside of the regular season framework?  

36. YES____ NO_____

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**DEER & ELK COMMITTEE ADVISORY QUESTIONS**

**QUESTION 37:** Florescent yellow as option to wear during all firearm deer seasons (130517) *(requires legislation)*

Currently, blaze orange or blaze pink must be worn by hunters during any firearm deer season. Approximately 7% of males are color blind. Studies have shown that florescent yellow is more visible to those individuals than either blaze orange or florescent pink. Currently, many construction and highway workers, bicyclists, and others participating in outdoor activities wear florescent yellow for this reason. Although hunting gear is limited at this time, vests and other outerwear are readily available at retail stores.

37. Would you support legislation legalizing florescent yellow as another color option of safety clothing to be worn during any firearm deer season?  

37. YES____ NO_____

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**QUESTION 38:** Allow deer tracking dog handlers to carry and dispatch wounded deer with firearms (450217) *(requires legislation)*

Some hunters use trained tracking dogs to aid them in finding wounded deer during the archery and firearm hunting seasons. Wounded deer can sometimes pose an unsafe situation for the tracking dog, handler and accompanying hunter.

38. Would you support legislation allowing deer tracking dog handlers to carry and use firearms to dispatch wounded deer during any open deer season under the condition that the tag holder accompany the handler, if at all possible? This could be done either through the creation of a dog handler’s permit which would be purchased prior to the deer season and/or the dog handler obtaining a warden’s permission prior to dispatching the animal. Any dog used to track a deer would be required to be on leash. Exceptions for disabled hunters unable to accompany the tracker would be made.  

38. YES____ NO_____
QUESTION 39. Darkhouse spearing for northern pike on the Wisconsin portion of WI/MN boundary waters of the Mississippi River

This rule would allow for the taking of northern pike during the winter by spearing commonly known as “dark house spearing”. This proposed fishing rule change includes the waters of the Mississippi River located west of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Rail Road tracks and east of the Wisconsin State line along the border with Minnesota. A season, bag limit as well as other potential restrictions would be part of any proposed rules. Existing state law covering human made holes in the ice would apply. Rules regarding dark house structures could be part of the proposed rule.

Presently a Wisconsin license holder may fish in Minnesota waters on their Wisconsin license and Minnesota license holders can fish in Wisconsin waters on their Minnesota License. This is also true for WI/IA boundary waters. Each angler must comply with the fishing regulations for the state within which they are fishing. Historically fishing regulations of the several states along the Upper Mississippi River have been promulgated in close collaboration to provide compatible and or identical regulations to the benefit of anglers and law enforcement.

Dark house spearing is legal in several northern states, including Minnesota, however, Minnesota does not allow dark house spearing of northern pike on the Minnesota Boundary Waters of the Mississippi River. Iowa also does not allow dark house spearing of northern pike in Iowa Boundary Waters of the Mississippi River. Spearing of northern pike through the ice in Wisconsin is currently permitted only on the Wisconsin portion of Lake Superior.

39. Do you support the Wisconsin DNR developing and proposing a rule change to allow a dark house spearing season through the ice to harvest northern pike on the Wisconsin portion of the WI/MN boundary waters of the Mississippi River? 39. YES____ NO____

GREAT LAKES COMMITTEE ADVISORY QUESTION

QUESTION 40: Allow the unrestricted harvest of white perch on Lake Superior waters (040317)

White perch are an invasive species and have been identified by the Wisconsin DNR in Lake Superior, Green Bay, Lake Michigan and tributary streams. Currently white perch can be harvested without limit on Lake Michigan, but there is no season for white perch on Lake Superior, however, one may be killed and possessed for transport to a WDNR service center or regional office for study. There is anecdotal evidence that the population of white perch is increasing in Lake Superior.

