

100 Days of Evers Administration's Record on Conservation

Written by Wisconsin Conservation Voters, Ryan Billingham
Thursday, 18 April 2019 14:02

<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/sand-mining-wi-man-s5.jpg>



Wisconsin environmental advocacy group evaluates new Administration on it's efforts to promote clean water, air, and energy and protect our public lands, lakes, rivers, and wetlands for future generations.

MADISON – Early in their candidacies, both Gov. Tony Evers and Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes signed the Wisconsin Conservation Voters Conservation Pledge. That pledge included five commitments aimed at protecting Wisconsin's air, land, water, and health.

Now, at 100 days in office, Wisconsin Conservation Voters reviews the progress the Evers Administration is making on the pledge.



I pledge to work toward safe drinking water and healthy air for all Wisconsinites.

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- In his first State of the State Address, Gov. Evers proclaimed 2019 the Year of Clean Drinking Water.
- His proposed budget calls for \$40 million in bonding for the replacement of up to 50 percent of the cost to replace lead service lines through the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program.
- His budget proposes \$10 million in bonding authority for the Soil and Water Resource Management (SWRM) program, which assists farmers in implementing infrastructure projects such as manure storage facilities and streambank restoration to reduce water pollution.
- His budget proposes increasing permit fees for CAFOs to \$660 each year with a \$3200 application fee to review and reissue their wastewater permits. This increase would help fund five new positions at the Department of Natural Resources to oversee CAFO permitting and regulation.
- He committed to at least two staff in the Bureau of Natural Resource Science dedicated to understanding the threats from emerging water contaminants like PFAS.
- His budget would make it easier for local communities to qualify for loans under the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program.

I pledge to move Wisconsin towards 100 percent clean, renewable energy by 2050.

- He made Wisconsin a member of the U.S. Climate Alliance.
- He proposed a statutory goal to ensure that Wisconsin's energy is 100 percent carbon neutral by 2050.
- He proposed an Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy within the Department of Administration. This office and its five staff positions would promote clean energy development and grow Wisconsin jobs.



I pledge to protect Wisconsin's lakes, rivers, and wetlands.

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- He requested \$10.4 million in funding for county conservationists.
- He requested authorization of \$25 million in bonding to clean up contaminated sediment in five areas of concern in the Great Lakes Basin.
- His budget would reallocate staff to focus on watersheds with heavy pollution levels, including the Milwaukee, Rock, St. Croix and Wisconsin River Basins.
- His budget calls for \$4 million in bonding authority for the urban nonpoint and stormwater grant program, and the municipal flood control program, which ensures rainwater coming off parking lots and developments does not end up polluting surface waters or lead to flash floods.
- Gov. Evers proposed in his budget \$6.5 million in bonding authority for the Targeted Runoff Management program, which includes assistance to local municipalities for infrastructure projects to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

I pledge to protect and maintain our public lands for future generations.

- Gov. Evers did not reauthorize the Stewardship Program for another 10 years. Rather, he directed unallocated Stewardship Funding for two years for up to the existing funding level of \$33 million. In addition, he announced his intention to call for a Blue Ribbon Commission that looks at long term funding and management of the program.
- His budget proposal allocates \$1.4 million more per year for state parks, \$500,000 of which is for maintenance.

I pledge to support a strong Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

- Proposed the creation of a Bureau of Natural Resources Science with five full time staff positions and a director that reports to the DNR Secretary.
- Did not allocate any additional resources in the state budget to Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

"Wisconsinites are feeling the pressure of climate change impacts and unsafe drinking water more than ever. Gov. Evers and Lt. Gov. Barnes have signaled in these first 100 days they understand the importance of addressing these serious problems," Executive Director Kerry Schumann said. "While the first 100 days have not been perfect, Gov. Evers has made it clear he and his administration share many priorities with the state's conservation voters. His proposed budget, his dedication to clean drinking water, and his embrace of science-guided policy is in stark contrast to the previous governor. We congratulate him and his administration on its first 100 days, and look forward to future collaboration on behalf of Wisconsin's air, land, water, and health."

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Engaging voters to protect Wisconsin's environment.