

Resolution No. 39-07/19

**Supporting Budget Priorities to Improve Local Land and Water Resources**

1 Moved/Sponsored by: Land Conservation Committee

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3 **WHEREAS**, County Land and Water Conservation Departments Provide boots-on-the-ground  
4 technical assistance as trusted advisers to farmers and other landowners, helping them meet  
5 mutually agreed-upon and reasonable state conservation standards, while achieving other local  
6 business or land management objectives; and,

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8 **WHEREAS**, County Land and Water Conservation Departments are a proven asset in getting  
9 common-sense conservation onto working lands, increasing farm profitability and protecting  
10 water quality at the same time; and,

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12 **WHEREAS**, County Land and Water Conservation Departments do critical work on a variety of  
13 conservation issues such as: groundwater and drinking water protection, reducing polluted runoff  
14 from agricultural and urban areas, shoreland restoration, lake management planning, invasive  
15 species control, and much more; and,

16  
17 **WHEREAS**, County Land and Water Conservation Departments have proven to be a cost-  
18 effective investment, as the impact of state funding is multiplied several times over though  
19 collaboration with federal and private dollars – getting conservation on the land while enhancing  
20 local economies; and,

21  
22 **WHEREAS**, Conservation efforts help reduce runoff to our state’s waterways, reducing  
23 pollutants such as nutrients that lead to harmful algae blooms and result in reduced recreational  
24 opportunities that our state’s economy relies on; and

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26 **WHEREAS**, Contaminated drinking water is a growing crisis, especially in rural Wisconsin.  
27 Just under 4 million Wisconsinites—families, businesses, farms, and schools—get their drinking  
28 water from groundwater aquifers and over 25% of the State’s residents drink water from private  
29 wells, which do not have the same protections as public (municipal) wells, nor are their sources  
30 of groundwater adequately understood; and

31  
32 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Walworth County Board of Supervisors  
33 strongly urges the Wisconsin Legislature to restore conservation funding to the Statutory level  
34 set by Wisconsin State Statutes Section 92.14, increasing annual county conservation staffing  
35 and support grants from \$9 million to \$12.4 million and bonding cost-share grants for  
36 conservation projects from \$3.5 million to \$5 million; and

37  
38 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Walworth County Board of Supervisors  
39 strongly urges the Wisconsin Legislature to restore \$150,000 annually to support the Wisconsin  
40 Geological and Natural History Survey; and,



Policy and Fiscal Note  
Resolution No. 39-07/19


- I. **Title:** Supporting Budget Priorities to Improve Local Land and Water Resources
- II. **Purpose and Policy Impact Statement:** Wisconsin State Statutes set requirements for funding county conservation efforts. Section 92.14 of the Wisconsin Statutes state that funding will be appropriated to cover 100% of a first position, 75% of a second position and 50% of a third position. This funding level has not been appropriated for at least a decade. With more and more attention being paid to the quality of our state's water, there is an effort to encourage our state legislators to fully appropriate the funds set by statutes to support conservation efforts. Support for this level of funding is gaining momentum from both parties in the legislature. This resolution is intended to show support for funding conservation and let the legislature know that this is an important issue for Walworth County.
- III. **Budget and Fiscal Impact:** If the state allocates funds as prescribed by state statutes, the County could receive an additional \$65,000 each year to support conservation efforts.
- IV. **Referred to the following standing committees for consideration and date of referral:**


Committee: Land Conservation Committee      Meeting Date: June 17, 2019

Vote: 5-0

County Board Meeting Date: July 9, 2019

Policy and fiscal note has been reviewed and approved as an accurate statement of the probable policy and fiscal impacts associated with passage of the attached resolution.

 6/21/19  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David A. Bretl      Date  
County Administrator/Corporation Counsel

 6/24/19  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nicole Andersen      Date  
Deputy County Administrator – Finance

If unsigned, exceptions shall be so noted by the County Administrator.