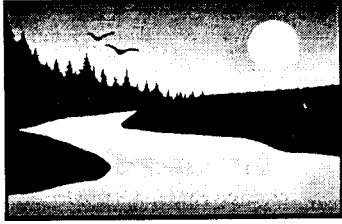


River Alliance of Wisconsin



306 E. Wilson St., Suite 2 W
Madison, WI 53703
www.wisconsinrivers.org

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Denny Caneff, (608) 257-2424
Rich Bogovich, (608) 257-2424

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -Nov. 11, 2003

LEGISLATURE'S "JOB CREATION ACT" DESTROYS LAND, WATER AND OPEN GOVERNMENT

Madison, WI – You might find more jobs in lake dredging and riverbank bulldozing under a proposed “job creation” plan developed by Republican legislators, but you won’t find the kind of job creation Wisconsin really needs.

“Legislative leaders are gutting a vital environmental law and watering down a citizen’s ability to challenge polluters, all under the guise of ‘job creation,’” says Denny Caneff, executive director of the River Alliance of Wisconsin, a nonprofit river protection group. “This bill should be labeled, ‘Environmental Protection and Open Government Destruction Act,’” says Caneff.

The proposed legislation puts Chapter 30, the law administered by the Dept. of Natural Resources that regulates the use of land along Wisconsin’s waterways, under the bulldozer’s blade. People can put up bridges over lo-yard wide rivers wherever they want, reroute small streams, and dump gravel or rocks on shorelines, almost with impunity.

“The proposal would also block a citizen’s ability to challenge people who degrade our waterways,” says Rich Bogovich, water policy program manager for the River Alliance. “But that’s in keeping with how this legislation was drafted – behind closed doors, and with the help of developers, road builders and other interests.”

“The proposal is an affront, says Caneff, to two firmly held Wisconsin traditions – careful stewardship of land and water, and open government. Besides, he notes, it fits a pattern emerging over the past few years of the Legislature scapegoating the Department of Natural Resources.

“It’s curious that this ‘job creation’ act offers nothing to the Dept. of Workforce Development, the agency whose job it is to stimulate job growth in the state,” says Bogovich.

- more -

A recent UW-Madison School of Business study of manufacturing and service industry executives about Wisconsin's quality of life for doing business shows that Wisconsin business operators do NOT regard Wisconsin's regulatory environment as heavy-handed or burdensome. And in an article in last Sunday's Wisconsin *State Journal* Business section about the loss of manufacturing jobs in the state, there was not a single reference by manufacturing workers or business owners to "regulations," "permits," or the Dept. of Natural Resources.

"The manufacturing sector in Wisconsin, if not leading Republican legislators, recognize that job loss, and job creation, is much more complex than simply rewriting Chapter 30 and cutting citizens out of their right to challenge polluters," Caneff notes. "Let's hope the Legislature get serious about job creation before the last manufacturing plant shuts its doors."