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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**



Groups push to get DNR chief appointed by Natural Resource Board

Associated Press - February 2, 2008 5:05 PM ET

MILWAUKEE (AP) - Some hunting and fishing groups want to allow the Natural Resources Board to hire and fire the Department of Natural Resources chief.

This week members of the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters pushed an "independent DNR secretary" as 1 of 3 priorities at their annual lobbying day at the Capitol.

Since 1995, the governor has had the power to appoint the DNR secretary.

Sportsmen aren't happy that there have been three DNR secretaries since 2001 and that the current secretary and some of his top officials have little agency experience.

But Scott Manley of Wisconsin Manufacturer & Commerce says the DNR has become more responsive because the secretary is answerable to an elected official.

Late last year the Democratic-controlled Senate voted to return control to the board by January 2011. But the Republican-controlled Assembly Natural Resources Committee voted December 19th to give the power to the board immediately.

Governor Doyle has said he will sign the legislation if it gets to his desk.

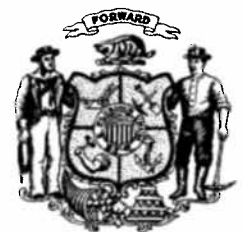
Information from: Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, <http://www.jsonline.com>

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SB
113 folder



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Group: Make DNR head 'independent'

SB 113 folder

Environmentalists want the secretary appointed by the Natural Resources Board.



Meyer Frank Hassett

By Associated Press

Some hunting and fishing groups are pushing to allow the Natural Resources Board to hire and fire the Department of Natural Resources chief, instead of allowing the governor to keep the power.

On Wednesday, members of the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters pushed an "independent DNR secretary" as one of three priorities at their annual lobbying day at the Capitol.

In other years, the issue had never generated enough interest to take to lawmakers, said Anne Sayers, program director for the league.

"I think the conservation groups have organized themselves much better," said Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison, who has sponsored a bill in seven legislative sessions.

Since 1995, the power to appoint the DNR secretary has been in the hands of the governor. And environmentalists have complained about it since.

There have been three DNR secretaries since 2001.

"Clearly, the turnover of secretaries has been a factor," said George Meyer, executive director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, which represents 157 hunting and fishing groups.

He is a former DNR secretary, appointed by the seven-member Natural Resources Board in 1993. He was reappointed by former Gov. Tommy Thompson in 1995.

When former corrections chief Matt Frank took over as DNR secretary Sept. 1, he and his top two lieutenants had a total of nine months of agency experience. (One official has since been replaced by a career employee.)

"That just drives people cra-

zy," Meyer said. "It really resonated with our members."

Paul Kruse, president of the Green Bay chapter of Trout Unlimited, said he doesn't care if the secretary is a hunter or angler, but wants someone with natural resources experience or education.

"We are getting people in there who don't know a wall-eye from a carp," Kruse said, adding that he was not speaking for the organization.

"It's all become so political, and that's what we have to get away from."

Meyer, who spent almost 30 years at the agency, was DNR secretary until 2001 — when then-Gov. Scott McCallum replaced him with Darrell Bazzell, the deputy secretary and a budget specialist.

Thompson, who made the change so governors could appoint the secretary, had said having the secretary in the cabinet would lead to greater accountability and better management of government.

Scott Manley of Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce said the DNR has become more responsive because the secretary is answerable to an elected official.

Manley credited Gov. Jim Doyle in June with pushing the DNR to ask federal authorities to re-designate eight counties as no longer violating federal standards for ozone pollution.

The request could help companies avoid spending more on pollution controls. There had been pressure from environmentalists who wanted to see more efforts to cut ozone levels.

But Black said Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce and other business groups want the governor in charge

because it's easier to exert influence and steer campaign contributions. Manley rejected that charge.

On Oct. 30, the Democratic-controlled Senate voted to return control to the board by January 2011 — meaning Doyle would not lose his authority during this term.

The Republican-controlled Assembly Natural Resources Committee, where the bill has stalled in the past, voted Dec. 19 to give the power to the board immediately.

"I think that when Matt Frank was appointed secretary we weren't sure that it should have happened that way," said committee chairman Rep. Scott Gunderson, R-Waterford.

Frank took over for Scott Hassett, a former attorney in private practice and avid outdoorsman. Hassett resigned.

At the time of his departure, Hassett said he had grown weary of the pace and the ceremonial aspects of being a DNR secretary.

But Friday he elaborated. "With any agency, and like the DNR particularly there is always the potential for friction between the secretary and the governor's office."

"An independent board would provide some insulation — and it probably would have in my case."

