

Resolution No. 02-04/20
Supporting Budget Priorities to Improve Local Land and Water Resources

1 Moved/Sponsored by: Land Conservation Committee

2
3 **WHEREAS**, the County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) is the local
4 delivery mechanism for a wide range of Wisconsin's natural resource management programs
5 including non-point pollution control, farmland preservation, reclamation of non-metallic mines,
6 invasive species control, woodland management, lakes protection and more; and,

7
8 **WHEREAS**, LWCD professionals work as trusted, technical advisors to support producer-led
9 watershed groups, assist waterfront property owners, help farmers develop and implement
10 nutrient management plans, and respond to natural disasters like floods, and spend years building
11 the trust to be able to successfully do so; and,

12
13 **WHEREAS**, the conservation practices that LWCD professionals help landowners apply to farm
14 fields, forests, and shorelines have numerous water quality benefits, including: preventing soil
15 erosion and promoting soil health, increasing infiltration into groundwater aquifers, protecting
16 drinking water supply, reducing surface runoff and flood severity, and more; and,

17
18 **WHEREAS**, the State of Wisconsin codifies the counties' role in coordinating and
19 implementing local conservation standards in Wis. Stats. Chap. 92, and defines a state-supported
20 staffing goal for every LWCD of an average of three positions at 100, 70, and 50 percent
21 support; and,

22
23 **WHEREAS**, the State of Wisconsin has not ensured baseline support of counties by meeting this
24 funding goal since its inception, and current state-funded LWCD staff number 40% fewer than
25 they did 20 years ago; and,

26
27 **WHEREAS**, the return on investment in county LWCDs is high; they amplify the impact of
28 state funding by leveraging federal and private grant dollars into more conservation on the land,
29 and more dollars into local economies; and,

30
31 **WHEREAS**, supporting county LWCDs was the top priority voiced by Wisconsinites at
32 statewide Water Quality Task Force hearings and elsewhere over the past year by farm,
33 conservation, environmental and local government groups alike, including Wisconsin Counties
34 Association, Dairy Business Association, Wisconsin Corn Growers, Wisconsin Farm bureau, and
35 Wisconsin Farmer's Union; and,

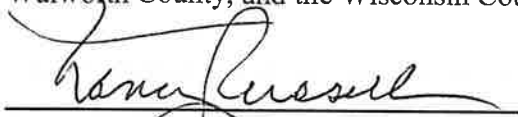
36
37 **WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 723 seeks to provide an increase of \$2,960,900 in baseline support to
38 county LWCDs, resulting in more conservation on the landscape, and better protection of water
39 quality; and,

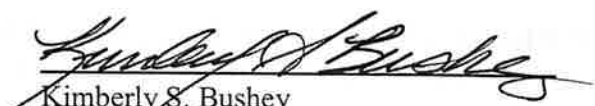
40
41 **WHEREAS**, for 2020, Walworth County requested \$207,623 for funding to cover staff using the
42 statutory formula, but received \$144,668, creating a difference of \$62,955; and,

1 **WHEREAS**, additional funding as supported by SB 723 would provide additional resources to
2 put more conservation practices on the ground and leverage federal, state and private funds to
3 support the LWCDs conservation efforts.
4

5 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Walworth County Board of Supervisors
6 does hereby urge the Wisconsin State Senate to schedule Senate Bill 723 to be heard on the floor
7 of the Senate prior to the closure of the 2019-2020 legislative session, and vote to support the
8 bill, providing necessary state support to counties, recognizing that if we are to improve water
9 quality and achieve clean and safe drinking water and support a viable agricultural industry at the
10 same time, county LWCD professionals are the best and most cost-effective solution we have.
11

12 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Walworth County Clerk is hereby directed to forward
13 a copy of this resolution to the Governor of the State of Wisconsin, State legislators representing
14 Walworth County, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.
15

16 
17 _____
18 Nancy Russell
19 County Board Chair

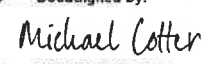
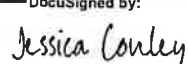
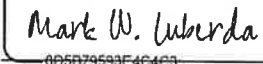


Kimberly S. Bushey
County Clerk

20
21 County Board Meeting Date: APRIL 23, 2020
22

23 Action Required: Majority Vote X Two-thirds Vote _____ Other _____

Policy and Fiscal Note is attached.
 Reviewed and approved pursuant to Section 2-91 of the Walworth County Code of Ordinances:

<p>DocuSigned by:  _____ <small>99D00DED71E44D</small> Michael Cotter Corporation Counsel</p>	<p>4/6/2020 _____ Date</p>	<p>DocuSigned by:  _____ <small>DFDAF5E148054C2</small> Jessica Conley Finance Director</p>	<p>4/6/2020 _____ Date</p>
<p>DocuSigned by:  _____ <small>0D5D79593E4E4C9</small> Mark W. Lubberda County Administrator</p>	<p>4/14/2020 _____ Date</p>		

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

This Resolution/Ordinance was:
 (Adopted) Roll Call/U.C. (Voice)
 Rejected/Referred/Laid Over
 Yes: _____ Noes: _____ Absent: _____
 Date: April 23, 2020

Policy and Fiscal Note
Resolution No. 02-04/20

- 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. Senate Bill 723 is a companion bill to legislation already passed in the Assembly. The Assembly bill was developed following a year of public hearings held around the entire state by the Speaker's Task Force on Water Quality. These pieces of legislation restore funding for conservation and would provide significant additional funds to the County's conservation office. Currently, the SB 723 is in jeopardy of failing if it is not scheduled for a vote at this year's last legislative session.
- 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: March 16, 2020
- Vote: 5-0
- County Board Meeting Date: April 23, 2020

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.

<p>DocuSigned by: <u>Michael Cotter</u> 4/6/2020 <small>89D00DEDC71E14D...</small> Michael P. Cotter Date Corporation Counsel</p>	<p>DocuSigned by: <u>Jessica Conley</u> 4/6/2020 <small>DFDAP5F148054C2...</small> Jessica Conley Date Finance Director</p>
<p>DocuSigned by: <u>Mark W. Luberda</u> 4/14/2020 <small>8B5879593E464C9...</small> Mark W. Luberda Date County Administrator</p>	

