



Conservation Chronicle

Chairman's Update

By Rob Bohmann

I hope that all of you have had a great summer, and now that fall is here, you are finding time to spend afield to harvest some of Wisconsin's plentiful bounty or just enjoy the great outdoors.

Work has been hectic this past summer, but I was able to get in quite a bit of salmon fishing. Coho numbers were great this year, thanks to Salmon Unlimited and the DNR collaborating with the state of Michigan a couple of years ago to help with the stocking of Cohos. Chinooks and Rainbows were more difficult to find this year, but they finally showed up in late August.

I even found time to do some Walleye fishing in Green Bay, and we were fortunate to experience great action every time we made the trip.

I was successful in drawing bear harvest tag this year, and I transferred it to my oldest son, Andrew. Andrew and I hunted with Mike Rogers (Sauk County) and his gang up in Iron County

and we had a blast!

This was our first time hunting bear with dogs, and I can assure you that it won't be our last. Mike and his gang worked their tails off to make sure that Andrew would get his first bear. On the third day of the hunt, he harvested his first bear that dressed out at 323 pounds. Mike dragged my son over four miles thru some of the thickest bear country that I had ever seen. They even crossed thru water that was waist deep. At the end of it all, Mike and his gang gave my son and I some wonderful memories that will last us a lifetime.

The Executive Committee met in June for appointing delegates to committees for 2011-2012. It is our intention to work with all councilors next year to make sure that every district has representation on every committee, with two exceptions, Great Lakes and Mississippi River. We will continue to remove delegates from committees who had unexcused



absences from their meetings.

The Executive Committee also requested that all committees that have been assigned resolutions, schedule their meeting prior to November 30. I want to thank all committee chairs for responding to this request. Other than the Bear Committee and the Migratory Committee, whose meetings were exempted and are scheduled for December 2nd, all committee meetings will be done by October 15th. This will not only help Kari in getting the Executive Council prepared for our January meeting, but it gets everyone out in the field to enjoy the fall hunting seasons.

In addition, those committees that have any resolutions being forwarded from their committees to the

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Act 21 and the Annual Spring Meetings

By Kari Lee-Zimmermann, WCC Liaison

Act 21 was passed by the legislature, signed into law by the governor and went into effect on June 7, 2011.

Act 21 is a law that curbs the ability of all state agencies to create administrative rules by effectively adding steps to the process which allow the legislature more oversight and add a year to the process. The governor's approval is required at least

two different times in the new process, a comprehensive economic impact analysis is required prior to a public hearing, an additional NRB approval is required, and the legislative review process has been extended to include an additional committee. Rules may not be referred for review between April and December in even-numbered years.

For the Congress, this makes it difficult to hold an annual "spring hearing" in conjunction

with the department, because the DNR is not able to forward actual rule proposals each year. The department can only put forth proposed rule changes every other year, since it takes two years for the cycle from beginning to end. Rule proposals will only be forwarded to the spring meeting in odd-numbered years.

Department staff and the secretary's office met with WCC leaders on a number of occasions to

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Friends of the WCC Fund Youth Transportation to Outdoor Expo

Photo and article by Lee Fahrney

Three schools attended the Wisconsin Outdoor Education Expo, May 19-20, with the assistance of transportation grants from the Wisconsin Conservation Congress. In addition to students and chaperones from Hilbert Elementary School pictured, schools from Madison and Green Bay also received grants. More than 125 students were able to attend the event with our assistance.

The Expo, held each year at the Dodge County fairgrounds in Beaver Dam, welcomed more than 3,500 4th and 5th grade students to this interactive hands-on outdoor experience. The Conservation Congress' Wall of Fame exhibit



More than 125 4th and 5th grade students attended the Wisconsin Outdoor Education Expo after receiving transportation grants from the Wisconsin Conservation Congress. Included was this large contingent from Hilbert Elementary School.

was one of the featured attractions at the event. Thanks to Congress delegates Jim Burmeister, Rick Swenson, Jim Shurts and

Lee Fahrney for helping with set up and of staffing of the exhibit.

The Conservation Congress was also well-represented at the Wisconsin Trappers Association exhibit which included skinning demonstrations of various species including beaver, otter and muskrat. Juneau County delegate Dan Carroll was particularly busy skinning dozens of carcasses throughout the two-day event. Student response: "Yuk!" – followed by much shoving and pushing to get even closer to the action! Other WCC delegates assisting were Scott McAuley from Wood County and Scott Zimmerman of Dodge County.

Dodge County Delegate Dale Maas was once again instrumental in organizing the entire event.

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Executive Council for possible inclusion in the spring questionnaire, should have those written in question format, and forwarded to Kari by November 30th. Please work closely with your committee liaisons and Kari so that we have well-written backgrounds and questions to discuss at the January Executive Council meeting.