40. Do you support an administrative rule change to have an open fishing season for white perch in Lake Superior similar to that on Lake Michigan? 40. YES____ NO_____
QUESTION 41: Allow the transfer of bear tags to Wisconsin senior hunters (≥ 70 years old) (020217, 030217, 260117) (requires legislation)

41. Would you support allowing the transfer of awarded bear harvest permits to Wisconsin senior hunters (≥ 70 years old) if the senior hunter was required to forfeit harvest points accumulated through the date of the transfer and an individual was only eligible for a transfer one time in his/her life?  

41. YES____ NO_____

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE ADVISORY QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS 42: Penalties for tilling land within 5 feet of channel or surface water (540317) (requires legislation)

Currently the only penalty for farmers who intentionally plow their fields right to the water edge is the loss of their Farmland Tax Credit. If the farmer is not in that program, there is no penalty. Plowing to the water’s edge can cause an increased risk of erosion, which may lead to runoff draining into the water bringing with it silt, chemicals and fertilizers. This leads to algae blooms, oxygen depletion, and potential well contamination.

42. Should the Conservation Congress work with the DNR, NRB, and legislature to enact fines/penalties to any landowner and/or renter of agricultural land who violates the law and tills within 5 feet of any stream, ditch, or top of the channel of any surface water?  

42. YES____ NO_____

QUESTION 43: Designate all karstic Wisconsin as sensitive areas (120417, 150317, 230217, 250317, 250517, 310217, 420517, 570617, 560317, 720727)

Karst geology is a special type of landscape characterized by underground drainage systems with sinkholes and caves. This feature can result in ground water flow rates of hundreds of feet per day, versus the normal few inches or feet per day. This easy access and rapid flow makes the groundwater in these areas exceedingly susceptible to contamination. The impoundment of any sort of waste or even water in these areas is complicated, and can cause potential collapse, failure, or contamination. Current regulatory structures do not allow municipalities to implement regulations to protect the public in these areas.

43. Do you support the Conservation Congress working with the DNR and NRB to establish new rules designating the entire karstic areas of Wisconsin, both dolomite and calcareous bedrock areas, as sensitive areas meriting special groundwater protection by the State and freeing municipal governments to make additional rules and regulations based on local geological consideration?

43. YES____ NO_____
Areas with carbonate bedrock within 50 feet of the land surface are particularly vulnerable to groundwater contamination.
**QUESTION 44:** Conduct hydrogeological surveys in counties lacking them (010117, 120117, 230117, 250217, 390317, 420617, 530217, 540117, 560217, 570717, 630817, 720817) *(requires legislation)*

Clean and abundant groundwater is an essential resource shared by all of us. Wisconsin is currently experiencing growth and interest in high capacity well approvals and pollution discharge permits. Both can risk ground water resources. Some wells and waterways are already being negatively impacted.

Local governments share in the responsibility to protect these resources, and should use the best data available to make science-based decisions.

**44.** Should the Conservation Congress work with the DNR, the NRB, and the legislature to require hydrogeological surveys be conducted in counties where none have yet been done?  
44. YES____ NO_____

**QUESTION 45:** Ban the use of neonicotinoid insecticides on state owned agriculture and forest land (530117) *(requires legislation)*

Neonicotinoids are a widely used class of insecticides. They are neurotoxins that are present throughout all parts of the plant once applied, including the leaves, pollen, and nectar. They can also contaminate water resources and soils as well. Studies show that pollinators are endangered through acute poisonings by coming into contact with these toxins. It has been widely reported that we are currently experiencing a large loss of pollinators.

**45.** Should the Conservation Congress work with the DNR, NRB and Wisconsin Legislature to take up the “Saving Wisconsin Pollinators Act,” and include specific language to ban the use of neonicotinoid insecticides (dinotefuran, clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam) regardless of application method on all state owned agricultural and forest lands, and establish limited use guidelines for continued use on commercial and private agricultural lands?  
45. YES____ NO_____

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ADVISORY QUESTIONS**

**QUESTION 46-47:** Wisconsin Guide License requirements *(150117, 050617) (requires legislation)*

Under Wisconsin law, individuals who guide, direct or assist other individuals in hunting, fishing and trapping are required to have a Wisconsin Guide License. Currently there are no provisions for client safety or liability and no requirement for First Aid/CPR training or proof of insurance.

