

SUBJECT: Congress Matters: Wisconsin Conservation Congress 2011 Spring Hearing Advisory Questions

FOR: JANUARY 2011 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Rob Bohmann, Conservation Congress Vice-Chair

SUMMARY:

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress will present their 2011 advisory questions to the Natural Resources Board. The questions have been approved by the Congress Executive Council for inclusion on the Spring Hearing Questionnaire and will be used to gauge public opinion on an array of natural resources issues. The questions will be presented to the public for their input at the joint DNR Spring Hearings and Conservation Congress County Meetings held in each county of the state on Monday, April 11, 2011.

**MODIFIED on 1/21/11:
Question 7 has been deleted.**

RECOMMENDATION:

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|---|-----|-------------------------------------|----------|
| No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Fiscal Estimate Required | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Environmental Assessment or Impact Statement Required | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Background Memo | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Attached |

APPROVED:

Michael Lutz
Bureau Director, Michael Lutz

1-14-11
Date

n/a
Administrator,

Date

Matt Mowmy
Secretary, Cathy Stepp

1-14-11
Date

cc: NRB Liaison
DNR Rules Coordinator

2011 Wisconsin Conservation Congress Advisory Questions

Bear Study Committee:

Division of Bear Management Zone C (# 110710): The northern area of Bear Management Zone C has more suitable habitat than the southern area of Zone C and is in closer proximity to northern Wisconsin's prime bear habitat, resulting in a higher density of black bears than the southern area of Zone C. The northern area of Zone C is experiencing more agricultural and property damage complaints than the southern area of Zone C. Dividing Zone C could provide a mechanism to concentrate harvest pressure on a smaller area, the northern portion of Zone C, which could reduce nuisance and damage complaints there.

1. **Would you be in favor of dividing Bear Management Zone C into two separate units, each having its own quotas and harvest goals?**

Big Game Study Committee:

Legalize Crossbows for Archery Season: In the recent past, the use of crossbows as legal archery equipment for all hunters possessing a valid archery license without age or disability restrictions has been controversial. The 2009 survey conducted by the DNR of licensed archery hunters indicated that 58.8% opposed and 41.2% approved legalization. Eleven percent of the archers surveyed were already using crossbows under the age and disability restrictions. The survey was sent to 10,000 licensed archers with 4,883 responding. Concerns have been expressed that legalization of crossbows would lead to the overharvest of bucks and does and the eventual shortening of the archery season as it exists today. In many states where crossbows have been approved, the hunter success rates using the crossbow are comparable to hunters using vertical bows. Deer populations and seasons have not been significantly altered as a result of crossbow utilization in those states.

2. **Do you support the legalization of crossbows statewide for deer hunting during Wisconsin's archery season for hunters who possess a valid archery license with no additional age or disability restrictions?**

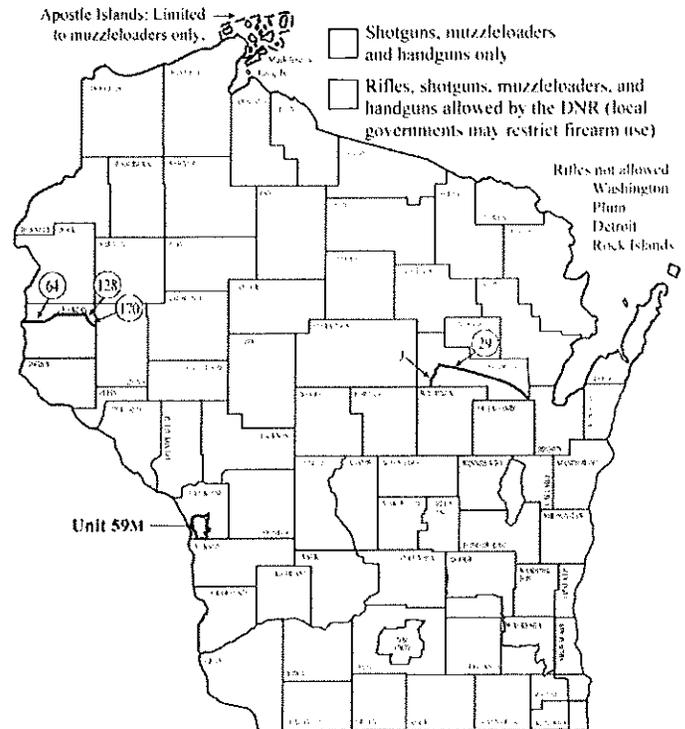
Use of Archery Equipment with a Gun Deer License (# 520310): Currently, the regular gun deer license only allows hunting deer with a firearm during the firearm deer seasons. Some hunters would like the option which is available under the authority of the turkey hunting license and the bear hunting license, which is to be able to choose if they want to hunt with a firearm or with a bow and arrow under that one license.

