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(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ...  
PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2009-10

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Transportation, Tourism,  
Forestry, and Natural Resources (SC-TTFNR)

**COMMITTEE NOTICES ...**

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

**INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL**

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)  
(**ab** = Assembly Bill)                      (**ar** = Assembly Resolution)                      (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)  
(**sb** = Senate Bill)                              (**sr** = Senate Resolution)                              (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

Date?

## **Overwhelming Public Support for DNR Secretary Appointment Bill (AB 138/SB 113):**

**Organizations Supporting Bill at Assembly Hearing:** Wisconsin Conservation Congress, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, Northeastern Wisconsin Great Lakes Sport Fishermen, Wisconsin Woodland Owners, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, Wisconsin Federation of Great Lakes Sportfishing Clubs, Sheboygan County Conservation Association, Tri-County Sportswomen, Johnsonville Rod and Gun Club, Eau Claire County Rod and Gun Club, Aldo Leopold Foundation, The Wildlife Society—Wisconsin Chapter, Wisconsin Science Professionals, Friends of the Lower Wisconsin River, Association of Retired Conservationists, WSEU—Local 1215 (Conservation Wardens), North American Lake Management Society, Midwest Environmental Advocates, Chippewa Valley Outdoor Resource Alliance, Wisconsin Association of Field Trial Clubs, RAWSEP, Sierra Club, Green Bay Area Great Lakes Sports Fishermen, Sauk County Sportsmens Alliance, Manitowoc County Fish and Game Pecatonica River Coonhunters, American Federation of Teachers---Wisconsin Taylor County Sportsmens Club, Madison Audubon Society, Clean Wisconsin Wisconsin Wetlands Association, Wisconsin Hunters Education Instructors Association Wisconsin Trappers Association. Kendall Lake Association, Citizen Utility Board River Alliance of Wisconsin, AFSCME Council 24, Argyle Rod and Gun Club Sugar River Pheasants Forever, Rock River Coalition, Triangle Sportsmens Club Pewaukee Lake Sportsmen, Twin City Rod and Gun Club, Milwaukee Casting Club Wisconsin Association of Sporting Dog Clubs, Wisconsin Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign, Sierra Club---John Muir Chapter, Fox Valley Sierra Club, League of Women Voters, Friends of Dane County Parks, Polk County Sportsmen, Wisconsin Sporting Dogs Association, Watertown Conservation Club, Wisconsin Muzzleloading Association, Rock River Buckskinners, Ft. Atkinson Wisconsin Conservation Club, Sheboygan Sport Fishermen, Crawford Stewardship, Badger Creek Watershed, Wisconsin Council of Sport Fishing Organizations, Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, Wisconsin Sharptailed Grouse Society, Wisconsin Bow Hunters, Wisconsin Federation of Whitetail Unlimited, West Waubesa Preservation Coalition, Trout Unlimited, Wisconsin Deerhunters Inc., Johnsonville Rod and Gun Club, Waukesha County Conservation Alliance, Izaak Walton League, Wings Over Wisconsin. Outagamie Conservation Club, Dodge County Sporting Alliance, Fountain City Rod and Gun Club, Buffalo County Sportsmen's Alliance Dane County Conservation League, American Turkey Hunting with Dogs Association.

**Organizations Supporting Bill at Senate Hearing:** Musky Clubs Alliance of Wisconsin, La Crosse County Conservation Alliance, Walleyes For Tomorrow, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, North American Lake Management Society, Wisconsin Association of Field Trial Clubs, WSEU-Local 1215, Wisconsin Chapter of the Wildlife Society, Wisconsin Sharp-Tailed Grouse Society, Chippewa Valley Outdoor Resource Alliance, Wisconsin Conservation Congress, Dane County Conservation League, Izaak Walton League, Western Dane County Coalition for Smart Growth and Environment, Shadows on the Wolf, Waukesha County Conservation Alliance, Wisconsin Waterfowl

Association, Manitowoc County Fish and Game, Madison Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Wisconsin Association of Lakes, Wisconsin Audubon Council, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, Wisconsin Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign, Western Dane Coalition, Wisconsin Association of Sporting Dog Clubs, Clean Wisconsin, Rock River Coalition, Town and Country RC and D, Wisconsin Science Professionals, Wisconsin Woodland Owners, River Alliance of Wisconsin, Winnebago Conservation Club, Citizens Utility Board, Friends of the Black River, Kimball Lake Association, Wisconsin Council of Sport Fishing Clubs, AFT-Wisconsin, Midwest Environmental Advocates, Wisconsin Trappers Association, Sierra Club, Dodge County Sporting and Conservation Alliance, Winnebagoland Conservation Alliance, Coulee Region Trout Unlimited, Wisconsin Muzzleloading Association, Triangle Sportsman Club, Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, Outagamie Conservation Club, Association of Retired Conservationists, Trout Unlimited.

