

SUBJECT: Congress Matters: 2011 Conservation Congress Advisory Question Summary and Annual Convention Report

FOR: MAY 2011 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY / TITLE: Rob Bohmann, Chair, Wisconsin Conservation Congress

SUMMARY:

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress convened for its 77th annual convention on May 12, 13, and 14, 2011, in Wausau. The Congress statewide delegation reviewed each of the proposed DNR rule changes and each of the proposed Congress advisory questions from the 2011 Spring Hearings.

The majority of the Congress supported all of the Department's recommendations except the advancement of the proposed rule change to allow archery deer hunting during the traditional November Firearm season (question 28).

The WCC delegation endorsed the statewide votes on 38 of the 39 WCC advisory questions. Of the 35 questions that received a positive statewide vote, the Congress supported 34 for advancement and rejected one. The question that was rejected (number 56 relating to the initiation of a study of the effects of dog training on nesting birds) had a positive statewide vote, but failed in the majority of the counties at the Spring Hearings.

We request that the Department consider these 34 supported proposals as they work with the legislature and draft rule change proposals for the 2012 Spring Hearings.

RECOMMENDATION: Informational

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:

Tim Cundy for Mike Lutz
Bureau Director, Mike Lutz

05/16/2011
Date

Matt Mowrey
Administrator,
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cc: NRB Liaison
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DATE: May 25, 2011
TO: Natural Resources Board
FROM: Rob Bohmann, Chair
SUBJECT: Congress Matters: 2011 Conservation Congress Advisory Question Summary and Annual Convention Report

Chair Clausen, Secretary Stepp, and members of the Board. I want to thank you for this opportunity to present the results of the WCC annual convention. I'd also like to congratulate the newly appointed and confirmed Board members. I too am new to my position, and I look forward to working closely with all of you in the coming year to advance the management of Wisconsin's natural resources. I am Rob Bohmann, newly elected Chair of the Conservation Congress.

In accordance with our purpose and mission I would like to take this opportunity to review the business that was conducted by the congress at our annual meeting. The Wisconsin Conservation Congress convened for its 77th annual convention on May 12, 13, and 14, 2011 in Wausau. Our statewide delegation elected Executive Councilors and the Executive Committee in addition to voting on each of the proposed DNR rule changes, and each of the proposed congress advisory questions from the 2011 spring hearings questionnaire (Attachment 1).

Elections

As you're aware, we have had some changes in the leadership of the Conservation Congress. The new Executive Committee consists of Larry Bonde (Manitowoc County, Vice-Chair), Lee Fahrney (Iowa County, Secretary) and me (Rob Bohmann, Racine County, Chair). I would like to thank each of the councilors from 2010-11 that will not be returning this year (specifically Ed Harvey who stepped down as Chair of the Congress and also stepped down from the Executive Council) for their dedication and hard work and also congratulate and welcome those that have been elected and re-elected. I have included a list of our new Council in this memo for your information (Attachment 2).

DNR Rule Change Proposals

The delegation reviewed and registered their support or opposition to each of the questions that appeared as Department rule change proposals. At the 2011 Spring Hearings, the public voted on eighty-five rule proposals and advisory questions.

Fisheries Management presented 27 questions at this year's hearings: four with statewide impacts, 21 local proposals, and two advisory questions. On May 13, 2011 the Congress voted to support the Department's recommendation to advance 23 proposals that received support at the April 2010 Spring Hearings, and also endorsed the recommendation to not advance questions 4 and 11. Question 4 dealt with the walleye size limit in 19 southern counties, and while it passed statewide, the support was moderate in those counties that would be affected. Additionally, question 25 (re-establishing a closed area for setline fishing for catfish in the Winnebago system) was approved statewide, but did not have local support. The Congress approved the Department's recommendation to advance question 1 with amendments. The rule would now require the use of one or more circle hooks or a quick-strike rig that anglers immediately attempt to hook in the mouth of a fish when fishing with a minnow 8 inches or longer.

This year the Bureau of Wildlife Management presented 13 proposed rule changes for public consideration and asked an additional four advisory questions. At our convention the Wildlife Program recommended advancing all but two of those proposals for NRB consideration. The WCC supports the Department's decision to not advance questions 39 and 40 relating to prohibiting the discharge of firearms on Department lands in Pierce and St. Croix counties. However, the WCC did not support the Department's recommendation to advance question 28 (allowing archery deer hunting during the traditional November firearm season).