I received a letter from Governor Walker's office back in June. He has charged the Congress to develop recommendations that will reduce complexity, increase opportunity, and eliminate regulations and policies that may be obstacles for hunters, anglers and trappers who want to get involved in these Wisconsin traditions. He has encouraged us to work with the NRB and DNR in developing our recommendations for simplification and reduced regulatory complexity. This item has been added to every committee's agenda for your discussion and suggestions in your respective areas of interest. You should also be thinking about this as you go through resolutions to determine whether the proposed change will make things simpler or more complex; will encourage participation or become a barrier; and if it is more complex, does the

potential benefit to the resource outweigh the challenges of the proposed change.

The Executive Committee met with DNR leadership on July 18th to discuss this charge and the implications of Act 21. After meeting with DNR leadership, we felt that it was best to schedule an Executive Council meeting to discuss Act 21, and its impact on how we do our business.

The Executive Council met on September 2nd with Department staff to discuss Act 21. Act 21 lengthens the rulemaking process from 12-18 months to a 2-3 year process. After much discussion, the Council voted to continue to have a spring meeting every year. However, only in odd-numbered years will there be actual rule change proposals.

In odd-numbered years, the Spring Hearings will look like our traditional event. The Department will have proposed rule changes and Congress will have advisory questions. However, in even-numbered years, the Department and the Congress will have only advisory questions. After all advisory questions are discussed, the Congress will be leading a town hall discussion. During the town hall forum, we will gather input from our constituents on simplification of rules pertaining to hunting, fishing and trapping,

pending legislation, the Youth Congress, and modifications to future spring meetings. The Executive Council at its meeting in January, will discuss how the town hall meeting part will be handled and provide direction for county delegates through the District Councilors at the spring District Meetings.

Lastly, I have heard and read a lot of negative discussions on how Act 21 is an attempt to eliminate the Congress. The Governor's office has assured me that that is not the case. Governor Walker values the Congress and its role in Wisconsin's Natural Resource management. It's because of this role that the Governor has charged the Congress to develop recommendations to reduce complexity, increase opportunity, and eliminate obstacles for hunters, anglers and trappers.

While we have challenges ahead, this is certainly nothing new to the Congress. In our 77-year history we have faced many challenges and our grass-roots public input process has always prevailed. I view this as an opportunity to improve our organization's efficiency and effectiveness. I encourage you to do the same.

2012 Convention to be Held in Manitowoc

Mark your calendars. The 2012 WCC Convention is scheduled to be held in Manitowoc on May 10, 11, and 12, 2012. And this year's convention will be one you won't want to miss.

"I have been hearing a lot of concern and anxiety about some of the challenges the Congress is facing, both internal and external, so this year's convention is an excellent opportunity for the entire delegation to get together, discuss the challenges, and generate ideas for the future success of the Congress," said Rob Bohmann, Chair of the Congress. "It's the perfect time, with everyone physically together in the same room, to engage delegates in the education and decision making about these issues. We can pool the feedback we receive from the town

hall forums at the spring meetings and see where we are at."

"At the 2012 convention we will continue to do many of the same things we have done for years at conventions. We will invite dignitaries, such as the governor, DNR secretary, and NRB chair to address the delegation," said Larry Bonde, Vice-Chair, "We will continue to review the results of the annual spring meetings, and there will definitely be paddle votes. However, in addition, the Executive Council decided that it would be beneficial to have some additional delegate training."

Some of the ideas for the 2012 convention that have been discussed include:

—having break-out sessions for study com-

mittees including DNR liaisons

—discussion on the Governor's charge for simplification of regulations and elimination of barriers to participation

—additional training for County Chairs and new delegates

—training on Robert's Rules of Order and the WCC Code of Procedures

—a presentation on Act 21

"This year's convention may well be one of the most important and fruitful meetings of the Congress," said Lee Fahrney, Secretary.

"There is work to be done, and we need to make sure the entire delegation is on the same page."

Delegate Profile: William "Bill" Howe, Crawford County

By Lee Fahrney

Like a child at the altar of God, Bill Howe was "baptized" on the waters of the Mississippi River at the age of ten, rowing a small clam boat as he tried to keep up with a larger craft just ahead. "My boat was for overflow if they needed it," he said laughing.

And at 88 years young, Bill is still drawn to the River – to float both main channel and backwaters, spin a yarn about its storied past or offer insight to present-day threats to its sustainability. He remembers when the locks and dams were installed on the river in the late 30's, and when the Mississippi Refuge system was created.

Bill fought his way onto the Wisconsin Conservation Congress after he got into an argument with a guy over some changes to commercial fishing rules on the Mississippi. "I wanted to be on the Congress so I could get something done." After more than 50 years as a delegate to the Congress from Crawford County, Bill reigns as a walking, talking legacy of conservation leadership.

He remembers rubbing elbows with such figures as Ernie Swift, then secretary of the Conservation Commission, forerunner of the current Department of Natural Resources. Swift would come out to the area to hunt ducks with his family, Bill relates, as did "Ding" Darling, a cartoonist for the Des Moines Register and a wildlife artist who sketched the first federal duck stamp.

Bill's father and grandfather toiled as the publishers of the Courier, a local paper serving the various communities of Grant and Crawford counties.

He recalls going to Madison with fellow conservationist Jack Johnson to lobby the legislature and the Conservation Commission. "I knew where their office was back then and got to know most of the people there."

