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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on Finance

**FROM:** Daniel Bahr, Wisconsin Counties Association

**DATE:** June 10, 2019

**SUBJECT:** 2019-2021 State Biennial Budget – Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

In regard to items scheduled for consideration by the Joint Committee on Finance on June 11, 2019, please consider the following recommendation of the Wisconsin Counties Association:

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY	
LFB PAPER #	RECOMMENDATION
<b>515</b>	<b>Support option 2 or 3.</b>

Attached please find rationale for the items listed above. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the WCA office at 608-663-7188.

**LFB PAPER**

**#515**

STEWARDSHIP EXTENSION

**RECOMMENDATION: Option 2 or 3**

**Rationale:**

- Because of this program, local governments and nonprofit groups have received state matching funds to purchase land or easements for conservation. As a result, we have the funding needed for the upkeep and maintenance of our waterways, parks, forests, and trail systems.
  - If the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is not renewed as part of the state budget being debated right now, then we'll lose the effectiveness of Wisconsin's best source of funding for land and water conservation.
  - Governor Evers proposed budget only calls for a two-year extension of the program. That short time frame is entirely inadequate and severely limits the ability of local governments to provide these outdoor spaces for the public to enjoy.
  - WCA supports a long-term reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program and urge the Legislature to adopt a ten-year reauthorization of the program, while maintaining current funding levels.
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