**Affiliate Clubs of Wisconsin Wildlife Federation Supporting Bill:** Abbotsford Sportsmen's Club, Almond Rod and Gun Club, American Wild Turkey Hunting Dog Association, Ashland Bayfield County Sportsmen, Association of Conservation Clubs, of Trempealeau, Augusta Area Sportsmans Club, Badger Dachshund Club Inc., Badger Fishermen's League, Bangor Rod and Gun Club, Beaver Dam Conservationists Inc., Big 4+ Sportman Club, Boscobel Sportsmens Club, Brice Prairie Conservation Association, Brown County Conservation Alliance, Brule River Sportsmens Club, Butte Des Morts Conservation Club, Carter Creek Sportsmen's Club, Central Wisconsin Gun Collectors Association, Inc., Central Wisconsin Sportsmen's Club, Central Wisconsin Shoot to Retrieve, Challenge the Outdoors Inc., Chippewa Valley Outdoor Resource Alliance, Columbia County Sporting Alliance, Columbus Sportsman's Association Inc., Crystal Lake Sportsmens Club Inc, Dane County Conservation League, Daniel Boone Conservation League Inc., De Pere Sportsman's Club, Dodge County Sporting and Conservation Alliance, Door County Rod and Gun Club Inc., Dousman Gun Club, Dunn County Fish and Game, Eau Claire Rod and Gun Club, Farmers and Sportsmen's Club, Field and Stream Sportsmens Club, Fin and Feather Sportsmans Club, Forest County Association of Lakes Inc., Fort Atkinson Wisconservation Club, Friends of MacKenzie Environmental Education Center, Friends of the Brule River and Forest, Green Bay Area Great Lakes Sport Fishermen, Globe Conservation Club, Great Lakes Sport Fishermen—Ozaukee Chapter, Green Bay Duck Hunters Association, Grellton Conservation Club, Hayward Rod and Gun Club, Jefferson Sportsmen's Club, Koenig's Conservation Club, Lake Poygan Sportsmen's Club, Lakeshore Fishing Club, Lakeview Rod and Gun Club, Lincoln County Sports Club, Little Wolf River Houndsmens Club, Manitowoc County Fish and Game Protective Association, Manitowoc County Coon Hunters, Milwaukee Police Officers Conservation and Sportsman Club, Milwaukee Casting Club, Mosinee Sportsmens Alliance, Nekoosa Conservation League, Northeastern Wisconsin Great Lakes Sport Fishermen, Oakland Conservation Club, Oconomowoc Sportsman's Club, Oconto County Sportsman's Alliance, Osseo Rod and Gun Club, Outagamie Conservation Club, Pewaukee Lake Sportsman's Club, Polk County Sportsmens Club, Prairie Du Chien Rod and Gun Club, Racine County Line Rifle Club Inc., Rio Conservation Club, River Valley Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, South Milwaukee 1400 Fishing and Hunting Club, Sauk Trail Conservation Club, Shadows on

the Wolf Inc., Sheboygan County Conservation Association, Shoto Conservation Club, Slinger Sportsman Club, Smerke's Sportsmen's Club, Southern Clark County Sportsman's Club, Sparta Rod and Gun Club, Stan Plis Sportsmans League, Star Prairie Fish and Game Association, Sturgeon for Tomorrow North Chapter, Sugar River Coon Hunters, Suscha-Fale Sportsmen's Club, Trempealeau Sportsman's Club, Tri-County Sportswomen's Club, Triangle Sportsmens Club, Trout Unlimited-Aldo Leopold Chapter, Trout Unlimited Green Bay Chapter, Twin City Rod and Gun Club, Walleyes for Tomorrow Inc., Watertown Archery Club, Watertown, Watertown Conservation Club, Waukesha County Conservation Alliance, Wisconsin Association of Field Trial Clubs, Wisconsin Association of Beagle Clubs, Wisconsin Bow Hunters Association, Wisconsin Bowfishing Association, Wisconsin Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, Wisconsin Coon Hunters Association, Wisconsin Council of Sportfishing Organizations, Wisconsin Deer Hunters Association, Wisconsin Federation of Great Lake Sport Fishing Clubs, Wisconsin House Outdoorsmen Club, Wisconsin Hunter Education Instructors Association, Wisconsin Muzzleloading Association, Wisconsin Sharp-Tailed Grouse Society, Wisconsin Taxidermist Association, Wisconsin Trappers Association, Wisconsin Trapshooters Association, Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, Wild Ones Natural Landscapers LTD, Wilderness Sportsmen's Club, Wildlife Society Student Chapter-UWSP, Wildlife Society Wisconsin Chapter, Willow Aces, Wilton Rod and Gun Club, Wings Over Wisconsin, Winnebago Conservation Club, Winnebago Land Conservation Alliance, Wisconsin Waterfowl Association.