3. **Do you support legislation that would modify the regular gun deer license to allow the use of archery equipment when hunting under the authority of this license during the any firearm deer seasons?**

Legalize Rifles for Hunting Deer Statewide (#

130110): The restriction on the use of rifles for deer hunting has been largely based on safety concerns. DNR statistics have shown that the rate of shooting incidents is disproportionately higher among hunters that most often use shotguns, than among those who most often use rifles. A 2003 survey of hunters indicated that 23% of hunters use shotguns most often, while 76% of hunters most often use rifles. However, shotguns were involved in 42% of all shooting incidents from 1998 through 2008 and rifles were involved in 58% of those shooting incidents during that same time period. In the last several years the DNR has expanded the use of rifles in the CWD Zone shotgun counties and several other counties have voted to remove the rifle restriction with no safety issues reported.

Currently the use of rifle cartridges in handguns and the use of muzzle-loading rifles is legal in shotgun counties. Rifles can also be used to hunt predators and small game in every county of the state (unless there is a more restrictive local county or town ordinance which prohibits the discharge of a firearm or of a rifle larger than .22 caliber rimfire).



4. Do you favor allowing the use of rifles for hunting deer statewide?

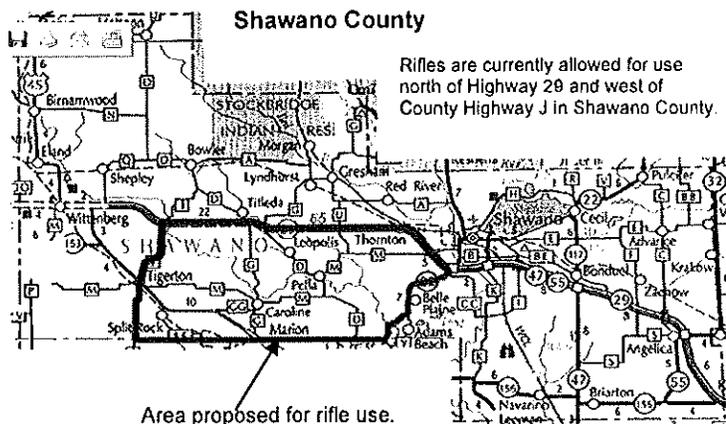
Endangered Resources and Law Enforcement Study Committee:

Use of a Crossbow for Rough Fish (# 230110): Current state law does not allow any person to use a crossbow for spearing rough fish, not even a person with a permit to hunt with a crossbow. Therefore, even a disabled person with a crossbow hunting permit could only spear rough fish with a hand spear or a bow and arrow. Persons who are eligible for a crossbow hunting permit generally have some type of disability that prevents the permit holder from being able to easily or effectively operate a regular bow.

5. Would you support legislation and associated rule changes that would allow any person who holds a valid crossbow hunting permit to be allowed to harvest rough fish with a crossbow? All other laws regarding the harvesting of rough fish with a bow would be applicable.

Executive Council:

Increase rifle hunting area in Shawano County (# 590310): The restriction on the use of rifles for deer hunting has been largely based on safety concerns. DNR statistics have shown that the rate of shooting incidents is disproportionately higher among hunters that most often use shotguns, than among those who most often use rifles. A 2003 survey of hunters indicated that 23% of hunters use shotguns most often, while 76% of hunters most often use rifles. However, shotguns were involved in 42% of all shooting incidents



from 1998 through 2008 and rifles were involved in 58% of those shooting incidents during that same time period. In the last several years the DNR has expanded the use of rifles in the CWD zone shotgun counties and several other counties have voted to remove the rifle restriction with no safety issues reported. Rifles are currently allowed for use north of Highway 29 and west of County Highway J in Shawano County.

