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(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2005-06

(session year)

Assembly

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on Forestry...

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**

* Contents organized for archiving by: Stefanie Rose (LRB) (July 2013)

- Bob Jentz, Madison — Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs, Inc
- Kathleen Koller, Pearson — Town of Ainsworth Town Board
- Richard Connor, Jr., Laona — Pine River Lumber Co
- Tom Rulseh, Three Lakes
- Rick Stademan, Shawano — Wisconsin Towns Association
- Kris Mayberry, Hayward
- Michael Blumenfeld, Madison — Wisconsin Educational Media Association

Registrations Against

- None.

February 14, 2006

EXECUTIVE SESSION HELD

Present: (5) Representatives Friske, Mursau, Ainsworth, Hubler and Boyle.

Absent: (1) Representative M. Williams.

Moved by Representative Hubler, seconded by Representative Mursau that **Assembly Bill 1012** be recommended for passage.

Ayes: (5) Representatives Friske, Mursau, Ainsworth, Hubler and Boyle.

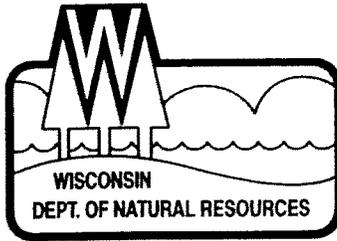
Noes: (0) None.

Absent: (1) Representative M. Williams.

PASSAGE RECOMMENDED, Ayes 5, Noes 0


Tim Gary
Committee Clerk





State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Jim Doyle, Governor
Scott Hassett, Secretary

101 S. Webster St.
Box 7921
Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7921
Telephone 608-266-2621
FAX 608-267-3579
TTY Access via relay - 711

Assembly Forestry Committee February 14, 2006

DNR Testimony on AB 1012

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I am Paul DeLong, Administrator of the DNR's Division of Forestry and Wisconsin's Chief State Forester. I am pleased to be here this morning to speak on behalf of the Department regarding AB 1012. The Department supports AB 1012.

I'd like to thank Representative Jensen and BCPL Executive Secretary Tia Nelson for their work with Department staff over the last few weeks to address issues and concerns regarding the concept being advanced in this bill. The bill that has resulted is in a form that the Department supports for the following reasons:

- BCPL is a constitutional entity with a mission not to conserve land, but to ensure a return on their investments to serve their beneficiaries.
- Therefore, lands owned by BCPL that have natural area qualities should be under the long-term management of the DNR, which has a conservation mandate.
- BCPL has managed productive forestland to produce a return on investment to their beneficiaries. By giving them authority to use the proceeds of the sale of BCPL lands to purchase other productive forest lands that consolidate their ownership will increase the efficient management of those lands and reduce forest fragmentation by increasing the size of these public blocks of forestland.
- These consolidated blocks of working forest land will increase public recreational access and support local economies.
- This bill provides that the lands exchanged will provide increased tax receipts to local governments.
- The bill recognizes the responsibility of the Natural Resources Board to review and approve all purchases of land proposed by DNR.

As you know, the Department has been actively working with partners to address the range of issues affecting the long-term sustainability of Wisconsin's forests. Forest fragmentation, recreational access to forest land, the health of the forest products industry, and protection of biological diversity are four such issues. All four will be positively affected by this bill. For this reason, the Department supports this bill.

I would be happy to address any questions you might have.





**Testimony Before the
Assembly Committee on Forestry
February 14, 2006**

In Regards to AB1012

Good morning Mr. Chairman and committee members. My name is Gene Francisco; I am the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Professional Loggers Association. I am here to express our position on AB 1012.

We support this bill in concept, but have some concerns. It makes sense to consolidate the Board's ownership to improve management efficiency and cost control. And we applaud the bills goals of mitigating forest fragmentation and maintaining working forests.

However, we are concerned about the provision that requires the payment of advalorem tax based on the year prior to purchase. As we read this, taxes for other property would continue to rise with increased valuation while lands purchased by the Board would remain frozen. Other lands purchased by state government stay on the tax roles and are taxed the same as other private property. We believe that same policy should apply to BCPL. This provision places the Board at a competitive advantage regarding land acquisition over other land management companies.

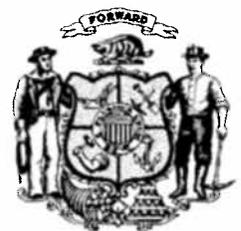
In addition to the tax concern, we have not seen any data on the productivity of the lands scheduled for sale to the DNR. We would oppose selling lands to the DNR for natural areas that are inventoried as productive forest lands.

We could support this legislation if these two concerns are addressed.

Thank you for listening to our concerns with AB1012. I would be happy to answer any questions.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



**Testimony before the
Assembly Committee on Forestry**

**AB1012 – Collaboration on Sustainable
Forestry Natural Areas Management**

February 14, 2006

Tia Nelson, Executive Secretary
Board of Commissioners of Public Lands

Introduction

The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) is Wisconsin's oldest state agency. It was created in 1848 by the State Constitution to sell millions of acres of land granted to the state by the federal government to support public education and the development of the state's infrastructure. Over 10 million acres, nearly one third of the state, were granted for these purposes. Approximately 60% of this total was granted for the construction of roads, canals, and railroads; the reclamation of swampland; and the construction of the first State Capitol. These lands were sold or distributed as directed by the original land grants. Other lands were granted specifically to support public education. Known as "Trust Lands," they totaled 3.6 million acres. Approximately 98% of these lands have been sold and the proceeds deposited into one of four Trust Funds. There remain 77,706 acres of Trust Lands in BCPL ownership. These remaining lands are managed for timber production wherever possible and the timber revenue generated on them is deposited into the appropriate Trust Fund.

The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands is a self-supporting, program revenue agency. Revenues are derived from earnings on investments of the Trust Funds. Principal of the Trust Funds continue to grow through a variety of fines, forfeitures, and unclaimed property, as well as timber sale revenue generated on the remaining Trust Lands. The Board's largest investment is the State Trust Fund Loan Program, which provides financing to school districts and municipalities throughout the state. The principal beneficiaries of the Trust assets are Wisconsin's K-12 public school libraries. With school districts facing increasing budget constraints, many rely on the Common School Fund as their sole source of library funding. The 2006 library aid disbursement from this fund will be \$28.2 million or over \$22 per student in every district.