WCC Advisory Questions

There were 39 Congress advisory proposals presented for public comment at this year's Spring Hearings. Thirty-five of these proposals were approved by the statewide votes, and 34 were recommended for advancement to the Department and Natural Resources Board for consideration. Four proposals were not supported by the public vote, and consequently, these four proposals were not recommended for further consideration by the Department, Legislature or the Board. The four that were not supported statewide were questions 48 (legalization of crossbows statewide), 55 (shortening of the beaver trapping season), 57 (night hunting of raccoons during the 9-day gun deer season) and 58 (bear hunting with dogs statewide). The fifth question that the Congress is not advancing is number 56 relating to the initiation of a study to define the effects of dog training on nesting birds. This question passed statewide by a small margin (95 votes), but failed by county vote (30 counties supporting, 41 counties rejecting, and 1 tie).

Awards

This year the Congress recognized a number of DNR employees for their outstanding service. Tom Meier, Wildlife Management, received an award for his dedication to wildlife habitat management and efforts to enhance the educational and recreational opportunities at the Mead Wildlife Area. Retired trout biologist, Larry Claggett, received our fisheries award for his contributions to improving the cold water fisheries of our state. Russ Fell, Barron County, was recognized as our law enforcement officer of the year for his outstanding law enforcement work and community outreach efforts. We also honored our Congress delegate of the year, Mike Riggle, Taylor County, for his contributions over the past year and the high standard of service which he has set through his outstanding leadership within the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, and his advancement of conservation through his work in wildlife health and deer research. We acknowledged the dedication of our delegates by handing out our years of service certificate and pins to those delegates who have served the congress for 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35+ years.

The Outstanding Local Conservation Club was the Rusk County Wildlife Restoration Association and recognized for outstanding achievement by local conservation club was the Stanley Sportsman's Club. The 2010 Educator of the Year is Christine Jumbeck, Cochrane Fountain City High School's Agri-Science Teacher, who tirelessly engages her students in conservation efforts from raising purple loosestrife eating beetles to assisting in goose banding.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Conservation Congress, I would like to thank Chair Clausen for your attendance and presentation to the delegation. Your involvement and attendance is a testament to your commitment to the role of the Congress as an advisory body to the Natural Resources Board.

Question Description	Votes		Majority		Counties Approving		Counties Rejecting		Counties Tie vote		Counties Not Voting		Congress Recommendation
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Counties	Counties	Counties	Counties	Counties	Counties	Counties	Counties	
2011 STATEWIDE ATTENDANCE													
1 Require quick-strike rigs when using minnows larger than 10 inches in length	3,547	1,091	Yes		72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance with amendments
2 Muskellunge 40-inch minimum size limit on most waters statewide	3,221	1,485	Yes		64	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
3 Cisco, whitefish, hybrids daily bag in Wisconsin-Michigan boundary waters	3,471	713	Yes		72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
4 Walleye, sauger, hybrid size limit/bag limit in 19 southern Wisconsin counties	2,459	1,856	Yes		51	17	4	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to not advance
5 Rice and Stump lakes muskellunge 50-inch minimum size limit	2,112	1,249	Yes		55	14	3	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
6 Lilly Lake largemouth and smallmouth bass protected slot size limit	2,122	769	Yes		69	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
7 Lilly Lake panfish daily bag limit reduction to 10 in total	2,124	809	Yes		67	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
8 Lower Fox River walleye, sauger, and hybrid minimum size limit elimination	2,157	815	Yes		71	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
9 Burnett County large and smallmouth bass minimum size limit elimination	1,898	823	Yes		66	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
10 Extend hook and line catfish rules to include Green Lake and Marquette Co	2,021	503	Yes		69	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
11 Re-establish closed area for setline fishing for catfish in Winnebago system	1,570	926	Yes		60	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to not advance
12 Re-establish open area for setline fishing for catfish on the Fox River	1,643	732	Yes		65	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
13 Peshigo River fish refuge	2,029	566	Yes		66	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
14 Anderson and Archibald lakes muskellunge 50-inch minimum size limit	1,790	994	Yes		61	9	2	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
15 Minocqua Chain largemouth and smallmouth bass and walleye regulations	1,739	1,158	Yes		55	12	5	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
16 Designate Appleton Memorial Park Pond as an urban fishing water	2,034	433	Yes		67	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
17 Create fish refuge at the Thiensville-Mequon Dam	1,883	544	Yes		64	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
18 Redstone Lake muskellunge 50-inch minimum size limit	1,695	1,025	Yes		54	13	5	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
19 Black Dan and Island lakes walleye, sauger, and hybrid size and bag limit	2,006	572	Yes		69	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
20 Big Elkhart Lake muskellunge 50-inch minimum size limit	1,751	920	Yes		59	9	4	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
21 Designate Kohler-Andrae State Park Pond as an urban fishing water	2,086	422	Yes		69	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
22 Glen Lake largemouth and smallmouth bass protected slot size	1,656	705	Yes		61	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
23 Squaw Lake largemouth and smallmouth bass protected slot size	1,649	724	Yes		64	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
24 Washburn County large and smallmouth bass minimum size elimination	1,821	713	Yes		66	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
25 Designate Delafield Rearing Pond as an urban fishing water	1,995	456	Yes		67	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
26 Minnow harvest regulations on the Mississippi River	2,661	941	Yes		70	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
27 Change date of general fishing opener	2,958	1,569	Yes		63	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
28 Allow archery deer hunting during the traditional November firearm season	2,630	2,356	Yes		40	31	1	0	0	0	0	0	Not approve DNR recommendation to advance
29 Allow normal hunting hours for pheasants on weekends at stocked properties	3,004	1,333	Yes		71	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
30 Repeat the blaze orange requirement during the elk season	2,277	2,299	No		38	28	6	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
31 Establish a September firearm and archery hunting season for elk	3,132	1,400	Yes		71	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
32 Allow landowners to shoot a cougar that is harming a domestic animal	4,247	712	Yes		72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
33 Require that hunters must provide bear carcass samples for research purposes	3,372	1,352	Yes		71	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
34 Extend each of the spring turkey hunting periods by two days	3,024	1,974	Yes		58	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
35 Renew the fall turkey hunting season extension in management zones 1-5	3,469	1,201	Yes		70	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
36 Allow the use of rifles for firearm deer hunting in Waupaca County	2,742	869	Yes		70	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
37 Est. firearm and muzzleloader-only deer seasons at Copper Falls State Park	2,677	712	Yes		69	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
38 Prohibit discharge of firearms on department lands-Manitowoc County	1,780	1,305	Yes		47	19	6	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to advance
39 Prohibit discharge of firearms on department lands-Pierce County	1,706	1,336	Yes		44	23	5	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to not advance
40 Prohibit discharge of firearms on department lands-St. Croix County	1,699	1,354	Yes		41	25	6	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to not advance
41 Lower the age at which anyone can use a crossbow from 65 to 55	2,806	2,198	Yes		55	16	1	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to not advance
42 No change to duck hunting zones and possible season dates	2,130	1,393	Yes		57	14	1	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to not advance
43 Three zone option with current midstate dividing line of Hwy 10 and 41	1,299	1,989	No		18	50	4	0	0	0	0	0	Approve DNR recommendation to not advance

