

Audubon: Urges legislators to support Knowles-Nelson conservation program

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MADISON, WI — Nine Wisconsin Audubon chapters and the Wisconsin Audubon Council have sent a joint letter to state legislators urging them to support a ten-year reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program.

“For 30 years, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program has provided millions of dollars in funding to protect Wisconsin’s most treasured lands and waters. This program is essential to protecting Wisconsin’s natural spaces and the birds, wildlife, and people that depend on them,” said Nathaniel Miller, Acting Director and Director of Conservation for Audubon Great Lakes.

The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is a successful bipartisan program that provides matching state funds for the protection and conservation of land, as well as maintenance and upkeep of waterways, parks, forests and trails. These efforts ensure the preservation of valuable natural areas and wildlife habitat, the protection of water quality and fisheries, and the expansion of outdoor recreation opportunities. Birds and bird lovers alike in Wisconsin benefit greatly from this important program, which protects valuable wetland habitat for the Common Tern, rivers and lakes that White Pelicans and Common Loon rely upon, and opens up access for Wisconsinites to explore more areas of this amazing state.

“The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is the best source of funding for land and water conservation in the state of Wisconsin,” said Matthew Reetz, Executive Director of Madison Audubon Society. “Without this important program, we wouldn’t be able to fund projects that protect bird habitat and provide outdoor recreation opportunities like Goose Pond Sanctuary which received the first ever non-profit Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant to acquire and restore habitats to benefit birds, wildlife and the public. We need this funding to ensure that we can continue the important work of protecting Wisconsin’s lands and waters.”

Support from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program has benefitted every county in Wisconsin. Long-term funding ensures the continued protection of important bird habitat – such as forests, prairies, and wetlands, which are crucial to hundreds of species of migratory birds that rely on them for resting, feeding, and breeding sites throughout the year.

Audubon, and its more than 23,800 members in Wisconsin, urges legislators to support a ten-year reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, while maintaining current funding levels at least \$33 million per year.

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The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow. Audubon works throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education, and on-the-ground conservation. State programs, nature centers, chapters, and partners give Audubon an unparalleled wingspan that reaches millions of people each year to inform, inspire, and unite diverse communities in conservation action. A nonprofit conservation organization since 1905, Audubon believes in a world in which people and wildlife thrive. **Audubon Great Lakes** is a regional office of Audubon, learn more at gl.audubon.org and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).