6. **Do you favor allowing the use of rifles during any firearm deer season in the area of Shawano County bounded by Highway 29 on the north, County Highway J on the west, the Waupaca County boundary on the south, and Highway 22 on the east?**

Forestry, Parks and Recreation Study Committee:

~~**Allow Archery Deer Hunting within the Hoffman Hills Recreation Area (# 170410):** Hoffman Hills State Recreation Area (Dunn County) offers 707 acres of preserved and restored wooded hills, wetlands, and prairie traversed with hiking and cross-country ski trails. Currently, Hoffman Hills Recreation Area is only open for gun deer hunting during the November firearm season.~~

- ~~7. **Would you support a rule change to allow archery deer hunting within the boundaries of the Hoffman Hills Recreation Area?**~~

Allow Trapping and Hunting on State Park Lands (# 540210): Wisconsin State Statute s. 29.089 does not allow any trapping or hunting on Wisconsin state park land, except for deer, elk, wild turkeys or small game in a state park or portion of a state park if the Department has authorized by rule the hunting of that type of game in a state park or portion of a state park. This means that state park lands are closed to hunting unless specifically opened by an administrative rule. Once lands are designated as part of the state park system, there are no provisions to allow trapping of any kind and no opportunity for bobcat or bear hunting. Currently Wisconsin operates 46 state parks totaling 84,000 acres (32 of the 46 parks are more than 600 acres in size). The DNR continues to purchase private land and put it into the state park system. In private ownership, many of these areas may have been open to hunting and trapping. Trapping techniques have changed in recent years and the use of dog-proof traps, cable restraints, and the late seasons that allow the trapping of some furbearers under the ice have made possible the opportunity for multiple land uses with minimal user conflicts. In addition, safe hunting techniques, education, and hunter awareness efforts have made hunting an extremely safe activity, even on lands that are simultaneously open to other uses and activities.

8. **Would you support legislation that would require lands purchased as state parks to be open to hunting and give the authority to the DNR to regulate hunting on these state park lands according to the wise use of the natural resource?**
9. **Would you support legislation that would require lands purchased as state parks to be open to trapping and give the authority to the DNR to regulate trapping on these state park lands according to the wise use of the natural resource?**

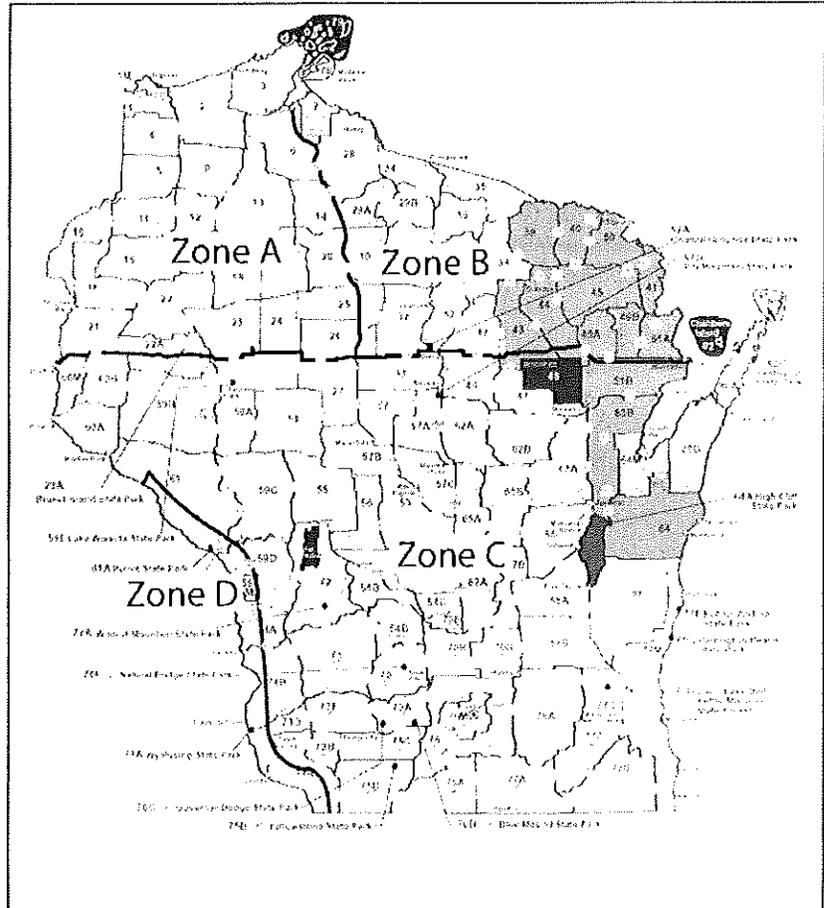
Fur Harvest Study Committee:

Cable Restraints on Private Lands (# 510210): On private lands, a land owner (or occupant of any lands and members of their immediate family living with them who are at least age 10) can hunt or trap certain species (coyote, fox, raccoon, squirrels, opossum, woodchuck, etc.) on the land they own or occupy year round without the need for a license. There is no biological reason for prohibiting a landowner from using cable restraints on their own land year round. Cable restraints are much easier to set on trails and travel corridors than foot hold traps and this would provide more opportunity to use cable restraints. Cable restraints could be utilized on private lands by the land owners, especially during the months of October, November, and December when pelts are prime. In some areas of the state coyotes, fox and other furbearers are very plentiful and this would give land owners another tool to manage these animal populations.