44	Three zone option with current midstate dividing line of Hwy 64	1,444	1,865	No	22	46	4	0	
45	Use of non-toxic shot on department lands	1,979	2,726	No	12	59	1	0	
46	Restrict deer baiting and feeding ten days before 9-day firearm season	3,056	1,928	Yes	59	12	1	0	
47	Division of Bear Management Zone C (# 110710)	2,870	1,158	Yes	67	5	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
48	Legalize Crossbows for Archery Season	1,969	3,017	No	13	58	1	0	Reject-No further Action
49	Use of Archery Equipment with a Gun Deer License (# 520310)	2,533	2,301	Yes	42	30	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
50	Legalize Rifles for Hunting Deer Statewide (# 130110)	2,742	1,973	Yes	61	9	2	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
51	Use of a Crossbow for Rough Fish (# 230110)	3,693	1,023	Yes	70	1	1	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
52	Allow Hunting on State Park Lands (# 540210)	3,710	872	Yes	72	0	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
53	Allow Trapping on State Park Lands (# 540210)	3,488	1,078	Yes	71	1	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
54	Cable Restraints on Private Lands (# 510210)	2,823	1,408	Yes	66	6	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
55	Shorten Fall Beaver Trapping Season (# 050210)	1,783	1,925	No	23	42	7	0	Reject-No further Action
56	Initiate study to Define Effects of Dog Training on Nesting Birds (# 670310)	2,137	2,042	Yes	30	41	1	0	Reject-No further Action
57	Night Hunting of Raccoons During the 9-Day Gun Deer Season (# 670410)	1,266	3,286	No	3	68	1	0	Reject-No further Action
58	Bear Hunting with Dogs Statewide	1,989	2,300	No	30	42	0	0	Reject-No further Action
59	Wolf population goal of 350 or less in the next revision of the Wolf Plan	3,939	827	Yes	72	0	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
60	Implement meaningful population controls in the next Wisconsin Wolf Plan	4,254	581	Yes	72	0	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
61	Federally delist the gray wolf in Wisconsin	4,402	526	Yes	72	0	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
62	DNR not relocate wolves that have caused problems	3,885	951	Yes	72	0	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
63	Fish and Wildlife Fund Money for Commercial Fishing (# 410110)	2,610	1,261	Yes	67	5	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
64	WCC Process before Legislative Action (# 150210)	3,794	561	Yes	71	1	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
65	Change Definition of Vehicle for Transportation of Weapons (# 230210)	2,967	1,361	Yes	70	2	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
66	Open Water Rule Modification For Disabled Hunters (# 440110)	3,053	1,104	Yes	69	3	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
67	Unattended Decoys on Private Lands (# 110110)	2,389	1,916	Yes	53	18	1	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
68	Conservation Congress Curriculum Added to Hunter's Education (# 460110)	3,483	746	Yes	71	1	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
69	Remove 15 Day Requirement for Permit Transfers (# 510110)	2,954	1,067	Yes	72	0	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
70	Disabled Veteran's Recreational Card (# 650210)	3,920	431	Yes	72	0	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
71	Increase Archery License by \$1 for Youth Archery & Bowhunting Training	2,811	1,722	Yes	64	7	1	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
72	Dog Access Regulations at Badger Ordinance Site (# 110410)	2,555	909	Yes	70	1	1	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
73	Exemption From 100 Yard Firearm Discharge Prohibition On Public Lands	2,206	2,076	Yes	40	29	3	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
74	Metal Detecting on State Lands (# 700110)	2,549	1,640	Yes	60	12	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
75	Turkey Permit Preference for Wisconsin State Residents (# 650310)	3,891	587	Yes	72	0	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
76	Open Fall Crow Season Earlier (# 240510)	2,732	1,050	Yes	72	0	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
77	Manage Largemouth and Smallmouth as Separate Species (# 040610)	2,946	1,128	Yes	69	3	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
78	Northern Pike Size Limit on Diamond Lake, Bayfield County (# 040810)	1,808	764	Yes	68	3	1	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
79	Walleye Restoration or the Chippewa Flowage (# 580110)	1,781	985	Yes	64	6	2	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
80	Reduce Panfish Bag Limit on Eau Claire Lake Dunn County (# 170110)	1,702	842	Yes	60	9	3	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
81	Free Winter Fishing Weekend (# 580510)	3,610	667	Yes	72	0	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
82	Northern Wisconsin Gamefish Season Extension (# 680110)	2,689	1,086	Yes	70	2	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
83	Musky Survey Using the Automated License Issuance System (# 200110)	2,499	1,198	Yes	64	7	1	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
84	Reduce Largemouth Size Limit on Trump Lake in Forest County (# 210210)	1,958	674	Yes	69	0	3	0	Advance to DNR for consideration
85	Increase rifle hunting area in Shawano County (# 590310)	2,305	801	Yes	68	4	0	0	Advance to DNR for consideration

