

20-02-14

Change Guide License Requirement for Winnebago System Waters

The Winnebago System including waters all the way to Buffalo Lake in Marquette County is considered Federal Waters and requires a Captain's License to guide on these waters. Because of the cost and requirements needed to obtain a Captains License, there are very few guides operating legally on the Winnebago System. Since the closing of the Rapide Croche Locks these waters may no longer meet Federal Waters requirements, but it requires an act of Congress to change it to Wisconsin Waters.

If the requirements for a guides license were changed on the Winnebago System it could provide more opportunities for guiding which could create a positive economic impact for those wanting to guide on the system and to businesses that would benefit from increased tourism.

Currently the Federal Government has control over this and the State may be limited in what it can do if the waters remain under Federal Control. There is also some safety training that is part of a Captains license that should be incorporated into the Wisconsin Guides license if a Captains license were no longer needed.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting held in Fond du Lac County on April 14, 2014, recommend that the Conservation Congress work with the Department of Natural Resources, State of Wisconsin, and the Federal Government to investigate the best course of action and negotiate making changes that would allow guiding on the Winnebago System without the full requirements of a Captains License.

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