10. Would you support allowing private land owners/occupants to use cable restraints year round on lands owned or occupied by them for the species they now can hunt or trap year round without a license?

Shorten Fall Beaver Trapping Season (# 050210): The population of beaver in Wisconsin has decreased in recent years and is trending downward with a steady, gradual decline in northwest Wisconsin

Beaver Management Zone A and a significant decline in northeast Wisconsin Beaver Management Zone B (Beaver Population Analysis, 2008). Beaver populations are stable in southern Wisconsin, Zone C, and increasing in the Mississippi River Zone D. The statewide population is estimated at 66,800 beaver. At present, the open season south of highway 64 is from the first Saturday in November until the end of March for Zone C, and the day after the duck season through March 15 for Zone D. North of highway 64 (Zones A and B) the open season is from the first Saturday in November until the end of April. Spring trapping tends to target dispersing animals while fall and winter trapping targets established colonies. Shortening the season in fall would protect established beaver colonies and allow trappers to take advantage of the spring season when dispersing 2 year old animals will make up a larger proportion of the harvest. USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services to protect approximately 1,500 miles of high priority trout streams, primarily in northeastern Wisconsin. The majority of beavers are removed in early spring, which is normally late March through early May. This has caused some confusion and conflict between citizen trappers and agency trappers. Better understanding, reduced problems, and additional protection may occur if agency trapping on high priority trout streams would commence after the close of the respective season.



11. Would you support shortening the beaver trapping season by one month at the beginning of the season (from starting the first Saturday in November to starting the first Saturday in December) in Deer Management Units (DMU) 39, 40, 50, 44, 41, 45, 43, 49A, 49B, 51A, 51B, 63B, and 64?

Great Lakes Study Committee:

Fish and Wildlife Fund Money for Commercial Fishing (# 410110): Although commercial fishing license fees provide some funding to support the DNR management of Great Lakes commercial fishing, additional funding from the Fish and Wildlife Account sport license fees has been needed. On the 2010 Spring Hearing Questionnaire (question 81), the sportsmen and women of Wisconsin overwhelmingly supported that funds to maintain commercial fishing should be taken from GPR funds and that the management and enforcement costs should not be paid for by the Fish and Wildlife Account.

- 12. Would you support the state legislature appropriating funds from a source other than the Fish and Wildlife Account or close commercial fishing in Wisconsin until such a time that the commercial fishing industry is self funded?**

Hunting with Dogs Study Committee:

Initiate study to Define Effects of Dog Training on Nesting Birds (# 670310): Hunting continues to be a major component of the professional management and conservation of wildlife in the United States. For centuries, various hunting dog breeds have been developed for the pursuit of game including upland and waterfowl bird species and the trailing of mammals by hounds. The breeding, training and use of dogs to locate, pursue and retrieve game in this country has been a long standing tradition passed down through families for many generations. The training and use of hunting dogs has come under opposition in some areas of the country. NR 1.11(12) and NR 1.18(11) allow for dog training and trialing, however, some dog training and trialing licenses are occasionally denied or rescinded based on supposition of harming nesting birds, including song birds, game birds, and raptors. However, nationally, there is no study available to define the impacts on most species of birds from dog training or trialing during the time that birds are nesting.

- 13. Would you support the DNR taking action to initiate a scientific study to study the impact of dog training and trialing on nesting birds?**

Night Hunting of Raccoons During the 9-Day Gun Deer Season (# 670410): Currently night hunting of raccoon is prohibited during the traditional 9-day gun deer season (outside of the CWD management zone). However, night hunting of raccoon is allowed during all other gun deer seasons including CWD zone seasons, October and December antlerless deer hunts, youth deer hunts, and muzzleloader seasons. All other small game hunting is allowed during the legal hunting hours of the traditional gun deer season. In some parts of the state, the peak of raccoon hunting often occurs during the 9-day gun deer season.

