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Title: Re destination of land purchased with stewardship funds by the DNR

The problem:

The Wisconsin DNR has recently been exposed for planning a 30 year study on forest regeneration and deer density on land purchased with Stewardship funding in 2009.

Many stakeholders from hunters to the forest products industry are in favor of the science. The problem is that in 2009 the Natural Resources Board approved the purchase of the proposed site, which is now called the Ontonagon block, with the use of Knowles Nelson Stewardship fund with the intention of allowing public access for hunting trapping hiking and cross country skiing.

Five years after the purchase, if the land is used by the DNR for this experiment, the 1050 acres would be enclosed by a 10 foot high fence, and closed to any public access.

We believe that this would set precedence to allow lands that are managed by the DNR, purchased with Stewardship dollars to be closed to the public for recreational activities. Furthermore, we believe this experiment was planned without ample disclosure, discussion, and transparency, or meeting stewardship requirements.

This experiment should be conducted on lands owned by the state that are already fenced or closed to the public and not on lands purchased and designated for open public recreation using stewardship funding.

Be It Resolved, that the Conservation congress at its Annual meeting held in Dodge County, April 14, 2014, recommends that the Conservation Congress work with the Department to take action to correct this situation by requiring clearer intent, more input from adjacent landowners and from the public for research purpose and abandoning the proposed site for this project.

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