

**SCOTT WALKER**  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN**

P.O. Box 7863  
MADISON, WI 53707

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September 27, 2012

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Daniel M. Ashe  
Director  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar and Director Ashe:

We are writing to express our concerns with the allocation of duck stamp revenue. For more than two decades, Wisconsin has been a proud member of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, working in close coordination with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), other states, private groups, and non-profit groups to acquire and manage quality waterfowl habitat. These restored wetlands have increased waterfowl production across North America, improved water quality in adjoining lakes and streams, and provided acres of recreational activities for Wisconsin's outdoor sports enthusiasts. Wisconsin hunters are major contributors to the acquisition of waterfowl production areas and wetland restoration projects through their purchase of duck stamps. However, the recent proposal to change the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (MBCF) allocations will eliminate all Federal duck stamp funding for Wisconsin and impede the State's restoration efforts. Under the new proposal, a disproportionate amount of duck stamp dollars will be diverted to the Dakotas, without regard to duck stamp revenue percentages of the losing partner states. In addition, USFWS has not yet publicized its plan for allocating the new revenue from the proposed duck stamp increase. Although we certainly acknowledge the importance of the Prairie Pothole Region, shifting the entire duck stamp allocation to North and South Dakota will only harm waterfowl production in Wisconsin, and states like it.

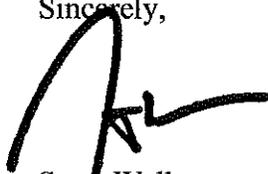
We are also concerned that this decision was made unilaterally without input from the partners that USFWS has depended on to carry out its mission for the past 20 years. When the Migratory Bird Commission approved the redirection of Federal duck stamp

revenues toward the Prairie Pothole Region of the United States, we do not believe it was the intent of the Commission to direct all the funds to the limited area of North and South Dakota. Instead, that decision appears to have been made by USFWS officials, using undisclosed criteria and without any communication to or input from the states or other partners.

States are an important partner in the protection and restoration of wetlands. When states are not consulted on important decisions that affect their ability to implement state-federal programs, our trust in the Federal government's commitment to that partnership is shaken. The recent decision on the redirection of Federal duck stamp revenues does more than impact habitat. In recent years, Wisconsin has consistently ranked either second or third in total waterfowl hunters among all fifty states. In Wisconsin, the sport brings in more than \$52 million a year from 80,000 licensed hunters and we have more than a half million breeding ducks each year. Without its fair share of Federal duck stamp funds to help maintain and expand Wisconsin's wetlands, it will be difficult for the State to continue to preserve wetlands and keep them open for recreational activity.

We respectfully request that USFWS take steps to consult with the states on this important funding decision, re-evaluate the MBCF reallocation, and keep all states in mind as the new revenue for the duck stamp increase is allocated. We look forward to working with you on resolving this important issue. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Scott Walker  
Governor of Wisconsin



Cathy Stepp  
Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

cc.           Members of the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation  
              U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack  
              Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Secretary Ben Brancel



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P.O. Box 7863  
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August 9, 2011

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary of the Interior  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St., N.W., Room 6151  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you for your letter regarding the 2011 Certificate of Apportionment for the Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Grant program. Wisconsin has a long history of utilizing Land and Water Conservation funds for recreational land and facility development.

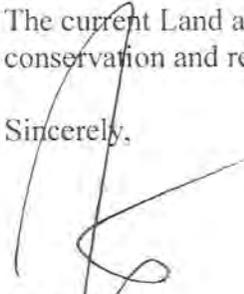
I recently had the pleasure of discussing the America's Great Outdoor initiative with Deputy Secretary Hayes and how Wisconsin can be involved. We are pleased that there appears to be support for the continued funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Your letter also requested designation of a State Liaison Officer (SLO) in dealing with the Land and Water Conservation program. I am appointing Dan Schuller, Director, Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Department of Natural Resources as the new SLO. Dan has the breadth of experience as our State Parks Director to serve in this role. He can be contacted at the following address:

Dan Schuller  
Director  
Bureau of Parks & Recreation  
101 S. Webster St.  
PO Box 7921  
Madison, WI 53707-7921

