

Nature Conservancy: Applauds Senator Cowles' leadership on nutrient reduction proposal

Posted on Thursday, Feb 28, 2019

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The following is a statement from Mary Jean Huston, State Director, The Nature Conservancy in Wisconsin.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) today announced support for Senator Rob Cowles' efforts to create a third-party, nutrient credit trading system. The proposal would potentially create a more streamlined, cost-efficient process that enhances water quality and grows Wisconsin's agriculture economy.

"The Nature Conservancy works daily with landowners looking for science-based solutions to decrease nutrient pollution and improve water quality. We look forward to working with Senator Cowles and all stakeholders on legislation to accelerate conservation-minded nutrient trading," said Mary Jean Huston, who directs The Nature Conservancy's work in Wisconsin. "A more flexible marketplace for permit holders could be a win-win for landowners, the agriculture economy and land and water conservation," adds Huston.

Under current law, point and non-point sources of pollution are only permitted to directly trade credits with each other and not with third parties. This reduces the

ability of a water quality trading market to function effectively in Wisconsin.

For nearly 60 years, TNC has worked with landowners, business and communities to protect more than 233,800 acres of land and water in Wisconsin. Recognizing that best agricultural practices impact nearly every aspect of our conservation work, TNC globally and in Wisconsin is taking an active role in promoting nutrient reduction policy and bipartisan support for improving water quality.