

Clean Water Now: Clean water referendum approved for April 2021 ballot in Wood, Portage, Marquette counties

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Wisconsin—January 28, 2020 — Wood, Portage and Marquette County are taking the lead to let voters show the state legislature that Wisconsinites need clean water. Voters in these counties will have a clean water referendum question on their April 2021 ballots as part of the Clean Water Now campaign.

Clean Water Now is a county referenda campaign to demand the right to clean water in Wisconsin. Voters in Wood, Portage and Marquette County will have the chance to voice their support for clean water for all when they vote in April. Local leaders are lining up to follow suit in more counties across the state. Clean Water Now is a multi-year campaign.

Clean water is a top issue for Wisconsinites. Communities across the state face threats to water quality, but, not nearly enough is being done in the Capitol. The campaign slogan is: *You can't Wisconsin without clean water.* Clean water is vital to Wisconsin residents. Industries like tourism and agriculture rely on it. Clean drinking water keeps us healthy.

Wood County was the first Wisconsin county to approve the referendum for the April 2021 ballot. Marquette and Portage County followed soon after. More counties are expected to add the referendum to their ballots in future election cycles.

“On April 6th, residents can affirm their desire to protect our most precious natural resource AND implore Wisconsin manufacturers, businesses, farm organizations,

legislators, and each individual to do their part in renewing our waters and keeping them clean far into the future,” said Bill Leichtnam, Wood County Supervisor.

Marquette County Board Supervisor, Al Rosenthal shared, “Our State legislators knew that clean water was important, and introduced 13 water bills in 2020, which passed the assembly, but never were introduced in the senate, and therefore never went anyplace. The Marquette County referendum will let our legislators know how important clean water is and [that] we need to act now, before it is too late!!”

Portage County Executive, Chris Holman, stated, “Portage County, like many other counties in our region and across the state, is faced with water issues that affect our residents, our diverse economy, and our quality of life. Encouraging the state to continue the work it started last year through the positive, broadly-supported message in this referendum should signal to legislators how important the issue is, and—hopefully—lead to much needed progress in an area that is admittedly complex but also a huge factor in what our future will look like in this state.”

“Too many things hinge upon water availability and quality for us to not find ways to work together, problem solve, and think creatively and constructively about how we can improve in an area that is fundamental to our lives, our economy, and the future of our state. The Clean Water Now referendum is needed because it will help to build upon the work that was recently done by the Governor and the legislature. It will also help to keep a needed focus on the issue since so many things have been impacted by the pandemic across the globe and here in Wisconsin,” Holman continued.