72-08-14

`````Citizen Resolution

(For Hearing Officer completion)

Wisconsin Waters: Evaluation and Approval of High Capacity Well Permits

Groundwater and surface water are connected. Groundwater supplies are critical to sustain Wisconsin's surface waters: lakes, streams, and wetlands. Surface waters are home to Wisconsin's wildlife and fisheries. Reduced lake and stream water levels eliminate habitat that support fish populations. Lake level declines isolate woody habitat above the water level, making them unavailable to aquatic communities they support. Fish refuges, prey production, and spawning are all reduced, resulting in slower growth and fewer game and pan fish. Reduced stream base flow increases water temperatures reducing trout populations.

In 2012 Groundwater withdrawals totaled 292 billion gallons from over 13,000 high capacity wells (http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WaterUse/documents/WithdrawalReportDetail.pdf). Lakes and rivers in Wisconsin have already been pumped dry by neighboring high capacity wells and more are likely to follow.

July, 2011 Wisconsin's Supreme Court ruled in *Lake Beulah vs. Wisconsin DNR* that the DNR has the "authority and a general duty" to consider whether a proposed high capacity well may harm the waters of the state. December, 2013 Wisconsin's District IV Appellate Court ruled in *Family Farm Defenders vs. Wisconsin DNR* that the DNR was required by both state law and the EPA to consider cumulative impacts of high capacity well pumping on the environment.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conservation Congress ask the Wisconsin legislature to pass no new legislation that will limit, interfere with, or compromise the July, 2011 *Lake Beulah vs. Wisconsin DNR* Supreme Court decision or the December, 2013 *Family Farm Defenders vs. Wisconsin DNR* District IV Appellate Court decision.

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