The current Land and Water Conservation Fund apportionment will continue to provide conservation and recreation opportunities for the citizens in the great State of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

  
Scott Walker  
Governor

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**SCOTT WALKER**  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN**

P.O. Box 7863  
MADISON, WI 53707

July 13, 2011

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary of the Interior  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St., N.W., Room 6151  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you for your letter regarding the America's Great Outdoors Initiative. I was pleased to be able to meet with Deputy Secretary Hayes on this topic just a few weeks ago. Enclosed are a number of informational documents that highlight Wisconsin's chosen projects for the initiative.

These projects are:

1. The Lake Michigan Water Trail
2. Baraboo Hills National Natural Landmark / Devil's Lake State Park
3. The Niagara Escarpment Network
4. The Mid Kettle Moraine

I was able to provide information on these projects to Department of the Interior regional staff during my meeting with the Deputy Secretary as well. Your staff indicated their approval of our choices at that meeting.

Given the budget constraints we are all feeling at this time, I understand that there are no guarantees for any actual funding for projects. Despite this, I feel that Wisconsin's projects emphasized within would compete well for attention, given the opportunity.

Thank you for the opportunity for input on such an important matter. Wisconsin has a long history of conservation; we would be pleased to unite our resources to make that practice even stronger.

Sincerely,

Scott Walker  
Governor of the State of Wisconsin

OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARY

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**America's Great Outdoors Initiative  
Wisconsin Conservation Landscape Projects**

**Lake Michigan Water Trail**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is working with the National Park Service - Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program, NOAA and the Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission is developing a Lake Michigan Water Trail Network. This water trail network will develop a new 450 mile water trail along the shoreline of Lake Michigan. This trail will become the second longest trail in the State of Wisconsin. Through this effort access gaps have been identified where further public access is needed to complete this trail. These zones will be targeted to increase public land holdings along the shoreline.

A branding effort will start in 2012 that will work with local communities and private affiliates to implement this Lake Michigan Water Trail Network. In conjunction with this effort, the four states boarding Lake Michigan have started work leading towards a national recreation trail designation.

Counties: Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Kewaunee, Door, Brown, Oconto, Marinette

