

Resolution to Reauthorize the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund

Whereas, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program was created in 1989 Act 31 to preserve Wisconsin's natural resources and expand outdoor recreation opportunities and has been reauthorized in 1999 Wisconsin Act 9 and in 2007 Wisconsin Act 20; and

Whereas, Wisconsin sportsmen and women greatly value the conservation land protected through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program for protecting wildlife habitat, improving water quality, and increasing hunting, fishing and trapping and other outdoor recreational opportunities in the state; and

Whereas, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program supports important conservation programs, such as Forest Legacy, Wild Rivers and Lakes, Stream Bank Protection, State Parks, State Fishery Areas, State Wildlife Areas, the Ice Age Trail, water fowl habitat, and local conservation projects; and

Whereas, public access to conservation land is vital for Wisconsin hunters, trappers and anglers and is a key consideration in land purchases through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, resulting in opening over a quarter-million acres to the public for hunting, fishing and trapping and other outdoor recreational pursuits in the last ten years; and

Whereas, Stewardship funds provide the infrastructure that enables sportsmen and women to access recreational land and water by funding projects like boat launch construction and repair, fishing piers, road access, trail development and maintenance, restroom facilities, gravel parking areas, and signage; and

Whereas, the lands that the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program protects are also important to Wisconsin's annual \$14 billion outdoor recreation economy and nearly \$25 billion forestry economy; and

Whereas, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program will expire on June 30, 2020, unless it is reauthorized in the 2019-21 state budget that the Legislature and the Governor are developing;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation at its annual meeting in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin on April 12 and 13, 2019 respectfully requests the Wisconsin Legislature to reauthorize the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund in the 2019-2021 State Budget and further requests the Governor to sign it into law.

Submitted by the WWF Forestry and Parks Committee
Jerry Knuth, Chair