The Attorney General, the Secretary of State, and the State Treasurer comprise the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands as created by Article X of the State Constitution. The Board appoints an Executive Secretary who is responsible for the on-going functions of the Board as detailed in Chapter 24 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

AB 1012

I am here today to testify in support of AB 1012. This legislation will improve the management efficiency of state lands through the transfer of BCPL natural area quality land to the DNR and the granting of 'land bank' authority to BCPL for the improvement of its timber management. The primary purpose of this legislation is to provide for the realignment of BCPL land into more productive timber management units, while consolidating natural area ownership under the DNR.

This land consolidation plan has the following benefits:

- I. The transfer of natural area quality land from BCPL to the DNR**
- II. Increased tax receipts for local municipalities**
- III. Increased timber management efficiency**
- IV. Reduced forest fragmentation**
- V. Increased public access for hunting, fishing and recreation**

As a life long conservationist who has enjoyed the north woods since I was a toddler, touched at an early age by the magic of northern forests, lakes and streams to which I have returned every year for almost 50 years, I wouldn't have imagined even 10 years ago that I would find myself today telling fellow conservationist that the most important tool we have to keep the north as we know and love it is by fostering an environmentally and economically sustainable timber economy.

Why is a healthy timber economy in northern Wisconsin so important as a conservation strategy? The answer is two-fold. First timber companies across the country are selling off their forestland under pressure from Wall Street to cash in on sky rocketing land values which far exceed timber earnings. As a result, large tracts of land are suddenly on the market, as is evidenced by International Paper's recent announcement that it intends to sell 65,000 acres of working forest in northeastern Wisconsin.

Secondly, Wisconsin is experiencing dramatic growth in second home development, especially up north. Some northern counties have experienced population increases of over 100% in just 10 years. So many of us have been drawn to the scenic beauty and recreational opportunities of the northwoods. Now we are witnessing a great change on the land which is leading to dramatic growth in forest fragmentation, diminishing access to public recreation and hunting areas and threatening healthy ecosystems. Northern Wisconsin as we have known it is rapidly changing. One of the most important tools we have to help reduce forest fragmentation and the "parcelization" of land into smaller and smaller pieces is for conservationists to team up with industry and government to work together to maintain "working forest" and develop easements which ensure sustainable forestry practices, public access and prevent development on large tracks of existing forest.

It can be done but it will require us to develop and employ new tools and reach across the political aisle to forge bipartisan alliances. Working together with environmentalists, industry and government we can get the job done. The job is too big and too important for us not to come together for the common good.

Current Land Holdings and Management Practices

Like many other public forest managers, the BCPL manages its lands under the multiple-use model with a full range of forest management activities that include: timber sales, timber regeneration, timber stand improvement, forest protection, and recreational activities. Unlike other land management agencies, the BCPL is responsible for generating revenue for its beneficiaries, while at the same time protecting and enhancing the assets of the Trust.

Land Consolidation Plan

To improve its timberland management, the BCPL is using existing trade authority to implement a Land Consolidation Plan approved unanimously by its Board on July 10, 2003. While the authority to trade land has allowed BCPL some limited success in consolidating the Trust Lands, it is not uncommon for a single trade to take a year to complete.

The intent of the consolidation plan is to dispose of isolated parcels within 24 counties (yellow area on map) and to reinvest the proceeds into the consolidation of larger blocks of land currently held within the nine counties that contain 90% of the state's Trust Lands (green area on map). The acquisition of additional lands within the consolidation zone will provide access to currently land-locked parcels, thus increasing management efficiency and productivity. It will also result in larger tracts of working forest.

The Land Bank

A motion supporting the Land Bank concept was approved unanimously by the Board of Commissioners on April 14, 2005. Modeled after legislation of several other states, it would allow the BCPL to use the proceeds from the sale of unproductive parcels to acquire land in order to increase timber revenue, reduce forest fragmentation or increase public access. The language specifies that there shall be no net gain in total acres of BCPL Trust Lands.

With Land Bank authority, the BCPL land base will change and result in more acres available for timber management. In collaboration with the BCPL the DNR has identified 12,000 acres of Natural Area quality sites on BCPL lands which would be purchased with Stewardship monies. In addition, BCPL has identified another 10,000 acres of isolated tracts that are unsuitable for timber management due to their size, location, forest type or because it is unforested wetlands.

The BCPL expects to gain access to most of its land locked [e.g. blocked from access] timber and sell parcels that are too small to economically manage. Therefore, we expect to have a net increase in productive timberland and corresponding timber sale revenue once purchased tracts become harvestable. This translates into an estimated net increase of at least 1 million board feet of additional timber harvest annually. By way of illustration: In the past five years, through land exchanges that have provided the BCPL access to previously inaccessible timber, an additional \$173,000 in timber revenue on 345 acres was generated.

Trust Land agencies in other states, such as Utah, Colorado and Washington, have successfully created and implemented similar Land Bank programs to increase the efficiency of their land management programs.

How the Land Bank Would Work

- Based on the language in Assembly Bill 1012 the land purchased using funds from the Land Bank must do one or more of the following:
 1. improve the efficiency of BCPL's timberland management activities.
 2. address forest fragmentation issues.
 3. increase public access to BCPL land.
- Board staff have developed the following criteria for evaluating Land Bank transactions:
 - A. *Management Efficiency*
 - 1) The percentage of upland of BCPL properties must increase over the long term.
 - 2) The average productivity of forest soils measured by the site index must increase over the long term.
 - 3) The amount of line work per acre must decrease.
 - B. *Forest Fragmentation*
 - 5) The average tract size must increase.
 - 6) The ratio of perimeter to area must decrease.
 - C. *Public Access*
 - 7) The number of acres open to the public must increase.

At a minimum, four of the seven criteria stated above should be satisfied in order for a transaction to proceed to completion.

