



State of Wisconsin  
2019 - 2020 LEGISLATURE

LRB-4878/1  
LTK:ahe

## 2019 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 76

November 22, 2019 - Introduced by Senators SCHACHTNER and SMITH. Referred to  
Committee on Senate Organization.

1     **Relating to:** supporting efforts to establish the North Woods and Waters of the St.  
2           Croix National Heritage Area.

3           Whereas, the U.S. Congress has designated 55 national heritage areas to  
4     commemorate, conserve, and promote important natural, historic, and recreational  
5     resources; and

6           Whereas, legislation has been recently introduced to designate the St. Croix  
7     River watershed region, covering all or part of 18 counties in northwest Wisconsin  
8     and east central Minnesota, as the North Woods and Waters of the St. Croix National  
9     Heritage Area; and

10          Whereas, the scenic St. Croix watershed region, which links the Great Lakes  
11     to the Mississippi River through the St. Croix River and its tributaries, has a rich  
12     geological, cultural, and industrial history that exemplifies the Upper Midwest; and

13          Whereas, designating the St. Croix watershed region, with its abundant  
14     wildlife and white pine forests, as a national heritage area would increase awareness

1 and understanding of important geographic locations and events in the region that  
2 represent key developments in American history; and

3       Whereas, the designation would allow diverse cultural groups who have  
4 influenced the area, including the people of the four sovereign Ojibwe Nations who  
5 have ancestral lands and ceded territories in the region, to share their stories with  
6 a wider audience; and

7       Whereas, the designation would also create new opportunities for local  
8 historians, scientists, artists, and others to interpret the nationally important  
9 stories of fur trading and, later, logging that brought development and prosperity to  
10 the central plains states but also left the land in the North Woods forests devastated;  
11 and

12       Whereas, that devastation in turn fostered the rise of a conservation ethic led  
13 by, among others, Gaylord Nelson, who grew up in the St. Croix watershed region and  
14 went on to found Earth Day, inspiring millions of people around the world to become  
15 good stewards of the land; and

16       Whereas, designation as a national heritage area would help conservationists  
17 showcase forestry and agricultural practices now operating in the region that are  
18 national models for sustainable resource management; and

19       Whereas, the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, the watershed's existing  
20 national park, established when the St. Croix River, along with its major tributary,  
21 the Namekagon River, was designated as one of the nation's first congressionally  
22 recognized wild and scenic rivers in 1968, would gain greater recognition for its  
23 natural beauty and plentiful recreational resources if the area is designated; and

24       Whereas, the proposed legislation recognizing the scenic and historical  
25 significance of the St. Croix River watershed would bolster the local economy by

1 bringing more paddlers, hikers, campers, ice climbers, and generally curious tourists  
2 to the region; and

3 Whereas, designation as a national heritage area would not only increase the  
4 St. Croix watershed region's competitiveness in seeking grants, donations, and  
5 sponsorships to conserve and promote the area but also bring a new sense of regional  
6 identity and deserved pride to people living in the area; now, therefore, be it

7 ***Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That*** the Wisconsin  
8 Legislature supports the efforts to establish the North Woods and Waters of the St.  
9 Croix National Heritage Area in Wisconsin and Minnesota.

10 (END)