Bill's interest in conservation goes far beyond the Mississippi, however. He recalls traveling to northern Wisconsin back in the fifties to herd starving deer from over browsed areas to other locations where they might have a chance of survival. "We had people from the Conservation Commission, Parks and Congress delegates all involved," he relates. The operation was conducted near Rhinelander and Eagle River as he recalls. "It didn't work; they went right back again."

He also remembers when the first Parks Committee was formed in the 50's under Ed

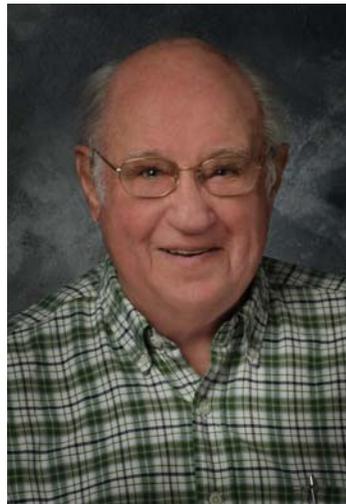
Morris. "There were some parks you couldn't even fish in," he said.

Many of the same controversies exist today, Bill says. He is concerned about the legislature and its involvement in conservation issues, which, according to him, are better left to the Congress and the DNR.

"The problem goes all the way back to Gov. Lucey and Gov. Kohler who wanted to do the same things," he says. "Let the public do the rules and let the government administer the policies."

He also expresses reservations about "specialty groups" such as fish tournament promoters. He would like to see tournament anglers use technology to take a photo of the fish rather than haul them in to be put on a scale. The challenge, he asserts, is to keep fish in their original habitat. "Moving fish around and using live wells can spread disease," he warns. "Return the fish to the water where it's caught."

Bill currently serves on the Mississippi River Committee and the Legislative Committee. A Navy veteran of World War II, Bill worked in control towers, guiding Navy and Army Air Corps planes in and out of various air strips, most of which no longer exist, he says. Bill lives with his "sweetheart," Donna, in Prairie du Chien. Combined, they have seven children.



Land and Water Conservation Fund Vital to Northwoods

By Rick Olson, Sawyer County delegate

This commentary was originally published in the Ashland Daily Press.

To live in the Great Wisconsin northwoods is to have beautiful lakes and rivers, and large, pristine spaces open to the public. Conserving the qualities that make this place so special is tremendously important for those of us who call it "home." That's why I recently traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with our Wisconsin congressional delegation about the importance of protecting our forests, lakes, and recreational lands in northern Wisconsin.

By now, everyone recognizes that we must put the government's budget on a diet, and tough decisions have to be made. But investing in Wisconsin's economic recovery and our beloved national forests, wildlife refuges, and parks through a federal program that doesn't come out of our tax dollars is a smart choice as Congress develops a budget for the next fiscal year.

Since 1965, that program, called the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), has protected places like Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, the North Country National Scenic Trail, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, and the Chippewa Flowage Forest. This year, LWCF funds will help protect more than 18,000 acres in the Chippewa Flowage watershed, which will secure a world-class fishery and protect a

working forest for continued logging.

These sorts of places protect our water quality and the environment. They are also critical to the state's economy because they preserve the working forests that provide local jobs and make Wisconsin a premier destination for active outdoor recreation. In fact, the Outdoor Industry Association has found that outdoor recreation contributes more than \$9.7 billion to Wisconsin's economy, supports 129,000 jobs across the state, generates \$570 million in annual state tax revenue, and produces \$7.5 billion annually in retail sales and services — accounting for nearly 4 percent of gross state product. The U.S. Census reports that over 2.9 million people hunt, fish or watch wildlife in Wisconsin each year, spending over \$3.9 billion on wildlife-related recreation.

What makes LWCF such a bargain investment for Wisconsin is that it isn't financed by our taxes! Instead, the fund gets a portion of the fees collected from oil and gas companies when they lease federally managed areas in our offshore waters. Every year, \$900 million of those fees is supposed to be put into this fund to protect our federal, state, and local lands and waters. However, that seldom occurs. Instead, Congress uses most of this oil and gas company money for other purposes, and LWCF is consistently shortchanged.

Today, LWCF is in deep jeopardy. Con-

gress slashed the program during year-end budget negotiations, which left the program with just a third of what it is supposed to get. Now the U.S. House of Representatives is proposing even deeper cuts that would decimate the program. This harmful budget hasn't yet been enacted, but time is running out.

Gratefully, our Congressional delegation includes longstanding — and bipartisan — champions of LWCF, like Senator Herb Kohl and Representatives Tom Petri and Ron Kind. I'm also thrilled that my congressman, Sean Duffy, recently stood up for those of us who care about Wisconsin's natural heritage by joining his colleagues in defending LWCF. With their strong support, we can ensure the protection of cherished places like Chippewa Flowage and keep our Northwoods' beautiful appeal while supporting our local and state economy.

