

Clean Wisconsin

(Formerly Wisconsin's Environmental Decade)

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Clean Wisconsin Blasts AB506 – Bill to Redefine Public Navigable Waters

Madison—Today Clean Wisconsin told the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources that if AB 506 is approved, Wisconsin citizens will lose the right to fish, hunt and recreate on many of Wisconsin's waters.

Derek Scheer, Water Policy Director for Clean Wisconsin and avid fly fisher and pheasant hunter made the following remarks:

“Clean Wisconsin is opposed to AB 506 because it is an attack on Wisconsin's environmental protections and an attempt to undermine the Public Trust Doctrine. This bill is contrary to our State Constitution, the Supreme Court's rulings and Wisconsin citizen's best interests, because it takes away public access to thousands of miles of Wisconsin's waterways. This is a land grab that would harm the fishing, hunting and recreational opportunities for all Wisconsinites and visitors.”

Scheer went on to say,

“These are the waters where many of us learned to fish, hunt frogs and create memories. This bill contradicts our constitution and would remove 1/3 to 1/2 of the state's waterways from public access and regulatory protection. Our rivers, lakes and streams offer incredible recreational opportunities because they are cherished and have been protected over the years. AB 506 threatens Wisconsin's waters and will remove public protection and access from a large portion of Wisconsin's valuable wetlands, headwaters, and trout streams.”

Clean Wisconsin told the committee that the areas that AB 506 threatens are among the most biologically important in the state. These areas are the birthplaces of many of the most beautiful rivers and animals in the state. Among the water bodies that would lose protections are the tributaries of Wisconsin's three rivers federally designated as official Wild Rivers, 85-90% of Door County's streams, and portions of all of Wisconsin's trout streams.

Clean Wisconsin, an environmental advocacy organization, protects Wisconsin's clean water and air and advocates for clean energy by being an effective voice in the state legislature and by holding elected officials and corporations accountable. Founded in 1970 as Wisconsin's Environmental Decade, Clean Wisconsin exposes corporate polluters, makes sure existing environmental laws are enforced, and educates citizens and businesses. On behalf of its 10,000 members and its coalition partners, Clean Wisconsin protects the special places that make Wisconsin such a wonderful place to live, work and play.

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