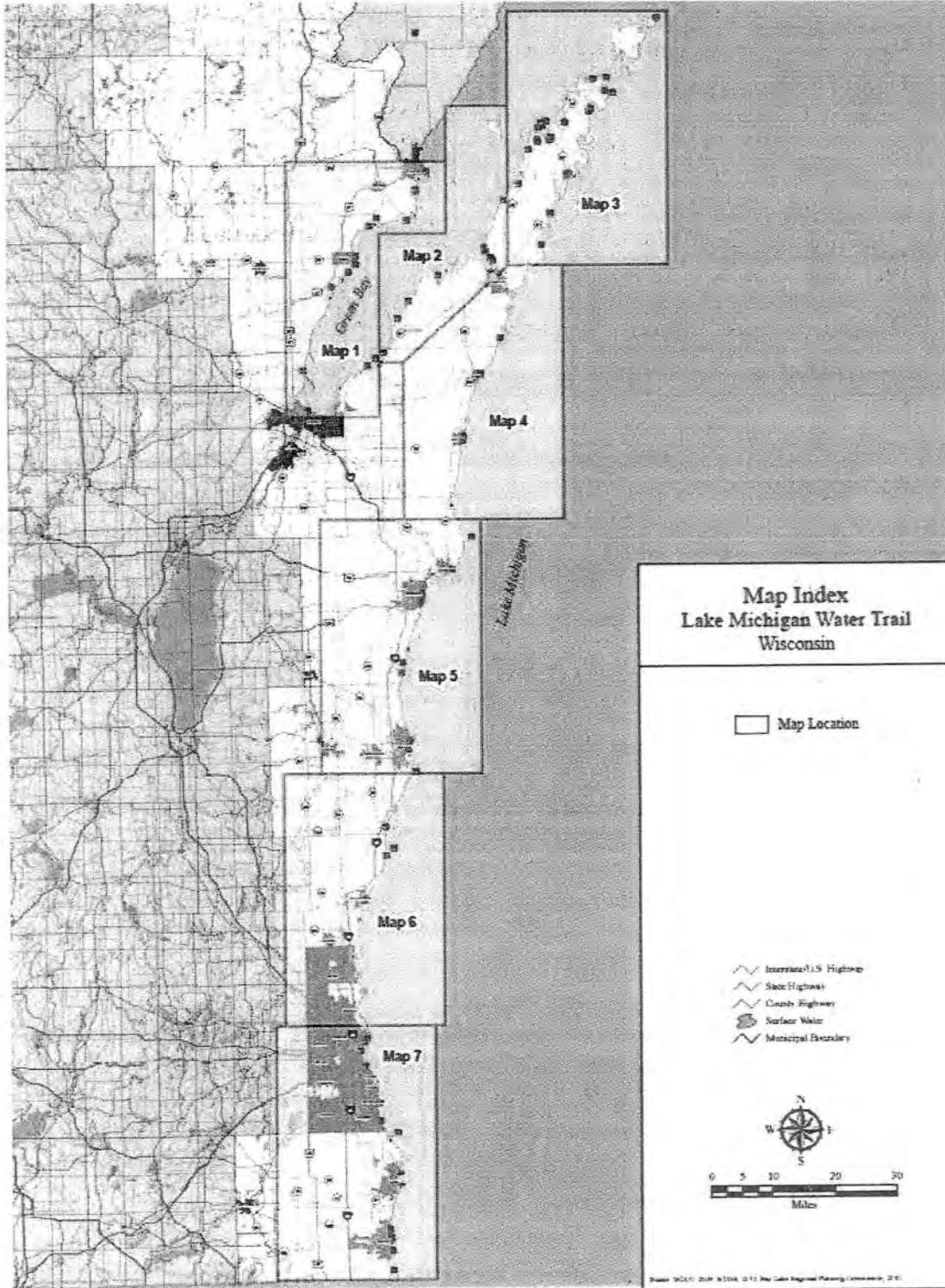
**Baraboo Hills National Natural Landmark / Devils Lake State Park**

The Baraboo Hills have long been recognized as ecologically unique and valuable. There are numerous preserves, state natural areas, and two state parks. The southern range of the Baraboo Hills was designated a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service in 1980. The Nature Conservancy has named the Baraboo Hills a Last Great Place, one of only 200 such sites worldwide. Some 30,000 acres in the Baraboo Hills have been targeted for conservation through the Forest Legacy Program. Various organizations, including The Nature Conservancy, the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, the University of Wisconsin, the Baraboo Range Preservation Association and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources have formed a strong conservation partnership and protected thousands of acres through acquisitions and easements.

2011 marks the centennial anniversary of the Devil's Lake State Park, which forms the core of the National Natural landmark, and provides recreational opportunities for over one million visitors a year.

