

Resolution Calling for Reassessment of Wisconsin State Statute NR 40 Concerning Preventative Measures for Aquatic Invasive Species

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin waterways are a critically important resource that provides outstanding fishing, hunting, and other recreational opportunities for the hunters, anglers and trappers which make up the membership of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation; and

WHEREAS, as a result of these valuable recreational pursuits, these waterways are historically valuable to the citizens of Wisconsin and the state's economy; and

WHEREAS, aquatic invasive species are devastating native fish and wildlife habitats resulting in a decrease in tourism, property values, and conservation funding thereby degrading the state's economy; and

WHEREAS, aquatic invasive species have the ability to expand, dominate and eliminate native species which hunters and anglers spend money on to harvest for their own recreation; and

WHEREAS, climate change is currently occurring as a result of greenhouse gas emissions; and even if the gasses slow or stop, those that are already in the atmosphere will continue to warm the Earth, and

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI) predicts Wisconsin may warm by 4-9°F by the middle of the century, resulting in a 25% increase in extreme precipitation events, that records show have already occurred; and

WHEREAS, the increase in temperature, precipitation, and acidity in waterways is leading to the creation of new ecological niches; and

WHEREAS, aquatic invasive species are able to fill these new niches by their ability to easily adapt to new environments, and aggressively outcompete native species for resources; and

WHEREAS, prevention is the most efficient and the most cost effective method of preventing the spread of invasive species.

WHEREAS, risk assessment models are in place to find target species in possible future climate conditions as well as areas of the state which are at highest risk; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin State Statute of Invasive Species Identification, Classification and Control (NR 40), has two categories, Restricted and Prohibited species, both of which are enforceable; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin State Statute NR 40, also has a caution list that is not enforceable and is comprised of species that may have shown evidence of invasiveness in similar environments in other states and could potentially spread in Wisconsin.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation at their Annual Meeting on April 10th-11th, 2015 held in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, urge utilization of risk-assessment models to target future invasive species that could adapt to this region as climate change continues and the addition of these species to the NR 40 caution list.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation supports a reassessment of Wisconsin State Statute NR 40, focusing on moving high-threat species from the caution list to a prohibited, enforceable status prior to their establishment in Wisconsin.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation request that this resolution be sent to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources urging the proactive addition of prohibited species to the Wisconsin State Statute NR 40.

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