

Adaptive Resource Management for Climate Change in Wisconsin

Whereas, the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI) predicts that Wisconsin's annual average temperature is projected to increase by 6-7° F by the middle of this century;

Whereas, WICCI also predicts that extreme heat events will be more frequent, lasting longer, and be geographically widespread throughout Wisconsin. General increase in extreme weather conditions and events in the state will affect agriculture, water resources, habitats and fish and wildlife;

Whereas, increasing heat and extreme weather events will result in increased vulnerability of our communities to death and illnesses such as wildlife-linked diseases and heat and respiratory sickness;

Whereas, as temperatures increase every 2° F during the summer season, there will be a decrease in crop yields for corn (-13%) and soybeans (-16%) as well as increased soil erosion and nutrient loss;

Whereas, Wisconsin state government has cut funding for researching changing climate systems within the DNR, Wisconsin State Climatology Office, and organizations that collaborate with the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts;

Whereas, there has been a reduction in support from Wisconsin state government for climate change research to develop appropriate management plans and practices to protect and strengthen our ecosystems;

Whereas, current Wisconsin policies regarding fish and wildlife management assume habitat conditions will maintain consistency, a position not supported by climate research;

Whereas, in the 2015 fiscal year, roughly 133 million dollars from excise taxes, stamp sales and fees from state hunting, fishing and trapping licenses spent on various management and research programs--primarily wildlife, air, water and fisheries--by the Wisconsin DNR may not be useful due to not considering the impact of climate change;

Whereas, further scientific research and forecast modeling are needed to predict the effects of climate change on Wisconsin's natural resources;

Whereas, flexibility needs to be built into future resource management plans allowing resource managers to adapt to new climate change challenges.

Now therefore be it resolved, that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation at its Annual Meeting assembled April 8-9, 2016 in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, calls upon the Governor and the Wisconsin Legislature to provide funding, staffing and policy changes necessary for the implementation of proper natural resource research and adaptive management practices for the changing climate throughout Wisconsin.

Submitted by the Conservation Leadership Corps:

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