All:

I am sending to you the below email and attachments which is one of the many emails that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation is sending out to many sports groups about a proposed DNR General Permit to allow minimal oversight by DNR staff. The proposed GP would allow every riparian owner on inland lakes to dredge up to 25 cubic yards from near shore areas with only 30 days’ notice to DNR and 100 cubic yards on the Great Lakes. The DNR does not have the staff to oversee such a loose program and probably would not have Senior Management support to stop many if any of the projects from going forward.

A bit of history, a very similar provision one of the provisions in AB 600 introduced in the last legislative session. A huge number of sports groups, lake associations, other conservationists, and members of the general public. The difference was that in AB 600 the amount allowed to be dredged was 30 cubic yards in inland lakes and 100 cubic yards in the Great Lakes. Despite overwhelming public opposition, the Assembly pass the bill but Senator Rob Cowles who chaired the Senate Natural Resources Committee held up the bill until the dredging and some other bad conservation measures was taken out of the bill

However the Wisconsin Builders Association, the Wisconsin Realtors and the marine contractors went to DNR and asked that the DNR issue a General Permit for virtually the identical activity and of course, DNR Administration said yes. The DNR is holding two public hearings tomorrow and Thursday which will be lightly attended since they are held during the day when working folk cannot attend. However the comment period is open until March 3rd. The mail and email contacts are below.

I am writing to you as scientists to weigh in on this. While sports and lake groups weight in, the information that you can provide on why it is unwise to allow largely unsupervised dredging of the near shore areas of inland lakes and the Great Lakes, you folks have the scientific background to present the importance of the near shore areas for the ecological health of the lakes including fish and wildlife habitat. **Please take time over the next two weeks to individually weigh in on this proposal.** It clearly is an example of why we need a group of concerned conservation scientist group to be a scientific balance to the politically driven conservation and regulatory policies occurring in this state and soon to be on a national level.

I can be reached by email and phone at [608-516-5545](tel:(608)%20516-5545)----I will be tied up quite a bit during the day on Tuesday through Thursday but will get back to people as soon as I can.

Take care and thank you for all your contributions to conservation.

George Meyer

Executive Director

Wisconsin Wildlife Federation

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