The BCPL will screen all land holdings for retention or sale. Parcels that cannot meet the criteria of retention would be available for sale, with the proceeds temporarily held by the Land Bank. Criteria for retention include but are not

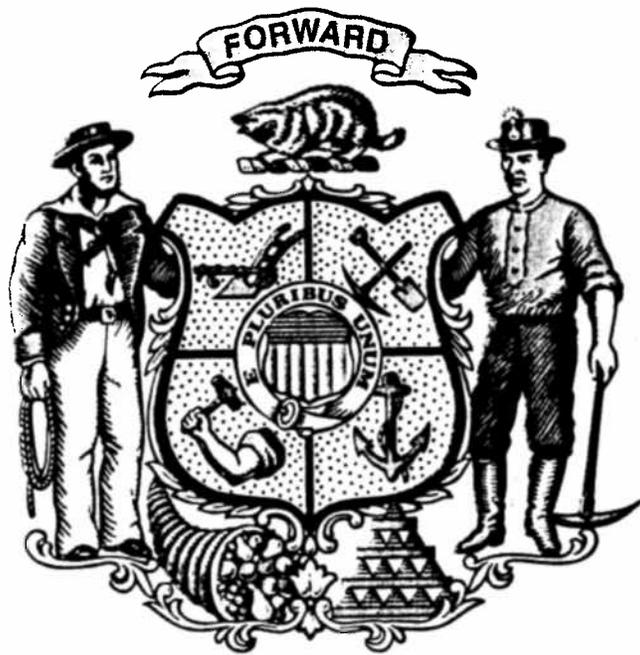
limited to those lands that:

1. provide access to other BCPL property.
2. have logging access or the opportunity to obtain a recordable easement for management purposes.
3. are suitable for ownership by another public agency within an existing project boundary.

The initial effort under the authority granted by this legislation will be to sell any lands to the DNR which are identified as being appropriate for inclusion in its Natural Areas Program. All additional lands identified for sale, particularly those which are located within the boundaries of governmental units project areas, such as county forests, will first be offered for inclusion into those projects. Lands will then be offered for public sale.

- Private consultants will be hired to assist with appraisals, title work and real estate services. All costs would be borne by the corresponding transaction.
- Sales would be conducted on a per county basis with advertising being placed both locally and in major Wisconsin real estate markets.
- The BCPL would conduct periodic sales of these lands using the sealed bid process. Funds generated through Land Bank sales will be deposited in a separate account and made available for BCPL land purchases within the area targeted for long-term ownership (green area on map), which will help to consolidate productive timberland blocks.

Attachment: BCPL Land Consolidation Map



**SUPPORT
LETTERS
FOR
AB1012**

TOWN OF AINSWORTH
PEARSON, WISCONSIN 54462

To: Rep. Scott R. Jensen
Fax: 608-282-3698

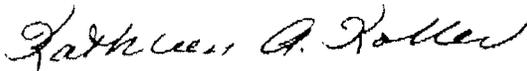
From: Town of Ainsworth
N10101 State Road 55
Pearson, WI 54462
Phone & Fax: (715) 484-8949

Re: LRB-4418: Transferring of certain BCPL lands to the DNR and granting limited land bank authority to the BCPL

February 9, 2006

At a Town Board Meeting for the Town of Ainsworth, Langlade County, held on February 9, 2006 a discussion was held regarding LRB-4418: Transferring of certain BCPL lands to the DNR and granting limited land bank authority to the BCPL. A motion to support LRB-4418 was made by Supervisor Richard Guenther and seconded by Supervisor Theodore Jacobsen. Vote taken: Chairman Mary Lu Lewis – aye; Supervisor Theodore Jacobsen – aye; Supervisor Richard Guenther – aye. Motion carried.

Thank You,



Kathleen A. Koller
Ainsworth Town Clerk

cc: Rep. Donald Friske



-----Original Message-----

From: Richard Connor [mailto:prlrc@hotmail.com]

Sent: Friday, February 10, 2006 11:51 AM

Subject: LRB-4418

Representative Donald Friske
Assembly Committee on Forestry

RE: (LRB-4418)

I am in favor of (BCPL) transferring lands that are not being managed and acquiring lands that are suitable for timber management and this is the thrust of the above legislation. It will allow (BCPL) to increase it's management efficiency and reduce forest fragmentation. All previous objections to this legislation seem to have been taken care of in this draft. I offer my full support.

Richard Connor Jr.
President - Pine River Lumber Co., Ltd.

cc: All Forestry Committee Members



gathering waters
conservancy

DATE: February 13, 2006
TO: Members of Assembly Committee on Forestry
FROM: Vicki Elkin, Executive Director, Gathering Waters Conservancy
RE: Support for Assembly Bill 1012

On behalf of Wisconsin's 55 land trusts, Gathering Waters Conservancy urges you to support AB 1012.

Gathering Waters Conservancy is a private, non-profit conservation organization that represents Wisconsin's growing network of local land trusts. Land trusts are private organizations that work to protect wildlife habitat, trails, scenic areas, farms and forests, and other lands vital to the health and well-being of our communities. There are now 55 trusts operating in every corner of Wisconsin, including your own district. Together, we have protected over 150,000 acres of land and have a combined membership of 45,000 individuals.

We believe that AB 1012 makes sense from both an economic and conservation standpoint. AB 1012 will allow the DNR to consolidate natural areas and to consistently manage these lands for their natural values. At the same time, AB 1012 will enable BCPL to increase the number of acres it manages for timber production.

AB 1012 represents a win-win for all involved; for the DNR, for BCPL, and for the general public.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support of AB1012.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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President
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Madison

Thomas "Tuck" Mallery
Mosinee

Howard Mead
Madison

Bryan Pierce
Eagle River

Rudy Rasin
Chicago, IL

Patricia Stocking
Madison

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Vicki Elkin

Gathering Waters Conservancy works with land trusts and individuals around Wisconsin to ensure a legacy of wild lands and special places for our children.

211 S. Paterson Street, Suite 270
Madison, WI 53703
(608) 251-9131
www.gatheringwaters.org





The Nature Conservancy in Wisconsin
633 West Main Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53708

tel 608/251-8140
fax 608/251-8535
nature.org/wisconsin

DATE: February 13, 2006

TO: Members of Assembly Committee on Forestry

FROM: Todd Holschbach, Director of Government Relations, The Nature Conservancy in Wisconsin

RE: Support for Assembly Bill 1012

The Nature Conservancy in Wisconsin supports AB 1012, confident that it will result in the protection of natural area quality lands while increasing acres managed for timber production in Northern Wisconsin.

The fragmentation and parcelization of Wisconsin's northern forests is threatening the conservation of large, landscape-scale natural habitats. Responsible timber management aids in maintaining forestland habitats, achieving conservation while preserving local, timber-dependent economies.

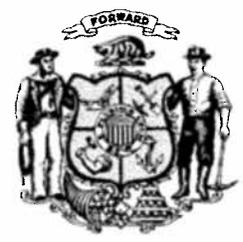
AB 1012 presents an opportunity for a partnership between habitat conservation and timber management that will demonstrate that these activities are compatible and complementary to each other.