- 14. Would you support the elimination of the restrictions on night hunting hours for raccoons during any gun deer season except for the Friday before opening day of the traditional 9 day gun deer season and the first two nights of the traditional 9 day gun deer season?**

Bear Hunting with Dogs Statewide: Currently, on odd numbered years, the bear season for hunters using dogs starts on the first Wednesday in September. The season for hunters not using hounds starts a week later. On even numbered years, the season for bear hunters not using dogs starts on the first Wednesday in September. The season for bear hunters using dogs then starts a week later. Regardless of which season starts first, both seasons last a total of 35 days. Hunting bears with the aid of dogs is not currently permitted in bear management Zone C at anytime. However, in July and August, there is a bear hound training season statewide. During that season, dogs can be used to run bears for training purposes in all bear management zones, including Zone C.

- 15. Would you support bear hunting without the use of dogs starting the first Wednesday of September for 35 days statewide and bear hunting with the use of dogs starting the second Wednesday of September and continuing for 28 days statewide (including Zone C where it is currently prohibited)?**

Wolf Control: The Wisconsin DNR established a wolf population goal of 350 animals in 1999 based on prey availability and human population density, and in the intervening years nothing has happened to increase prey availability or decrease human density.

As the wolf population continues to increase, there has been a correlating increase in depredations and threatening incidents involving wolves. These threats have curtailed livestock and pleasure horse activities, and increased concerns over the welfare of pets and people. It is likely that the increased

predator population, including wolves, has contributed to the reduction of the deer population in some areas of Northern Wisconsin.

16. **Would you support Wisconsin continuing the wolf population goal of 350 or less in the next revision of the Wisconsin Wolf Plan?**
17. **Would you support Wisconsin DNR and other partners implement meaningful population controls in the next Wisconsin Wolf Plan to bring the wolf population to goal levels?**
18. **Would you support that the US Department of the Interior, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and WI DNR move ahead to delist the gray wolf in Wisconsin, as petitioned by WI DNR, transferring management of the wolf population in Wisconsin to the State of Wisconsin?**
19. **Would you support that the WI DNR not relocate wolves that have caused problems in Wisconsin or other areas into any county in Wisconsin?**

Legislative Study Committee:

WCC Process before Legislative Action (# 150210): Every year members of Wisconsin's legislature introduce specific special interest legislation that circumvents or by-passes the grassroots ideals of the Conservation Congress (CC). In doing so, they deliberately and effectively keep the people of Wisconsin out of the debate on those issues. Wisconsin is currently the only state to have such a grassroots organization to advise the Natural Resources Board and the Department on Natural Resources issues. The DNR and the NRB have shown great respect for this process and have demonstrated their willingness to work through the CC.

20. **Would you support legislation requiring the procedure of allowing the Conservation Congress process of public input on all matters concerning conservation, hunting, fishing, trapping, habitat, wildlife, land and water issues to take place before a law on these matters can be acted on by the legislature?**

Change Definition of Vehicle for Transportation of Weapons (# 230210): Current hunting regulations do not allow a wheeled implement to be used as a platform or shelter while hunting because a firearm must be unloaded and completely enclosed within a carrying case to be in or on a vehicle.

CURRENT LAW

Wis. Statute, s. 167.31

(2) Prohibitions; motorboats and vehicles; highways and roadways.

(b) Except as provided in sub. (4), no person may place, possess or transport a firearm, bow or crossbow in or on a vehicle, unless the firearm is unloaded and encased or unless the bow or crossbow is unstrung or is enclosed in a carrying case.

(c) Except as provided in sub. (4), no person may load or discharge a firearm or shoot a bolt or an arrow from a bow or crossbow in or from a vehicle.

21. **Would you support the DNR working with the legislature to create a new exemption under s.167.31(4) Wis. Stats. to allow a person who is otherwise lawfully hunting, to hunt from a non-motorized stationary vehicle which is not attached to any animal, motorized vehicle or other source of propulsion?**

Migratory Study Committee:

Open Water Rule Modification For Disabled Hunters (# 440110): Many Class A and B Disabled Hunters cannot participate in waterfowl hunting because a watercraft or blind that is functional for the handicapped hunter may not allow them to meet the concealment requirements of NR10.001(20) "Open

Water.” Many of these disabled hunters are not physically able to get into a canoe, flat bottom boat, duck skiff, boat or blind and/or maneuver a watercraft or blind into or within 3 feet of sufficient height and density emergent vegetation that will meet the 50% concealment required by law.

