

News Release

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**“Needs Improvement”
Progress Report Shows Many State Legislators Need to Improve their
Natural Resource Votes**

Madison-- The *Interim Conservation Scorecard 2003*, released today by the non-partisan Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, indicates that the clean air, clean water, open spaces and sporting opportunities so valued by Wisconsin citizens were largely discounted by decision makers throughout the 2003 legislative session.

The *Interim Conservation Scorecard 2003* scores each member of the state legislature on a range of key natural resource issues including recycled content standards, business exemptions to environmental regulations, baiting and feeding of deer, and review of Stewardship purchases by a political committee. The document was prepared by a committee comprised of eleven individuals representing environmental, conservation and sporting interests.

“Given the wide range of issues being scored, we are seeing surprisingly low scores across the board, even from legislators that have tended to do well in the past. Fortunately, this document serves as a progress report. There will be several opportunities for legislators to improve their scores during the final half of the legislative session,” explained George Meyer, President of the League.

Scorecards only score those votes taken by the full Assembly or Senate, which means many of the good things that happened in committee or by voice vote are unable to be recorded such as the proposed amendment by Senators Leibham and Erpenbach to extend the ban on all baiting and feeding of deer through June 2004.

“We certainly acknowledge and appreciate the work done by many to get good conservation legislation drafted or out of committee, but, ultimately, it is the floor vote that determines whether state law will protect or harm the environment and natural resources,” explained Bill Pielsticker, chair of the Scorecard Committee.

With the 2004 legislative session just beginning, the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters is optimistic that more positive activities are on the horizon for natural resources, which can then be included in the final *Conservation Scorecard 2003-2004*, to be released in the summer.

“We are hoping for two things. First, to be able to score legislation that does not roll back our current environmental protections. And second, that low-scoring lawmakers use the opportunities they will have to improve their scores,” said Pielsticker.

“We feel very strongly that when legislators’ actions do not reflect the values held by Wisconsin citizens, it is not time to change our values. Rather, it is time to change the voting behavior of the legislators. The Interim Scorecard clearly illustrates just whose voting behavior needs to change,” concluded Meyer.

*Legislators who achieved a score of 100%:
Representatives Berceau, Black, Cullun, Krug, Miller, Pocan, Pope-Roberts, Richards,
Travis, Wasserman, Williams, and Young
Senators Carpenter, Chvala, Decker, Erpenbach, Moore, and Risser*

To view the *Interim Conservation Scorecard 2003* on-line, please visit www.conservationvoters.org or contact the WLCV office for a hard copy.

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