



**WUA POSITION PAPER**

**WISCONSIN STATE BUDGET AB-133/SB-45  
NEW FACILITY FEES--DNR**

The Wisconsin Utilities Association (WUA), representing Wisconsin's investor-owned gas and electric utilities, is opposed to the new facility fee contained in the state budget.

**The Issue:**

The State Budget contains a variety of new fees and fee increases. One such new fee is the facility fee which allows the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to annually impose a fee on all owners operating under an air permit. The fee ranges from \$50 to \$20,000 depending on the amount of emissions:

<u>Total Emissions (in tons)</u>	<u>Fee Amount</u>
5-25	\$50
26-100	\$650
101-250	\$2,000
251-4000	\$7,000
Over 4000	\$20,000

The new fee would be used to offset lower emission fees and decreased federal funding. The fee would generate \$1,593,650 and would pay for new software and five positions which were previously federally funded.

**Background:**

The air management division in DNR is supported primarily by fees. Currently stationary sources pay an emissions tonnage fee of \$33.19/ton for certain air pollutants up to 4000 tons per pollutant per facility. The emissions tonnage fee is indexed to automatically increase each year. There are also additional federal funds. The state collected approximately \$9.3 million in fees in 1998 based on 1997 emissions.

Utilities are high emitters and therefore fund a large part of the air program. However, through pollution control measures, utility emissions have decreased over the years, with a consequential decrease in emission fees. In addition, DNR claims federal funding has been decreased causing a shortage of funds.

It is estimated that the new facility fee would cost Wisconsin electric utilities approximately \$300,000 to \$350,000 per year. Other industries affected include the paper industry, foundries, and small manufacturing.

(over)



**WUA Position:**

**The Wisconsin Utilities Association opposed the new fee during DNR budget discussions and continues to oppose the fee for the following reasons:**

- It is a new fee imposed on top of several current fees. Our industry is trying to become more competitive. Increased fees make Wisconsin generated power more expensive.
- Program funding through fees allows the agency to be less accountable to the public, lacks the incentive to control costs, and provides less legislative oversight.
- There is little if any decrease in federal funding when other sources are taken into account such as new EPA funds.
- DNR argues that billable tonnage is down and, therefore, an increase is needed. However, billable tonnage has been under the current estimates since the fees were initiated. Nothing has changed in this area.

4-1-99



**THE LEAGUE  
OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WISCONSIN, INC.**

122 State Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53703-2500 608-256-0827 FAX 608-256-2853

**Statement to Joint Committee on Finance Regarding  
Natural Resources Provisions in SB45/AB133**

**April 1999**

**Recycling**

The business surcharge which provided grants to local governments for recycling programs has not been renewed in the budget, yet local governments depend on state support to help fund the collecting, processing and marketing of recyclables. Since the enactment of the Wisconsin recycling law, more than 40% of trash that used to go to landfills now is recycled. This has saved landfill space, created jobs and resulted in millions of dollars of useful products that did not deplete our natural resources.

Two thousand new jobs have resulted from recycling, and \$70 million worth of usable goods have resulted from the "trash." We have an economically flourishing and environmentally sound program that is popular with Wisconsin citizens. The state should continue to support it. We propose a higher state tipping fee for waste going to landfills as a way to continue funding this program.

**Stewardship Fund**

We applaud the Governor's proposal to reauthorize the Stewardship Fund at a slightly higher amount. However, even this increase is not adequate to keep up with rising real estate costs. We recommend a fund at \$60 million per year, adjusted annually for inflation, for the next ten years. This amount will keep up with real estate costs and will maintain the original 1990 buying power of the Fund.

Only with adequate funding can the state purchase important parcels as they become available and continue our leadership role in preserving our natural heritage for posterity.

We do not recommend using Stewardship Fund dollars to match U.S. Department of Agriculture dollars for easements under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Money for short-term easements for CREP should be provided through a separate Federal Opportunities Fund.

The budget includes planning initiatives for local governments to use in creating comprehensive land use plans. This is a major breakthrough in that the state is taking a leadership role in providing guidelines. However, no incentives nor enforcement mechanisms are proposed.

We believe state funding to provide help with technical support and other costs of planning is necessary to make this program realistic. These dollars should match the funds expended by the local government. In addition, some penalty for non-compliance should apply.

**Pesticide Database System**

The League of Women Voters has learned of an effort to include the Pesticide Database System in the

budget and would like to make a few comments in support of this program.