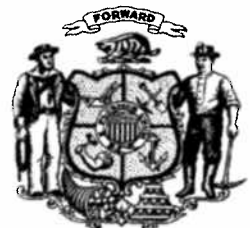
Doyle spokesman Matt Carter said the governor has long asserted that Hassett wasn't pushed out.

Gunderson and others describe Frank, an attorney who spent much of his career in the Justice Department, as a quick study who has made efforts to reach out to various constituencies. "But with no background in conservation, that doesn't help anyone," Gunderson said.

Doyle has said he will sign the legislation if it gets to his desk.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



"We are getting people in there who don't know a walleye from a carp."

Paul Kruse, president of Green Bay chapter of Trout Unlimited, not speaking on behalf of group

Pushing for change at DNR

By LEE BERGQUIST
lbergquist@journal-sentinel.com

Since 1995, the power to appoint the Department of Natural Resources secretary has been in the hands of the governor. And environmentalists have complained about it ever since.

Now there appears to be a new-found momentum to return the authority to a citizens board.

In the past, bills to allow the seven-member Natural Resources Board to hire and fire the DNR chief have foundered.

But the measure is getting more traction with a big push by hunting and fishing groups.

That might not be enough to compete with other key issues, such as passage of the Great Lakes compact, economic development initiatives and a possible budget

Please see **DNR SECRETARY, 10A**

Some want citizens board, not governor, to name secretary

SB 113 folder

From page 1

DNR SECRETARY

Some press for independence

pair bill before the Legislature adjourns next month.

Feeding the sportsmen's fire has been the appointment of three DNR secretaries since 2001.

Gov. Jim Doyle has named two of the department heads, and his first appointment, Scott Hassett, intimated on Friday that he might still be at his post if the board — and not the governor — controlled the position.

Those who want the board to control the secretary believe that air, water and wildlife issues should be managed for the long run — and when possible, above the partisan fray.

"Clearly, the turnover of secretaries has been a factor," said George Meyer, executive director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation,

which represents 157 hunting and fishing groups.

When former corrections chief Matt Frank took over as DNR secretary Sept. 1, he and his top two lieutenants had a sum total of nine months of agency experience. (One official has since been replaced by a career employee.)

"That just drives people crazy," Meyer said. "It really resonated with our members."

On Wednesday, members of the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters pushed an "independent DNR secretary" as one of three priorities at their annual lobbying day at the Capitol.

In other years, the issue

enough interest to take to lawmakers, said Anne Sayers, program director for the league.

"I think the conservation groups have organized themselves much better," said Rep. Spencer Black (D-Madison), who has sponsored a bill in seven legislative sessions.

"So political"

"We are getting people in there who don't know a walleye from a carp," said Paul Kruse, president of the Green Bay chapter of Trout Unlimited. He added that he was not speaking for the organization.

"It makes no difference if the guy is a hunter or angler to me," Kruse said. "But I want a guy who has gone to

has experience — and experience is better.

"It's all become so political, and that's what we have to get away from."

Meyer knows this better than anyone.

An attorney, he served as DNR secretary from 1993 to 2001. He had spent almost 30 years at the agency when Gov. Scott McCallum replaced him with Darrell Bazzell, the deputy secretary and a budget specialist.

McCallum was the first governor to replace a DNR secretary after Gov. Tommy G. Thompson proposed that the governor name the secretary.

Thompson had support from two former Democratic governors — Tony Earl, who served as DNR secretary, and Patrick Lucey. They said having the secretary in the cabinet would lead to greater accountability and better management of government.

Wisconsin's business lobby agrees.

Scott Manley of Wisconsin Manufacturer & Commerce said the DNR has become more responsive because the secretary is answerable to an elected official.

Manley credited Doyle in June with pushing the DNR to ask federal authorities to redesignate eight counties, including metropolitan Milwaukee, as no longer violating federal standards for ozone pollution.

The request could help companies avoid spending

more on pollution controls.

There had been pressure from environmentalists who wanted to see more efforts to cut ozone levels.

"We were convinced it was because of the governor's intercession," said Manley, Wisconsin Manufacturer & Commerce's environmental policy director.

But Black said Wisconsin Manufacturer & Commerce and other business groups want the governor in charge because it's easier to exert influence and steer campaign contributions. Manley rejected that charge.

Doyle has exerted more control over the DNR than previous governors, through his appointments and strong hand in environmental matters.

Doyle would sign bill

Frank's ascension sparked interest in taking back the power from the governor.

On Oct. 30, the Democratic-controlled Senate voted to return control to the board by January 2011, meaning Doyle would not lose his authority during this term.

The Republican-controlled Assembly Natural Resources Committee, where the bill has stalled in the past, voted Dec. 19 to give the power to the board immediately.

