

Resolution Calling for Standards To Protect Birds and Restore Biodiversity Through Building Design and Operation and Habitat Creation

WHEREAS, birds, both game and nongame species, assist with seed dispersal and viability of important plants, including edible fruits and nuts, control insect and pest populations, and play important roles in ecological function such as nutrient cycling;

WHEREAS, birding is a hobby enjoyed by 64 million Americans, including many Wisconsinites, and generates more than \$40 billion a year in economic activity in the United States;

WHEREAS, Wisconsin lies within both the Mississippi and Atlantic flyways through which migratory birds pass through the state on a semiannual basis;

WHEREAS, Wisconsin is host to over 400 species of birds that bring in 400,000 out-of-state visitors for the purposes of bird watching, the second highest number in the nation;

WHEREAS, migratory birds frequently use Wisconsin's natural areas as stopover sites for food, water, and shelter along the route;

WHEREAS, green roofs can provide biodiverse habitat usable by birds in urban and suburban built environments while reducing stormwater runoff, urban heat island, and energy use as well as operating costs;

WHEREAS, as many as 1 billion birds may be killed by collisions with windows every year in the state;

WHEREAS, light pollution contributes to bird collisions with buildings but can be controlled;

WHEREAS, research has identified that diminished night sky conditions in urban areas impact bird migration and navigation;

WHEREAS, controlling indoor and outdoor lighting at night is shown to decrease bird deaths from collisions with buildings and to allow for natural navigational abilities;

WHEREAS, incorporating bird-safe building design into new building construction is shown to be cost-neutral;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation at its Annual Meeting in Wisconsin Rapids on April 10th and 11th calls for a Wisconsin "Bird-Safe Building Act" to be established for buildings over 4 stories constructed, remodeled, owned, and leased by the State of Wisconsin and University of Wisconsin System, so that all state facilities, office buildings, multi-family residential buildings, and complexes or campuses shall implement bird-safe building design and operation practices. Under this act, the Department of Administration, in consultation with the Department of Natural Resources, UW System, and expert stakeholders

(WI Wildlife Federation, Audubon Society, Green Building Alliance, Division of Facilities Development, etc.), will establish guidelines and programs to:

- a. install green roofs to provide habitat and support biodiversity (in a similar manner to the US Green Building Council's Leadership LEED sustainable site system);
- b. implement lighting operation procedures and building design, including window choice that will reduce bird collisions with buildings; and
- c. implement design practices that minimize light pollution during bird migration.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation calls for a task force to be established with the building industry to adopt, modify, and implement a voluntary certification recognition program for commercial buildings (offices and multi-story buildings 4 stories or greater) that meet the same design objectives. The program will focus on building design and operation practices that are considered safe for birds and will recognize:

- a. the construction of green roofs using native plant species with varying heights to maximize available habitat (an intensive or semi-intensive approach);
- b. the use of window film coverings, treatments or glass embedded with UV-reflecting materials that allow the birds to see the window;
- c. the reduction of indoor and outdoor light pollution around the building (through lighting design and lights-off hours such as those adopted in 2011 by the San Francisco Planning Department); and
- d. additional building practices not mentioned which can be reasonably shown to protect and provide for birds.

Submitted by WWF Conservation Leadership Corps
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