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RESTRUCTURING OF CONSERATION WARDEN FUNDING

The number of conservation wardens that the Department of Natural Resources can have is set by state statute. The number for the 2016-17 biennial budget is set at 217. At the present time the number of credentialed law enforcement wardens is 198. This years training class will be 11 students. In the recent past and in the foreseeable future the department has not and will never reach the statutory goal for the maximum number of warden positions because of lack of funding that the department receives for the warden service. The department is dependent on the following sources for all monies that go to the hiring and maintaining of the warden service. By percentage the warden service receives monies from the following funds. 58% comes from the fish and wildlife fund, 6% from the general fund, 13% from the federal hunter education fund, 5% from the snowmobile fund, 1% from the recycling fund, 3% from the environmental fund, 4% from the ATV fund, 9% from boat registration, and 1% from water resources fund. These funds are not always stable and result in fluctuating budgets which cause difficulty in managing any agency or business.

By comparison Wisconsin State Patrol staffing is statutorily set at 399 patrol officers Their present budget is between 65.9 – 66.9 million of which 60.9 comes from two sources state transportation funds and 5-6 million from federal transportation funds.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Conservation Congress work with the Department to find and develop fewer and more stable funding sources for present and future needs concerning the warden service.

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2016 vote

63 yes

5 no