- 22. Would you be in favor of allowing a disabled hunter and up to two hunter companions, to hunt from a watercraft (pontoon boat) and/ or a specially designed blind that may not meet the natural vegetation concealment requirement of NR 10.001(20) “Open Water”?**

Unattended Decoys on Private Lands (# 110110): It has been proposed that water set decoys be allowed to be left unattended on water areas completely surrounded and enclosed by private land under one ownership with no public access at any time during the year. This would free private land waterfowl hunters from having to set, and then pick up their water set decoys at the end of each hunt. It is presently legal to leave unattended decoys on dry land. This proposal is currently legal in other flyway states, and there is no biological detriment occurring from this practice.

- 23. Do you favor a rule change that would allow water set decoys to be left unattended on water areas completely surrounded and enclosed by private land under the same ownership with no public access at any time during the year?**

Outdoor Heritage and Education Study Committee:

Conservation Congress Curriculum Added to Hunter’s Education (# 460110): The 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. Established by Wisconsin State Statutes, the Congress is unique to Wisconsin and plays an important role in natural resources policy making. Many citizens of Wisconsin lack knowledge and understanding of the Conservation Congress, the organization’s history and function, their purpose and mission, and the role the Congress plays, and how to become involved in this grass roots democratic process.

- 24. Do you support the addition of material relating to the history, unique process and role of the Conservation Congress in Wisconsin’s natural resources management to the Wisconsin Hunters, Trappers, Angler and Archery Education, and ATV, Boating, and Snowmobile Safety curriculums?**

Remove 15 Day Requirement for Permit Transfers (# 510110): At present, the ability to transfer some permits and licenses is hindered by a requirement that those permits/licenses must have already been transferred to a youth 15 days before the start of a season. The reason for this 15 day requirement is to allow the DNR’s licensing section to process the transfer request and reissue the new license or permit to the youth before the applicable season begins. However, sometimes the applicant does not purchase their license until or is not in possession of the permit until a few days before the season starts, making it impossible to transfer that permit to a youth. This is particularly a problem when trying to transfer a bobcat, fisher or otter permit. With an ongoing effort to recruit and retain youth into hunting, trapping and other outdoor activities, it is important to clear any unnecessary obstacles and afford them as many opportunities to participate as possible.

- 25. Do you favor removing the 15 day time period before a season starts to have already transferred a harvest permit or license to a youth to allow permit holders the ability to transfer a harvest permit or license to a youth anytime before the season starts?**

Disabled Veteran’s Recreational Card (# 650210): Wisconsin’s veterans have provided a great service to their state and country and should be afforded the chance to have access to Wisconsin’s recreational opportunities. Many of Wisconsin’s veterans who have service connected disabling injuries are on a limited income.

- 26. Do you favor the Department work with the legislature to introduce legislation to create a Disabled Veteran's Recreational Card, at no or reduced cost, for Wisconsin residents who are veterans with a 50% or greater service connected disability which would include fishing and small game hunting approvals and access to state parks and trails?**

Increase Archery License by \$1 for Youth Archery & Bowhunting Training: came out of committee In 2005, Wisconsin piloted the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP), joining 44 other states. Currently, over 270 schools across Wisconsin offer NASP programs. NASP has been officially adopted by the Badger State Games. Nearly 1,000 student archers in grades 4-12 will participate in the 2011 State Tournament. Wisconsin's strong bow hunting heritage will benefit by having equally strong NASP, community archery education and Learn to Bowhunt programs.

Archery clubs, industry, conservation groups and the DNR have supported the growth of NASP in Wisconsin, but secure, long-term funding support is needed for the future. New participating schools cannot afford to purchase of classroom archery kits. Communities also need help offering archery programs with shrinking park & recreation budgets. Funding is also needed to offer Learn to Bowhunt programs to youth who have taken NASP or community archery programs and want to move to the next level.

- 27. Would you support adding \$1 to the current resident archery license to establish a dedicated account for youth & community archery training, including Learn to Bowhunt programs?**

Private and Public Land Use Study Committee:

Dog Access Regulations at Badger Ordinance Site (# 110410): The Badger Ordinance Works in Sauk County will soon be a large site under DNR management. Many DNR controlled trails and recreation sites currently restrict activities for dogs and their owners, primarily due the large number of Wisconsin residents already using those properties who may not wish to compete with large numbers of dogs for limited space. The new Badger site provides an opportunity to explore new regulations to allow wider access to recreational and competitive opportunities for a diverse dog owner population. Local dog clubs support a large variety of seasonal functions and competitions which could benefit from having an outdoor recreation area available, with long trails for training and racing, as well as large open fields and parking for an ever increasing number of outside activities. Local businesses would likely also profit from dog clubs and owner groups being drawn to this site for access for recreational activities.