"I think that when Matt Frank was appointed secretary, we weren't sure that it should have happened that way," said committee chairman Rep. Scott Gunderson (R-Waterford).

Frank took over for Hassett, a former attorney in private practice and avid outdoorsman. Hassett resigned, but there is speculation that he was either pushed out or had tired of meddling from Doyle's office.

At the time of his departure, Hassett said he had grown weary of the pace and the ceremonial aspects of being a DNR secretary.

But Friday he elaborated by saying, "with any agency, and like the DNR particularly, there is always the potential for friction between the secretary and the governor's office."

"An independent board would provide some insulation — and it probably would have in my case."

Doyle spokesman Matt Canter said the governor has long asserted that Hassett wasn't pushed out.

Gunderson and others describe Frank, an attorney who spent much of his career in the Justice Department, as a quick study who has made efforts to reach out to various constituencies. "But with no background in conservation, that doesn't help anyone," Gunderson said.

Doyle's fervor to change the law appears to have waned since he has become governor.

As attorney general, he said, "I see this as a whole-sale attack on the way we protect the environment. I think we're playing with fire here."

As governor, Doyle said he will sign the legislation if it gets to his desk, but he has never championed it.

Christine Thomas, the chairwoman of the Natural Resources Board and dean of the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, has a unique perspective on the issue. She wrote her 263-page dissertation in 1989 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison on the role of the board in environmental decision-making.

"My personal opinion is that the whole process would work better if the secretary was supervised by the board," Thomas said.

YOURDAY

Monday, January 19, 2009 9A

SB
113
folder

DNR SECRETARY

Doyle was right the first time

Do you know why Gov. Jim Doyle used to think that the Department of Natural Resources secretary should be appointed by the Natural Resources Board instead of being a political appointment? Because he wasn't always governor. The governor is the person currently in charge of hand-selecting the DNR secretary.

Plain and simple: When Doyle wasn't the governor, he understood the importance of keeping partisan politics out of natural resource management. Now that he's a part of the political machine, he's changed his tune.

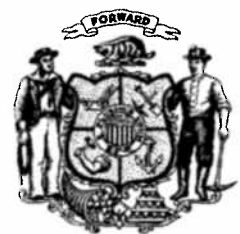
That is *exactly* the reason the selection of the DNR secretary should be left to the Natural Resources Board, a committee of citizens dedicated to serving natural resources, not special interests. The DNR secretary shouldn't be involved in a political power play that completely reduces his credibility. The position should be held by someone with a deep understanding of natural resource management and science, not a crony.

Doyle should think again. What happens when he loses control of the appointment? Will he change his tune again?

Melissa Wiedmeyer
Milwaukee



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





SB 113
folder

Doyle breaking faith, line on DNR position

JANUARY 23, 2008

GREEN BAY — For years, Gov. Jim Doyle has supported good government by backing the return of an independent state DNR Secretary who would be appointed by the Natural Resources Board rather than as a political appointee of the governor.

I voted for him because of his campaign promises that he would see to it that the secretary would no longer be appointed by the governor. Recent media coverage shows that Gov. Doyle is now rethinking his position.

Perhaps, now that the Legislature has a good chance of passing a bill, he's wavering on his word because he doesn't want to lose power. By not signing a bill that would protect Wisconsin's natural resources, Gov. Doyle would be going against the wishes of a majority of Wisconsinites who want to see our natural resources in the hands of good decision-making, not politics.

This is why I'm attending Conservation Lobby Day on Feb. 25 in Madison. I want to use my voice to urge the governor to rethink his new position on the secretary.

If you want to help restore Wisconsin's conservation integrity, then sign up to join me at www.conservationvoters_line.org.

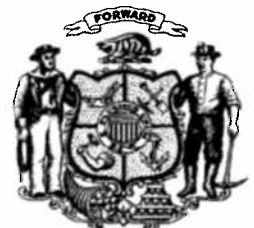
Jack Koivisto



<http://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/article/20090123/GPG0603/901230550/1271>



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**TORNADOES KILL 8 PEOPLE
TUESDAY IN OKLAHOMA. A3.**

FEB 12 2009

THE CHIPPEWA HERALD



**CARDINALS GET
SHUTOUT IN LAST
REGULAR SEASON
HOCKEY GAME. B1.**

**CHI-HI BOYS' 4-
GAME WIN STREAK
SNAPPED BY
ALTOONA. B1.**

YOUR VIEWS

Keep politics out of natural resources

I love to walk the Old Abe Bike Trail Bridge crossing the Chippewa River south of Highway O on clear evenings. The sunset is beautiful, but is breathtaking reflected in the river. Yet there are signs at the boat landing for invasive plants growing in Lake Wissota.

