Resolution No. 05-04/17

Supporting the Return of $9.3 million in the 2017-2019 Biennial Budget to Provide Adequate Resources to County Land Conservation Programs and Cost-Sharing for Farmers

Moved/Sponsored by: Land Conservation Committee

WHEREAS, the County Land Conservation Department is the necessary local delivery mechanism for a wide range of natural resource management programs including non-point pollution control, reclamation of non-metallic mines, invasive species control, woodland management, and lakes protection; and

WHEREAS, State grants supporting County Land Conservation staff have decreased since the program began; and

WHEREAS, the Governor’s budget reduced the staff funding allocations that were included in the 2015-2017 biennial budget, to $8 million annually, this amount is down from the 2001 to 2011 average of $9.3 million; and

WHEREAS, the 2017-2019 Governor’s budget proposed a further reduction of $675,000, equal to a 7.6% reduction of the overall budget for staff funding allocations that were included in the 2015-2017 biennial budget, and

WHEREAS this reduction brings the annual allocation below the $8 million allocated in the 2015-17 budget and further down from the 2001 to 2011 average of $9.3 million; and

WHEREAS, the 2017-2019 Governor’s budget includes an increase in cost share for nutrient management programs in the amount of $825,000 which will not directly benefit Walworth County producers; and

WHEREAS, the inability to adequately fund local, voluntarily accepted farm conservation practices has led to environmental problems and court decisions against farmers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Walworth County Board of Supervisors does hereby urge the Governor of the State of Wisconsin and all elected representatives in the Wisconsin State Legislature to return to the $9.3 million appropriation for state aid to counties, recognizing the invaluable service that county conservation employees provide in helping Wisconsin farmers grow our state’s agriculture while preserving the state’s land and water resources for future generations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Walworth County Board of Supervisors directs the County Clerk to forward a copy of this resolution to Governor Walker, State Legislators representing Walworth County and the Wisconsin Counties Association.
Policy and Fiscal Note is attached.
Reviewed and approved pursuant to Section 2-91 of the Walworth County Code of Ordinances:

David J. Bretl
County Administrator/Corporation Counsel

Nicole Andersen
Deputy County Administrator - Finance

If unsigned, exceptions shall be so noted by the County Administrator.
Policy and Fiscal Note
Resolution No. 05-04/17

I. Title: Supporting the Return of $9.3 million in the 2017-2019 Biennial Budget to Provide Adequate Resources to County Land Conservation Programs and Cost-Sharing for Farmers

II. Purpose and Policy Impact Statement: The purpose of this resolution is to encourage and support providing adequate resources to support County Land Conservation departments and cost-sharing for farmers and other land users.

III. Budget and Fiscal Impact: Passage of this Resolution will have no fiscal impact on the county budget.

IV. Referred to the following standing committees for consideration and date of referral:

Committee: Land Conservation Committee
Vote: 4-0
Meeting Date: March 20, 2017
County Board Meeting Date: April 18, 2017

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.

David A. Bretl 3/31/17
County Administrator/Corporation Counsel

Nicole Andersen
Deputy County Administrator – Finance

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