2020 Spring Hearing Online Input FAQ

In light of COVID-19, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are closely following guidelines from the Department of Health Services (DHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization (WHO).

As such, the in-person portion of the 72 public meetings known as the Spring Hearings that were to be held in each county on April 13 are canceled. The public will continue to have the opportunity to provide input on the natural resources advisory questions from the DNR, Natural Resources Board (NRB), and WCC through the online input option.

- **Who can use the online input option for the Spring Hearings?**
  Anyone can utilize the online input form for the 2020 Spring Hearings. Just as anyone can attend a Spring Hearing and provide input in person, anyone can use the online option. For security, and to ensure the integrity of the results, individuals will be required to sign in to use the online version, just as they are required to sign in if they attended a hearing in person.

- **How do I find the online input option?**
  The link will be placed on the DNR’s Spring Hearing webpage and can be found at [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) by searching “Spring Hearings.”

- **How do I provide input using the online option?**
  The online form is being run through SurveyMonkey. Once you sign in, simply read and follow the directions carefully. The questions online are identical to the ones found in the Spring Hearing questionnaire.

- **When can I provide my input online?**
  The link will “go live” on Monday, April 13, 2020 at 7:00 PM and will remain open for three days (until 7:00 PM on Thursday, April 16). Each person can provide input once for each of the survey questions.

- **What if people try to provide their input multiple times and “sway” the feedback?**
  We have security systems in place to identify these issues and will continuously monitor the online input system for intentional misuse. The DNR and the WCC will analyze the data and consider any inappropriate attempts to influence the outcome when they interpret this input.

- **How does the random verifiable number (RVN) work?**
  Since the in-person portion of the Spring Hearings are canceled, there will not be any RVNs used this year. All of the input received will be compiled together.

- **What about WCC delegate elections?**
  For this year, each WCC delegate’s term will be extended by one year. Those delegates who were not going to run for re-election or with to vacate their seat can notify the WCC/DNR Liaison. This will create a vacancy in the county, and per the WCC’s Code of Procedures, the County Chair may appoint someone to fill the vacancy.

- **What about local citizen introduced resolutions?**
  Citizens may still introduce resolutions by emailing them to SpringHearingInfo@Wisconsin.gov or mail typed hardcopies to: Kari Lee-Zimmermann, Conservation Congress Liaison, P.O. Box 7921 WCC/4, Madison WI 53707-7921. All citizen resolutions must be received by close of business on April 6. Resolutions must also meet the requirements identified on the Spring Hearing webpage. As would be the case if the hearings were being held in person, individuals submitting their input online will be able to see the resolutions submitted for their county if they choose to.

Updated 03/20/20
• **What devices can I use to provide input on the online form?**
SurveyMonkey is compatible with most cellular devices, tablets and computers. If you leave your session before completing the questions, you will need to continue your session using the same device, or your input may not be captured.

• **How long will it take to provide my input?**
If you want to provide input on all 55 questions, we recommend that you set aside at least 20-30 minutes to complete the online form in one sitting, though having more time may be beneficial particularly if you haven’t read the background information ahead of time.

• **Do I have to provide input on all 55 questions?**
This year you have the option to answer “NO OPINION” to most of the questions. If you do not have a preference or opinion on the issue, we’d prefer you indicate that by marking “NO OPINION” instead of leaving it blank because it gives us better data to analyze (we don’t have to make as many assumptions about why the question may have been skipped). However, if you do not answer all the questions, your response will still be counted.

• **What should I do if I do not have time to finish the form in one sitting?**
If you cannot finish in one sitting, SurveyMonkey will retain your answers through that point. Upon your return you can complete the survey. Your answers will not be collected until you click the submit button at the end of the form.

• **When will results be available?**
As state agencies continue operations, please understand that most of the staff are teleworking and may have limited access to files and delayed online connectivity. The online input option will be available for three days, and our ability to compile, analyze and report the input, while monitoring the data for intentional improper influences will depend largely on the volume of input we receive. Be assured that they will be posted on the Spring Hearing website as soon as they are available.

• **In the online option, why are you asking me where I recreate most?**
People often recreate in multiple locations and may spend most of their “outdoors” time in a county other than where they live. The online version allows us the opportunity to ask and gather some additional (optional) demographic information which may be used as context to assist the DNR and the WCC when interpreting the input received.

• **What should I do if I received an error when trying to open the online form?**
SurveyMonkey should be compatible with all mainstream internet browsers, however, they suggest using some over others. If you should receive an error opening the link, please try using a different internet browser. SurveyMonkey suggests:
  - Google Chrome 18 or later
  - Safari 7 or later
  - Firefox 24 or later
  - Internet Explorer 11
  - Microsoft Edge