While there's no doubt federal spending needs to be reduced, not all cuts are equal. Wiping out LWCF, as now proposed in the House, is wrong-headed and will squander an opportunity to protect our state's treasured places. For the sake of our environment and economy, LWCF is the kind of program that should be encouraged, not eliminated.

The NRB voted unanimously at the August Board meeting to support the purchase of a Forest Legacy easement on over 10,000 acres of land near the Chippewa Flowage.

The Future of Wisconsin's Whitetail Deer Population

By Robert Wilberscheid, Calumet County delegate

Bob periodically writes an op-ed column for the Tri-County Record.

If you believe Andrew McKean in September's 2011 Outdoor Life, there could be a "Deer Depression" coming along in the next few years. Quoting Dr. Grant Woods, a widely respected wildlife biologist whose land management interests take him around the country, "The best case scenario I see is that deer populations drop ten to twenty-five percent over the next couple of years."

That might sound hyperbolic, but Woods is

supposedly not alone in his view. A director of a Southeastern DNR type agency stated that he has been telling hunters for years that you "can't kill enough does." Now he feels it may be time to end that mantra.

While the nation's deer herd is currently in excess of 20 million animals, the population is poised to take a steep drop.--- "Somewhere between a significant correction and a catastrophic crash" according to Woods.

If these dire predictions come to pass, as many as 50% of the whitetail hunting community could take a pass on purchasing a deer hunting license. While a drop in license sales would negatively impact wildlife agencies, deer hunters drive an outdoor gear in-

dustry that accounts for \$12.4 billion annually.

McKean lists eight "qualifying risks" that threaten the present deer numbers. The maturation of American forests has a risk index of 8 (out of 10). A young hardwood forest is capable of producing 1000 pounds of available food per acre, while a mature forest can barely eek out 50 to 100 pounds.

Private versus public habitat has become a major issue. Private land has been much better managed for wildlife, while public forests don't see sufficient timber harvest to promote new growth.

If you talk to hunters in northern Wisconsin,

they will uniformly confirm that view.

Predators (risk index 7) are definitely on the increase, making some game managers wanting to make every hunter a coyote hunter. In Wisconsin, coyotes, while not tracked like most predators, are definitely on the increase, along with wolves, black bears and maybe bobcats.

Nationwide, the current estimated number of coyotes killed by government funded predator control programs is 500,000. It is thought that 75% of coyotes would have to be removed annually to cause a decrease in the predator's general population.

Baiting (risk index 3), while still popular in many states, including Wisconsin, can undo habitat work and can often concentrate deer causing health concerns.

Habitat loss (risk index 9) is very visible to hunters and non-hunters alike. Rural subdivisions, even in our depressed economy, continue to grow. Corn and soybean production also contributes to a reduced carrying capacity.

Intolerance (risk index 9), while not appar-

ently prevalent in Wisconsin, is very much alive in some states and suburbs. Whitetails are viewed as pests rather than potential trophies. Nuisance deer are all over, but regulated hunting is a better and cheaper solution than sharpshooters or birth control.

Inadequate monitoring (risk index 3) continues to be a concern for officials around the country, not just Wisconsin. Many states rely on internet reporting, citing ease of monitoring and lack of funding.

Wisconsin is once again trying to get a better handle on the deer population with it currently implemented \$2 million plan.

Unrealistic expectations (risk index 3) can be traced to "irrational exuberance" that some game managers have trumpeted in the past. No matter how many deer there are on the landscape, there are going to be seasons when even above-average hunters are not going to score.

Perhaps hunters will have to start looking at deer hunting as a great recreational endeavor rather than a predictable opportunity to harvest a whitetail.

Leadership vacuum (risk index 4) sounds a bit weak to me. Whitetails Unlimited and similar groups do a good job promoting deer, but with often sizeable populations available, sportsmen and women are more prone to supporting groups that advocate other wildlife species.

I don't know if we need a national conservation organization to support whitetails and deer habitat. State and local groups, especially in the present economy, would probably be more effective and efficient.

While the predictions are dire, if some of the speculation comes to pass, the effects will not necessarily be nationwide. 2010 harvest numbers are quite diverse, with states like West Virginia and Missouri seeing a decrease of 23% and 10% respectively, while states like Delaware and Nebraska grew 14% and 11% respectively.

While we can never say never, it is extremely unlikely that whitetails which are resilient and adaptive will experience any appreciable population declines unless a new dynamic is introduced.

Can You Identify Any of these Gentlemen?

The Conservation Congress requests your help to identify the five gentlemen seen in this photo taking a break from an archery hunt.

The verbal history that accompanied the photo was that it included Aldo Leopold, Roy Case, and Harley McKenzie.

However, after contacting the Aldo Leopold Foundation for assistance, they have confirmed that Leopold doesn't appear in the photo.

Larry Bonde worked to date the photo based on the model of the vehicle, but was unable to confirm or dis-

credit the presence of Roy Case or Harley McKenzie.

If you recognize any of the gentlemen in the photo below, please contact Larry

Bonde at 920-693-8449 or Kari Lee-Zimmermann at 608-266-0580.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.



