

<https://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/clean-air-s5.jpg>



Due to the COVID-19 crisis, LWVWI urges all members and supporters to go online to participate in this year's Wisconsin Conservation Congress Spring Hearings.

MADISON - Spring is here. Time for the Annual Wisconsin Conservation Congress Spring Hearings, which are a great opportunity for League members to have a voice. Due to the COVID-19 situation, participation will be held **ONLY** online, and **we urge you to take a few minutes to respond to the online questionnaire.**

Go online to Vote starting April 13 at 7:00 p.m. through April 16, 7:00 p.m. Questionnaire is at www.dnr.wi.gov

and search

“Spring Hearings.”

A link is also on this web page:

<https://dnr.wi.gov/About/WCC/springhearing.html>

The Annual Spring Hearings are a unique opportunity for any Wisconsin resident to provide input on natural resources advisory questions from the DNR, Natural Resources Board, and Wisconsin Conservation Congress.

Each question includes background information, the specific question and a choice of YES, NO

Protect Our Environment and Our Health

Written by League of Women Voters Wisconsin
Monday, 13 April 2020 17:51 -

or NO OPINION. **Don't be daunted by the length of the questionnaire.** You have the option of skipping questions or selecting "No Opinion."

The 55 questions will be in SurveyMonkey format which is compatible with most cellular devices, tablets and computers. If you encounter an Error opening the link, try a different internet browser. Suggested are: Google Chrome 18 or later; Firefox 24 or later; Internet Explorer 11; Safari 7 or later; Microsoft Edge.

Based on League Positions and recent advocacy, LWVWI urges all members and supporters to Go Online to Vote on Questions #1-8, #16, #21-22, #28 and #55. After voting, LWVWI would really appreciate it if you would reply to this email with the words I DID IT to let us know you participated.

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Questions #1 - 7 Requiring the use of non-toxic ammunition on state owned or managed property With similar wording, these seven questions deal with non-toxic shot, bullets or shotgun slugs for individual hunts.

LWV urges a Yes vote on all of these 7 questions. LWVUS has supported non toxic and non lead shot, bullets and fishing tackle in US Fish & Wildlife (USFWS) Refuges for many years because of the unintended lead poisoning of game and non-game species, lead build up in areas with concentrated hunting and fishing areas and potential health risks. DNR reports cases of lead poisoning in bald eagles and scavengers spike dramatically during fall hunting seasons due to the accessibility to gut piles and carcasses. If ingested, relatively small amounts of lead can poison birds. Lead poisoning can be fatal or cause behavioral and physiological changes in wildlife. USFW issued a nationwide ban in 1991 after determining toxic impacts to waterfowl and their predators. Since 1998 USFWS has required non-toxic shot use for all types of hunting on all waterfowl production areas nationwide. In 2007, WDNR began similar requirements for specific types of fishing and hunting.

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Questions #8 and #16 Limit the Spread of CWD in Deer

#8 Do you support restricting the placement of artificial water supplies that are not for agricultural purposes of attracting deer or elk in CWD-affected counties?

#166 Do you support the department working with the legislature to restrict the baiting and feeding of deer statewide.

LWV urges a Yes vote. The League position is based on LWVUS and LWVWI positions promoting an environment beneficial to life (human as well as wildlife and aquatic species) with natural resources managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. LWVWI has supported legislation to limit the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) deer-to-deer throughout the state by banning baiting and feeding deer and funding deer testing and research on the potential for transmission to humans from infected deer and deer meat. CWD is a highly transmissible prion disease that leads to chronic illness, drastic weight loss (wasting), reduced fertility and early mortality in deer herds. Since 1997, the World Health Organization has recommended that it is important to keep the agents of all known prion diseases from entering the human food chain. The Center for Disease Control and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services recommend not consuming meat from CWD-infected deer.

Questions #21 and #22 Limit Baiting and Feeding by County

#21 Do you support legislation that would give more authority to the DNR to determine baiting and feeding regulations, including when and where bans are put in place?

#22 If greater flexibility is returned to DNR, do you support allowing CDACs the ability to make recommendations regarding baiting and feeding in their respective counties?

LWV urges a Yes vote on #21 but a NO vote on #22. The League supports science-based decision making. Currently such bans are limited by statute. Bans should be science based. DNR has biologists who should determine baiting and feeding regulations. #22 would go further and allow County Deer Advisory Committees (CDACs) to make these determinations but they are not biologists and are subject to local pressures.

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Question #28 Oppose Back Forty Mine

#28 Would you support the Wisconsin Conservation Congress informing the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) that the proposed Back Forty Mine Project poses a significant threat to water quality in the Menominee River and Lake Michigan?

LWVWI urges a Yes vote to Oppose Back Forty Mine, a proposed open-pit metallic sulfide mine. The League position is based on LWVUS and LWVWI positions on mine waste, water quality and the rights of First Nations. The League for many years has opposed metallic sulfide mining in Wisconsin due to the high potential for long-term leaching of acid-producing wastes into groundwater and surface waters. Aquila Resource's Back Forty Mine is proposed to locate on the Menominee River in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The Menominee River is the border between Wisconsin and Michigan and flows to Lake Michigan. There are also potential irreversible impacts on cultural resources of the Menominee Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, including Native American grave sites and other areas of historic significance.

- Question #55 – Alternative funding source to Fish & Wildlife Account

#55 Would you favor the legislature creating an alternative funding source in addition to license fees?

LWV urges a Yes vote. The League position is based on LWVUS Principles that require government agencies be funded appropriately. The health of fish and wildlife are important elements of healthy ecosystems as well as the basis for a strong state tourism economy. Without adequate funding important DNR programs will be shrunk.