

#530516

53 #5 2016

Citizen Resolution # _____

(For Hearing Officer Completion)



DNR Enforcement of the Clean Water Act

WHEREAS, in July 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) deficient in enforcing 75 provisions of the Clean Water Act, specifically the Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) Program. In its letter, the EPA requested that the DNR's improper deviations from federal requirements "be corrected quickly." To date, the DNR has failed to comprehensively remedy these deficiencies.

Wisconsin's abundant surface and ground water resources are indispensable for recreation, drinking, and economic activity. Due in large part to the DNR's ineffective oversight and enforcement within the WPDES Program, many Wisconsin waterways suffer from quality degradation. Wisconsin's 2016 Impaired Waters List will likely include, per the DNR's recommendation, 209 more waterways than included in the corresponding 2015 list and more than double the number of impaired waters listed in the 2004. The bases of impairment include but are not limited to: phosphorus pollution and resulting algal blooms; high levels of nitrate pollution ground water and many private drinking water wells; and overuse of ground water and destruction of surface water from overuse of high capacity wells.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting in Richland County on April 11, 2016, recommends that the Conservation Congress call upon DNR to take immediate remedial action to address its 75 deficiencies in enforcing the CWA, and call upon the State Legislature to pass legislation to further enable DNR to cure WPDES Program deficiencies as identified by the EPA in 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

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Introduced in Richland County

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