**2009-2010 Conservation Priority Coalition Organizations Supporting the Bill:** The Aldo Leopold Foundation, Alliance for Sustainability, Artha Sustainable Living Center LLC, Apollo Alliance of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Association of Retired Conservationists, Baird Creek Preservation Foundation, Bayfield Regional Conservancy, Bluebird Restoration Association, Brown County Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, Brown County Conservation Alliance, Centerville Cares, Citizen Action of Wisconsin, Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger, Citizens for a Scenic Wisconsin, Citizens Utility Board, Clean Water Action Council of NE Wisconsin Inc, Clean Wisconsin, Columbia County Land and Water Conservation Department, Concerned Citizens of Newport, Crawford Stewardship Project, Dane County Conservation League, Door County Environmental Council, ECOS Fox Valley, Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association Inc., Friends of Lincoln-Osceola-Garfield Conservancy, Friends of the Mukwonago River, Friends of Tomorrow/Waupaca River, Grassroots of Waukesha County, Greendale Environmental Group, Highway J Citizens Group UA, Hoy Audubon Society, Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership Inc., League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, Madison Audubon Society, Wisconsin Audubon Council, Midwest Environmental Advocates Inc., Milwaukee County Conservation Coalition, Milwaukee Riverkeeper, Northeast Land Trust Inc., Park Watch of Fond Du Lac, Phantom Lakes Management District, Physicians for Social Responsibility-Wisconsin, Preserve Our Parks, Price County Waterways Association, Racine Dominican Ec0-Justice Center, RENEW Wisconsin, Rock River Coalition, Sauk County Land Conservation Department, Sheboygan Area Great Lakes Sport Fishermen, Sheboygan County Conservation Association, Sierra Club John-Muir Chapter, Sixteenth Street Community Health Center, Southeast Wisconsin Trout Unlimited, Sustain Central Wisconsin, Sustainable Eau Claire, the Kenosha/Racine land

Trust Inc., The Park People of Milwaukee County, the Wildlife Society-Wisconsin Chapter, Town and Country Resource Conservation and Development, Trout Unlimited-Wisconsin State Council, Valley Stewardship Network, Waukesha County Environmental Action League, Wild Ones Natural Landscapers Ltd., Wisconsin Association of Lakes, Wisconsin Association of Land Conservation Employees, Wisconsin Council of Sportfishing Organizations, Wisconsin Deer Hunters Association, Wisconsin Environment, Wisconsin Farmers Union, Wisconsin Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign, Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute, Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice, Wisconsin Trappers Association Inc., Wisconsin Wetlands Association, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation

Date ?

Dear Legislator,

I will not be able to testify at the August 13 hearing in support of SB 113, the bill to restore an Independent DNR Secretary. Please accept my letter of support for this proposed legislation.

I believe that since the Department of Natural Resources Secretary became a political appointee of the Governor the decision-making process and integrity of the Department have suffered. As a result the natural resources of Wisconsin have also suffered. Part of the problem is the recent "revolving door" succession of WDNR Secretaries, many of whom have had little or no natural resources experience. We need more consistent, long range, science based policy decision-making for the good of the State.

Politics should not play such a direct role in the way we protect Wisconsin's natural resources.

I urge you to pass the bill to restore the Independent DNR Secretary. Please support SB 113.

Sincerely,

Guy Hansen  
8437 Harshaw Rd.  
Harshaw, WI 54529-9623



12.34

SB 113  
file

Date?

Dear Legislator,

I live in the Minocqua-Woodruff area. We are serviced by the Lakeland Times News. They have an extremely anti-bias against the DNR. I would call it an extreme campaign to disrail zoning and environmental protections.

To counter this, we need a very profession and above reproach secretary for the DNR. No political appointment to attach.

Thank you for your time.

Yours,

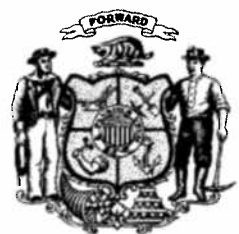
Candaace Sorensen

Candace Sorensen  
9789 White Pine Lane  
Woodruff, WI 54568





# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Date ?

Dear Legislator,

I urge you to support SB 113, a bill that would reestablish an independent DNR Secretary for the state of Wisconsin. This is necessary to elevate the integrity of natural resource decision-making, which is presently compromised by the political whims of the day, to the detriment of long-term ecosystem health and human well-being.

Establishing strong, consistent, natural resource policy guided by the best available scientific information and recommendations is absolutely vital in the context of the mounting pressures on our natural systems, our life support systems, from anthropogenic forces, a phenomenon that must be intelligently addressed if we seek to ensure, for instance, that Wisconsin's landscape is worth inhabiting by future generations of people.

An independent DNR Secretary for the state of Wisconsin would help achieve this objective by playing a pivotal role in the broader effort to balance competing environmental, social justice, and development interests.

Personally, I find many of the development decisions made over the past several decades in Southeast Wisconsin, like those throughout the greater continental United States, troubling. It is apparent that much of the decision making, driven by a "growth-oriented" economic ideology, has been given priority over a strategic, science-based vision that embraces the precautionary principal, acknowledges potential ecosystem limitations, champions a long-term perspective, and affirms the first principal of ecology: that everything is interconnected.

Please consider this written letter in place of my testimony before the Senate Natural Resources Committee in support of SB 113, the bill to restore an Independent DNR Secretary for the state of Wisconsin.

Thank you for your kind attention.

