

## TEMPLATE RESOLUTION

### SUPPORT FOR INCREASING BASE FUNDING FOR COUNTY CONSERVATION STAFFING TO \$20.2 MILLION

**WHEREAS**, County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) staff are relied upon to carry out a range of Wisconsin's state agricultural and resource management programs that reduce non-point pollution, preserve farmland, protect waterfront property, reclaim non-metallic mines, limit aquatic invasive species control, manage forests, and reduce floods; and,

**WHEREAS**, LWCDs assist Wisconsin's farmers in many ways, including supporting producer-led watershed groups, developing nutrient management plans, engineering manure storage and transfer systems, and applying conservation practices that promote soil health and build profitability; and,

**WHEREAS**, the shared conservation work of LWCD professionals and landowners has major water quality benefits, including preventing soil erosion, protecting drinking water supply, increasing rainwater infiltration into groundwater aquifers, and restoring native habitat; and,

**WHEREAS**, LWCD experts are trusted, technical advisors that consult with landowners to understand their land management goals and then propose customized solutions that includes project planning and contracting, engineering, quality control, and securing of cost-share funding to reduce project expenses to; and,

**WHEREAS**, building a partnership based on trust and understanding with farmer and landowner clients cannot happen instantly, but rather, requires a sustained commitment over time from LWCD professionals; and,

**WHEREAS**, LWCDs leverage cost-share funding from federal and private sources, providing a 2:1 return on the state investment, and spurring local economic growth in industries including agriculture, construction, tourism, forestry, and recreation; and,

**WHEREAS**, the State of Wisconsin codifies LWCDs' role in carrying out state conservation standards via Wis. Stats Chap. 92, defining a goal that the State fund staff positions in every LWCD at 100% of the first, 70% of the second, and 50% of each additional staff position; and,

**WHEREAS**, the State of Wisconsin has not ensured baseline support of LWCDs by meeting this funding goal since its inception, and in the 18-year period from 2006 to 2024, base funding relative to LWCD staffing needs decreased by 24%.

**WHEREAS**, supporting county LWCDs is a widely supported priority supported by conservation, environmental and local government groups alike; and,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that [COUNTY NAME], does hereby urge the Wisconsin State Legislature to strengthen the viability of the State's County Land and Water Conservation Staffing program by increasing base funding for the program by \$11,035,900 on an annual basis to a total of \$20.2 million annually.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of the resolution be sent to WI Land+Water Conservation Association, all State Legislators, the Governor, DATCP Secretary, DNR Secretary, DOA Secretary, the Wisconsin Counties Association, and the Wisconsin Towns Association.