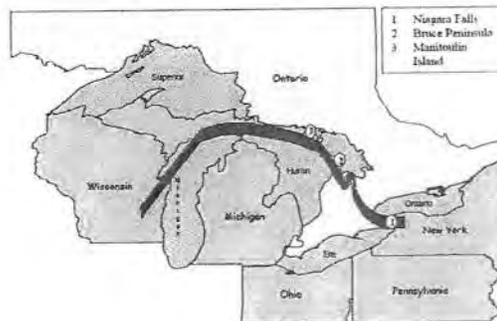
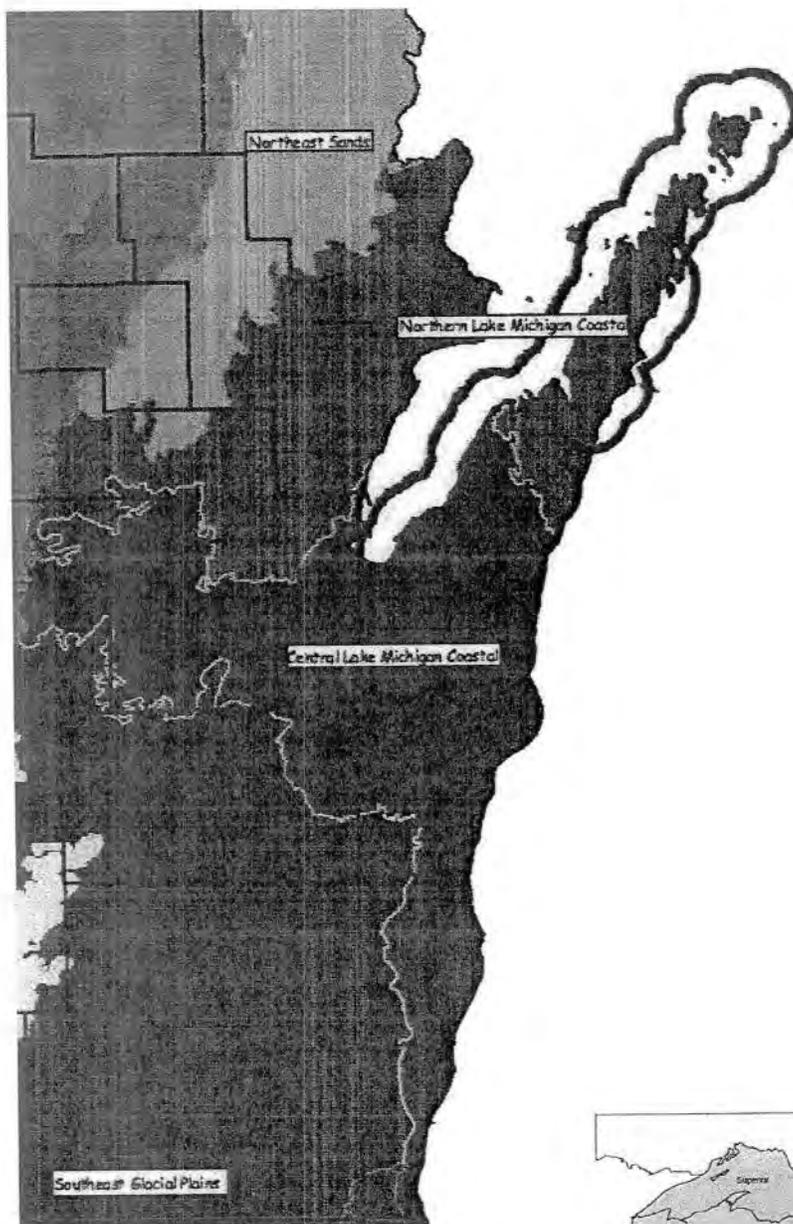
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# Lake Michigan Water Trail