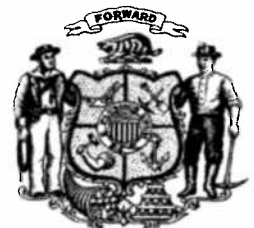
Sincerely,

Stephen Koermer  
Lake Geneva, WI USA

Stephen Koermer  
W3676 Maple Ln  
Lake Geneva, WI 53147



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Date ?

Dear Legislator,

I have been heavily involved with conservation and environmental issues for decades. I was a co-producer for the public television program, Outdoor Wisconsin, for twenty years, and the founding director for two wildlife organizations licensed by both the federal and state governments.

I think it is imperative that the position of DNR secretary not be a politically motivated seat, but one impartially based on science and what is best for Wisconsin's woods and waters.

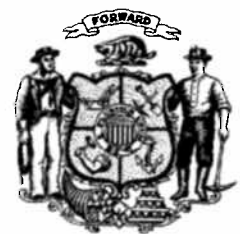
I urge you to pass a bill to restore the Independent DNR Secretary and bring integrity back to natural resource decision-making. Please support SB 113.

Sincerely,

Nancy Frank  
3602 1450th Ave  
Ridgeland, WI 54763



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Dear Members of the Senate Natural Resources Committee,

Date?

I am writing in support of SB 113, the bill to restore an independent DNR Secretary.

I worked for the Department of Natural Resources for 16 years, with agency Secretaries who were both Board-appointed and Governor-appointed. There was a difference. Board-appointed Secretaries tended to have significantly more experience in, and knowledge of, DNR issues than did Governor-appointed Secretaries, particularly in recent years.

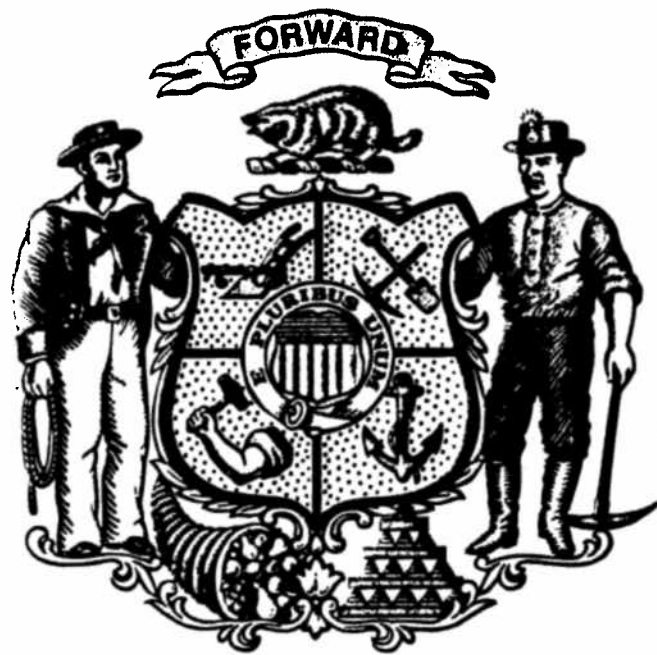
That depth of knowledge is critical. DNR issues are numerous and complex, and many decisions affect the long term health of the state's resources for decades to come. It takes years for even a very smart, "quick study" person to absorb the issues. And Governor-appointed Secretaries seemed to stay for shorter periods of time than Board-appointed agency heads. The lack of a fully prepared and knowledgeable DNR Secretary could result in poor natural resource decisions and more political interference in these decisions.

DNR Board members tend to have a strong background in DNR issues, and would be more likely to appoint a Secretary who has a good understanding of natural resource issues. In addition, the Board could provide a buffer between the Governor and the Department, hopefully resulting in less political manipulation of DNR decisions.

Please support SB 113.

Sincerely,

Susan Felker-Donsing  
1105 Waban Hill  
Madison, WI 53711



Date?

28 82

Dear Legislator,

Because I cannot be in Madison today to testify before the Senate Natural Resources Committee in support of SB 113, the bill to restore an Independent DNR Secretary, I hope you will consider this written letter in place of my testimony.

The integrity of natural resource decision-making cannot be sacrificed because of political concerns.

Politics plays a role in nearly everything these days. But it should not-must not-play a role in the way we protect Wisconsin's natural resources. Let science determine which wetlands to protect, which lakes to stock, and how to manage deer herds. Politics has no place in my deer stand or at my favorite fishing hole.

Please pass a bill to restore the Independent DNR Secretary and bring integrity back to natural resource decision-making. Please support SB 113.

Sincerely,

Nancy Davlantes  
5983 Sugarbush Lane  
Greendale, WI 53129





Date?

26 76

Dear Legislator,

I was born near Madison in 1930 and love Wisconsin dearly. It is important to me that we protect the most precious commodity we possess, our natural resources, so that all of our state's residents can enjoy our natural bounties.

I would like to relay my deepest support support for SB 113 being presented by the Senate Natural Resources Committee and request that like you to accept my written testimony.

We must maintain the independent integrity of the Department of Natural Resources by appointing a knowledgeable Secretary who will look out for the best long-term interests of everyone in our beautiful state and not base policies on some short-term perceived political interests.

