

Resolution Calling For Environmental Standards and Regulations for PFAS

WHEREAS, perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), such as perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), are part of a group of compounds used globally during the past century in manufacturing (coated paper products), firefighting (airport and military fire retardants) and thousands of common household and other consumer products (Gore-Tex, Teflon and Scotch guard because of their heat, water, and oil resistance properties; and

WHEREAS, PFAS do not change or break down easily and are known as forever chemicals, are widespread in the environment and bio accumulate in the food chain; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Toxicology Agency has identified PFAS as a human health hazard increasing cholesterol, reducing fertility in women, adversely affecting the immune systems and increasing cancer risk; and

WHEREAS, humans cannot metabolize PFAS and exposure accumulates over time; and

WHEREAS, there is no federal or state water quality or consumption standard for PFAS, only a 70 parts per trillion health advisory level, which is viewed by emerging science as seven to ten times two protective; and

WHEREAS, there are several locations in Wisconsin where the levels of PFAS in the groundwater have been tested to be anywhere from 10,000 parts per trillion to 200,000 parts per trillion; and

WHEREAS, groundwater near the manufacturing plant in Marinette, Wisconsin that produces fire retardants has been tested to have 202,000 parts per trillion;

WHEREAS, the Menominee River in Marinette which runs into Green Bay and Lake Michigan has been found to be contaminated with PFAS which eventually may lead to the need for fish advisories on those waters;

WHEREAS, fire retardants at manufacturing facilities and airports have been tested and spread across extensive land areas thereby contaminating the land with PFAS and exposing local wildlife to the contamination; and

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan, due to discovering high levels of PFAS in deer taken within five miles of Clark's Marsh in Oscoda Township, has issued a "Do Not Eat" advisory for deer taken within five miles of Clark's Marsh; and

WHEREAS, in order to protect human health, and fish and wildlife, it is important for the State of Wisconsin to develop ground and surface water quality standards and consumption advisory standards for PFAS and incorporate those standards into water, air and waste regulatory programs in the state.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation at its Annual Meeting in Wisconsin Rapids on April 12 and 13, 2019 strongly urges that the Department of Health Services and the Department of Natural Resources, using sound science, rapidly develop ground and surface water quality standards designed to protect human health and fish and wildlife, develop fish and wildlife consumption standards and incorporate said standards into DNR regulatory programs as soon as feasible; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation respectfully requests the Governor and the Legislature to provide sufficient funds and staffing in the 2019-2021 State Budget for the Departments of Health Services and the Department of Natural Resources to develop the aforementioned standards and regulation.

Submitted by the WWF Environment Committee
By Chairman Dr. Tom Johnston, Chair