- 28. Would you support the DNR implementing regulations specific to the Badger Ordinance Site so that dogs can be accommodated there for numerous functions including a) trail access for dogsleds in winter and wheeled rigs the rest of the year, b) herding, tracking, terrier trials, and other individual or group centered activities, c) year round training for such activities, d) dog shows and obedience trials and matches, e) field trials, and f) recreational use and fitness training for individual dog owners and their pets.**

Exempt All Buildings From 100 Yard Firearm Discharge Prohibition While On Public Lands: Currently it is unlawful, while on the lands of another, to discharge a firearm within 100 yards of any building devoted to human occupancy situated on and attached to the lands of another without the express permission of the owner or occupant of the building.

- 29. Would you support an amendment to s.941.20 (1) (d) that would exempt persons otherwise lawfully hunting on public lands or waters open to hunting from the 100 yard firearm discharge prohibition?**

Metal Detecting on State Lands (# 700110): It is currently not legal to use metal detectors on state owned lands unless authorized for the purpose of retrieving personal property. The current rule was enacted over concerns about people using metal detectors to locate artifacts and possibly taking the

artifacts or destroying the site so that it could not be recorded and preserved properly to reconstruct historical events. Under this suggested permitting system, participants would be required to have some type of educational instruction or certification before being issued a permit. Persons would not be allowed to disturb or retrieve historical artifacts and doing so would result in the loss of the permit to use a metal detector on state owned lands.

- 30. Do you support the DNR establishing a permit system whereby participants may purchase an annual metal detecting permit for the sum of \$20 and be allowed to operate metal detectors on all state owned or managed property and properties purchased with Stewardship money?**

Turkey Study Committee:

Turkey Permit Preference for Wisconsin State Residents (# 650310): The cumulative preference system for turkey permits gives preference to Wisconsin resident landowners with the most preference points, then to other residents based on preference points, then to non-resident landowners and finally all other non-residents are considered. Once the available turkey permits have been distributed based on this preference system and the periods hunters have requested, any remaining turkey permits are sold over the counter on a first come first served basis for each zone and time period.

- 31. Would you support legislation to allow the DNR to give residents first chance to obtain leftover turkey permits by making the first day of sale for each zone's leftover tags available to residents only?**

Seven Day Continuous Turkey Season: The current turkey season is five days long, with two days of no hunting in between each season. The two day rest period was originally implemented to allow hunters and mushroom pickers time to scout, give farmers and landowners a break from the hunting, and give turkeys a period to rest. However, turkey hunting has become a widely accepted spring activity, there is no biological reason to limit hunting to five days, and increasing the season to a seven day season would increase hunter opportunity.

- 32. Would you support a change to the turkey season structure to create a continuous seven day season starting on Wednesday and ending on Tuesday? (Will be pulled if approved as Department question.)**

Upland Game Study Committee:

Open Fall Crow Season Earlier (# 240510): The first half of the crow season runs concurrent with the archery deer season, and hunting crow in some public hunting areas may disturb some archery hunters. However, the first half of the crow season is also coincides with many other upland game bird seasons (pheasant, grouse, mourning dove, quail, etc) and many hunters like to opportunity to harvest crow while out hunting other upland game species. The second half of the crow season is from January 25 to March 20. Federal regulations for crow (federally regulated as a migratory species) only allow a state to have a crow season for 124 days, so changing the dates of the first half of the crow season may also change the dates of the second half due to the 124 day season limit.

- 33. Do you favor changing the first half of the fall crow season dates to open on August 1 and close on October 1?**

Warm Water Study Committee:

Manage Largemouth and Smallmouth as Separate Species (# 040610): For years, the DNR has managed largemouth bass and smallmouth bass jointly, as is done for most species of panfish. With some exceptions, the bag limits, size restrictions, and season dates have been the same, though they are two separate species. Combining these two species for purposes of season, bag and size limits means that an angler is not required to know for sure if the fish is a largemouth or smallmouth bass. Establishing separate seasons, size, and bag limits for these two species on the same water body may allow for increased fishing opportunity as it would allow each species to be managed differently. However, requiring anglers to be able to clearly identify the slight differences between a largemouth and smallmouth may deter some anglers from participating in this activity; particularly novice anglers who fear misidentification may result in enforcement action.

