

Wisconsin Federation

of Great Lakes Sport Fishing Clubs



Eileen Schoenfeldt, Policy Advisor
Office of Governor Scott Walker

March 31, 2012

Dear Ms. Schoenfeldt:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Federation of Great Lakes Sport Fishing Clubs, thank you for the invitation to be here and the opportunity to present some ideas on the proposed 2013-2015 Department of Natural Resources Budget. The Federation consists of eleven clubs: Kenosha Sport Fishing and Conservation Association, Kenosha Charter Boat Association, Salmon Unlimited of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Great Lakes Sport Fishing Club, Ozaukee Chapter Great Lakes Sport Fishing Club, Sheboygan Great Lakes Sport Fishing Club, Northeastern Wisconsin Great Lakes Sport Fishing Club, Lake Ridge Boat Club LTD, Between the Lakes-Muskies Inc, Green Bay Great Lakes Sport Fishing Club and Marinette & Menomonee Great Lakes Sport Fishermen.

The total paid membership of our Wisconsin Federation of Great Lakes Sport Fishing Clubs is about 3,500 members. Our primary obligation is to provide a central and unified voice on Resource management and Legislative issues, dealing with matters of the Fishery and other concerns and issues of our Great Lakes management. Our President and the other Officers and Directors of our organization are voted on by our membership at large.

The Federation would like to address a concern about a current expenditure from the State Fish and Wildlife Account. The account as you know is funded through the sale of sports hunting, fishing and trapping licenses. Like all sportsmen and women we believe strongly that the license dollars in that account are paid for by sportsmen and should be used solely for the benefit of those that hunt, fish and trap.

Currently, however, approximately \$350,000 of the Fish and Wildlife Account is being diverted to pay for the regulation and enforcement of commercial fishing in the state. This results in a major subsidy of the commercial fishing industry by sportsmen and women. Three hundred and fifty thousand dollars amounts to the revenue from the sale of 17,500 resident fishing licenses. In contrast, commercial fishing licenses contribute only approximately \$13,500 to the Fish and Wildlife account.

The Wisconsin Federation of Great Lakes Sport Fishing Clubs is recommending that the 2013-2015 DNR budget fund the regulation and enforcement of commercial fishing from funds other than the sale of sports licenses. This position is shared by all of the local Great Lakes sport fishing clubs belonging to the Federation, by the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation and the Wisconsin Conservation Congress. At the 2010 Conservation Congress Spring Hearings, Wisconsin hunters, anglers and trappers voted to support this proposal by a vote of 2056 to 885, with 67 counties voting yes, four voting no and one county had a tied vote.

Again thank you for your consideration of this proposal for the DNR budget.

Thom Gulash, President
Chuck Weier, Legislative Chair
WFGLSFC

