

Resolution for the Establishment of Additional Conservation Funding for Habitat Management and Restoration, Conservation Education, and Clean Water

Whereas, Wisconsin has a rich and vibrant tradition of outdoor recreation, including hunting, fishing, and trapping; as well as protecting and enhancing valuable land and water resources; and

Whereas, conservation funding for managing recreational land and water resources has largely come from the Fish and Wildlife Account, which is supported by license fees paid by hunters, anglers, and trappers; and

Whereas, that conservation funding has not kept pace with the cost of managing these land and water resources; and

Whereas, State Parks, Forests, Wildlife Areas, Fishery Areas, and Natural Areas, are frequently used by the general public for other outdoor recreational purposes; and

Whereas, outdoor recreation in Wisconsin generates nearly \$18 billion in consumer spending, over \$5 billion in wages and salaries, and \$1.1 billion in State and Local tax revenue; and

Whereas, a survey done of Wisconsin voters in 2015, by Public Opinion Strategies, initiated by Wisconsin Conservation Organizations, found that 90% of Wisconsin voters support the Legislature dedicating additional funds for conservation; and

Whereas, the survey also found that only 44% of Wisconsin voters support increasing the sales tax for managing Wisconsin natural resources; and

Whereas, the survey also found that 86% of Wisconsin voters support the dedication of existing state sales tax generated from hunting, fishing, wildlife-watching, and outdoor recreational equipment for additional funding for conservation; and,

Whereas, the State of Georgia in 2018 passed a Constitutional Amendment to allocate a portion of their existing sales tax collected on outdoor sporting goods for use to protect lands critical to clean drinking water, and to protect and maintain wildlife management areas, state parks, and lands for hunting and fishing throughout Georgia; and

Now therefore be it resolved, that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation at its annual meeting on April 12 and 13, 2019 in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin supports the dedication of the existing sales tax on outdoor sporting goods (NAICS Code 45111¹) for habitat management and restoration, conservation education, and clean water; and

¹ Definition of NAICS Code 451110: This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in retailing new sporting goods, such as bicycles and bicycle parts; camping equipment; exercise and fitness equipment; athletic uniforms; specialty sports footwear; and sporting goods, equipment, and accessories.

Now therefore be it further resolved, that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation work to build a coalition of other conservation organizations and other groups to support the creation of such funding.

Submitted by the Wisconsin Conservation Leadership Corps,

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Sources

<https://outdoorindustry.org/state/wisconsin/>

<https://classcodes.com/lookup/naics-5-digit-industry-45111/>

<https://www.georgiaconservancy.org/gosa/>

Wisconsin Voters' Views of Conservation Funding, Public Opinion Strategies, February 2015