

BARRON COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 2023 – 13

**PROVIDE \$18.7 MILLION IN STABLE, CORE STATE FUNDING SUPPORT
FOR COUNTY CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT STAFFING STATEWIDE**

TO THE BARRON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1 **WHEREAS**, Wis. Stats. 92.06 and 92.07 create and define the powers of Land
2 Conservation Committees (LCCs) and Wis. Stat. 92.09 empowers Soil and Water
3 Conservation Departments (SWCDs) to administer county soil and water conservation
4 programs and may exercise the powers granted to the land conservation committee; and
5

6 **WHEREAS**, county SWCDs are the local delivery mechanism for a wide range of
7 Wisconsin's natural soil and water and other resource management programs including
8 non-point pollution control, farmland preservation, reclamation of non-metallic mines,
9 invasive species control, woodland management, lakes protection, and more; and
10

11 **WHEREAS**, SWCD professionals work as trusted, technical advisors to support
12 producer-led watershed groups, assist waterfront property owners, help farmers develop
13 and implement nutrient management plans, respond to natural disasters like floods, and
14 spend years building the trust to be able to successfully do so; and,
15

16 **WHEREAS**, the conservation practices that SWCD professionals help landowners
17 apply to farm fields, forests, and shorelines have numerous water quality benefits,
18 including: preventing soil erosion and promoting soil health, increasing infiltration into
19 groundwater aquifers, protecting drinking water supply, reducing surface runoff and flood
20 severity, and more; and
21

22 **WHEREAS**, the State of Wisconsin 2023 Joint Allocation Plan establishes the
23 current need for county SWCD staffing at \$18.7 million statewide, per the core funding
24 goal established in Wis. Stat. 92.14(6)(b); and
25

26 **WHEREAS**, the return on investment in county SWCDs is high, leveraging federal
27 and private grant dollars into more conservation on the land and more dollars into local
28 economies, and multiplying several times over the state's existing investment; and
29

30 **WHEREAS**, support of county SWCD funding is a bipartisan issue, supported by
31 farm, conservation, environmental and local government groups alike, and was a top
32 priority voiced by Wisconsinites at statewide Water Quality Task Force hearings in 2019;
33 and
34

35 **WHEREAS**, providing state funding for core county SWCD staffing needs will
36 result in more conservation on the landscape and better protection of water quality.
37

38 **WHEREAS**, this resolution of support to provide \$18.7 million in stable, core State
39 funding support for county conservation staff funding statewide is being brought forward
40 by Louie Okey, County Board Chair and County Supervisor, District 16; and
41

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Barron County Board of Supervisors hereby supports and urges the Wisconsin Legislature and the Joint Committee on Finance to provide \$18.7 million in stable, base funding for county conservation staffing, in fulfillment of the state's core funding goal and in recognition that county LWCD professionals are the among the best and most cost-effective solutions we have to improving water quality, achieving clean and safe drinking water, and supporting a viable agricultural industry at the same time.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be forwarded by the County Clerk to the Governor of the State of Wisconsin and state senators and state representatives representing Barron County.

OFFERED THIS 20th day of March, 2023.

Number of readings required: One (X) Two () Vote required for passage: Majority (X) 2/3 Entire Board (20) () Source of funding: Budgeted () General Fund () Grant () Contingency () Other (X) Details: N/A Fiscal impact: - Current year total amount: \$ - 0 - - Future years total amount: \$ - 0 - - Effect on tax levy – current year - \$ - 0 - - Effect on tax levy – future years - \$ - 0 - Fiscal impact reviewed by County Finance Director _____ Jodi Busch, Finance Director Approved as to form by Administrator: _____ Jeffrey French, Administrator Approved as to form by Corporation Counsel: _____ John Muench, Corporation Counsel	_____ Louie Okey, County Board Chair, County Board Supervisor, District 16 (The Committee Chair signature verifies the action taken by the Committee.) Board Action: Adopted (X) Failed () Tabled () Motion: (Nelson/Langman) to approve. Carried with 28 voting Yes and 1 voting No (Vaughn).
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