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## MEDIA RELEASE

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DNR Spring Hearings & Conservation Congress Annual County Meetings April 13, 2015

**Madison** – Wisconsin residents will be able to nominate and elect local representatives to the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) at the DNR Spring Hearings & Conservation Congress' annual county meetings held on Monday, April 13 starting at 7 p.m. Individuals interested in natural resources management will also have the opportunity to provide their input by non-binding vote and testimony on proposed rule changes and advisory questions relating to conservation and fish and wildlife management in Wisconsin.

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress is officially recognized as the only advisory body in the state where citizens elect county 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.

At the meetings, citizens will have the opportunity to comment and register their support, or non-support, for DNR proposed rule changes as well as Congress proposals that could someday become the rules that regulate fishing, hunting, trapping and other outdoor recreation activities in Wisconsin. They may also submit ideas to address conservation needs or concerns they observe through the WCC resolution process.

Results of the public's input on these proposals will be presented to the Natural Resources Board (NRB) in May 2015. If there is significant support for a proposal, the WCC advisory question could become a DNR rule change proposal in following years.

This year in addition to 71 DNR and Natural Resource Board questions, the Conservation Congress will seek public input on 41 advisory questions on a range of topics, some of which include:

- a proposal to provide an ethical hunter verification system;
- a proposal to establish an earlier bear hunt in Zone C;
- a proposal to eliminate the otter lottery drawing;
- a proposal to increase the Great Lakes Trout and Salmon Stamp fee;

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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.

- a proposal to change the definition of attended lines;
- a proposal to establish a sandhill crane hunting season.

The complete 2015 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources [spring rules hearings questionnaire](#) is available for review online or at local DNR service centers. Individuals without internet access may be able to view the online questionnaire by visiting their local library.

Given the large number of questions this year, people interested in attending the hearings are encouraged to review the questionnaire online prior to the April 13 hearings and should arrive at the hearing location early to register before the hearings begin at 7:00 pm.

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