RESOLUTION No. 596 - 24

SUPPORT FOR EFFECTIVE REGULATIONS THAT PROTECT SURFACE WATERS

WHEREAS, Marinette County is unique in that it contains 442 lakes and over 320 miles of shoreline; and

WHEREAS, one of the primary missions of Marinette County Land & Water Conservation is to protect natural resources from degradation; and

WHEREAS, Marinette County recognizes the importance of keeping our lakes and forests healthy to sustain a vibrant tourism economy and the Northwoods lake life; and

WHEREAS, the lakes within Marinette County have been experiencing increased recreational boating pressure from a multitude of user groups, including wake boarding and wake surfing; and

WHEREAS, the enhanced wakes created for these sports have more powerful energy and propwash than other typical boating activities which can cause negative biological and physical impacts to lakes including: increased shoreline erosion, the suspension of lake bottom sediment, the transfer of aquatic invasive species (AIS) through boat ballast tanks, disturbances to fish and wildlife habitat, and decreased water clarity and quality; and

WHEREAS, current research has shown that keeping enhanced wakes to a minimum of 500 ft from shore and to areas of lakes that are a minimum of 20 ft in depth could protect these ecosystems from harmful impacts; and

WHEREAS, recent state legislative efforts failed to address significant protective measures with regard to enhanced wakes or the transfer of AIS from one lake to another through ballast tanks / bladders; and

WHEREAS, the same legislative efforts suggested taking away local control over regulating wake boats.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Marinette County Board of Supervisors hereby recommends that the state Legislature engages in meaningful regulatory discussion and action that addresses the minimum standards necessary to protect surface waters by keeping the creation of enhanced wakes to a minimum of 500 ft from shore and in waters no shallower than 20 ft in depth; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Marinette County Board of Supervisors also supports state regulation that address protection(s) against the transfer of AIS from one lake to another from ballast tanks/bladders, increasing DNR law enforcement presence on inland waters for compliance to regulations and use independent scientific data related to the safe distance from enhanced waves to shoreland and other watercraft.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Marinette County Board of Supervisors recommend that local governments have the control to set standards different from state minimums.

Approved this 27th day of August, 2024 by a majority vote of a quorum of the Marinette County Board.

John Guarisco, Chairperson

Bobbie Borkowski, County Clerk

Recommended: Development Committee August 6, 2024