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DATE: April 09, 2014
TO: Natural Resources Board
FROM: Larry Bonde

SUBJECT: [Board Order WM-05-13 legislative modification request: rules related to bobcat and elk management and hunting](#)

Two separate questions were on the 2013 Spring Hearings asking if citizens supported the hunting and trapping of bobcat statewide. Both questions were supported by large margins both in county vote and popular vote and the Congress position is in favor of extending the bobcat season statewide regardless of the number of zones. However, as the Congress and the Department worked on the rule you approved in December, the discussion about changing the season framework from the current structure where tags are zone specific to permits valid statewide wasn't considered. That's not to say it isn't an option worth exploring, but the public was never given an opportunity to provide their input on this change. Changing the season framework from the system currently in place that hunters and trappers are familiar with to a completely different system without asking them for their input does not seem like an appropriate way to engage the public in managing their resource. We understand this system worked very well for wolves and it may work equally well for bobcat. However, the Congress feels that, similar to the trolling compromise that will be sent back to the public this year at the Spring Hearings for additional public vetting, this suggested change to the season structure is significant enough that the public should have the opportunity to engage in that discussion and voice their opinion on the proposal.

As established by Wisconsin State Statutes, the Wisconsin 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. Their mission is to represent the citizens of Wisconsin by working with the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources to effectively manage Wisconsin's greatest asset, our abundant natural resources, for present and future generations to enjoy.