We believe in the preservation of the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with the maximum protection of the public health and the environment. We support comprehensive long-range planning and believe that wise decision making requires adequate data with which alternatives may be weighed and intelligent decisions made. The PDS will provide the necessary data to make informed policy decisions regarding pesticide use as well as the information necessary to study lower impact alternatives to current pesticide use practices.

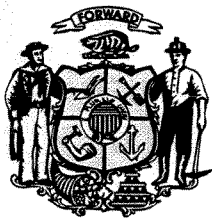
The League believes that current pesticide use practices pose a significant risk to public health and the environment, and that their use should be restricted until such time that the scientific question of their effects can be conclusively resolved. We have worked, over several decades, to reduce the use of pesticides and have been actively involved in advocacy and education projects relating to pesticide groundwater contamination, agricultural and urban alternatives to pesticides practices, local pesticides ordinances, disclosure of pesticide impacts and hazards, rules governing pesticide use near day care centers, schools and playgrounds, pre-notification of pesticide application and citizens right to know.

Throughout League's 77 year history, a fundamental principle has been to promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources. The public access portion of the PDS provides the opportunity for citizens to be informed participants in decision making regarding pesticide use.

We believe that the PDS supports a physical environment that is beneficial to life, promotes wise use of ground and surface water resources and will provide the data necessary to improve Wisconsin's water, air and soil quality while providing the means for informed citizen participation in natural resource decision making.

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LWVWI Legislative Committee Contacts:

Frankie Locke 608/257-0554, Kerry Thomas 414-246-3724 or Beverly Speer 608/256-0827



STATE OF WISCONSIN  
Tommy G. Thompson  
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION  
Mark D. Bugher  
Secretary

OFFICE OF LAND INFORMATION SERVICES  
Wisconsin Land Council  
Wisconsin Land Information Board

J. Michael Blaska  
Executive Director  
17 South Fairchild Street 7th Fl  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703-3219  
(608) 267-2707; Fax: (608) 266-5519

March 31, 1999

The Honorable Tommy G. Thompson  
Governor of Wisconsin  
115 East, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 7863  
Madison, WI 53707-7863

Dear Governor Thompson:

The State of Wisconsin continues to be a national leader in land records modernization. We are one of very few states actively working towards the compilation of information in an integrated, locally-based, statewide land information system. The Wisconsin Land Information Program (WLIP) has been very successful in supporting local land records modernization efforts. All seventy-two counties participate in this voluntary program which provides financial support for land records modernization efforts in local governments.

The Wisconsin Land Information Board (WLIB) wishes to thank you and your administration for the continued support of the efforts of the Wisconsin Land Information Program and Wisconsin Land Information Board. The WLIP provides an important partnership between the State and local governments. The continued success of the WLIP depends greatly on local government support. The WLIB wishes to bring to your attention two items that affect the WLIP and WLIB and all local governments across Wisconsin.

In January, the WLIB voted to financially support the statewide completion of digital soil surveys and mapping to be conducted by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). One of the original foundational data elements for land records modernization, the completion of a digital soil survey mapping layer will provide the basis for a framework crucial in advancing WLIP goals. The NRCS has indicated that they will need six years to complete this project. At its January 20, 1999 meeting, the WLIB voted to fund \$2.49 million at \$415,000 per year for this effort over six years.

The WLIB's approved WLIP funding level accounts for nearly 21% of the total project cost of approximately \$12 million. In addition, the WLIP share of the project accounts for 60% of the state's share of \$4.2 million. Your 1999-2001 Executive Budget recommends funding the soils initiative with the WLIP contribution of \$620,000 per year over *four* years. While the total funding contribution of the WLIP is comparable to your budget recommendations, the

proposed *four-year* project timeframe is not consistent with WLIB's recommendation of a *six-year* timeframe.

Wisconsin's municipalities depend on the WLIP funding for their continued progress in land records modernization. County contributions to the WLIP are a significant source of grant funding for local governments. While the WLIB appreciates the commitment of 40% additional state agency funding provided in your Executive Budget for the soils initiative, we believe the funding should extend over a *six-year* timeframe instead of four years as proposed. The WLIB, at its March 10, 1999 meeting, unanimously reaffirmed this position.

There are two primary reasons the WLIB supports a six-year project timeframe. First, a six-year time period with a WLIP funding rate of \$415,000 per year allows more grant money to be allocated annually to complete other very important foundational data elements. Second, the six-year project time period is consistent with the timeframe NRCS has stated it needs to complete the soil survey and mapping project.