Please support AB 1012.

The Nature Conservancy is a leading international, nonprofit organization that preserves plants, animals and natural communities representing the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. To date, the Conservancy and its more than one million members have been responsible for the protection of more than 15 million acres in the United States and have helped preserve more than 101 million acres in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific. In Wisconsin, the Conservancy has helped conserve more than 85,300 acres since 1960. The Conservancy has more than 21,000 members in Wisconsin and offices in Madison, Ashland, Baraboo, East Troy, and Sturgeon Bay. Visit us on the Web at nature.org/wisconsin.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



From: Kris Mayberry [mailto:county.clerk@sawyercountygov.org]

Sent: Monday, February 13, 2006 12:55 PM

To: Donald.friske@legis.state.wi.us; jeff.mursau@legis.state.wi.us;
john.ainsworth@legis.state.wi.us; mary.williams@legis.state.wi.us;
mary.hubler@legis.state.wi.us; frank.boyle@legis.state.wi.us

Cc: 'Nelson, Tia'

Subject: support for bill regarding Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (LRB-4418)

Representatives Friske, Mursau, Ainsworth, Williams, Hubler, and Boyle

Hopefully I am not too late to express my support for the above-referenced legislation. I have read the analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau and am familiar with the proposal. It makes sense to provide for a mechanism for the consolidation of BCPL lands and for the ultimate transfer of fragmented parcels that lie within county or DNR managed lands to those entities. Please call me if you have any questions.

Kris Mayberry, Sawyer County Clerk





Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs, Inc.

5497 WATERFORD LANE, SUITE B, APPLETON, 54913
PHONE: (920) 734-5530 • FAX: (920) 734-5528
WEB: www.awsc.org • E-MAIL: awsc@awsc.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Assembly Committee on Forestry

FROM: Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC)

DATE: February 14, 2006

RE: Support of **Assembly Bill 1012 (LRB 4418)**

The Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC) requests your support of Assembly Bill 1012 offered by Representative Jensen.

Historically, the AWSC has enjoyed a high level of cooperation with the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL). Together, we have been able to create and maintain trails on lands controlled by the BCPL to the benefit of Wisconsin's outdoor enthusiasts.

The issue of fragmentation of land ownership throughout Wisconsin makes it difficult and time-consuming for our 600+ snowmobile clubs to maintain the integrity of nearly 30,000 miles of snowmobile trails. Currently, some 40,000 land owners participate in our trail system, and sales of major blocks of land which are then divided among new owners create severe challenges for our volunteers seeking to maintain our trails.

Simply, the fragmentation of land ownership has been and will continue to be one of the major challenges facing the AWSC. Efforts to consolidate ownership of parcels of land provide immediate, positive benefits for all of us who enjoy Wisconsin's snowmobile trails.

The consolidation aspects of Assembly Bill 1012 deserve the AWSC's full endorsement, and we ask for your support of the measure.

Thank you.

United We Trail – Divided We Fail





**1000 FRIENDS
OF WISCONSIN**

16 North Carroll Street Suite 810 Madison, WI phone:608.259.1000 fax:608.259.1621
email:friends@1kfriends.org www.1kfriends.org www.PictureSmartGrowth.org

DATE: February 14, 2006
TO: Members of Assembly Committee on Forestry
FROM: Lisa MacKinnon, Policy Director, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin
RE: Support for Assembly Bill 1012

As an organization that educates the public about the benefits of our forests for conservation, habitat protection, public recreation, clean water and air, and strong local and state economies, we urge you to support AB 1012.

AB 1012 makes sense from both an economic and conservation perspective. It will allow the DNR to consolidate and preserve high quality natural areas and to manage these lands for their natural values. At the same time, AB 1012 will enable the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands to consolidate its working forests for more efficient timber management and investment in the state, while also preventing or mitigating forest fragmentation and parcelization.

Forest fragmentation and parcelization affect every aspect of forest values - ecological, economic, and social/cultural. The fragmentation and parcelization of Wisconsin's forests is threatening the conservation of large, landscape-scale natural habitats and the many benefits they provide to the public, as well as inhibiting the efficient and sustainable timber management that our state and local economies depend upon.

The citizens of Wisconsin have made it clear that they consider this issue one of their chief concerns regarding the future health of our forests.

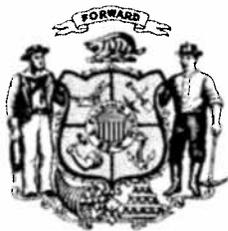
AB 1012 presents a unique opportunity for conservationists and timber management to join together to preserve the many benefits that our forests provide to the state.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support of AB1012.

1000 Friends of Wisconsin is a statewide nonprofit organization that educates citizens and policy makers about the benefits of responsible land use. We advocate for healthy rural and urban communities and the protection of our natural, cultural and economic resources statewide.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





REPRESENTATIVE GARY E. SHERMAN
74th Assembly District

State Capitol
P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-7690
Toll-free: 1-888-534-0074
Fax: (608) 282-3674
E-mail: rep.sherman@legis.state.wi.us

District Address:
P.O. Box 157
Port Wing, WI 54865
715-774-3691

**Statement of Rep. Gary Sherman
On AB1012**

I want to take this opportunity to thank the chair and the committee for holding a hearing on this bill so quickly. I am not able to attend today, but I do want to say just a few words about this bill.

Forestry and tourism are virtually the only industries in the North. Forestry has been the principal employer for over 100 years. Over the years, I have often said that, if it were not for logging, there would be no need for lawyers (or teachers, or doctors, or any other occupation) in the North.

The continued viability of the forest products industry is under attack on many fronts. The railroads are cutting service and raising tariffs. Foreign companies, with no commitment to the area, are buying up all the paper companies. Foreign competition is eating away at the market. And the traditional base of woodlands are being sold off, divided and developed.

This bill directly addresses the last of these problems in a constructive and economically conservative way. The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands is one of the principal owners of commercial forest land remaining in the North. They are well equipped to manage these lands, but are not equipped to manage environmentally sensitive lands.

This bill will allow the BCPL to sell its environmentally sensitive lands to the DNR to manage appropriately, while allowing BCPL to use the proceeds to improve its timber holdings for commercial forestry.

All of this land is open to the public for recreation, including hunting, fishing, motorized and silent sports.

