

Sen. Cowles, Rep. Tusler: Bill to improve water infrastructure in state parks signed into law

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MADISON– Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) and Representative Ron Tusler (R-Harrison) released the following statements after 2017 Senate Bill 421, named the Parks Revitalization Act, was signed into law as 2017 Act 71:

Senator Cowles stated, “The Parks Revitalization Act is designed to tackle the ongoing issue of degrading water infrastructure in some of our most visited parks. Good drinking water quality should not be in question, and the health and safety of our visitors should be protected. By addressing the critical water infrastructure projects identified by the DNR, we can continue to ensure that our state park visitors have an enjoyable outdoors experience and continue to use our parks. I hope to see the DNR work on completing some of these critical water infrastructure projects before next summer.”

Rep. Tusler stated, “Our state parks offer a cornucopia of outdoor Wisconsin opportunities. These opportunities serve our state in many ways. Our state parks build stronger citizens, closer families and a better business culture. They provide \$350 million dollars a year in direct economic impact, support 8,200 jobs and have an annual \$1.3 billion dollars indirect economic impact on the state. The Parks Revitalization Act is a great investment in an invaluable resource. I am glad we are addressing these critical water infrastructure needs so that future generations can enjoy the natural beauty of Wisconsin.”

The Parks Revitalization Act uses up to \$4.5 million in unspent Knowles-Nelson Stewardship funds from FY 2016-17 to complete water infrastructure projects in some of the most frequented state parks. Some of these parks may include Devil's Lake, High Cliff, Kohler-Andre, Peninsula and Willow River State Parks. The projects that would be completed under this bill were identified by the DNR as critical health and safety water infrastructure projects. Some of these projects may include drinking water fixture replacement, septic system replacement, vault toilet replacement, water line replacement, and waste storage areas.

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