I thank you for your wisdom in supporting SB 113.

Sincerely,

Virginia Farwell Zwickey  
613 Anthony Lane  
Madison, WI 53711-1501 608.231.1632



Date ?

32 96

Dear Legislator,

I am writing in support of SB 113, the bill to restore an Independent DNR Secretary. I hope you will consider this written letter in place of my testimony.

I have serious concerns regarding the integrity of DNR's decisions. Here is why. Individuals from Vernon County and across the state in May 2009, presented to DATCP our outrage that communities had no local control over the siting of CAFO's in Wisconsin. As long as an application was complete, it would be approved by the DNR and the State, and there is nothing a town, city or county can do about it. It doesn't matter if there are serious environmental concerns due to unique geological characteristics in our area. It doesn't matter if the proposed site is ¼ mile from the second largest city in the county and will require 2 high capacity wells pulling from the same aquifer as the city of Westby. It doesn't matter if 2,000 people (farmers and non-farmers) signed a petition in opposition because of their serious health and safety concerns. The State has determined that it "knows best" in all cases in the siting of CAFO's. The state further determined that it doesn't matter where you are located in the state or what unique geological features your community has, the application is the same. As long as "i's are dotted and "t's" are crossed, it gets a stamp of approval from the DNR and DATCP. This has led many to wonder how these agencies could arrive at the current siting process given the serious environmental concerns.

It has now come to light that the DNR, DATCP and the Dairy Business Association (DBA) have signed a "Memorandum of Understanding" to work together on streamlining the highly controversial application and permitting processes of CAFO's in Wisconsin. The DBA is a large scale farming industry lobbyist group. You need only to go to their website to see they have a serious legislative agenda ([www.widba.com](http://www.widba.com)). It's not difficult to connect the dots to understand what they are lobbying for; Six of the nine board of directors own CAFO'S, including Jim Ostrem, owner and recent permit recipient for the largest dairy CAFO in the state. Executive Director, Laurie Fischer, has stated many times that people who oppose CAFO's "just need to be better educated" and spends much of her time espousing the benefits of CAFO's. This is a political group, and I question the ethics and legality of this union.

The DNR and DATCP appear to be only concerned about the rights of large dairy operators on this issue and apparently think it is appropriate to allow politics to influence their decision making. They may say they are keeping everyone's interests in mind, but actions speak much louder than words. If it is appropriate for these agencies to include the DBA in a formal agreement to review and enhance the application process for CAFO's, including WPDES applications, why don't they also include groups representing small and organic farmers like Farmers Union. Or why don't they include concerned citizen groups, like Alliance Concerned for Environmental Safety (ACES)? Those of us who have opposed the 3,200 cow Petry CAFO in Vernon County understand the DBA is busy painting us as "uneducated" on environmental issues and "anti-agriculture". It is particularly alarming they essentially have an office at the DNR while they are doing it.

The DNR and DATCP staffs are state government employees. That means that your and my tax money is paying their salaries. If you were paying someone to look out for your best interests, would you say they were doing a good job or a poor job if they had an industry lobbyist group help them create an application process that would benefit specific constituents in that industry and could hurt you? I know my answer.

I've never been active in governmental issues, other than voting. This issue has opened my eyes as well as the eyes of the people in my community. Mainstream citizens have become activated and all of their opened eyes will be focused on what State employees are doing. This bill needs to be passed to ensure the DNR is doing what it is intended to do, be caretakers of our environment, not caretakers of political interest groups.

Sincerely,

Ryan Call  
E7811 E Smith Rd  
Westby, WI 54667  
(608)634-4261



Dear Legislator,

I live in the Minocqua-Woodruff area. We are serviced by the Lakeland Times News. They have an extremely anti-bias against the DNR. I would call it an extreme campaign to disrail zoning and environmental protections.

To counter this, we need a very profession and above reproach secretary for the DNR. No political appointment to attach.

Thank you for your time.

Yours,

Candaace Sorensen

Candace Sorensen  
9789 White Pine Lane  
Woodruff, WI 54568

SB 113  
folder  
date ?



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

My name is Dr. Rebecca Haefner. I am an anesthesiologist from Wauwatosa WI. I grew up on a small family farm in Missouri, and was educated at the University of Missouri in Columbia.

As an undergrad, before the thought of going to medical school crossed my mind, I worked part-time as a research assistant at the Missouri Department of Conservation. This led to a Masters Degree in Forestry, Fisheries, and Wildlife. Altogether, I spent 12 years in the conservation profession, and worked not only at the Missouri Department of Conservation, but also, for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, and The Nature Conservancy. I have a deep appreciation of the natural world and experience with the business of conservation, especially the way it is practiced at the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Wisconsin has a very fine program...but, of all the conservation programs in the nation, the *Missouri Department of Conservation* is considered to be THE benchmark. And the *Missouri Conservation Model* is consistently rated at or near the top by the Wildlife Management Institute and other leading non-governmental conservation organizations.