This bill will also provide some tax relief for local property taxpayers.

This bill has many benefits for forestry, the environment, recreation and tax relief. A great deal of credit must go to Scott Jensen and Tia Nelson for developing such a well thought out proposal.

Gary



Re: AB 1012

Comments and enclosures to Assembly Forestry Committee. Donald Friske, Chair

Comment page

Resolution 3-03 from Partners in Forestry Cooperative

Housing density charts from University of Wisconsin, Department of Rural Sociology
Courtesy Roger Hammer

Submitted by,

Joe Hovel
6063 Baker Lake Rd.
Conover, WI 54519
715-479-8528

I am here today as a businessman, a forest landowner, and as an avid outdoorsman. I have a 35-year career in forest products with a value added sawmill operation and construction business. We have been proud to use material which has been sustainably harvested. For the past several years I have chaired Partners in Forestry Cooperative and was here just five weeks ago to promote Senate Bill 353.

Our family owns and manages approximately 1,600 acres of forestland under MFL and FCL, most of which is in Vilas County. Our two Vilas County tracts border state lands of the Board of Commission of Public Lands.

Forest fragmentation is taking a toll on the north woods. A select few have reaped huge profits on land resales while the working folks lose forestry jobs, hunting and fishing lands, and we all lose the image of the great north woods. According to U W researchers Roger Hammer and Volker Radloff the " growth of housing in Northern Wis. is undeniable and has the potential to isolate public lands, which are at risk of becoming islands in a sea of human domination and are likely to suffer local extinctions and biodiversity loss. " See the enclosed density charts. They present a compelling testimony without words!

In June 2005 Partners in Forestry sponsored a summit of 35 stakeholders to address problems in the Forest Products industry. It was no surprise the summit identified fragmentation as the leading threat to the forest economy. Partners in Forestry has had a resolution promoting expansion of Public Forest lands since 2003, as a way to address fragmentation. A copy is enclosed for your review.

I have experienced firsthand the forest management practices of the BCPL and find it to be exemplary. These lands provide, through public ownership, all of the benefits striven for to assist an ailing industry, as well as numerous public benefits.

The timber management and logging practices of the BCPL lands I have witnessed are the envy of many forest owners in the north! I personally have been so impressed with BCPL management that the only access easement our family has granted to date has been to the BCPL.

I would sum this up by saying that BCPL lands are great neighbors and our relationship is mutually beneficial. In recent conversation with BCPL foresters I have become aware of their land consolidation plan and the idea of a land bank. In my opinion, this is a common sense approach providing many benefits to Northern counties. Perhaps the most notable of these benefits is to provide more public access and the mitigation of forest fragmentation.

I would hope that this committee will support this proposal, as a benefit to the northern counties and all the visitors who recreate there. It is the right thing to do for the forest products economy and for the tourism industry. It is right for the people of Wisconsin.

RESOLUTION 03-03

Re: Expansion of Public Forest Lands

WHEREAS, the land base of the Partners in Forestry Landowner Cooperative (PIF) is in the Northern counties of Wisconsin, and the mission of PIF is to *promote sustainable forestry*; and

WHEREAS, the North Woods of Wisconsin is characterized by an abundance of forested land, lakes, and rivers; and

WHEREAS, this resource has great impact upon this region, its economy, its residents, and its visitors; and

WHEREAS, the *public ownership* of these lands grants the utilization of this resource to both residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, public forest land has demonstrated itself to be a viable and lucrative investment for the economy of Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, lands in public ownership offer many benefits; including, but not limited to:

- A valuable and necessary land base for the practice of forestry and forest-based economy in Northern Wisconsin, including the industries of logging, consulting forestry, and forest-product manipulation,
- The mitigating effect against fervent forest fragmentation,
- Allowing access to lands by the public for uses such as hunting, hiking, horseback riding, berry picking, sightseeing, and fishing,
- State lands make payments in lieu of taxes to local municipalities at an equal rate, while offering opportunities for the public to enjoy forest lands,
- Acting as an economic stimulus for the North Woods, both in sustaining forest products industries, and in attracting tourism to the region,
- Environmental benefits to flora and fauna, and
- The preservation of the atmosphere of the North Woods of Wisconsin.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED by Partners in Forestry that PIF supports and encourages the expansion of public ownership of forestlands in Northern Wisconsin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution will be available for distribution to all entities with reference to or involvement in public land issues in the counties of PIF's membership, and all legislators representing the same.

Adopted this 13th day of October, 2003
by the Partners in Forestry Landowner Cooperative
Board of Directors

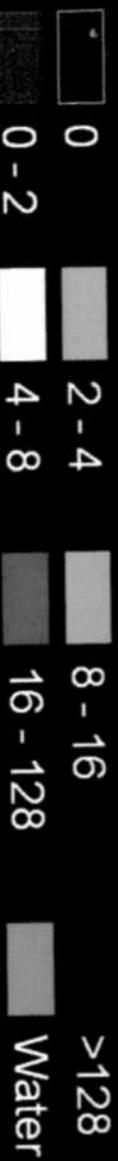
Phil Coon
Joe Hovel
June Jones
Barbara Loar
Bob Simeone

