



211 South Paterson Street • Suite 270 • Madison, WI 53703
ph 608.251.9131 • fx 608.663.5971 • www.gatheringwaters.org

Gathering Waters appreciates the Joint Committee on Finance voting to renew the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program.

Knowles-Nelson has been Wisconsin's flagship environmental conservation and outdoor recreation program for more than three decades. It provides critical state funding to care for our land and water. The program makes it possible to build and maintain the recreation infrastructure that makes it possible for residents and visitors to get out and enjoy the places that make Wisconsin special.

While today's vote essentially maintains the current funding of the Stewardship Program, the length of the renewal—only 4 years—falls far short of the 10-year reauthorization sought by advocates of the program. A four-year time horizon will limit the amount of project planning and execution that can be accomplished on increasingly popular sites like the Ice Age Trail and local parks and bike trails. Demand for outdoor recreation has skyrocketed over the past year and is only likely to increase in the years ahead.

Gathering Waters would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the thousands of individuals across the state who spoke up on behalf of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program as well as the more than 70 organizations who banded together to advocate for the program under the banner of Team Knowles Nelson. We also thank Governor Evers and his administration for their ambitious proposal to reauthorize the Stewardship Program for ten years and to restore much of the funding that has been cut over the last decade.

The vote today in Joint Finance would not have been possible without legislators who worked behind the scenes, trying to build consensus with their colleagues, and those who spoke up in public on behalf of Knowles-Nelson. Without champions in both parties, we would not have today's continued investment in conservation in Wisconsin.

Contact:

Mike Carlson
Executive Director
Gathering Waters: Wisconsin's Alliance for Land Trusts
608-251-9131