Why? For a number of reasons:

First of all, Missouri got started early at maneuvering away from the influence of partisan politics. The Missouri Department of Conservation was incorporated into the State Constitution by a vote of the people in 1936. This gave them constitutional independence.

Then, the governing body for the Department of Conservation was set-up as a four-member bi-partisan board called the *Conservation Commission*: (which would be equivalent to the *Wisconsin Natural Resources Board*.) The Commission was granted full rule-making authority, and also had earmarked revenues, which they alone controlled.

**In addition, authority to select and hire the Department of Conservation Director (...or 'Secretary' ) was vested in this Commission.** And so it continues to this day. Members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

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With this solid base, the Commission set out to employ professionally-trained staff, and establish sound, science-based programs to restore and manage the forest, fish and wildlife resources of the state. Results in the field were successful, and public support flourished -- so much so, that in 1976, the citizens of Missouri once again amended the state Constitution to create a 1/8 of 1% sales tax dedicated/earmarked to the Department of Conservation.

Most notably, in its nearly 75-year history, the Missouri Department of Conservation has had only **SEVEN** Directors. This is in stark contrast to the Wisconsin DNR which has had **FOUR different Secretaries in the past EIGHT years alone.**

**My main point is that you cannot conduct successful conservation work in the short span of election cycles.**

Sound resource management is done in 25, 50, and 100 year time horizons, and requires continuity of commitment to programs over time.

The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board **and a Secretary selected by the Board (as it was in the past)**, has a proven record of success here in Wisconsin. One only needs to inspect the records of former DNR Secretaries: Les Voight, Buz Besadny, and George Meyer, to realize how important this stability is to the management of our natural resources in Wisconsin.

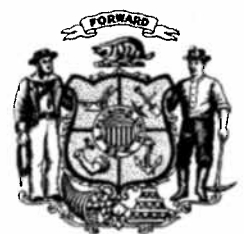
Now that I live, work, and have fallen in love with the state of Wisconsin, I wanted to voice my opinion to the Committee about Senate Bill 113: I think it's very important for sound management of the incredible natural resources of this state, and hence for **ALL** the people of this state, to Restore the Independence of the DNR Secretary.

Thank you very much for allowing me to provide this testimony.

Rebecca Haefner, M.D.  
1907 Ludington Ave.  
Wauwatosa, WI 53226  
414-771-6639



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Date?

Thank you Chairman Holperin and members of the Committee on Transportation, Tourism, Forestry and Natural Resources for giving me this opportunity to speak this morning. My name is Don Hammes and I'm speaking this morning in support of SB113 on behalf of the Dane County Conservation League...the oldest conservation organization in the state

This is rather blunt, but I would like to remind Committee members that neither the current Secretary nor the last DNR Secretary are or were qualified for the job. Mr. Hassett worked as an attorney at a Madison law firm and had no education or background in natural resource management and Mr. Frank, who is also an attorney, was formerly Secretary of the Dept. of Corrections with no education or background in natural resource management. These two men are both fine gentlemen, but you know it, and everyone here knows it, they were or are not qualified for the job.

Let me ask you all something. If you needed heart surgery and you had a choice of who was going to perform the surgery would you chose an attorney with 10 years of experience or would you choose a UW graduate with a major in ~~natural resource management~~ and 10 years of field experience?

*Surgery*

If you needed someone to supervise the construction of your new home, would you hire an attorney with 10 years of experience or would you hire someone with an educational background in architecture or construction and 10 years of experience?

The answers to these two questions are easy, but why then does the Governor and the Senate accept the appointment of a DNR Secretary that is not qualified for the job? A board appointed Secretary would ensure that the person hired to perform the job would be qualified to perform the job. That is what DNR employees deserve, that is what State Legislators should expect and that is what the people of Wisconsin would most certainly like.

The big question here today is, despite overwhelming bi-partisan support in both houses of the Legislature, and thousands of people across the state in support of a board appointed Secretary why did Governor Doyle change his mind about the process? At one time he openly supported a board appointed Secretary. Where he needs an attorney with 10 years of experience, and a license to practice law in the State of Wisconsin, is in his office of Legal Counsel. And, why did the Wisconsin State Journal change their mind? At one time they supported a board appointed Secretary. Doesn't this sound like money and politics are playing a role in these flip-flops?

One thing is for certain on this question. The people of Wisconsin want to take the politics out of the DNR Secretary selection process. A board appointed Secretary is the best way to make sure this happens.

Don Hammes  
3507 Valley Ridge Road  
Middleton, WI



**Wisconsin Conservation Warden Local 1215 - Outline** regarding the legislation on changing the Appointment of the Secretary of the DNR by the Governor to the Natural Resource Board:

Listeners: Legislators, citizens and resource user groups

Action: Pass the bill to have the Secretary of the DNR appointed by the NRB.

SB 113  
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date ?

Introduction: I am Susan Miller and I have been working as a conservation warden for almost 25 years. I come to you from Hayward, Wisconsin. I am the president of Wisconsin Conservation Warden Local 1215, a statewide local of conservation wardens stationed in communities throughout Wisconsin.

