

Phosphorus Surface Water Pollution in Relation to Agriculture

WHEREAS, phosphorous is a severe surface water pollution problem in the state of Wisconsin and has a substantial impact on the quality of fish and wildlife habitat important to Wisconsin sportsmen and women.

WHEREAS, on a state-wide basis, 80% of phosphorus pollution is generated from non-point sources, the majority being agricultural activity.

WHEREAS, municipal, industrial and other point source dischargers of phosphorus have implemented significant treatment and control technologies to manage phosphorus discharges to water resources of Wisconsin.

WHEREAS, Best Management Practices to control phosphorous loss from agricultural sources are based on optimal agricultural productivity rather than water quality protection.

WHEREAS, Best Management Practices to control phosphorous loss from agricultural sources do not achieve parity with treatment and control technologies deployed by point source dischargers.

WHEREAS, Wisconsin's 15,000 farms are largely unregulated in terms of phosphorous discharge to Wisconsin's waterways.

WHEREAS Wisconsin's livestock population exceeds the human population of Wisconsin by at least 10 fold in terms of organic pollution potential.

WHEREAS, significant excess phosphorous discharges to water resources of Wisconsin result from inadequate manure management activities.

WHEREAS, manure spreading in winter contributes to phosphorous discharges to Wisconsin waterways.

WHEREAS, certain landscapes are more vulnerable to discharge of phosphorus from agricultural sources to Wisconsin waterways.

WHEREAS, the amount of revenue farmers receive from the sale of their products, impedes the ability of agricultural producers to internalize additional costs of reducing phosphorus discharges to the water resources of Wisconsin.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation at its 2014 Annual Meeting on April 11th -12th, 2014 held in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, in recognition that agriculture is the primary source of phosphorous to water resources in Wisconsin, the State of Wisconsin should immediately (1) develop and implement more effective agricultural Best Management Practices for control of phosphorus discharges with particular emphasis on effective manure management practices, (2) identify agricultural landscapes that are most vulnerable to phosphorus loss and (3) develop and implement customized control technologies to reduce phosphorus pollution from those landscapes.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State of Wisconsin evaluate and adopt appropriate technological, regulatory and financial tools and policies in order to adequately fund additional practices needed to control phosphorus discharges to the water resources of Wisconsin from agricultural sources.

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