

**Ducks Unlimited
Pheasants Forever
Wisconsin Conservation Congress
Wisconsin Trappers Association
Wisconsin Waterfowl Association
Wisconsin Wildlife Federation**

Sportsmen's Groups Oppose Bill Removing Wetlands Protection

Legislation has been proposed that removes DNR's permit authority for the protection of over one million acres of non-federally protected wetlands in Wisconsin. In 2001 the Wisconsin Legislature with overwhelming support from sportsmen and women and other Wisconsin citizens unanimously enacted legislation requiring DNR review and permitting before non-federally protected wetlands could be filled.

A large proportion of these wetlands are high quality and provide valuable fish and wildlife habitat throughout the state of Wisconsin. These wetlands are critical habitat for waterfowl, furbearers, pheasants and other game, nongame and endangered species. In addition these nonfederal wetlands often form the headwaters of Wisconsin's streams including Wisconsin's prized trout waters.

Non-federally protected wetlands serve other important ecosystem roles, such as filtering pollutants from getting into Wisconsin lakes and streams and providing valuable flood storage thereby reducing flood damage to public and private property during storm events.

The proposed bill is extremely damaging to the hunting, fishing and trapping community and the above sportsmen's organizations call on the Legislature to engage sportsmen and women, other stakeholders and the Department of Natural Resources prior to developing legislation affecting Wisconsin's valuable wetlands. The groups stand ready to assist in the development of legislation dealing with specific wetland regulatory problems but remain steadfast to protecting Wisconsin's valuable nonfederal wetlands.

Ducks Unlimited is the world's leader in wetlands and waterfowl conservation with a mission to conserve, restore, and manage wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people. Contact: Nels Swenson, State Policy Chairman (608) 712-3347

Pheasants Forever is a nonprofit organization with over 8,300 members in the state of Wisconsin alone. Our organization and our members are dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of wildlife habitat on both the state and national level. Contact: Alex Weber, Regional Representative (608) 333-8599

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress is comprised of citizens elected from every county in Wisconsin and is dedicated to the responsible management of Wisconsin's natural resources for present and future generations. Contact: Larry Bonde, Chairman (920) 286-3327

The Wisconsin Trappers Association is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to preserving and promoting trapping and the protection of furbearer populations and their habitat. Contact: Scott Zimmerman, President (920) 382-7049

The Wisconsin Waterfowl Association is a member-based nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation and restoration of Wisconsin's waterfowl and wetland resources. Contact: Don Kirby, Executive Director (262) 224-4949

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation is a nonprofit organization comprised of 205 hunting, fishing and trapping groups and is dedicated to conservation education and the advancement of sound conservation policies. Contact: George Meyer, Executive Director (608) 516-5545