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

**WHEREAS,** Wis. Stats. 92.06 and 92.07 create and define the powers of Land Conservation Committees (LCCs) and Wis. Stat. 92.09 empowers Soil and Water Conservation Departments (SWCDs) to administer county soil and water conservation programs and may exercise the powers granted to the land conservation committee; and

**WHEREAS,** county SWCDs are the local delivery mechanism for a wide range of Wisconsin's natural soil and water and other resource management programs including non-point pollution control, farmland preservation, reclamation of non-metallic mines, invasive species control, woodland management, lakes protection, and more; and

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

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

**WHEREAS**, the State of Wisconsin 2023 Joint Allocation Plan establishes the current need for county SWCD staffing at $18.7 million statewide, per the core funding goal established in Wis. Stat. 92.14(6)(b); and

**WHEREAS,** the return on investment in county SWCDs is high, leveraging federal and private grant dollars into more conservation on the land and more dollars into local economies, and multiplying several times over the state's existing investment; and

**WHEREAS,** support of county SWCD funding is a bipartisan issue, supported by farm, conservation, environmental and local government groups alike, and was a top priority voiced by Wisconsinites at statewide Water Quality Task Force hearings in 2019; and

**WHEREAS,** providing state funding for core county SWCD staffing needs will result in more conservation on the landscape and better protection of water quality.

**WHEREAS,** this resolution of support to provide $18.7 million in stable, core State funding support for county conservation staff funding statewide is being brought forward by Louie Okey, County Board Chair and County Supervisor, District 16; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** the Barron County Board of Supervisors hereby supports and urges the Wisconsin Legislature and the Joint Committee on Finance to provide $18.7 million in stable, base funding for county conservation staffing, in fulfillment of the state's core funding goal and in recognition that county LWCD professionals are the among the best and most cost-effective solutions we have to improving water quality, achieving clean and safe drinking water, and supporting a viable agricultural industry at the same time.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that a copy of this resolution shall be forwarded by the County Clerk to the Governor of the State of Wisconsin and state senators and state representatives representing Barron County.

**OFFERED THIS 20th day of March, 2023.**

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| Number of readings required: One (X ) Two ( )  Vote required for passage: Majority (X)  2/3 Entire Board (20) ( )  Source of funding: Budgeted ( ) General Fund ( )  Grant ( ) Contingency ( )  Other (X ) Details: N/A  Fiscal impact:   * Current year total amount: $ - 0 - * Future years total amount: $ - 0 - * Effect on tax levy – current year - $ - 0 - * Effect on tax levy – future years - $ - 0 -   Fiscal impact reviewed by County Finance Director    Jodi Busch, Finance Director  Approved as to form by Administrator:    Jeffrey French, Administrator  Approved as to form by Corporation Counsel:    John Muench, Corporation Counsel | Louie Okey, County Board Chair,  County Board Supervisor, District 16  (The Committee Chair signature verifies the action taken by the Committee.)  Board Action: Adopted (X) Failed ( ) Tabled ( )  **Motion: (Nelson/Langman)** to approve. Carried with 28 voting Yes and 1 voting No (Vaughn). |