In addition to the soils data layer, completing this initiative will provide a wealth of important data ancillary to the soils layer. For example, digital orthophotography will be created through this effort. This image base will be very useful for a variety of local, state and federal land information and land planning efforts. The partnership with NRCS and the completion of the soils data layer statewide may potentially lead to additional federal funding initiatives for Wisconsin in the future. The WLIB wishes to commend you and your administration for actively seeking ways for Wisconsin to capture additional federal funding.

The second issue the WLIB would like to bring to your attention is the Executive Budget item relating to the funding of the Wisconsin Land Information System. Wisconsin's local governments have successfully utilized the WLIP funds to complete key mapping and data elements. These elements will be the foundation of the statewide Wisconsin Land Information System. While the WLIB supports the creation of the Wisconsin Land Information System, the WLIB at its March 10 meeting voted to oppose the expenditure or commitment of WLIP funds without approval by the WLIB.

Currently, a survey is being conducted of all county Land Information Offices to gather data on the status of land records modernization efforts attributed to WLIP funding support over the past eight years. The survey is also collecting information regarding plans for future modernization efforts at the local level. Out of the six-dollar land records fee collected at the county level, the two dollars contributed to the WLIP is an important source of funding for local communities continuing modernization efforts and to develop new innovative projects. The WLIB believes these funds should continue to be invested in land records modernization projects to, as quickly and efficiently as possible, complete the foundational data elements that will be the primary components of a statewide land information system.

Again, the WLIB wishes to thank you for your continued support of the WLIP and the local land records modernization process. With this partnership, Wisconsin will continue to be a national leader in these efforts.

Sincerely,



Ted Koch, Chairperson  
Wisconsin Land Information Board

cc: J. Michael Blaska, OLIS  
Sec. Mark Bugher, DOA  
Wisconsin Land Information Board Members  
Wisconsin Land Council Members



## Wisconsin State Cartographer's Office

550 North Park Street  
Madison, WI 53706-1491

160 Science Hall, UW-Madison  
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**Date:** April 6, 1999

**FROM:** Ted Koch, Chair, Wisconsin Land Information Board

**TO:** Assembly Committee on Conservation and Land Use,  
Representative Mike Powers, Chair

**RE:** **FY00 and FY01 Budget Proposals Regarding Land Use Decision Making (Administration, page 23) - Items 1 (Soils Mapping) & 2 (Computerized Land Information System).**

### RECOMMENDATIONS

**1. Soils Mapping:**

- **Reallocate \$415, 000 annually over six years from the Land Information Board to support the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service complete the digitization of soil maps statewide and complete soil surveys in nine northwestern counties.**

**2. Computerized Land Information System:**

- **Eliminate reallocation of any Land Information Board funds in FY00 and FY01 to develop and implement a computer-based land information system.**
- **Under the direction and supervision of the Wisconsin Land Information Board develop in FY00 and FY01 a technical and fiscal plan and test the implementation of a computer-based land information system.**

**3. Sunset:**

- **Extend the Wisconsin Land Information Board sunset date two years to September, 2005.**

