

Letter to the Editor of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Karen Schapiro, Executive Director
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November 27, 2007

RE: "Editorial: Resource management above partisan politics" (MJS, 11/25/2007)

"Removed from Politics without being Removed from Accountability"

Sunday's editorial was appropriate in its support for the State Assembly's bills that would return the authority to appoint the secretary of the Department of Natural Resources to the Natural Resources Board. Both bills in the Assembly have support from both parties, which makes this issue significant not only for the partisan politics it seeks to remove from the appointment of the state's top natural resources manager, but also for its bipartisan support.

Natural resource management must not be subject to pressures of partisan politics, for those very reasons Sunday's editorial enumerated. Natural resources management requires scientific expertise, consistent leadership and forward-thinking policy insight.

And, it is important to note, returning the appointment to the Board does not remove the public from the process. The Natural Resources Board is comprised of seven individuals from across the state who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate. The individuals responsible for the appointment of the Secretary of the DNR have been and will continue to be selected by the public's elected representatives.

Restoring the authority of the Board to appoint the Secretary will strengthen the already strong natural resource management in Wisconsin.

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