Why should you pass this bill?

It is in everyone's best interest to have protection of Wisconsin's natural resources.

**The current practice does not provide the best candidate.** In the past, the Natural Resource Board would appoint Secretaries that are in-tune with the user groups & the citizen's needs, with regard to Wisconsin's Natural Resources. They had experience & knowledge of conservation issues. The Governor's appointments have lacked experience in resource management issues. They have short term expectations in these positions. They lack the passion & commitment to the mission of the Department. They lack a basic - understanding - of how to be a good steward of Natural Resources.

The current practice has become disruptive to the agency. It is not only the DNR Secretary that comes with these appointments. The Department heads - are in affect - appointed with each new Secretary - everyone above the civil servant positions.

The "revolving door" with so many positions has become not only disruptive, but expensive to the citizens & the user groups. The current practice is not cost effective. Every time there are new appointments, there is an education process that must take place before any - real - work can be done. Employees are continually - covering old ground bringing new Department heads up to speed.

The current process has eroded morale within the agency. Issues need to be resolved, but the employees have difficulty with resolution. Department heads change regularly & we again are forced to repeatedly cover old ground without timely resolution to basic issues. This also results in low productivity - of not only the new managers, but the general employee.

Conservation wardens are one of the most recognized faces of this agency. We are on the front lines within all the communities. We have always had highly educated, dedicated and conscientious people working for this agency. We have historically hired and retained extremely qualified people as conservation wardens. We have been the envy of our surrounding States with the quality & the loyalty of our officers. I have never observed moral as low or prevalent as it is today.

In the past six to ten years we have had major issues with recruitment and retention. In the past we obtained exceptional candidates through mentoring by current Conservation wardens. Many current Conservation wardens have expressed their disinterest in mentoring or encouraging good candidates to come work for our agency. They have indicated that this is no longer the agency they came to work for and feel ethically bound to inform potential candidates of their dissatisfaction.

One of the most prominent complaints is the lack of two way communication. Direction is from the top down and open communication is often discouraged. Officer discretion is not honored and there are many examples of wardens being ordered to perform acts that are contrary to their conscience.

The current practice in appointing the Secretary & Department heads - has a direct negative impact on Wisconsin's citizens & Natural Resource user groups. Their needs and expectations have not been fulfilled - and their costs of doing business have un-necessarily increased. The importance of stability - & - consistent decision making has a profound affect on all of Wisconsin's citizens.

Again, I beg you to pass this bill!





**John Muir Chapter**

Date ?

Sierra Club - John Muir Chapter  
222 South Hamilton Street, Suite 1, Madison, Wisconsin 53703-3201  
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**Support SB 113, Restoring Independence to the office of DNR Secretary**  
Before the Senate Committee on Transportation, Tourism, Forestry, and Natural Resources  
Jim Connors, Volunteer Lobbyist, Sierra Club- John Muir Chapter

Thank you for holding a public hearing on this important bill, and for accepting our statement on this key conservation issue. Sierra Club- John Muir Chapter's 15,000 members strongly support SB 113, a bill which will restore continuity, integrity and independence to the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Sierra Club members recall the days when we had an Independent DNR Secretary. Since 1927 when Aldo Leopold recommended citizen control over the state's natural resources, the chief executive of the Department of Conservation (later the DNR) was chosen by a citizen policy-making board. For decades Wisconsin was nationally recognized as a model of clean, credible government as a result of our state's professional conservation programs and strong environmental policies. Credit for this professionalism is attributed to the insulation from flux in the political arena afforded by the citizen board. In the almost 40-year history of the DNR, there were only four secretaries.

In 1995, Governor Tommy Thompson made the DNR Secretary a cabinet position subject to hiring and firing by the governor. This change politicized the formerly independent DNR, frequently subjecting science and environmental protection to the whims of partisan politics. Since 1995, turnover in this position has increased and the public perception of the agency has suffered. There is also public perception that decisions of the Department of Natural Resources have been the product of political pressures, rather than an assessment of what is best for natural resources.

Restoring the power to hire and fire the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources to the seven citizen Natural Resources Board is a priority to our Sierra Club members, who want the confidence of knowing that protecting our water, land and air is not subject to the corrupting force of campaign contributions.

Thank you for considering this important legislation. We urge you to pass SB 113 this year. Restoring independence and trust to the DNR Secretary is common sense policy that a vast majority of Wisconsinites support.







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Date?

## Wisconsin Wetlands Association's Statement Regarding SB 113

Wisconsin Wetlands Association supports passage of SB 113. It is our strong opinion that the natural resources of the state should be managed, to the maximum extent possible, independent of political interference. The legislature and Governor have a critical role to play through oversight of rule-making and the state budget, but the day-to-day implementation of natural resource laws and programs requires the best professional judgment of staff trained in the biological sciences.

The implementation and enforcement of wetland laws provides a striking example of why best professional judgment must be allowed the final say in natural resources decision-making. Wetlands are privately owned but publicly protected. Identifying wetland boundaries and ecological values (e.g., functions) requires professional expertise. State and federal laws require protection of both the extent and the functions of wetlands. Rendering decisions based on anything other than what the law says must be protected, and what the science says is there to be protected, exposes the state to liability and threatens the integrity of our ecological systems.