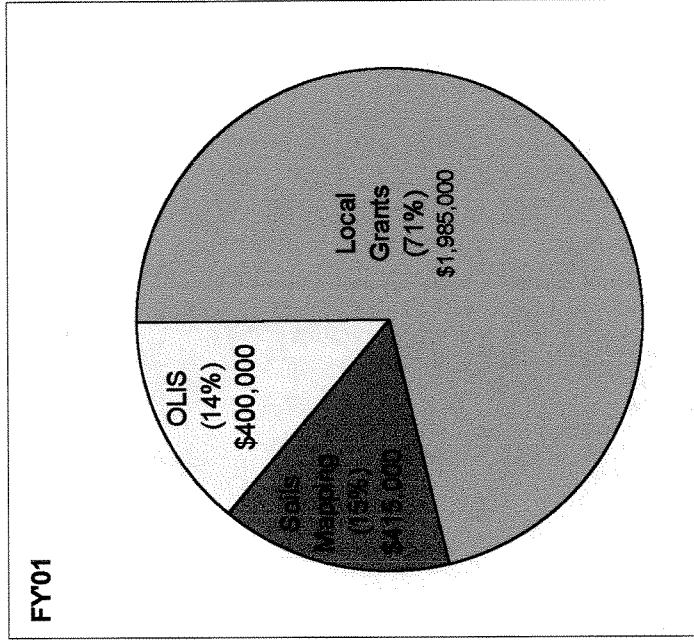
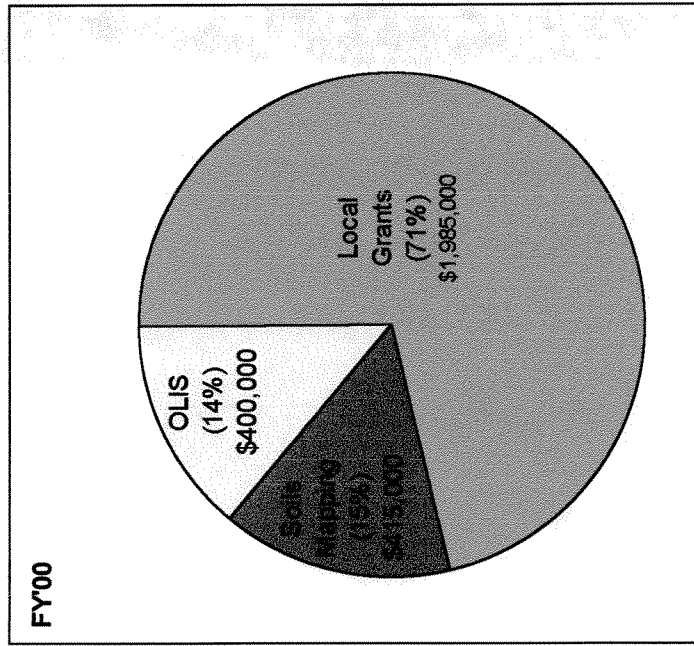


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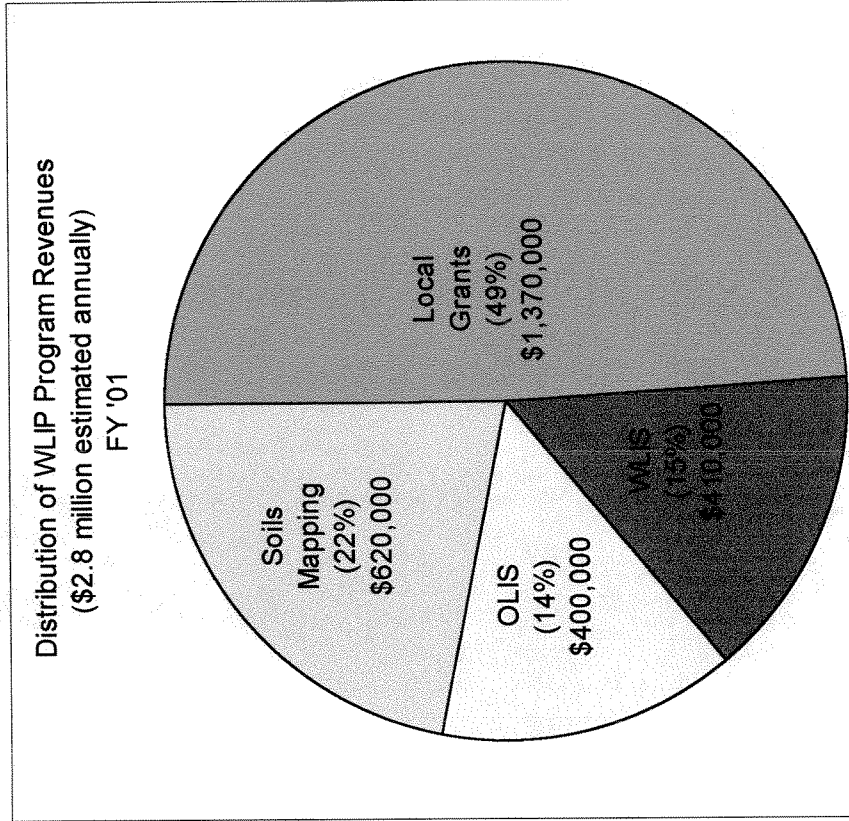
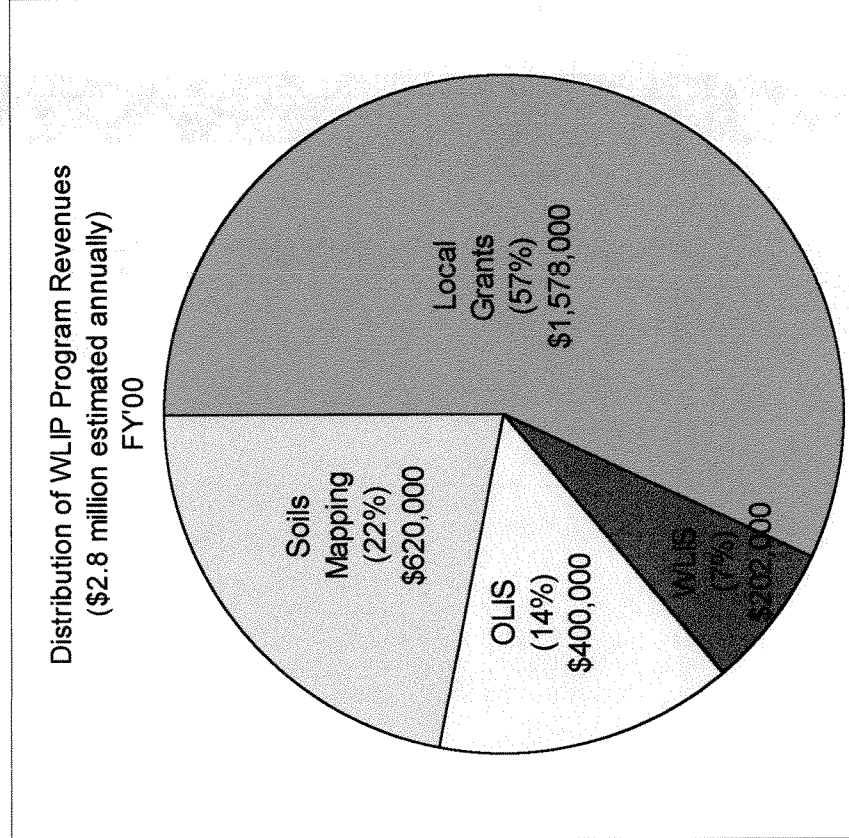
## Alternative Budget

