



# Wisconsin Wildlife Federation

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AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

## News Release

### Joint Finance Committee Stewardship Proposal an Illegal Diversion of Federal Conservation Funds

**Prescott---**Today, the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation released a letter requesting the Joint Finance Committee to reverse its decision to sell \$40 million of conservation lands and place the proceeds into the Budget Stabilization Fund.

“While the sale of conservation lands itself is bad conservation policy, the placing of the sales proceeds into the Budget Stabilization Fund will constitute an illegal diversion of federal funds and cost Wisconsin millions of federal dollars for fish and wildlife purposes” said Jerry Knuth, President of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation.

A significant amount of state conservation land has been purchased under the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, (Pittman-Robertson Fund), Federal Aid in Sports Fish Restoration Act, (Wallop-Breaux Fund) and from the state’s hunting and fishing license segregated account. If the proceeds of the sales of these lands are placed into the general purpose revenue Budget Stabilization Fund, it will constitute an illegal diversion of federal funds and, as it has in other states, the US Fish and Wildlife Service will be obligated to obtain full reimbursement of the land sale proceeds from Wisconsin and cutoff current funding to the state from the Pittman-Robertson and Wallop-Breaux Funds.

“It is truly regrettable that the Joint Finance Committee made the bad policy decision to sell off public conservation lands, but what is truly amazing is that they decided to do so in violation of federal law. Illegal diversion of conservation funds is something that the sportsmen and women we represent take very, very seriously,” said George Meyer, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation.

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation is the state's largest conservation organization made up of seventy-nine hunting, fishing and trapping organizations located throughout the state. It is the state affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation. Any questions on this release may be directed to Executive Director George Meyer at 608-516-5545.