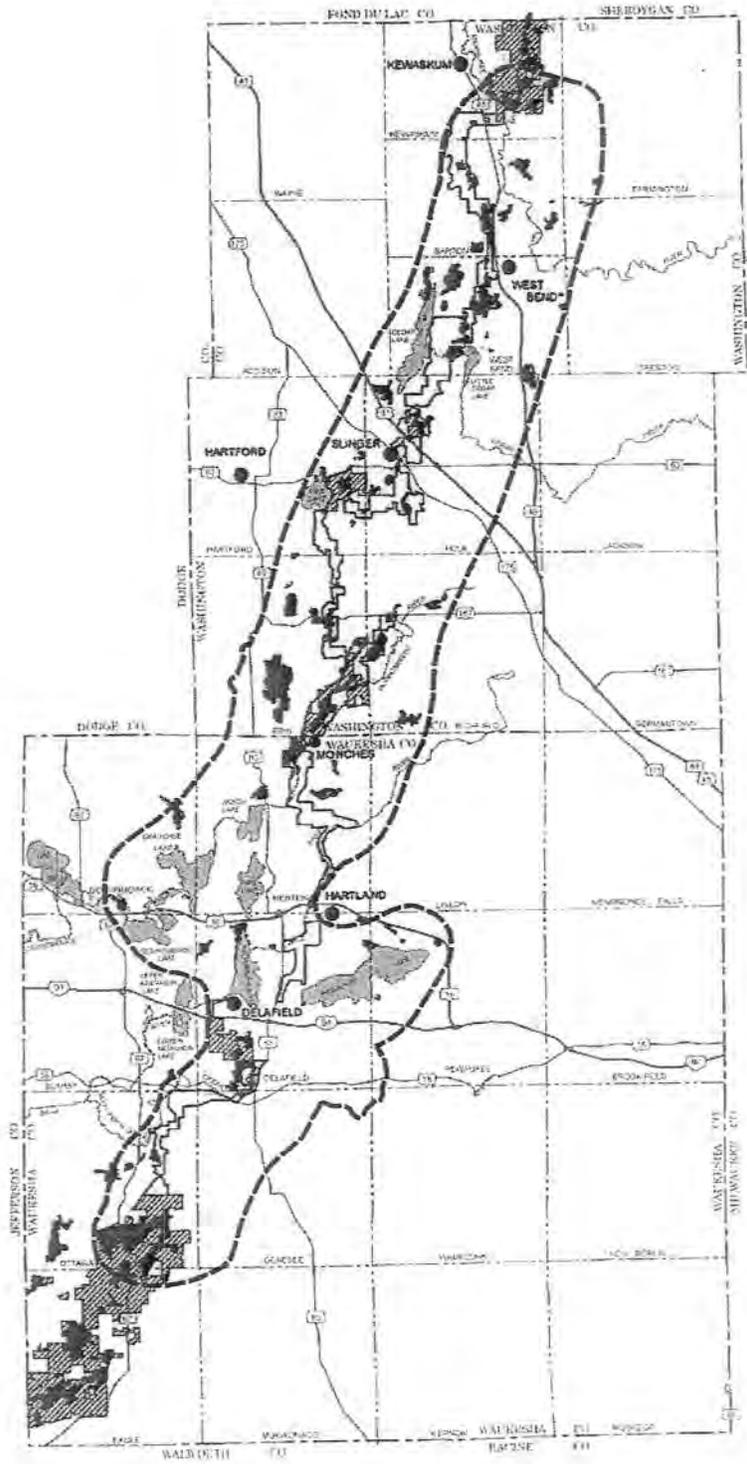


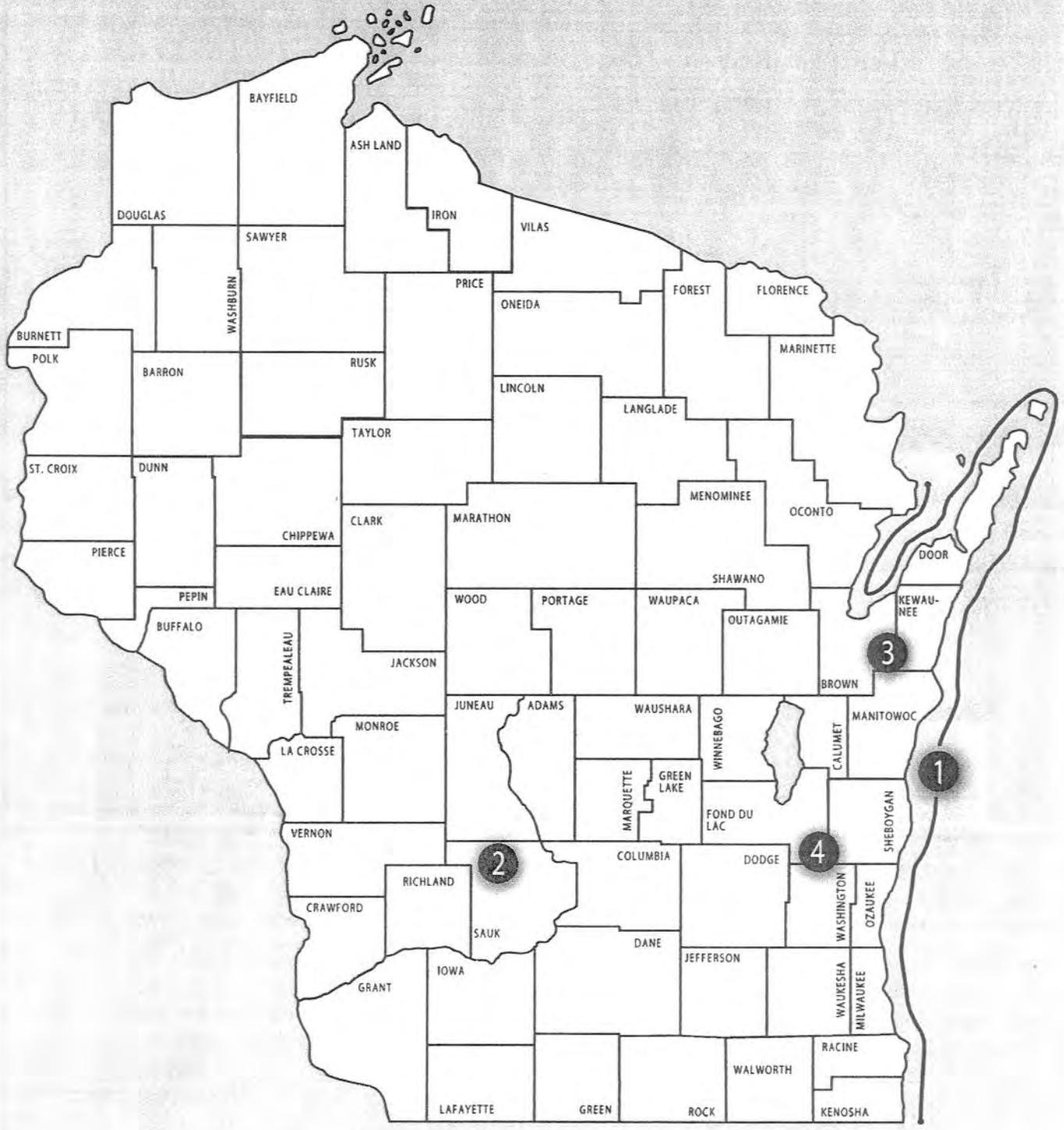


# Niagara Escarpment Network



# Mid Kettle Moraine





- 1. Lake Michigan Water Trail
- 2. Baraboo Hills National Natural Landmark/ Devil's Lake State Park
- 3. Niagara Escarpment Network
- 4. Mid Kettle Moraine



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P.O. Box 7863  
MADISON, WI 53707

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April 15, 2011

Honorable Kenneth Salazar  
U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar;

On behalf of the citizens of the State of Wisconsin, Department of Natural Resources Secretary Cathy Stepp and I applaud the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for the much anticipated announcement to remove gray wolves in the Western Great Lakes area – which includes Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin – from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife.

This important decision will finally untie our hands so we can start rebuilding public confidence in the state and federal efforts toward wolf conservation and wildlife management.

We have long maintained wolves have recovered in this area and no longer require the protection of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Indeed, wolves were down-listed on the state list to “threatened” in 1999, and removed from the state Threatened and Endangered Species list in 2004. Federal delisting affirms that wolves in the Western Great Lakes area have exceeded recovery goals and continue to thrive. In fact, wolf numbers total more than 4,000 animals in the three core recovery states.

Wisconsin’s 2011 wolf count is currently being tabulated, and we expect the count to reflect yet another new population record for the state. The number of wolves is already more than double our established population goal. The only U.S. states with more wolves than Wisconsin are Alaska and Minnesota. A recent Wisconsin Wildlife Federation petition signed by 36,739 residents suggests, the public had grown weary of delays and widely endorses delisting.

We believe transferring management of wolves to the state will allow better control of the population, especially problem animals, and will provide needed protections for livestock and pet owners.

The public expects us to manage wolves at a reasonable and sustainable level, and we are committed to doing that. Wolves are a symbol of the wild and an indicator of quality habitat. We are eager to assume our proper role in management of this important species. It’s been a long time in coming. We thank the Fish and Wildlife Service for its work on this issue, for its decision, and for its confidence in state management.

Sincerely,

Scott Walker  
Governor