

## **Wisconsin Waterfowl Association**

### **Stewardship Update**

#### **Wales, Wisconsin- June 19, 2009 -**

The Assembly, in a strong bi-partisan effort, removed the Joint Finance Committee Amendment from their version of the budget. As I am sure you recall that amendment eliminated the requirement that land purchased with public money be open to the public for hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, and other nature-based outdoor recreation. This amendment was formerly referred to in this document as Assembly Bill 75, Motion #754 Item 18.

The Senate as of yesterday has also agreed that this amendment should go by the wayside; another bi-partisan effort that reaffirmed the agreement we all reached two years ago.

The budget still has got to go to conference committee so we should wait and see how all that goes, but I am pretty confident that this battle is over.

I have talked to many, many of you over the last few weeks. The question most often asked is this: "Who are these people that are against fishing, hunting, and trapping?" Some of you have suggested that this is the anti-hunting-fishing-trapping movement showing their true face and that it is part of an overall effort to damage the future of our traditions. Many of you have been plenty angry and rightly so.

In some regards it doesn't matter who these folks are, it only matters that they exist. It would probably scare us all if we knew all of the agendas that are out there.

It does matter, however, if these people are the elected officials that are making the laws. If there are people like that we should really know who they are and watch them in the future. I want to defend some of those legislators that were originally in support of this amendment. Most of them had no idea what this was and what it did. When they found out they were quick to work towards changing it, even under intense lobbying pressure from the opposition. There were many who saw it for what it was immediately, and aggressively worked to help us. The important thing here is that legislators on both sides of the aisle have again reaffirmed that hunting, fishing and trapping are compatible and acceptable uses for lands purchased with public funds.

The reason that we were successful in this effort is simple: You made this happen. You were the single most significant part of reversing this amendment. You made it go away. You took the time to let your elected officials know how you felt, the impact of your

calls, emails and letters was huge. When lots of people take personal responsibility to get something done the results are truly amazing.

In addition, many of your elected representatives listened to your concerns and in most cases acted on your behalf.

I have one more favor to ask you and this is as important as what you have already accomplished. Legislators usually only hear from us when we are unhappy about something. Take a minute to call your representative or senator and thank them for their support it will mean a lot. (See the link in the sidebar). If you don't know how they went on this issue ask whoever answers the phone. Thank them if they supported us and remember their name if they didn't.

Jeff Nania  
Executive Director  
Wisconsin Waterfowl Association

### **About Wisconsin Waterfowl Association**

The Wisconsin Waterfowl Association is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission focuses on wetland and upland habitat restoration, youth and adult environmental education and environmental- and hunter-based legislation. To contact us call (800) 524-8460 or (262) 968-1722, email [wwainfo@centurytel.net](mailto:wwainfo@centurytel.net) or visit our website at [www.wisducks.org](http://www.wisducks.org).

Sincerely,

Dale W. Arenz, President  
Wisconsin Waterfowl Association