I would guess almost everyone has a favorite outdoor spot as well. These special and magical landscapes deserve to be managed mindful of their timelessness; here before us and here long after us — our only job is to respect these wonderful fishing, hunting, hiking, and viewing spots, and keep them pristine.

To be responsible stewards of Wisconsin's natural resources, it makes sense to practice consistent, science-based decision-making, led by the Department of Natural Resources. Good conservation policy in our state should start at the top, with an independent, rather than politically appointed, DNR secretary.

If you love being the outdoors, then you understand that our natural resources ought to be beyond the whim of politics. State senators, representatives and governors all come and go. The havoc wreaked on natural resources by changes in policy could certainly be too

much to bear. On Feb. 25, join conservation-minded citizens in Madison for Conservation Lobby Day to let our legislature know that we need to take politics out of managing Wisconsin's natural resources. If unable to attend, contact your senator and representative to let them know your views.

Renee Fontaine-Ebel
Chippewa Falls

Isaacson, Ferg would make good judges

As a lawyer who regularly uses the Chippewa County courts, I strongly recommend you vote for Jim Isaacson or Bob Ferg as our next judge.

Each is an experienced court commissioner repeatedly recommended by county judges and approved by Judge Ben Proctor, chief justice of the Tenth Judicial District. Each is a fair-minded fellow with respect of prosecutors, deputies, lawyers, court people and clients. And each is a person of honesty, humility and thoughtfulness.

If you don't know them, call them and introduce yourself. Or talk to friends, neighbors or others who work at the courthouse.

Please vote in the primary on Feb. 17 and the final election April 7. Your vote counts.

Charles G. Norseng
Attorney and court commissioner
Chippewa Falls

Serving Chippewa County since 1870

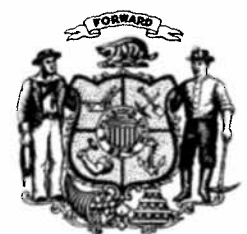
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2009

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WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



SB 113
folder

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Appointment change opposed

Governor against
proposal that has
board pick secretary

By LEE BERGQUIST
lbergquist@journal-sentinel.com

Gov. Jim Doyle says he now opposes a proposal by environmentalists and conservationists that would end the governor's power to appoint the state secretary of natural resources and return it to a seven-member citizens board.

Doyle had been a proponent of returning the appointment power to the board, but in January, he told the Journal Sentinel through a spokesman that he was rethinking his position.

Doyle's apparent change then troubled many environmental leaders who have long supported legislation to allow board members to name the secretary.

By doing so, they reason, the agency would be insulated to some extent from politics.

As attorney general, Doyle described the board's

1995 loss of its ability to hire and fire the secretary of the state Department of Natural Resources as a "wholesale attack on the way we protect the environment. I think we are playing with fire here."

This week, Doyle said in his clearest terms yet that Wisconsin governors should retain the authority to name the secretary.

"I have seen the agency function under both systems," Doyle wrote, "and I have come to believe a secretary appointed by the governor, with the full weight and authority of the governor behind it, can be much more effective."

The letter was sent to citizens who attended Conservation Labor Day at the Capitol on Feb. 25.

Doyle pointed to his environmental record, which includes passage of the Great Lakes compact, new air pollution regulations and bolstering funding for a public lands initiative.

Scott Manley, director of environmental policy for the Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce, said his organization supports

Doyle's change in stance.

The DNR is more responsive to the public when the secretary is answerable to the governor, not a board, which he described as "insulated and unaccountable to no one."

But Anne Sayers, a spokeswoman for the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, said she was disappointed.

"We are really surprised that the governor would reverse his position," she said.

Doyle's change of heart comes as the Legislature has moved to Democratic control in both houses, when presumably it would be easier to advance legislation to return authority to the board.

Regardless of Doyle's comments, Rep. Spencer Black (D-Madison) said that he will introduce legislation next week.

Black said the legislation isn't about Doyle but long-term efforts to ensure conservation and the environment — and not politics — are the mission of the agency.



Doyle: Keep DNR boss in Cabinet

The governor changes his stance on the issue, citing benefits.

By **RON SEELY**
rseely@madison.com
608-252-6131

In a reversal of his former position, Gov. Jim Doyle said in a letter to state conservationists this week that he no longer favors removing the position of Department of Natural Resources secretary from his Cabinet.

The change comes at a time when the state Legislature may be closer than it has been in years to passing a bill that would make the DNR secretary an independent appointee of the Natural Resources Board.

Despite having supported such a change during two political campaigns, Doyle said in the letter that he now believes advances in environmental policy, including passage of the Great Lakes Compact and expansion of the land-buying Stewardship Program, would not have happened were the DNR secretary not a member of his Cabinet.