Distribution of WLIP Program Revenues  
(\$2.8 million estimated annually)

Eliminating funding for the Wisconsin Land Information System (a total of \$612,000), and reducing soils mapping funding to \$415,000 each year (as approved by the WI Land Information Board) provides a total of an additional \$1,022,000 for local government land information grants.



# 1999-2001 Proposed Budget Land Information Initiative - DOA





# DANE COUNTY

**Kathleen M. Falk**  
County Executive

## Lakes & Watershed Commission

**Susan A. Jones**  
Watershed Management Coordinator

April 15, 1999

Senator Brian Burke, Co-Chair  
Joint Finance Committee  
Room 316 South  
State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53707-7882

Representative John Gard, Co-Chair  
Joint Finance Committee  
Room 315 North  
State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Senator Burke and Representative Gard:

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on lakes and watershed initiatives in the Governor's Budget on behalf of the Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission. We strongly support two items in the Governor's proposed budget.

The first is the Wisconsin Waters Initiative, supported by the Governor at the level of 7 positions and \$596,500 over the biennium for waterway protection information technology. Funding this initiative is vital to Dane County for several reasons: our development pressure and the demands it places on county and state staff, the need for up-to-date water resource information on which to base our decisions, and the protection and restoration of our lakes, streams, and wetlands on which a significant sector of our economy depends. While we greatly appreciate the Governor's willingness to fund 7 positions, we support staffing this initiative at 12 positions, as requested by DNR. With the 5 additional positions there is a better chance that DNR staff assistance with our shoreland, wetland, and floodplain zoning decisions will be enhanced; and that better service will be provided to Dane County landowners and developers with state navigable waters permitting.

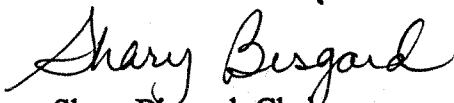
The second item that we strongly support is the Rivers and Streams Grant Program, as enhanced by the Shibilski/Cowles amendment. Together, these would provide \$400,000 per year for two years to bring DNR, the university community, and nonprofit organizations together to protect our rivers. They would also fund a Rivers Coordinator position in DNR to assist us and others on



rivers issues and create a small watershed center at UW-Stevens Point, modeled after the very successful lakes program at UW-Stevens Point. Dane County has 475 river and stream miles, and 14 miles of the Wisconsin River, and the new rivers program would help us protect these resources.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,



Shary Bisgard, Chair  
Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission

c: Joint Finance Committee Members  
Dane County Lakes & Watershed Commission Members



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**TESTIMONY BY TODD L. AMBS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RIVER ALLIANCE OF WISCONSIN  
BEFORE THE STATE LEGISLATURE'S JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE  
APRIL 15, 1999**