Hydropower proposed for the Upper Mississippi River Locks and Dams

By Marc Schultz, Mississippi River Committee Chair

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) hydropower licenses were applied for in early May by several firms for Upper Mississippi River (UMR) locks and dams. Nine of the 26 federal locks and dams built on the UMR in the 1930's by the US Army Corps of Engineers as authorized by the US Congress to provide for a commercial navigation channel are located on Wisconsin's border with Iowa and Minnesota. In 1924 Congress also authorized and created the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge on The UMR from Nelson Wisconsin to Rock Island Illinois. The UMR is an internationally important fish and wildlife habitat and at the same time an internationally important commercial navigation route that supports economically vital import and export trade.

Hundreds of millions of dollars have been invested by the federal government in maintaining and restoring fish and wildlife habitat as well as operating and updating the locks and dams and navigation infrastructure. Wisconsin, local governments along the UMR and the public also invest public and private funds seeking the economic and environmental opportunities that the UMR offers.

What is being proposed by the firms is to install low head run-of-the-river hydropower technology in and near the locks and dams. Run-of-the-river would use the day to day river flow at each lock and dam. Flow in the UMR changes slowly but dramatically over time with seasons, precipitation, groundwater discharge and runoff. Low flows are below 10,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) and high flows are well above 100,000 cfs.

There is a big question for FERC, UMR management agencies and the public. Are the proposed hydropower facilities in the public interest and compatible with commercial navigation as well as habitat for fish and wildlife? The issues are many and definitive answers are few at this time. The FERC process has time lines for the public and agencies to respond. License applications made in May have a 60-day public comment period but have been extended an additional 60-days by

FERC at the state's request.

The hydrology of the UMR is complex due to the size of the floodplain, the pools created by the dams and the lengthy dikes with their dam and spillways. River fish move long distances to spawn or to find seasonal habitat. Consequently, the cumulative effects of passage both up and down stream through turbines must be established. The several spillways and culverts in the long dikes at each dam are used to spread flow across the floodplain to keep downstream backwaters intact. Concentration of flow to produce power, particularly in low flow conditions, would seem to be in conflict with healthy backwaters.

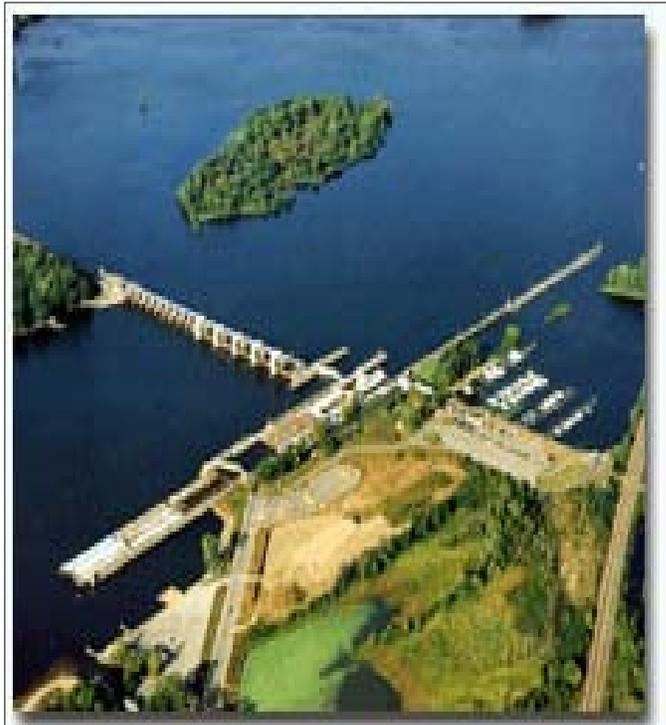
Below each lock and dam are fishing floats available to the public for a fee. The floats are located in unique quiet water opposite from the lock. Changing the flow conditions for hydropower potentially could eliminate the flow conditions that make fishing on the floats so good.

The thousands of acres of shallow water pools behind each dam contain immense beds of aquatic vegetation that are so important as a source of food for migrating waterfowl and a home for fish and aquatic life. Storms in the summer and the natural fall die-off can create very large mats of floating vegetation that buildup behind the dams. Last summer and fall there was so much floating vegetation moving in the river it impaired navigation from July to October and plugged water intakes for coal fired power plants.

Other significant questions that need answers are relating to how the proposed fa-

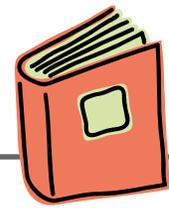
cilities would impact upstream and downstream passage of fish, passage of flood flows, sitting of transmission lines, impacts to water quality, water level manipulation for habitat purposes, recreational use by the public, exotic species, sedimentation patterns below the dams and the extent of public involvement on FERC decisions.

The UMR is a one-of-a-kind resource. A true gathering of waters, it is home to more than 140 species of fish, approximately 25 mussel species, waterfowl, furbearers, raptors and many other species of wildlife. Some are threatened or endangered. It is a particularly important corridor for migrating birds including waterfowl, songbirds and shorebirds. Some of these migrations contain a significant portion of their world populations. Some examples are canvasback ducks, tundra swans and cerulean warblers just to name a few.



