

Protect Wisconsin's Conservation Legacy

Written by Jennifer Shilling, State Senator 32nd District

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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/clean-air-s5.jpg>



Sunday is Earth Day. For our children and grandchildren to enjoy the same opportunities we have, we need to safeguard access to clean water, land and air and prevent special interests from taking unfair advantage of our environment on every day.

LA CROSSE, WI - It is hard not to celebrate Earth Day without a sense of pride. It was, after all, founded by former Wisconsin Governor and U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson. Created as a day for Americans to recognize environmental issues and promote conservation, the first Earth Day was celebrated on April 22, 1970.

Nelson paved the way for some of the most important environmental protections in Wisconsin and ushered in a new era of progressive stewardship. At a time when few would listen, he knew that our environment was something to be treasured and not taken for granted.

After seeing public frustration over dilapidated state parks, the exploitation of public resources by private industry, and the unchecked pollution of waterways, Nelson took decisive action. As Governor, he created the Department of Natural Resources, established a Youth Conservation Corps, and funded the Outdoor Recreation Action Program to preserve land for public parks and wilderness areas.

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