Doyle wrote in response to letters from conservationists who flooded the Capitol last week as part of a state conservation lobby day. An independent DNR secretary was named a priority conservation issue for this legislative session, along with groundwater protection, green jobs through energy development



MATT FRANK - Submitted photo

The Department of Natural Resources secretary, currently Matt Frank, shown here taking part in a pheasant stocking operation in 2007, should remain part of the governor's Cabinet, Gov. Jim Doyle wrote to conservationists this week.

and strong drinking water protections.

More than 600 conservationists attended the lobbying day.

Doyle also said having the DNR secretary in the Cabinet makes the governor more accountable.

"The governor can no longer just blame the DNR as in past administrations, but must take responsibility for policy. I believe this builds much

stronger popular support for environmental initiatives.

"I recognize that there are legitimate arguments on both sides, but I believe that a system that has a strong board and a quality secretary appointed by the governor is the most effective."

George Meyer, executive director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation and a former DNR secretary, said Doyle not only supported an inde-

pendent secretary during his campaigns for governor but has also spoken in support of the change at many sporting group meetings.

"We would hope he would keep his word on this issue," Meyer said.

Lee Sensenbrenner, a Doyle spokesman, said he could not say whether Doyle's opposition would translate into a veto were legislation to pass both houses.





SB
113 folder

Doyle is wrong, wrong, wrong on DNR secretary

3/07/2009

Jim Doyle campaigned for governor in 2002 as a supporter of the proposal to remove the position of Department of Natural Resources secretary from the Cabinet.

He was re-elected in 2006 as a supporter of the proposal, which has long been a top priority for environmentalists and good government activists who want to ease political and special-interest pressures on the DNR.

Now, with Democrats in control of both houses of the state Legislature, Doyle should be leading the charge to make the change he promised and re-establish the DNR secretary as an independent appointee of the Natural Resources Board.

Instead, the governor now claims that he wants to keep the position in the Cabinet.

Why? The governor claims that having the DNR secretary under his wing made advances in environmental policy, including passage of the Great Lakes Compact and expansion of the land-buying Stewardship Program, easier to achieve.

Even if the governor is right — and we are not conceding that he is — his argument is an absurd one.

No one serves permanently as governor. No party and no point of view has a permanent claim on the office.

While Doyle may be tepidly pro-environment, he could easily be replaced by a conservative Republican governor who is tepidly — or even militantly — anti-environment.

Making the DNR secretary independent of the governor remains the best short- and long-term strategy for protecting Wisconsin's natural resources and the economic potential that comes with being a clean, green state.

Doyle was right when he promised the voters to make the DNR secretary independent.

Doyle is wrong — wrong for the environment, wrong for sound governance, wrong politically — when he breaks that promise now.

<http://www.madison.com/tct/opinion/441861>





SB 113
folder

DNR secretary measure has heavy support

Mar. 9, 2009

Madison - State Rep. Spencer Black (D-Madison) said Monday that Assembly and Senate majorities have agreed to co-sponsor his bill restoring the authority of the state Natural Resources Board to name the secretary of that agency.

That would be the most momentum the proposal has had in the Capitol in years and set up a potential confrontation with Gov. Jim Doyle, who said last week he believes the governor should name the state's top environmental and recreational leader.

Doyle previously had supported returning the appointment power to the Natural Resources Board.

Black said 51 members of the 99-member Assembly - including 38 Democrats and 13 Republicans - have agreed to sponsor his bill. It would reverse the 1995 decision by then-Republican Gov. Tommy G. Thompson, and Republicans who then controlled the Legislature, to give appointing power to the governor.

The 1995 change ended a policy that had existed for 67 years.

In the Senate, 14 Democrats and three Republicans - a majority of the 33 senators - also back the change, led in that house by Sens. Robert Wirch (D-Pleasant Prairie) and Rob Cowles (R-Green Bay). Other Senate leaders endorsing it are Senate President Fred Risser (D-Madison) and Assistant Majority Leader Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay).

"I can't recall a time when a controversial bill had this many co-sponsors," Black said. "This unprecedented strong and bipartisan support shows how important the independence of the DNR is to the citizens of the state."

Under the bill, the DNR secretary chosen by the board would have a four-year term, but the board could make a change before the term is up.

If it became law, it would mean that the term of DNR Secretary Matt Frank would end in fall 2011, or earlier if the board chose.

Black said he supported the environmental records of Frank and Doyle.

"It's clearly not targeted at either of them," he said. "The point of the bill is: Gov. Doyle will not be governor forever."

