



Representative Kleefisch
Chair, Assembly Committee on Natural Resources and Sporting Heritage
417 North
State Capitol

July 19, 2017

RE: Assembly Bill 399

Representative Kleefisch and members of the Committee on Natural Resources and Sporting Heritage,

Thank you for holding this hearing to hear from the public about concerns we have about the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.

The River Alliance of Wisconsin is a nonprofit river conservation organization. Our 2,000 members come from all corners of the state. We are property owners and academics, anglers and small business owners. We work tirelessly in their communities to restore stream banks, hunt down aquatic invasive species, speak out about public policy, and work to make rivers accessible to everyone. What we have in common is that we love the waters of this state and want them protected from being depleted and degraded. In many cases, our economic well-being depends on the protection of these waters. Our members also cherish the National Scenic Riverway program and the Wild and Scenic River federal designation. Assembly Bill 399 runs counter to everything that the Wild and Scenic River federal designation represents, and violates Wisconsin's commitment to protect this Riverway, for the good of ALL people, for all time.

The River Alliance of Wisconsin opposes Assembly Bill 399 because it undermines:

- The St. Croix River Overlay District, especially the Wild and Scenic protections, which in conjunction with the state rules, have had untold positive effects on water quality, fisheries, and plant and animal that life;
- The Wild and Scenic designation and the Act's primary goal to protect and enhance our value for wild spaces.
- Local authorities' ability to protect the health, welfare, and safety of their citizens, for whom zoning laws are designed to protect.

Assembly Bill 399 is also bad policy because it is written to give an individual land owner preferential treatment. This bad bill will have adverse effects on neighboring landowners, the millions of visitors to this National Park and the businesses that thrive because of this Park, and the Park itself. Most property owners along the Riverway consider the restrictions not only fair and reasonable, but rely them to ensure continued high property values and a high quality of life. **We urge you to oppose Assembly Bill 399.**

Respectfully,

Raj Shukla
Executive Director, River Alliance of Wisconsin