

Citizen Resolution # 680316

(For Hearing Officer completion)



Rare Otters – Keystone species to the health of wetlands and water systems

Otters are a flagship species keeping rivers healthy. Their populations have declined so that there are fewer than 10,000 otters in the entire state, according to DNR statistics. Wisconsin has 12,600 rivers that run through 84,000 miles of terrain. That is a pair of otters for every 17 miles of rivers. 1204 otters were reported trapped and killed last year. There is a current trapper proposal to give all 16,000 trappers in the state 2 licenses to kill otters. At an average 22% success rate, that is a likely annual killing of 6,400 otters which will result in destroying the otter population in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin must curb otter trapping to incidental take to keep our rivers alive and vibrant. Europe is happily undoing the damage of 95% otter destruction in the 20th century. Wisconsin should come into the 21st century and protect our vulnerable river otters. They are slow reproducing, usually having only one pup, and only two litters their entire lives. Human parents should be able to take their children out to see otters playing and guarding our rivers' health.

Spring trapping continues through the birthing seasons of March and April leaving precious young to starve.

at its annual mtg in Waukesha 4/11/16
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conservation Congress and DNR to take action to draft into the Wisconsin law a stop to trapping and killing Wisconsin river otters.

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