A DNR secretary appointed by another governor could make bad decisions that hurt the environment for decades, yet remain in the job until a new governor is elected, Black said.

Department of Natural Resources board members are appointed by governors to six-year terms - longer than the four-year terms of governors, Black said.

Last week, Doyle said he had changed his position on the issue and now believes that governors should have the ability to name the DNR secretary.

"A secretary appointed by the governor, with the full weight and authority of the governor behind it, can be much more effective," he told the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters.

Anne Sayers, program director for the League, said the support for Black's bill means Wisconsin will restore "conservation integrity."

"There is no question that since 1995 politics have played a much larger role in the decision-making processes of the DNR," Sayers said.

When he was attorney general in 1995, Doyle warned of the dangers of letting governors hire and fire the DNR secretary.

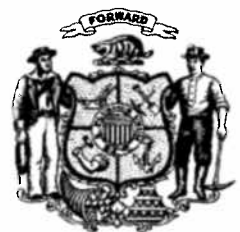
Then, Doyle called that system a "wholesale attack on the way we protect the environment." Doyle was elected governor in 2002.

Black said he will push the bill after the Legislature adopts a 2009-'11 budget this summer.

<http://www.jsonline.com/news/statepolitics/40968317.html>



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



SB 113
folder

Talking conservation in the Capitol



State Representative Scott Suder (R-Abbotsford) is pictured here with several local members of the League of Conservation Voters including Frank Reith (Stanley), Larry Osegard (Neillsville), and John Haag (Stanley). The group traveled to Madison as part of the Conservation Lobby Day last week. Rep. Suder met with the group of local conservationists to discuss their legislative priorities for the coming session. One of the League's top priorities is removing political control over the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources and returning the appointment power of that position to the Natural Resources Board. After meeting with the group and listening to their concerns, Rep. Suder signed on as a co-author of legislation.



*SB District
residents asked
for opinions*

The Stanley



*Oriole
season comes
to an end*

REEDPOURBRIKCAN

VOLUME 111

CHIPPewa COUNTY, WISCONSIN

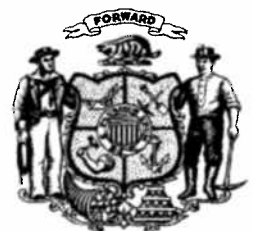
\$1.00

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2009

NO. 5



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



SB 113
folder

OUR VIEW

ISSUE:
Natural Resources
secretary

Time to restore system's integrity

Year after year, conservationists have urged the state to restore the Natural Resources Board's power to appoint the secretary of the Department of Natural Resources. Year after year, Gov. Jim Doyle has dragged his feet on the issue, and now he's changed his mind completely.

In 1995, at the behest of then-Gov. Tommy Thompson, the Legislature took that power away from the board and made the secretary an appointee of the governor.

Doyle was the attorney general then, and he called the change nothing less than a "wholesale attack on the way we protect our government."

But now Doyle is the governor. Now the power is in his hands, and he likes it there.

"The DNR secretary can do much more when it is part of the governor's cabinet and has the power of the governor's office behind it," Doyle said the other day. He said such initiatives as the Great Lakes Compact, the state's new mercury emissions rules and the expansion of the Stewardship Fund could not have happened without gubernatorial appointment of the DNR secretary.

Hogwash. All of those initiatives had the strong support of both the governor and the Natural Resources Board, and it's inconceivable that Doyle would have fought them on the basis that he didn't get to pick the DNR secretary. Good policy will win the day because it's good policy.

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress and the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters have repeatedly and overwhelmingly supported putting the appointment back in the hands of the Natural Resources Board — and so did Doyle until recently, although the lack of action during his first six years in office should have been a red flag.

Aldo Leopold, Wisconsin's revered conservationist, helped establish the state's system of natural resources management in the 1920s, and one of its cornerstones was the appointment of the secretary by an independent board as a way to insulate the agency's functions from politics. That's one of the reasons Wisconsin has always led the nation in environmental policy.

As he has done in every session since 1995, state Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison, has introduced a bill to restore the traditional appointment process.

This time 51 Assembly representatives and 17 senators have already co-sponsored the bill — a majority of both houses, but not yet a veto-proof majority.

Doyle was right in 1995. The Legislature should vote to restore integrity to the appointment process.

Thursday, March 12, 2009

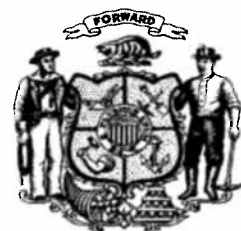
Weather: High 22, Low 13 > Page A-13

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GREEN BAY PRESS-GAZETTE



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



SB 113
folder

Editorial: Governor blocks best chance for independent DNR

Thursday, April 09, 2009

Governor Jim Doyle no longer believes the Department of Natural Resources secretary should be appointed by an independent board and insulated from political pressure.

