

**Resolution calling for removal of abandoned railroad grade culvert on
Nebagamon Creek**

Whereas, the South Shore Railroad abandoned operation in the late 1800's or early 1900's and as a result, ended maintenance of their railroad culvert on Nebagamon Creek; and

Whereas, there is a danger of the culvert collapsing or becoming completely blocked with the wing-wall supports on the downside of the culvert having already collapsed; and

Whereas, Nebagamon Creek drains about 28 square miles and carries, on average about a 16 cubic feet per second flow and if the culvert collapses will back up very quickly; and

Whereas, weather patterns are showing more frequent extremes increasing the danger of flood events.

Whereas, the Nebagamon Creek Watershed already has had one such major precipitation event about 10 years ago in which a culvert failed resulting in a large silt deposit at the mouth of an unnamed creek entering Lake Nebagamon; and

Whereas, if the culvert collapses, the South Shore Railroad grade will act as a dam and fill the entire valley upstream to a point where either the grade collapses or eventually overtops and washes it away; and

Whereas, the extent or threat to the Bois Brule River will depend on how much water is impounded upstream and how quickly that impounded water washes away the grade; and

Whereas, a catastrophic failure will create the largest flood that the Nebagamon Creek valley has ever experienced; and

Whereas, the flood will quickly erode a larger stream channel by washing away the sand laden stream banks and at many points along the way from there to the Brule will cause severe erosion and collapse of the sandy valley walls; and

Whereas, the flood would wash away the Afterhours town road crossing; and

Whereas, beside the water volume dumping into the Bois Brule an even larger concern is the huge volume of sand that will create an extremely large sand deposit. This sand deposit will be a major threat to the river's trout fishery as it slowly creeps downstream; and

Whereas, this sand deposit may take decades to move down the river while filling holes, causing channel widening (bank erosion) and sequentially burying trout habitat and spawning areas.

Now therefore be it resolved, that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation at its Annual Meeting in Wisconsin Rapids on April 21st and 22nd, 2017 goes on record supporting the removal of the culvert on Nebagamon Creek under the abandoned South Shore Railroad grade.

Submitted by: WWF Fisheries Committee,
Gordy Merz, Chair
Ken Lundberg, Vice-Chair