**46.** Do you support the Legislature and DNR working together to require a Wisconsin Guide License applicant to show proof of insurance?  
46. YES____ NO_____

**47.** Do you support the Legislature and DNR working together to require a Wisconsin Guide License applicant to show proof of First Aid/CPR training?  
47. YES____ NO_____

36
QUESTION 48: Increase Guide License fees (640417) (requires legislation)

Wisconsin Guide License holders currently pay $40 per year. Many guides are earning a living wage as a direct result of using the state's resources. Some feel that Guide License fees should reflect the added pressure guides may put on the resource and that guides should pay a higher fee for using the state resources to make money.

48. Do you support the Legislature and DNR working together to raise Guide License fees from $40 per year to $250 per year with these fees earmarked for the Fish & Wildlife Account? 48. YES____ NO_____

QUESTIONS 49-52: Permit fees for non-motorized watercraft (080117, 330117) (requires legislation)

In the last ten years, on average, non-motorized watercraft accounted for 33% of boating deaths. Boating enforcement and investigations are funded by the boating program which does not received funding from non-motorized watercraft. Registration could help to identify non-motorized watercraft owners when a boat is found, whether from an accident or at other times. It is believed that 335,000 non-motorized watercraft use our resource. This is a possible revenue source that should be considered. Many hunters, trappers and fisherman own a skiff or canoe and may feel this will just be an additional fee. There are also organizations and individuals that own multiple non-motorized watercraft and feel this could be a financial burden.

Do you support the Legislature and DNR working together to create a registration fee for non-motorized watercraft, while considering the following options:

49. All non-motorized watercraft should be registered? 49. YES____ NO_____

50. Anyone who purchases a hunting, trapping or fishing license would receive one non-motorized watercraft permit at no charge? 50. YES____ NO_____

51. Individuals who carry an active hunting, trapping or fishing license would not require a permit while using a non-motorized watercraft? 51. YES____ NO_____

52. Create a group rate for organizations with multiple non-motorized watercraft? 52. YES____ NO_____

QUESTION 53: Allow the use of large caliber pneumatic rifles and bows for hunting large game (requires legislation)

Advancements in technology and equipment have yielded the development of pneumatic rifles that are able to propel a projectile with more energy than some handgun loads. The lethal range of a pneumatic rifle is comparable to many bows and crossbows. It is currently legal to utilize a pneumatic rifle to hunt large game in several other states.

53. Would you be in favor of exploring the ability of pneumatic rifles and bows to be used for hunting large game in the state of Wisconsin? 53. YES____ NO_____
QUESTION 54: Wolf application date change (620217)

NOTE: At the time of print, gray wolves are listed by the federal government under the Endangered Species Act and there is currently no harvest season for wolves in Wisconsin. The below question is asked only to provide public input on a possible change to the wolf season permit application deadline in the event that wolves would be federally delisted and management was returned to the state.

Currently the deadline for a wolf permit application is August 1 for a harvest season that would begin the first Saturday in November. This date does not allow a successful applicant sufficient time to become certified as a trapper through a trappers education course, acquire the necessary equipment and do the proper scouting before the opening date. This would also simplify the application process by changing the date to coincide with the bear and bobcat application deadline of December 10.

54. Do you support changing the deadline for the wolf permit application to December 10 for the wolf season the following year? 54. YES___ NO_____

Spark a Change, Not a Wildfire

- Secure dragging parts & trailer chains
- Check tire pressure for exposed rims
- Maintain brakes to prevent metal-to-metal contact
- Avoid operating vehicles on dry grass
Thank you for attending this year’s meeting!

Department of Natural Resources
Annual Spring Fish & Wildlife Public Hearing
&
Wisconsin Conservation Congress
Annual Spring County Conservation Meeting

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