The governor's new position is worse than a flip-flop; it's a betrayal of progressive governance.

Progressives were aghast 14 years ago when then-Gov. Tommy Thompson, with the approval of a conservative state Legislature, gutted Wisconsin's independent DNR and made the secretary a political appointee who serves at the governor's pleasure. Not long after the change, the DNR found itself at the mercy of big-time campaign contributors who could leverage favorable regulatory treatment from the governor's office.

If there is any area of government that needs insulation from political pressure, it's the DNR. Issues of conservation and the environment, more than any other, involve conflicts between short-term individual gain and long-term sustainability. It may be profitable in the short term to destroy wildlife habitat, but the long-term consequence is less wildlife. It may be profitable in the short term for a developer to scrape off acres of farmland and let construction runoff slide into a nearby creek, but the long-term consequence is a polluted creek. It may be profitable in the short-term for a factory to pump mercury into the air or PCBs into a river, but the long-term consequence is a degraded and less bountiful eco-system.

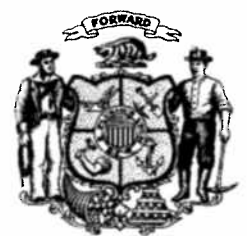
There has never been a more opportune time to restore an independent DNR. Democrats control the governor's mansion and both houses of the state Legislature for the first time since 1987. If Wisconsin can't get an independent DNR from this legislative session, it's unlikely to ever happen.

It's much easier for the DNR to perform its long-term stewardship function when it's insulated from political pressure and campaign cash. Perhaps Doyle believes his administration won't be pressured into short-term exploitation policies, but Doyle won't be governor forever. The political cycle will eventually produce a governor who puts short-term profits over long-term sustainability. And when a future governor puts the hammer down on a politicized DNR, much of the blame can be assigned to Jim Doyle.

<file:///C:/DOCUME~1/Owner/LOCALS~1/Temp/Tomah%20Journal%20-%20Opinion.htm>



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



OF LIFE ON THE FARM A7



Lights out
Temporary closer
Coffey getting the
job done, Sports B1

LA CROSSE Tribune



**OBAMA DOCTRINE? EMERGING
FOREIGN POLICY A GAMBLE, A2**

MONDAY, April 20, 2009

OUR VIEW

Even in tough times, we can't ignore our natural resources

SB 113
folder

People in our region have a strong independent spirit. While that may be frustrating at times when we're trying to unite, it's also a trait that enhances the diverse voices and viewpoints necessary in a healthy democracy.

One topic where it's easy to agree is the importance of our region's abundant and precious natural resources. Whether we live in the city or in the country, the streams, bluffs, valleys, forests, soil and water are part of the reason we've chosen to call this region home.

There are many grassroots groups or organizations that have a stake in our resources. One state group that listens to these groups and takes their advice to heart is the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute.

The institute last year held 11 regional listening sessions in the state where its members received input from more than 80 organizations and more than 225 citizens. Tom Stolp, the institute's western organizer based out of Eau Claire, said the hearing in La Crosse was attended by more than 50 people, making it the best-attended in the state.

Stolp said it was feedback and input from these listening

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sessions that helped the institute develop its top four Wisconsin conservation priorities for 2009-10. They are:

Preserve groundwater: Manage Wisconsin's groundwater resources to preserve drinking water supplies, lakes, streams, and wetlands.

Stop global warming in Wisconsin: Address the threats of global warming in Wisconsin through clean, renewable energy jobs and energy conservation.

Restore conservation integrity: Return the Department of Natural Resources secretary to an independent position and require timely appointments of Natural Resource Board members.

Protect Wisconsin's drinking water: Protect Wisconsin's drinking water supplies by making sure agriculture, municipal and industrial wastes are spread safely.

It's doubtful the Legislature will address all these issues during this session when a deep budget deficit is the main focus. But not all of these proposals have a large cost associated with them. In the case of creating renewable energy, there could be job growth.

There's also the cost of doing nothing. Some parts of Wisconsin, especially in the northeast, have severe groundwater contamination issues, forcing homeowners and communities to drill new wells or pay for expensive water treatment. That's the very issue that's of concern to citizens in Vernon and Crawford counties, where the geography is similar to northeastern Wisconsin and where there are environmental concerns with mega-animal operations.