Northern UW-Extension District

Housing Density 1940



Housing Units per Km²



Northern UW-Extension District Housing Density 1980



Housing Units per Km²

- 0
- 2 - 4
- 4 - 8
- 8 - 16
- 16 - 128
- >128
- Water

Northern UW-Extension District

Housing Density 2000

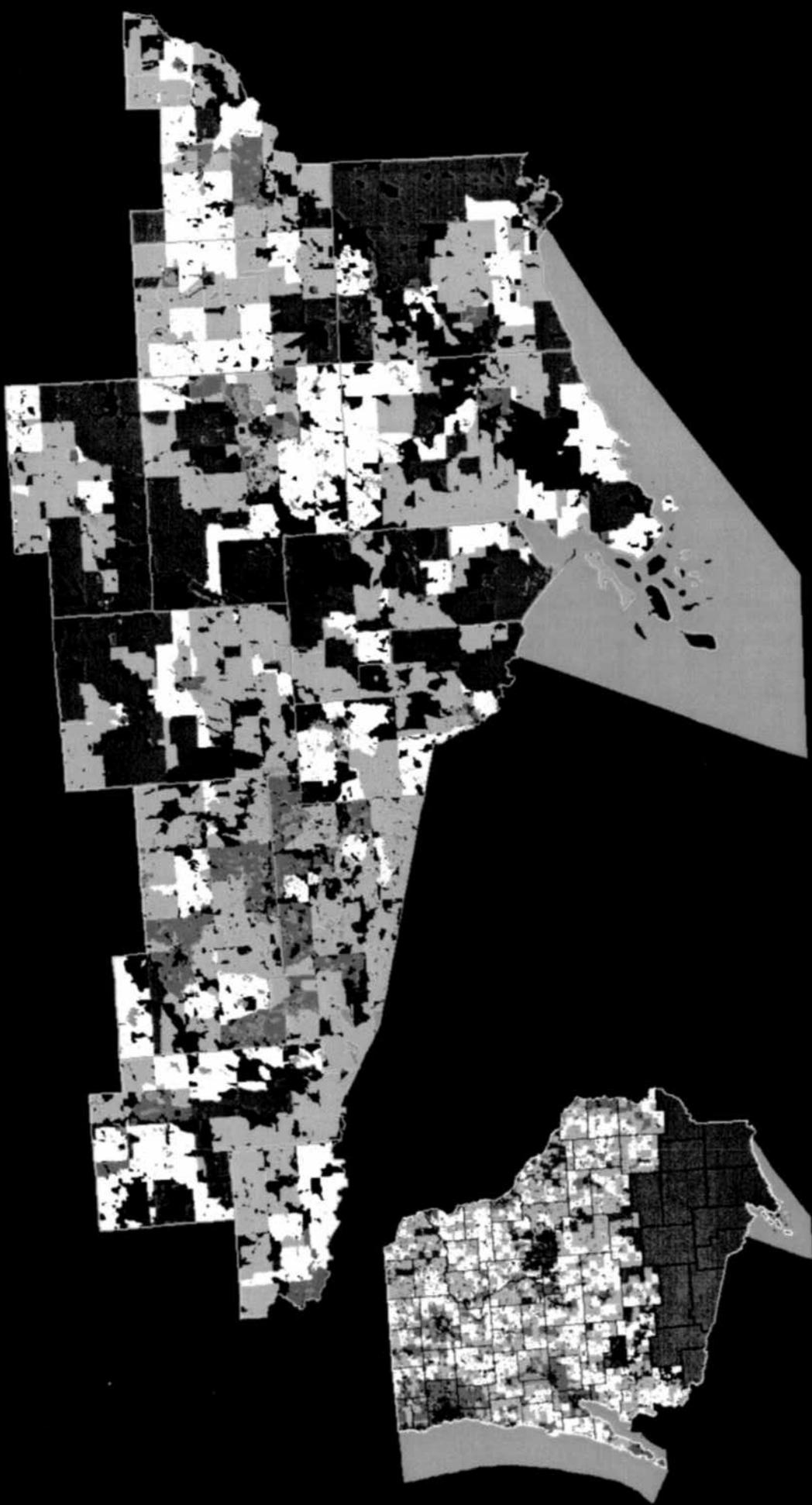


Housing Units per Km²

- 0
- 2 - 4
- 4 - 8
- 8 - 16
- 16 - 128
- >128
- Water

Northern UW-Extension District

Housing Density 2030*



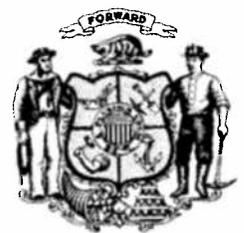
Housing Units per Km²

- 0
- 2 - 4
- 4 - 8
- 8 - 16
- 16 - 128
- >128
- Water

*Linear projection of 1990s growth



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





Douglas La Follette
Secretary of State

Jack C. Voight
State Treasurer

Peggy A. Lautenschlager
Attorney General

Tia Nelson
Executive Secretary

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Mailing Address: PO Box 8943 • Madison, WI 53708-8943
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Fact Sheet

The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands is Wisconsin's oldest state agency and was created in the Wisconsin Constitution in 1848. Currently the three board members are Doug La Follette, Secretary of State; Peggy A. Lautenschlager, Attorney General; and Jack Voight, State Treasurer. The agency is responsible for managing **Trust Assets** for the benefit of public education in Wisconsin. The **Trust Assets** include **Trust Funds**, which total over 634 million dollars, and **Trust Lands** totaling nearly 78,000 acres, as of January 2006. The **Trust Assets** are derived from the sale of lands granted to the State by the federal government in the 1800's and from other sources as directed by the Wisconsin Constitution and State Statutes. The beneficiaries of the **Trust Fund** include the State's K-12 public school libraries, which receive the majority of the **Trust Funds'** annual earnings. In Fiscal Year 2006, 28.2 million dollars will be distributed for library support, the largest earnings ever and a 15% increase over the previous year.

The three program areas administered by the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands are:

Trust Funds Investment Program

The principal of the **Trust Funds** is invested primarily as loans to school districts and local governments for public purposes. The **Trust Funds** also purchase bonds issued by various Wisconsin public entities. These investments are authorized by State Statutes and secured as general obligation debt of the borrower. Loans provided through the **State Trust Fund Loan Program** are an important source of financing for many of Wisconsin's school districts and local governments. There are four **Trust Funds** with separate sources of funding and beneficiaries.

- ❖ The principal balance of the **Common School Fund** totals over 613 million dollars and its earnings are used to support public school libraries. Its principal grows through the collection of fees, fines and forfeitures, proceeds from the State Treasurer's Unclaimed Property program, and timber sale revenue.
- ❖ The **Normal School Fund** totals over 20 million dollars and its earnings are transferred to the general fund. Its principal grows through the proceeds of timber sales on **Trust Lands**.
- ❖ Earnings from the **Agricultural College Fund** and the **University Fund** are provided to the University of Wisconsin System. Their balances are \$305,300 and \$234,200, respectively.