**Board of  
Directors**

Bill Beverly  
*Adell*

Gary Borger  
*Wausau*

Steve Born  
*Madison*

Herb Buettner  
*White Lake*

Tom Clarke  
*Osceola*

Scott Froehke  
*Montello*

Barb Kneer  
*Madison*

Tony Kubek  
*Appleton*

Tom Miller  
*Waupaca*

Bill Sievert  
*Dodgeville*

**Executive  
Director**

Todd Ambs  
*Madison*

Good morning. My name is Todd Ambs. I am the executive director of the River Alliance of Wisconsin. Formed in 1993, The River Alliance of Wisconsin is a statewide non-profit, non-partisan citizen advocacy organization. The organization's membership includes over 800 individuals, groups and businesses who are working together to protect and restore Wisconsin's rivers, one of the largest memberships of statewide river groups in the country.

I appreciate the opportunity to be here today to speak in support of Governor Thompson's proposal to create a rivers and streams protection program for Wisconsin. This proposal will enable the state to begin to develop a statewide rivers program that can follow in the great conservation tradition of Gaylord Nelson and Warren Knowles in that it is an important first step toward a comprehensive plan to protect Wisconsin's 40,000 miles of rivers and streams.

We are pleased to see this initiative in the Governor's Budget. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources also deserves credit for initially suggesting this program as part of their budget submission to the Governor. Today I want to encourage the Joint Finance Committee to support this request and build on it for the future of our rivers.

This proposal makes sense environmentally and economically. One of our organization's main missions is to aid in the development of local river and watershed groups. There are over 100 of these local groups in communities all over our state, and more are being created every week. Having folks at the local level invested in their river and watershed is the only truly effective way to protect our waterways. Working together, local communities, the university community and non-profit groups are poised to take on greater resource responsibilities and the rivers protection grants program sends the message that state government wants and needs their participation.

The real beauty of this work is that it is true hands-on conservation action. These local groups are made up of conservationists, business people, farmers, local government officials and just plain folks that want to do what they can to protect a resource that often flows right through their backyard.

This program also makes sense economically. The request itself includes \$400,000 in Fiscal Year 2000 and \$ 400,000 in Fiscal Year 2001 for this new rivers and streams protection grants fund. The purpose of the fund is to improve and protect the water quality in rivers and riverine ecosystems. The program would be similar to the popular and effective lakes programs, though this effort would focus on protecting Wisconsin rivers and streams.

The River Alliance works closely with these organizations to help them find the resources to protect their streams. They do a great job getting local businesses to donate products and services, use lots of volunteer know-how and elbow grease and do their best to tap into private funding sources. This budget request and anything else that you as a committee may choose to add to it, is money that will be leveraged, stretched and maximized by these organizations.

This idea is not new. Programs like this one are already underway in a number of states including Massachusetts, West Virginia and Oregon. This program can help Wisconsin to become a leader in the nation in efforts to involve people at the local level in collaborative work to protect one of our most valuable resources – our flowing waters.

The rivers and streams grants program is contained in the Wisconsin Waters Initiative portion of the agency request for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Governor's budget request does not include any funding for additional staff positions within the DNR for the rivers and streams program. I would like to urge the committee to consider adding funding for one staff position – the position of statewide rivers coordinator. We have some of the most beautiful and pristine rivers in the nation, yet the DNR does not have a single person working full-time on river issues. It is time to change that. Spending state dollars to aid local volunteer groups work on their rivers and watersheds is much more cost effective than dumping money into a new state bureaucracy. But we do need someone at DNR working full-time on ways to protect the 40,000 miles of rivers and streams in this state.

Let me also take a quick moment to speak in support of the state Stewardship Fund. The state Stewardship Fund was created in 1990 at an annual funding level of \$25 million. Governor Thompson has proposed renewing the program for another ten years at \$30 million per year --- a good start but this amount would give the Fund only 75% of the buying power it had in 1990. Many conservation groups, including the River Alliance, are advocating a figure of \$60 million per year, indexed to land prices so that it would keep pace with inflation over the next ten years. The state Stewardship Fund is a bonding program that makes up only 3% of the state's bonding debt. Therefore, any program expansion would not add any cost to the next two-year budget cycle.

On this day, as many of us are preparing to write large checks to the state and federal government, we as citizens are especially sensitive to the desire to see that hard earned money well spent. It is a pleasure to come before you today to urge your support for these programs that in my estimation are textbook examples of ways to efficiently use state financial resources to protect our precious natural resources.

Thank you.



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