

**BARRON COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - 19**

**Resolution in Support for Increasing Base Funding for County Conservation  
Staffing to \$20.2 Million**

**TO THE BARRON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1       **WHEREAS**, County Soil and Water Conservation Department (SWCD) staff are  
2       relied upon to carry out a range of Wisconsin's state agricultural and resource management  
3       programs that reduce non-point pollution, preserve farmland, protect waterfront property,  
4       reclaim non-metallic mines, limit aquatic invasive species control, manage forests, and  
5       reduce floods; and

6  
7       **WHEREAS**, SWCDs assist Wisconsin's farmers in many ways, including  
8       supporting producer-led watershed groups, developing nutrient management plans,  
9       engineering manure storage and transfer systems, and applying conservation practices that  
10      promote soil health and build profitability; and

11  
12      **WHEREAS**, the shared conservation work of SWCD professionals and  
13      landowners has major water quality benefits, including preventing soil erosion, protecting  
14      drinking water supply, increasing rainwater infiltration into groundwater aquifers, and  
15      restoring native habitat; and

16  
17      **WHEREAS**, SWCD experts are trusted, technical advisors that consult with  
18      landowners to understand their land management goals and then propose customized  
19      solutions that includes project planning and contracting, engineering, quality control, and  
20      securing of cost-share funding to reduce project expenses to; and

21      **WHEREAS**, building a partnership based on trust and understanding with farmer  
22      and landowner clients cannot happen instantly, but rather, requires a sustained commitment  
23      over time from SWCD professionals; and

24      **WHEREAS**, SWCDs leverage cost-share funding from federal and private  
25      sources, providing a 2:1 return on the state investment, and spurring local economic growth  
26      in industries including agriculture, construction, tourism, forestry, and recreation; and

27      **WHEREAS**, the State of Wisconsin codifies SWCDs' role in carrying out state  
28      conservation standards via Wis. Stats Chap. 92, defining a goal that the State fund staff  
29      positions in every SWCD at 100% of the first, 70% of the second, and 50% of each  
30      additional staff position; and

31      **WHEREAS**, the State of Wisconsin has not ensured baseline support of SWCDs  
32      by meeting this funding goal since its inception, and in the 18-year period from 2006 to  
33      2024, base funding relative to SWCD staffing needs decreased by 24%; and

34      **WHEREAS**, supporting county SWCDs is a widely supported priority supported  
35      by conservation, environmental and local government groups alike; and

36      **WHEREAS**, this resolution was approved by the LCC / Extension Committee on  
37      May 6, 2025 on a vote of 6 - 0 with Cook, Kusilek, Nelson, Gores, Langman and Huth  
38      voting in favor and no members voting against.

**BARRON COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - 19**

**Resolution in Support for Increasing Base Funding for County Conservation Staffing to \$20.2 Million**

**WHEREAS**, this resolution was approved by the Executive Committee on May 7, 2025 on a vote of 9 - 0 with Bartlett, Cook, Kusilek, Nelson (Alternate), Okey, Olson, Rogers, Thompson and Wenzel voting in favor and no members voting against. Hanson was absent.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Barron County, does hereby urge the Wisconsin State Legislature to strengthen the viability of the State's County Soil and Water Conservation Staffing program by increasing base funding for the program by \$11,035,900 on an annual basis to a total of \$20.2 million annually.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that publication of this resolution may occur through posting in accordance with Section 985.02 of the Wisconsin Statutes and that a copy of the resolution be sent to WI Land + Water Conservation Association, all State Legislators, the Governor, DATCP Secretary, DNR Secretary, DOA Secretary, the Wisconsin Counties Association, and the Wisconsin Towns Association.

**OFFERED THIS 19<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2025.**

<p>Number of readings required: One (X) Two ( )</p> <p>Vote required for passage: Majority (X) 2/3 Entire Board (20) ( )</p> <p>Source of funding: Budgeted ( ) General Fund ( ) Grant ( ) Contingency ( ) Other ( X ) Details: N/A</p> <p>Fiscal impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Current year total amount: \$ - 0 -</li><li>- Future years total amount: \$ - 0 -</li><li>- Effect on tax levy – current year - \$ - 0 -</li><li>- Effect on tax levy – future years - \$ - 0 -</li></ul> <p>Fiscal impact reviewed by:</p> <p>_____ Jodi Busch, Finance Director</p> <p>Approved as to form by:</p> <p>_____ Jeffrey French, County Administrator</p> <p>_____ John Muench, Corporation Counsel</p>	<p>_____ Randy Cook, LCC/Extension Committee Chair</p> <p>_____ Louie Okey, Executive Committee Chair</p> <p>(The Committee Chair signature verifies the action taken by the Committee.)</p> <p>Board Action: Adopted (X) Failed ( ) Tabled ( )</p> <p><b>Motion (Cook/Olson)</b> to approve. Carried with 29 Yes and 0 No.</p>
--	---