Lock and Dam 6 is located at Trempealeau, Wis. It was built in 1936 and upgraded in 1999. The dam is 900 feet long with five roller gates and 10 tainter gates. The lock is 110 feet long and 600 feet wide. This is one of several Upper Mississippi River lock and dam systems that would be used for generating hydroelectric power.

Understanding the WCC Code of Procedures



By Larry Bonde, Vice Chair

Most people who attend the Wisconsin Conservation Congress Annual Convention will leave the meeting with a memory of watching the voting procedure of the delegation. For a first year attendee, the paddle votes and roll call votes are always noteworthy.

Most votes are handled with a simple voice vote. That is where the Chair will ask who is in favor and who is apposed and make the decision on who had the majority on the volume of the delegation for each position. The paddle vote is used when requested by a delegate because he or she may dispute the decision of the chair and wants a count of counties voting for each position. A roll call vote can also be requested when a vote is close or if a delegate wants a record of

how each county votes. In a roll call vote, the Congress Secretary will call out each county one by one and record a yes or no vote with that record becoming part of the congress minutes.

The Congress Code of Procedure states “each delegate has an obligation to represent the views, perspective, opinions, directions and wishes of the individuals and stakeholders they represent on all natural resources issues within their county and represent their opinions at district meetings.” This includes the vote you make for your county at the statewide convention. Delegates have often asked the question, “Why do we need to gather if we are required to vote the same as the county did at the spring hearing, since that is already on

record?”

However, if new information is presented that was not available at the time of the Spring Hearing vote, then a delegation can change the county vote. If the delegates collectively feel that, had the public known the new information at the time of the Spring Hearing vote, that information may have changed the outcome of the vote, they may change their county’s vote. Another justification could be if the county vote was extremely close and conflicts with earlier votes on the same topic. When a county delegation does vote against their county vote, they may also be required by either the Executive Council or Executive Committee to submit a written explanation *Continued on page 10*

Seeking First-Time Hunters, Mentors to Continue Wisconsin’s Hunting Heritage

Take people hunting, they can eat for a day. Teach people to hunt, and they can eat for a lifetime.

Today, more than ever, we need to mentor our next generation of hunters. These are the people who will stimulate Wisconsin tourism, be our next generation of hunting club members and protect our natural resources. Hunters’ Network of Wisconsin (HNW) has partnered with four outdoor groups with the goal of increasing the numbers of mentors, first-time hunters, mentored hunts and Learn to Hunt events.

A Learn to Hunt event is an educational opportunity designed to help novice hunters of all ages have a high quality, safe and rewarding hunting experience under the guidance of qualified hunting mentors. The events are sponsored by local conservation clubs and organizations under the supervision of the Wisconsin DNR. Participants receive both classroom and field instruction prior to the hunting experience. Then, first-time hunters are paired up one-on-one with qualified mentors to provide the highest level of instruction and safety.

Four outdoor groups have committed to actively seek mentors to guide children and other first-time hunters on their adventurous days. These four groups need your assistance as mentors, please contact them to learn more.

To learn about Learn to Hunt events in your area, visit huntersnetwork.org or check Hunters’ Network of Wisconsin out on Face-

book. You may also contact the groups below who have made the commitment to help others mentor first-time hunters.

Protecting our natural resources and outdoor heritage depends upon our vigilance and active stewardship. It is our responsibility to mentor the next generation of hunters and outdoor enthusiasts, to inspire people to be committed to healthy, active lifestyles and to preserving our outdoors for generations to come.

With your help, we can teach others to eat for a lifetime.

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With your help, we can teach others to eat for a lifetime.

Contact information:

Becoming an Outdoors Woman

Peggy Farrell
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2011 Convention Recap

Chair Bohmann's report to the Natural Resources Board on the 2011 convention.

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.

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.

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. However, at the Executive Council meeting on May 24, 2011, the Council voted not to support the amendment that included circle hooks. The Congress continues to support the eight-inch minnow amendment.



Governor Scott Walker addressed the delegation at the 2011 convention and talked with delegates during the break.

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. The WCC did not support the Department's recommendation to ad-



Delegates vote with their iconic county paddles at the 2011 annual convention in Wausau.

vance question 28 (allowing archery deer hunting during the traditional November firearm season). But at the Executive Council meeting on May 24, 2011, the Council voted to support the advancement of question 28 since the county delegates did not vote the way their counties voted and no new information was given. Considering this, the statewide vote of the public to support the advancement of question 28 is the position of the Congress.

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



LE Officer of the Year, Russ Fell receives his award from 2010 Chair Ed Harvey.

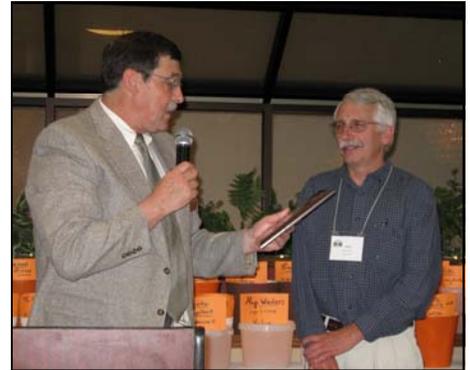
outstanding service. Tom Meier, Wildlife Management, received an award for his dedication to wildlife habitat management and efforts to enhance the educational and recreational opportunities at the Mead Wildlife Area. Retired trout biologist, Larry Claggett, received our fisheries award for his contributions 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.