While we make no claims or judgments against the current administration, we do believe that the current system of governance heightens the interest and influence of the Executive Branch on natural resources decision-making outcomes. More importantly, the potential for abuse is high and Executive Branch involvement in day-to-day decision making is likely to change erratically in scale and scope with any given administration.

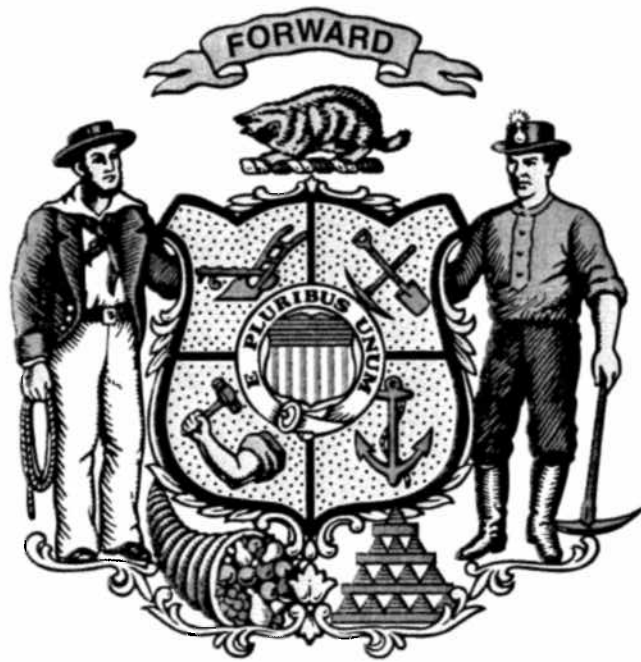
Because no Department of Natural Resources Secretary could possibly be an expert in the technical aspects of the Department's operations, what's needed most is a system where the Secretary relies first and foremost on the input and expertise of the natural resources professionals that serve the agency across the state. We believe this type of system is best supported when the agency is under the leadership of a Natural Resources Board appointed Secretary.

Our lands, waters and wetlands, are fixed and finite resources. Your support of SB 113 will help to ensure Wisconsin's natural resources are managed consistently, and well, through time.

For more information contact: Becky Abel, Executive Director, 608-250-9971 / [becky.abel@wisconsinwetlands.org](mailto:becky.abel@wisconsinwetlands.org)

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*Wisconsin Wetlands Association's (WWA) is dedicated to the protection, restoration and enjoyment of wetlands and associated ecosystems through science-based programs, education and advocacy. WWA is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization.*





# La Crosse County Conservation Alliance

P.O. Box 933 La Crosse, WI 54602-0933



## POSITION STATEMENT LA CROSSE COUNTY CONSERVATION ALLIANCE SUPPORT FOR A DNR BOARD APPOINTED SECRETARY

SB 113  
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The La Crosse County Conservation Alliance is strongly committed to restoring the authority of the Natural Resources Board to appoint the Department of Natural Resources' Secretary for the long-term benefit of Wisconsin's natural resources.

Partisan politics and the state's trust responsibility for natural resources do not mix well. Politics is driven by short-term considerations and consequences. To fulfill the state's trust responsibilities for natural resources a long-term perspective is required. With a politically appointed Secretary, political opposition from the opposing party is automatic. Natural resource decisions need bipartisan coordination and support.

Since the Governor began appointing the DNR Secretary in 1995 and especially since 2001, we have observed a constant erosion of public support for the leadership team in charge of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The reason for this erosion is the rapid turn over of Secretaries since 2001 (4), intrusion of politics into the day-to-day operation of the agency, and the lack of professional leadership (versus political) at the top to provide the necessary long-term perspective and continuity of programs. This is due primarily to the inability of the present DNR leadership to respond to natural resource management concerns with science-based decisions reached by the agency in partnership with the public and legislature. Since 2001 the operations and policy implementation management functions between the DNR Board and the Governor appointed Secretary are unsettled and even contentious. This erosion can be further exacerbated when natural resource issues then become a focus of legislative action such as setting of musky or large mouth bass regulations.

This perspective of constant change becomes even more apparent when we consider that there were only four DNR Secretaries during the 47 years between 1954 and 2001, while we have already had four Secretaries over the past 8 years.

Contact: Mr. Marc Schultz  
Chairman  
608-781-1662

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Bangor Rod & Gun Club • La Crosse Ducks Unlimited • Lake Onalaska District • Holmen Rod & Gun Club  
God's Country Turkey Federation • La Crosse River Ducks Unlimited • La Crosse Wild Turkey Federation • West Salem Game Getters  
Brice Prairie Conservation Assoc. • Coulee Region Ducks Unlimited • God's Country Muskies Inc. • River Valley Bow Hunters Pheasants Forever  
Wisconsin Waterfowl Assoc. La Crosse • Badger State Sportsmen • Bohemian Valley Conservation  
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