



JAMES W. EDMING

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 87TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

For Immediate Release
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Edming Bill to Protect Local Roads Clears the Legislature

Provides a new tool for local governments to prevent damage to local roads

MADISON – This week both houses of the legislature approved [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 163](#), authored by Rep. James Edming (R-Glen Flora) and Sen. Rob Stafsholt (R-New Richmond), which provides a new tool for local governments to protect their roads from damage by beavers and muskrats. This bill would allow the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), or an agent of a local government authorized by DNR, to discharge a firearm within the 50-foot buffer zone of the center of a roadway in order to shoot a beaver or muskrat that is causing damage to a road.

“The idea for this legislation came from local officials in the Town of Atlanta in Rusk County who have been dealing beavers causing damage to their township’s roads,” said Rep. Edming. “Beavers can dam up culverts or streams near roadways, which can cause flooding in the area and damage the road. In other parts of the state, muskrats are also causing headaches for local officials. While the DNR and local governments do deploy measures to prevent or deter damage from these animals, such as trapping, it is not always effective.”

Under this bill, the DNR still has the discretion on whether or not to permit the discharge of a firearm under this exemption and they can only do so if they determine that the discharge does not pose a threat to public safety.

“This common-sense proposal is another tool in the toolbox to protect our local roads,” said Rep. Edming. “I am pleased to see this idea from the 87th clear the legislature and I hope to see it become law soon.”

With bipartisan approval by the legislature, AB 163 now heads to Governor Evers’ desk.

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The 87th Assembly District includes portions of Clark, Marathon, Rusk, Sawyer and Taylor Counties.