Taylor County delegate Mike Riggle was honored for his dedication and contributions to the Congress and wildlife health.

Legislative Happenings and Congress Positions

There has been a lot of activity at the capitol these days and many of the bills being proposed have an impact, either directly or indirectly, on Wisconsin's natural resources. Here is brief summary of a few of the bills, their status, and the Congress' position.

AB158—Relating to non-resident voting at Conservation Congress Spring Hearings. This bill would invalidate the results of any county's spring hearing vote that allowed a non-resident to vote on the Congress' advisory questions.

AB 158 was given a hearing in the Assembly Natural Resources Committee on September 13, where Lee Fahrney testified in opposition on behalf on the Congress. This bill has come up before and the Congress has a long standing position in opposition.

AB 311—Relating to Wisconsin's sporting heritage. This bill would create a Sporting Recruitment and Retention Council, provide free first-time licenses, reward mentors, ensure access to Stewardship

lands, create a free winter fishing weekend, and allow 12 year olds to spear sturgeon.

AB 311 was introduced October 5 and given a hearing October 11. The Executive Committee met via conference call on Monday, October 10 and voted unanimously to support the efforts of the legislation. Larry Bonde testified in support of the bill at the Assembly Natural Resources Committee hearing.

AB 202/ SB 135—Bear permit for Wounded Warrior program. These bills would require the department to issue a Class A bear permit for use by the Wounded Warriors Program if the organization requests one.

These bills have been referred to their respective Natural Resources Committees, but have not yet been scheduled for hearing. The WCC Bear Committee and the Executive Council voted to support legislation that would allow a permit for the Wounded Warriors Program and presented their support for

such legislation to the NRB at their March Board meeting, prior to the introduction of these bills.

AB 176/ SB 113—Relating to minimum harvesting requirements for commercial fishing in the Great Lakes. These bills prohibit the minimum harvesting requirements for licensing of commercial fishers.

Both bills were referred to their respective Natural Resources Committees, however, a hearing has only been held in the Assembly Natural Resources Committee.

The Great Lakes Study Committee of the Congress has taken a position in opposition to these bills.

Specific bill language can be found online at legis.wisconsin.gov and citizens can get email updates when new bills are introduced.

Read the Congress' complete testimony online at dnr.wi.gov/org/nrboard/congress/Positions/



Copper Bullet Demonstration



By Ralph Fritsch, Oconto County delegate

In August I attended a workshop at the Waterloo Gun Club. This workshop was put on by the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources. The workshop was presented Carl Batha, retired DNR Wildlife Biologist, and Phil Lehman, retired DNR Wildlife Technician. The main purpose of the day was to show participants the properties of different types of bullets. The workshop was well attended by representatives of the Conservation Congress, Wisconsin Pro-Gun Movement, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation and DNR personal.

The morning began with an inside classroom program to explain the days activities and review the basics of lead bullets and copper bullets. For some time, the DNR has been concerned about the effects of lead fragments on wildlife and fatalities as results of animals ingesting lead from lead shot. This issue was partially addressed when lead shot was prohibited for use in waterfowl hunting. To date, the DNR has seen a marked improvement in lead toxicity in waterfowl populations, but there continues to be some concern over lead levels in non-target species and lead fragmentation in game species.

Going into this workshop, I told myself to take the middle-of-the-road approach to this workshop. I would collect all information, then make my conclusions at days end.

After the classroom session we proceeded out to the shooting range. At this time, Carl & Phil encouraged the onsite shooting of both copper and lead bullets by the persons attending the workshop. I participated with my 30.06, 180 grain bullet, my hunting bullet of choice for some time now.

Their shooting demonstration was developed and built to show bullet penetration and collect fragments left after shooting. This was done by the use of a 50 gallon plastic barrel laid on its side and six, one-gallon jugs filled with water placed behind each other in a row, inside the barrel. Next, firing into the row of jugs, water falls to the bottom of the barrel along with bullet fragments. The barrel is then flushed and the water filtered, collecting any fragments.

My bullet penetrated five of the six jugs. The lead bullet mushroomed nicely, but the collection of fragmented lead filled the

palm of my hand the size of a quarter and a 1/8 of an inch high. A surprisingly high amount of fragments, I thought.

Next I fired the copper headed bullet this also penetrated five jugs. The barrel was flushed and filtered same as with the lead bullet. The only fragments collected were two pieces of the plastic tip on the head of the copper bullet. The copper bullet remained in good shape after being retrieved.

For me, seeing this demonstration was truly believing. Lead fragmentation from a bullet does penetrate and disperse throughout an object.

