

Resolution to Reduce Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution

Whereas, agriculture is a leading contributor of phosphorus and nitrogen Wisconsin's surface water and groundwater; and

Whereas, one in five wells in agriculture areas of Wisconsin, roughly 90,000 households, are unsafe to drink due to nitrate levels; and

Whereas, an estimated 200 million pounds of nitrate nitrogen enters Wisconsin's groundwater each year, up to 90 percent of which is from agricultural applications; and

Whereas, nitrogen has been associated with many forms of human illness, acidification of aquatic ecosystems, and adverse health effects of wildlife; and

Whereas, phosphorus causes accelerated and excessive algal growth in Wisconsin waterways which decreases oxygen levels, blocks out sunlight, and causes harmful cascading effects in aquatic ecosystems.

Whereas, agriculture is a major source of phosphorus runoff into Wisconsin lakes and streams; and is the leading cause of Wisconsin waterways violating state and federal water quality standards; and

Whereas, agricultural concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus, are continuing to increase across the state; and

Whereas, Wisconsin landscapes have greatly differing carrying capacities for the assimilation of phosphorus and nitrogen from agricultural production, but state nutrient management standards are uniformly applied to all landscapes and are not protective of surface waters and groundwater in many parts of the state; and

Whereas, in addition, state nutrient management standards have been designed to optimize agricultural crop production and allow the application of phosphorus and nitrogen levels in excess of what will protect surface and ground water quality.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved That, the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation at its 2016 Annual Meeting on April 8th and 9th in Wisconsin Rapids calls on the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to revise Wisconsin's nutrient management standards for phosphorus and nitrogen so as to be protective of surface and groundwater quality and that such standards be tailored to differing agricultural landscapes.

Now Therefore Be It Further Resolved, that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation calls on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the County Land and Water Conservation Departments enhance agricultural practices and standards to include precision fertilizer application, native grass buffers and groundwater monitoring.

Submitted by the Wisconsin Conservation Leadership Corp

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