- 34. Do you support the management of largemouth bass and smallmouth bass as separate species and the establishment of separate bag and size limits for each species as needed?**

Northern Pike Size Limit on Diamond Lake, Bayfield County (# 040810): In 1995 the current size limit of 32 inches and daily bag limit of 1 fish for Northern Pike was established for Diamond Lake in southern Bayfield County. However, since that time, fish studies conducted on this lake have shown a gradual decline in the size and number of Northern Pike. In the most recent study in 2009, there were 62 captures with a length range of 16 inches-29 inches.

- 35. Do you favor changing the Northern Pike size and bag limit from 32 inches to 26 inches and changing the daily bag limit from 1 fish to 2 fish on Diamond Lake, Bayfield County?**

Reduce Panfish Bag Limit on Eau Galle Lake Dunn County (# 170110): Panfish bag limits of 10 fish per day on other lakes in Dunn County have resulted in increased fishing pressure on Lake Eau Galle, where the bag limit is 25 fish per day. This increased pressure could remove too many spawning size panfish and decrease the natural reproduction of panfish in this lake.

- 36. Do you support reducing the bag limit for panfish on Lake Eau Galle, Dunn County, from 25 panfish per day to 10?**

Musky Survey Using the Automated License Issuance System (ALIS) (# 200110): Muskellunge size limits are implemented often on a lake by lake basis. Requests for larger or smaller size limits are often reflections of social desires for trophy fish and add to the complexity of muskellunge regulations. However, the number of anglers that catch and keep musky and the number of musky that are actually harvested for consumption are unknown. Having this information may assist the DNR in the management of muskellunge populations.

- 37. Do you favor the Department asking the following survey questions using the ALIS system?** This survey would be ongoing and questions would be asked each year, beginning in 2011.

- Did you fish exclusively for muskellunge in Wisconsin at any time in 2010?
- Did you catch muskellunge at any time while fishing in Wisconsin in 2010?
- Did you keep a muskellunge that you caught in Wisconsin in 2010?
- How many muskellunge did you keep in 2010?

Reduce Largemouth Size Limit on Trump Lake in Forest County (# 210210): The size limit on large mouth bass on Trump Lake in Forest County has been 18 inches since 1990. This was done in an effort to increase the size structure of large mouth bass to reduce a large population of bluegills in this lake. However, DNR fish surveys in 1998 and 2005 showed no substantial size increase in largemouth bass. Both surveys indicate a healthy population of largemouth bass in Trump Lake, however the average size is lower than other North Central Wisconsin averages. Local anglers on this lake feel that the 18 inch minimum size limit is not having the intended effect on increasing the largemouth bass size structure.

38. Do you favor changing the largemouth bass size limit from 18 inch to 14 inch on Trump Lake, Forest County?

Walleye Restoration on the Chippewa Flowage (# 580110): The walleye population on the Chippewa Flowage has been sustained by natural reproduction, but reproduction has been declining significantly since 2002. There is some evidence indicate that competition with moderate to high densities of largemouth bass can inhibit the natural reproduction of walleye because of predation on juvenile walleyes and competition for food. Eliminating the no minimum size restriction on walleye may increase the size structure of the walleye population, better enabling them to compete with largemouth bass for resources.

39. Do you favor changing the current no minimum size limit on walleye in the Chippewa Flowage to a no minimum size limit on walleye, but only one fish over 14" is allowed?

Free Winter Fishing Weekend (# 580510): Wisconsin currently sponsors a free open water fishing weekend every June to promote outdoor recreation and introduce individuals to fishing. Winter fishing is different than summer fishing and establishing a free winter fishing weekend may encourage citizens to participate in outdoor recreation during the winter months and give individuals an additional opportunity to try a different type of fishing.

40. Would you support the Department establishing a free winter fishing weekend?

Northern Wisconsin Gamefish Season Extension (# 680110): The first Sunday in March is currently the end of the gamefish season statewide for all regular inland waters. There is no general differentiation between northern or southern management zones for the close of the gamefish season. Extending the northern Wisconsin gamefish season (north of Highway 10) would increase angling opportunity with no biological drawbacks to the fishery. It may also have a positive impact on tourism and would not require any license changes.

41. Would you support a rule change that would extend the northern Wisconsin gamefish season (north of Highway 10), to the second Sunday in March of each year?