Now, what actual health problems could we incur from using lead over copper? Your answers to this will come from the elevation of dispersed lead inside a deer or other animal harvested using lead. Harvested game shared with family members, especially youth, must be carefully considered.

I will be purchasing a box of copper bullets for deer hunting this season. If the chance comes your way, I hope you attend this demonstration and bring a friend. Draw your own conclusions. Decide for yourself if you warrant a change in your lead usage.

Sign-Up for Email Updates

You can sign up to get updates on WCC happenings as well as DNR information using the Gov-delivery system. On the WCC or DNR web pages, just click on the icon that says "subscribe to DNR updates" (see above right) and enter your email address. You are then able to check the boxes of the areas that you'd like to receive updates on.

For instance, you can get an email alert every time the WCC calendar is updated

with a new meeting date or agenda, or you can get an update when meeting minutes are posted. It is a great way to stay informed about what is happening with the WCC.

You can also get alerts on new information relating to specific DNR programs such as Outdoor Reports, breaking news, fishing and hunting seasons and updates, outdoor recreation, health and safety alerts, gray wolf depredation alerts, research updates, education and training information, and



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DNR Updates**

many others.

The Gov-delivery system also offers wireless alerts for those individuals who wish to receive updates on their mobile device.

If you have email, I hope you'll take advantage of this fantastic new tool to keep yourself informed about the WCC happenings and outdoor issues that are important to you.

Understanding the WCC Code of Procedures...continued from page 7

as why they changed the county vote and that written explanation will then become part of the Congress record.

Too often there have been concerns raised by persons outside the Congress that personal agendas are the reason some counties vote different at the statewide convention than the county's Spring Hearing vote. When these roll call and paddle votes are

called at the statewide convention it is really important that county delegations understand the importance of that vote. Further, if they choose to vote against their county's Spring Hearing vote, they should understand people are watching and the delegation will be held accountable. It never bodes well when the very public our delegates represent, feel the Congress is not

accurately representing them.

To better understand the full procedural duties of the Congress and County Delegation it is always a good idea for delegates to read and understand the entire Code of Procedure for the Congress. It can be found in your annual convention book or online at the Congress web pages.



Delegates Afield 2011



Rick Fruit (Richland Co.) and Wyoming elk



Eugene Altwies (Kenosha Co.)



Brad Hasheider (Sauk Co.)

David Zielke (Eau Claire Co.)



Joe Weiss (Washburn Co.)



Wil Netzer (La Crosse Co.)



Craig Olson & granddaughter (St Croix Co.)



Mike Rogers (Sauk Co.) & Andrew Bohmann (son of Rob Bohmann, Racine Co.)



Ken Richter (Washburn Co.)



Andrew Limmer & dog Austin (Milwaukee Co.)



Meade Grim (Green Lake Co.) and son Cody (age 10)





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Act 21 and the Annual Spring Meetings...continued from page 1

assist the Congress in navigating this change. Secretary Stepp pledged the support of the department and is committed to continuing to work closely with the Congress on the changes that Act 21 will bring.

On September 2, the Executive Council met with staff from fisheries, wildlife, legal services, law enforcement, and the secretary's office to discuss the options for implementing the new rule-making process.

Early on, everyone was in agreement that there needed to be something held every year and that the fish and wildlife portions of the rule hearing should be held together every two years, not staggered every other year. There was great concern that staggering the rule portion of the hearings with fisheries one year and wildlife the next would lead to a significant decrease in attendance and a loss of interest by the public.

It was decided that the Congress would hold a spring meeting in 2012, despite the fact that there would be no proposed rule changes forwarded by the department. Department staff from fisheries, wildlife and law enforce-

ment will continue to participate. The 2012 spring meeting will consist of two parts: the first will look much like the traditional spring hearings, but all of the questions, including those from the department will be advisory; and the second will be an open town hall forum for the Congress to gather input from their constituents.

The town hall format is an opportunity for delegates to have an open discussion with citizens about issues and to gather their input and ideas. Some of the topics that will be important to cover are additional options for future even-year meetings, a possible alternate day or time for the spring meetings, the youth conservation congress initiative, pending relevant legislation, recruitment and retention efforts, and the charge from the governor for simplification of regulations and elimination of obstacles to participation. The input that is received from the town hall discussion will help the WCC leadership shape how future meetings in even-numbered years are designed.

Additional discussion at the Executive Council meeting included the need for the

Congress delegates in each county to make a fervent and concerted effort to reach out to sporting clubs and groups, environmental groups, and other outdoor enthusiasts to participate in the spring meeting and cultivate a robust discussion on issues of joint interest.

While change is often met with anxiety, Act 21 gives the Congress a unique opportunity to refocus some of the energy normally focused on administrative rules, to organizational system improvements and partnering and collaborating with other user groups with similar interests and objectives.

This will admittedly not be an easy task, and will require all hands on deck. It cannot be accomplished by the Executive Council or the County Chairs alone; rather every single delegate of the Congress must play an active role in adapting to the changes that we are faced with. Change is necessary and inevitable for any organization to accomplish its mission and we need to work together to develop a path that will secure the future of the Conservation Congress.