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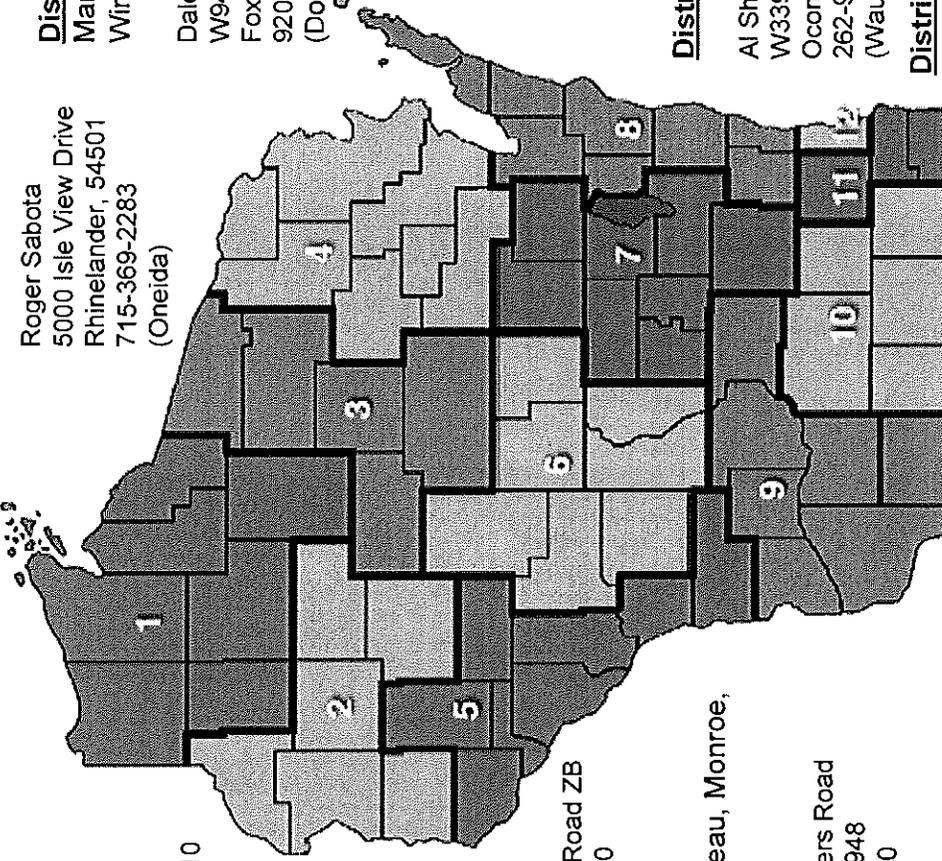
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