Trust Lands Management Program

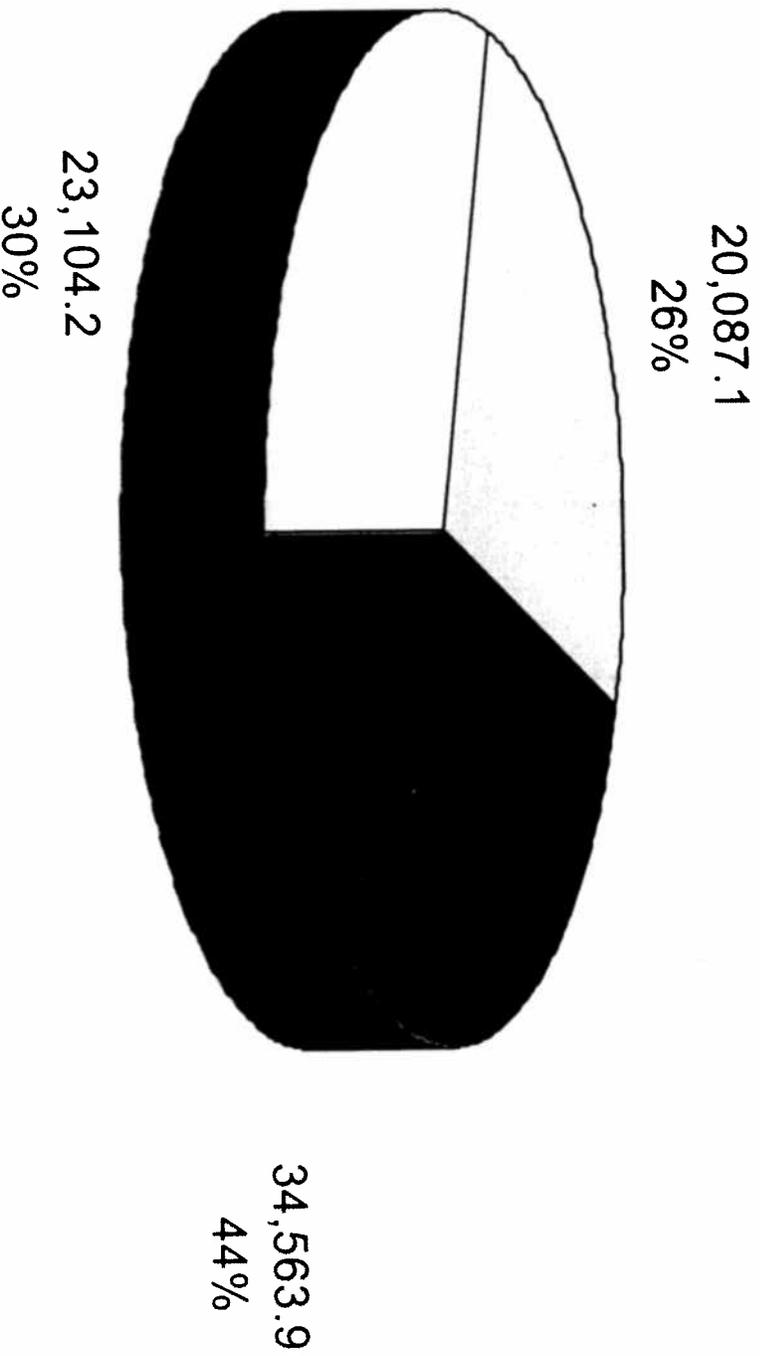
The Board manages approximately 77,000 acres of **Trust Lands** primarily for sustainable forestry. The **Trust Lands** are also available for public use including outdoor recreation. In addition, these lands provide the public benefit of protecting water quality and biological diversity. These lands are located mostly in the northern Wisconsin counties of Ashland, Florence, Forest, Iron, Marinette, Oneida, Price, Sawyer and Vilas.

Land Records Program

The Board maintains a repository of land records related to the approximately 10 million acres of land granted to Wisconsin in the 1800's by the federal government. Included are documents conveying the lands to the State, the management of those lands, and their sale to private parties. Additionally, the Board has custody of the original Public Land Survey field notes and plat maps which document the property description upon which all land ownership in Wisconsin is based. These records are regularly consulted for legal, administrative and historical research.

BCPL Land Management Analysis

Total Acreage = 77,755.2



- Timberland
- Natural Areas Quality
- Wetland/Open Water or Non-forested Lands

Total Natural Areas Quality Lands Include both NA1 and NA2 Parcels.

Prepared by BCPL_I/T 11/14/2005

Wedge Composition:

Natural Areas Quality Land contains all BCPL land identified by the BCPL biotic inventory as either NA1 or NA2, regardless of primary covertype category.

Timberland is all non-NA quality BCPL land with a primary covertype category that is a harvestable, revenue producing, timber species type.

Wetland/Open Water or Non-forested Lands are all non-NA quality BCPL land with a primary covertype description that is not manageable for revenue producing timber.



Concept Paper
DNR/Board of Commissioners of Public Lands
Collaboration on Sustainable Forestry and Natural
Areas Management

Purpose

To further the goal of improving the management efficiency of state lands through the transfer of certain BCPL owned lands to the DNR and the granting of limited “land bank” authority to BCPL for improving its timber management.

The goal includes structuring and pacing the proposed acquisition of BCPL lands in a manner which allows the DNR flexibility to complete other high priority transactions, while ensuring measurable progress towards the goal of consolidating natural area lands under a single agency.

The primary purpose of this legislation is to provide for the realignment of BCPL land holdings into more productive timber management units, while consolidating natural areas under the ownership of the DNR.

This land consolidation plan has the following benefits:

- I. The transfer of natural area quality land from BCPL to the DNR**
- II. Increased tax receipts for local municipalities**
- III. Increased timber management efficiency**
- IV. Reduced forest fragmentation**
- V. Increased public access for hunting, fishing and recreation**

DNR Acquisition of BCPL Owned Lands

The goals of the proposed acquisitions are to achieve the greatest amount of conservation at the lowest cost to the Stewardship Fund. That goal includes structuring and pacing the proposed acquisitions to minimize the extent to which it compromises DNR’s ability to complete other priority transactions.

There are three categories of BCPL owned land that should be managed by DNR or have additional conservation protections:

Natural Areas Lands:

# BCPL Natural Area quality lands within an existing DNR project boundary	3,471 acres
# BCPL Natural Area quality lands not within an existing DNR project	8,667 acres

Other Lands:

# BCPL non Natural Area lands within existing DNR project boundaries	TBD
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TOTAL

12,138

Legislation would direct that DNR utilize Stewardship Funds to the extent available but not to exceed \$2 million in each year of 2007-2010 to obtain, directly or through trade, fee title or conservation easements on BCPL Natural Area quality land. Certain other BCPL lands within existing DNR project boundaries may also be included as agreed to by each respective agency. All proposed purchases by the DNR shall be subject to the existing Natural Resource Board review and approval process, and all proposed BCPL purchases shall be subject to Board of Commissioners review and approval.

