



Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin

Request to restore Nonprofit conservation organization capacity grant to 2015-2017 Budget

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Since 2000, an annual grant of \$84,100 has been authorized to the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin from the Department of Natural Resources budget. The source of this Conservation Aids, SEG Nonprofit conservation organization grant has been \$42,500 from the DNR Water Resources account and \$42,500 from Forestry resources account. **We request that this capacity grant be restored to the 2015-2017 budget.**

The Foundation was created in 1986 to boost **private-sector investment** in state-managed or state-owned natural resources: our lands, waters and wildlife.

4:1 leveraging funds

For every \$1 the Foundation has received from the capacity grant since 2000, the Foundation has generated \$4-\$6, on average, that is given to the State of Wisconsin in cash and services for our natural resources.

The Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin has:

- Provided **\$3.2 million in cash to manage state-owned properties**, primarily State Natural Areas
- Worked with private donors to established **68 permanent endowment funds** for management of state-owned land, research and education
- Provided **\$1.64 million for projects that support research and monitoring** of Wisconsin's rare and endangered species
- Served as a **trustee for the state** for utility mitigation funds
- Authorized by the 2012 Legislature to serve as trustee for the **Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund**, a permanent endowment for managing state-owned lands
- Taken **36,700 citizens** on field trips all across Wisconsin

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What is lost with the loss of the capacity grant?

- **Private-sector investment** for Wisconsin’s natural resources. Since inception, the Foundation has
 - Granted \$4.84 million for Wisconsin’s natural resources
 - Funded \$4.63 million in permanent natural resources endowment funds
 - Trustee for \$5.14 million of mitigation funds for the State of Wisconsin.
- **3 program positions** from a small nonprofit organization. Programs supporting management of state-owned lands and rare & endangered wildlife. Without these programs there is no foundation to develop private-sector support.
- **Wisconsin’s field trip program** celebrating 26 years

Statutory Basis of Capacity Grant

Wisconsin Statute 23.0956 Assistance for private conservation activities.

- (1) From the appropriation under s. 20.370 (5) (aw), the department shall provide one grant of \$85,000 in each fiscal year, beginning with fiscal year 2000-01, to a nonstock, nonprofit corporation that is described under section 501 (c) (3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code and organized in this state if the corporation meets all of the following requirements:
- (a) The corporation is exempt from taxation under section 501 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code.
 - (b) The corporation was created to accept and to utilize private contributions made to protect and enhance the state's natural resources.
- (2) A corporation receiving a grant under sub. (1) shall use the grant to do all of the following:
- (a) Encourage private corporations and other private entities to undertake activities, including the contribution of money, that encourage management and restoration of the state's endangered wild animals, wild plants and natural communities.
 - (b) Encourage private corporations and other private entities to engage in land management practices that protect and preserve natural resources.
- 23.0956(2)(c)(c) Provide grants to nonprofit and other groups to encourage education, restoration and management activities to enhance the state's natural resources.

History: 1999 a. 9.



C.D. Besdany Conservation grants have disbursed \$426,330 to schools, nature centers and conservation clubs in all 72 Wisconsin Counties.



Waste Management Inc. supported the management of Berlin Fen State Natural Area



36,700 citizens have participated in our field trips



WE Energies supports the management of this popular hunting area in Florence County