The issues on Wisconsin's legislative plate are many, as are the needs. But let's make sure that we keep at the forefront the preservation of our precious natural resources. Quality of life protection is of utmost importance to us all.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





SB 113
folder

Doyle strays from promise

April 24, 2009

GREEN BAY — Feb. 25 marked the fifth annual Conservation Lobby Day, where folks from across the state came together at the State Capitol to speak with their legislators about conservation issues. Past victories of Lobby Day include the signing of the Great Lakes Compact and programs for renewable energy investments.

This year, 600 citizens gathered with four conservation priorities in mind: restoring an independent DNR secretary, stopping global warming in Wisconsin with the Strong Clean Energy Economy Bill, protecting our drinking water, and preserving our groundwater. A diverse crew of conservationists attended Lobby Day this year with interests ranging from public health to clean energy. As an outdoor enthusiast, I wanted to attend Lobby Day to support the Independent DNR Secretary Bill.

For 14 years, the DNR secretary has been appointed by the governor, compromising the DNR's ability to manage the wilderness enjoyed by citizens throughout the state.

As a result, the DNR secretary has become a position vulnerable to political motives and inexperience. I've been disappointed to learn that the governor has had a change of heart and no longer supports this bill. I support this bill because the governor's politics have no place in my canoe.

Vanessa Ashley Lefan

<http://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/article/20090424/GPG0603/904240554/1271/GPG06>



SB 113
folder

Reader views on DNR secretary selection

Should the governor continue to appoint the DNR secretary?

Future governors may not be good stewards

In 1925 environmentalist Aldo Leopold established the system where a citizens' board appointed the DNR secretary, who would be relatively independent of political influence. As a result, Wisconsin's DNR was respected nationally.

Former Gov. Tommy Thompson changed this in 1995, giving governors the appointment power. In the July hearings on the issue, testimony indicated appointments were made by political affiliation over professional qualifications, yet it's vital that decisions be made by staff with proven experience and scientific knowledge.

While Gov. Doyle and DNR Secretary Matt Frank have done well in their stewardship, the next governor may not be as caring -- with long-term negative effects. The political appointment of a DNR secretary is wrong-headed and detrimental to the preservation of our natural resources.

-- *Jim Connors, Madison*



SB 113 folder Date ?

Wildlife Management Institute

Wisconsin Conservationists and Legislators Back Board-appointed DNR Head; Governor Backslides

A bill aimed at restoring the authority of the citizen-based Wisconsin Natural Resource Board to appoint the state's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Secretary was introduced to the Wisconsin legislature on March 9. Backed by a pledged majority support in both the Senate and Assembly, the bill's odds of passing are perhaps the best they have been in the last 13 years, reports the Wildlife Management Institute.

Re-instating an independent DNR Secretary has been a priority of Wisconsin conservation organizations since 1995, when then-Governor Tommy Thomson convinced lawmakers to make the position a cabinet appointment. Since that time, a bill proposing to reinstate the Natural Resource Board's authority over the Secretary's appointment has been presented to each legislative session. For the past two years, the bill has been selected as a Wisconsin Conservation Priority by the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters (WLCV).

Jennifer Giegerich, Capitol Liaison for the WLCV, expects the bill to be addressed later this summer after the state's current budget crisis has been addressed. Noting that the bill's first stop will be in the Assembly's Natural Resource Committee, chaired by the bill's sponsor, Representative Spencer Black, Giegerich is optimistic. "We think this bill has a very good chance of passing."

However, controversy over the bill's future arose on March 5, two days before it was presented to the Assembly. In a letter given to nearly 600 conservationists attending the state's annual Conservation Lobby Day, Governor Jim Doyle withdrew his support of an independent DNR Secretary, stating that he has "come to believe that a secretary appointed by the Governor, with the full weight and authority of the governor behind it, can be much more effective." This is counter to the position Doyle has held during his last two political campaigns, during which he publicly supported removing the DNR Secretary from his cabinet, saying, "My preference is that the secretary be appointed by the (Natural Resource) board. It adds a layer of insulation between politics and resource decisions. That's a good thing."

Although Governor Doyle has not confirmed whether his current stance would result in a veto if the bill moved through the legislature, his position reversal has garnered the support of Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC) and the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation. Together, these groups represent the state's largest business lobby and have long advocated the office of DNR Secretary as a cabinet appointment since the position oversees environmental regulation. More recently, WMC has proposed to allow the DNR Secretary to be appointed by the Natural Resource Board but retain the responsibility of environmental regulation within the Governor's cabinet.

Despite the setback, conservation groups remain hopeful that the bill will pass later this year. "I can't imagine that he [Governor Doyle] would not keep his word," said Giegerich. "Eighty-five conservation groups have supported this bill for two legislative sessions. We think that sends a message." (mcd)

http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=344:wi-dnr-head&catid=34:ONB%20Articles&Itemid=54