BCPL Land Bank Authority

BCPL will use the proceeds from the sale of its natural areas quality land and other non-productive or isolated parcels to invest in property that enhances the consolidation of its land holdings. Qualifying natural areas will be sold to the DNR, as well as certain other lands within existing DNR project boundaries. The remaining isolated or non-productive parcels will be offered for sale to local governments for right of first refusal, after which those parcels remaining will be made available for sale to private parties under a competitive, sealed bid process.

Land sale proceeds will be deposited in an account [e.g. land bank] within the applicable Trust Fund and can be used for land purchases under the following conditions: (a) the land to be purchased is within the land consolidation zone approved by the Board; (b) the total acreage of public land managed by the Board after such purchase shall not exceed the total acreage managed by the Board at the time this authority is granted; and (c) the BCPL has determined that the proposed purchase will do one or more of the following: (1) improve the Board's timber land management activities; (2) reduce forest fragmentation; or (3) increase public access to BCPL land.

The legislation will establish accounts within the respective Trust Funds for the deposit of any proceeds from the sale of BCPL lands and will specify that monies in those accounts shall only be used to invest in future land purchases described above, or for costs associated with such purchases.

Further, this legislation shall require that the Board make annual payments in lieu of taxes to the appropriate local governmental unit for any land it purchases in an amount equal to the taxes assessed against such property at the time of purchase. Separate legislation will authorize an appropriation funded from the respective Trust Fund revenue to fund such payments.





Conservation Notices of the Week

**Week of February 6, 2006
2005 - 2006 Legislative Session**

Conservation NOW announces to Legislators and other stakeholders the pro-conservation positions on issues before the Senate and/or Assembly in the week ahead. Some of these policies are the priorities of the conservation community and can be found in the Conservation Briefing Book 2005-2006 which was delivered to your office on February 16, 2005. All of these issues will be tracked on the Conservation Vote Tracker (<http://www.conservationvoters.org/votetracker/>). Many of these issues will be scored on the Conservation Scorecard. Conservation NOW is produced and distributed by the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters. Please contact Anne Sayers at anne@conservationvoters.org or (608) 661-0845 if you have any questions.

This Week's Notices:

- **Oppose LRB 0419/1 and LRB 1562/1: Lifting the Moratorium on Nuclear Power Plant Construction**
- **Support LRB 4418/3: Encouraging Land Protection and Consolidation**
- **Oppose LRB 4140: Allowing for More Sprawl**
- **Oppose LRB 4182/1: Preventing Local Governments from Protecting Natural Resources and Public Health**
- **Support AB 906: Free Access to State Parks and Trails for Disabled Veterans**
- **Oppose AB 967: Senseless Removal of Trees and Shrubs**

Oppose LRB 0419/1 and LRB 1562/1: Lifting the Moratorium on Nuclear Power Plant Construction

The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters urges you to oppose LRB 0419/1 and LRB 1562/1 which are currently circulating for co-sponsorship.

Nuclear power plants generate a waste that is so toxic that a half-century after the nuclear power industry began, a solution for its disposal still has not been found. In Wisconsin, more than 1,000 tons of high-level radioactive waste is stored along the shores of Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River, both vital freshwater resources, because of industry's failure to solve the disposal problem. More than nine tons of plutonium, one of the most lethal substances known and a primary ingredient in nuclear weapons, are contained in this waste which remains dangerously radioactive for tens of thousands of years. The only sustainable options for meeting Wisconsin's energy needs are to reduce demand for energy and increase reliance and production on renewable sources of energy. Allowing for the production of the most dangerous fuel source known is neither safe nor sustainable.

Support LRB 4418/3: Encouraging Land Protection and Consolidation

The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters urges you to support LRB 4418/3, which is currently circulating for co-sponsorship.

LRB 4418/3 will result in the preservation of high-quality land, while also preventing fragmentation,

OVER



which is a severe ecological threat. The proposal would allow the DNR to use up to \$2 million per year of Stewardship funds to purchase natural area-quality lands and lands that lie within DNR project borders that are now owned by BCPL, giving them a higher level of protection. In turn, BCPL could use these revenues to purchase land in its proposed consolidation area.

Oppose LRB 4140: Allowing for More Sprawl

The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters urges you to oppose LRB 4140, which is currently circulating for co-sponsorship.

LRB 4140 would eliminate the Department of Transportation's ability to do highway sprawl mitigation through the purchase of development rights. The right to purchase development rights gives the Department of Transportation the ability to ensure that highways are used for the purposes they were designed, and not turned into long corridors of strip malls (if that was not the intent of the design). The ability of the DOT to purchase development rights was key to all vested parties in coming to an agreement on the Highway 12 expansion. It is an agreement that should be emulated in the future, not restricted.

Oppose LRB 4182/1: Preventing Local Governments from Protecting Natural Resources and Public Health

The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters urges you to oppose LRB 4182 which is currently circulating for co-sponsorship.

By prohibiting a county from enacting or enforcing certain zoning ordinances or regulations, LRB 4182 could have far-reaching impacts on natural resources and public health. The bill could dramatically affect county efforts to curb sprawl, prevent polluted runoff, limit light pollution, prevent flooding and encourage energy efficiency to name just a few. The heavy handed restrictions on local governments outlined in LRB 4182 will deny them the ability to protect the health, safety and welfare of their constituents.

Support AB 906: Free Access to State Parks and Trails for Disabled Veterans

The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters urges you to support AB 906, which may have an executive session in the Assembly Committee on Tourism on Tuesday.

Unlike numerous other states, Wisconsin does not offer benefits to our disabled veterans with regard to access to our state parks and state trails. AB 906 will provide Wisconsin residents who are veterans with a 70% or greater military-related disability and those who are former prisoners of war, year-round free access to our state parks and trails.

Oppose AB 967: Senseless Removal of Trees and Shrubs

The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters urges you to oppose AB 967 which will have a public hearing before the Assembly Transportation Committee on Thursday.

Trees and shrubs in the public "right-of-way" must be managed carefully because they are a great benefit, providing not only scenic beauty, but erosion control, light screens, noise barriers and snow containment. Trees and shrubs should not be cut down for the purpose of providing a better view of billboards without regard to these benefits. While AB 967 may benefit owners and operators of billboards, it neglects the interests of the general public.