

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

MOTION ON ASSEMBLY BILL 530

Moved by **Senator Kedzie** that the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources recommends concurrence of Assembly Bill 530

Relating to: suspending the Department of Natural Resources rule related to limits on bridges over wild rivers.

VOTE ON MOTION:

YES

NO

Signed:

Malp. Kedzie

Date:

2/16/04

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Relating to: suspending the Department of Natural Resources rule related to limits on bridges over wild rivers.

VOTE ON MOTION:

YES

NO

Signed: *A Stepp*

Date: *2-18-04*

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

MOTION ON ASSEMBLY BILL 530

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Relating to: suspending the Department of Natural Resources rule related to limits on bridges over wild rivers.

VOTE ON MOTION:

YES

NO

Signed: Robert W. Worch

Date: Feb 18, 2004

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Moved by **Senator Kedzie** that the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources recommends concurrence of Assembly Bill 530

Relating to: suspending the Department of Natural Resources rule related to limits on bridges over wild rivers.

VOTE ON MOTION:

YES

NO

Signed: *Jud A. Rossi*

Date: *2/17/04*

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

MOTION ON ASSEMBLY BILL 530

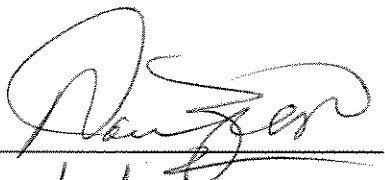
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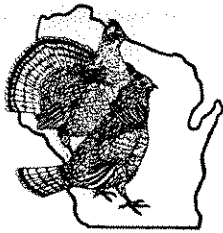
Relating to: suspending the Department of Natural Resources rule related to limits on bridges over wild rivers.

VOTE ON MOTION:

YES

NO

Signed: 
Date: 2/18/04



Wisconsin Wildlife Federation

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AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

January 10, 2004

To: Senator Neal Kedzie, Chair Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee; Senator Cathy Stepp, Senator Dave Zien, Senator Bob Wirsch and Senator Fred Risser

From: George Meyer, Executive Director, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation

Subject: Support for Bills Coming Before the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee on March 12, 2004

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation would like to indicate its position on the following bills that are scheduled to come before the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee on Thursday, February 12, 2004 and would like to be registered accordingly. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation is the state's largest conservation organization and is comprised of eighty-two hunting, fishing and trapping organization located throughout the State of Wisconsin.

1. AB 292---Authored by Representative Seratti and Senator Stepp---Possession, transportation, etc of a carcass from a CWD area. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation strongly supports this measure as a critical necessary step to prevent and/or slow the spread of CWD prions throughout the state's deer herd.
2. AB 345---Authored by Representative Miller and Senator Kedzie---Designation of the first weekend in March as Aldo Leopold weekend. Aldo Leopold is recognized nationally and internationally as a leading conservationist and natural resource philosopher. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation was one of the initial supporters of this concept to spread the writings of Leopold throughout the state.
3. AB 530---Authored by the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules---Suspending a DNR rule protecting Wisconsin's wild and scenic rivers. Initially the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation opposed this bill. It was amended to address the concerns raised by conservation and environmental representatives and the WWF does not oppose the bill in its current version.
4. SB 407---Authored by senator Kedzie and Representative Johnsrud---Authorizing DNR to waive licensing and other deer hunting requirements in a CWD zone. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation Board of Directors has not had an opportunity to meet and discuss this bill but will be doing so this weekend. However, this type of bill giving reasonable additional regulatory tools to DNR to combat CWD has traditionally been well supported by the Federation.



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TO: The members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

FROM: Richard Bogovich, Policy Project Manager

DATE: February 12, 2004

RE: Opposition to Assembly Bill 530, relating to the suspension of the DNR rule limiting bridges over state-designated wild rivers

The River Alliance of Wisconsin opposes Assembly Bill 530 because it would represent the first change in the "wild rivers" statute since its creation almost 40 years ago, and that first change, intentional or not, would send the wrong signal. After all, the explicit legislative intent in section 30.26 of the Statutes declared that "it is in the interest of this state to preserve some rivers in a free flowing condition and to protect them from development." In fact, Wisconsin was the first state to enact a "wild rivers" designation.

The River Alliance is a nonprofit, nonpartisan group of citizens, organizations, and businesses dedicated to advocating for the protection, enhancement, and restoration of the 44,000 to 50,000 miles of rivers and streams in our state. Anglers, hunters, paddlers, landowners and business people from across the state founded the River Alliance in 1993 to build an informed and active constituency for Wisconsin's rivers. Our current statewide network of river advocates includes more than 1,800 individual and business members and more than 45 organizations. We also have a number of members in Illinois, which reflects the fact that Wisconsin offers rustic and sometimes rugged recreational opportunities that just aren't available to our south.

The River Alliance of Wisconsin worked with the with the Department of Natural Resources last fall to develop alternate crossings for the old railroad bridge over the Pine River that's being proposed for the ATV crossing. That alternative would put motorized vehicles, including ATVs, over two crossings instead of three, thus mitigating the effect of motor vehicles on the wild river "experience" for river users. AB 530 would appear to preclude the development of such reasonable alternatives. It also represents the accommodation of one group of outdoor enthusiasts to the detriment of the fastest-growing group. According to a recent USDA Forest Service survey, it is kayaking that has grown

faster than all other forms of outdoor recreation, up 206% since the mid-1990s. What's more, we know that anglers who are familiar with the Pine River do not favor this legislation.

The Pine, Popple and Pike are some of the crown jewels among our state's many rivers. But since the Wild and Scenic Rivers law came to be, just three of these Wisconsin's 12,600 watercourses were given special status because the state recognized their rarity and value. Given that tourism, of all kinds, is more important to the economy of northern Wisconsin than ever before, protecting these relatively unique waters is all the more critical.

We appreciate the need for the people of Florence County to have a diversified recreation economy—one that accommodates both non-motorized and motorized recreation. But the county is very unique in having the state's only Wild Rivers. We ask committee members to keep in mind that the Pine, Popple and Pike constitute a little over 100 miles of the 40,000 miles of rivers and streams in Wisconsin. There are so few rivers like them in our state, and therefore there should be no retreat from the policies that protect them.

On the other hand, there is an ever-expanding list of ATV and snowmobile trails – as well there should be. But the expansion of that form of recreation should not be at the expense of other forms of recreation that regard a wild river experience as truly unique – unique only to the Pine and two other rivers in the state.

Perhaps this puts undue pressure on those rivers and the people in northeastern Wisconsin to have to live with this rare status. If so, the River Alliance welcomes working with legislators and river advocates around the state to give more rivers the "wild river" status.