



For Immediate Release:
July 16, 2008

Contact: Jennifer Giegerich, Capitol Liaison
WI League of Conservation Voters,
(608) 661-0845 (office), (608) 213-1406 (cell)
jennifer@conservationvoters.org

Conservation Scorecard Reports Historic Conservation Wins Politics Still Trumps Public Support on Some Critical Issues

Madison- The *Conservation Scorecard 2007-2008*, a report on how state legislators voted on key conservation issues in the last two-year legislative session, indicates significant improvement in legislators' commitment to protecting Wisconsin's natural resources. This session, several Conservation Priorities, such as reauthorizing the Stewardship Fund and the historic agreement to protect our Great Lakes, were passed. While the average legislator score was notably higher than in recent sessions, the progress was tempered by an overall lack of leadership that allowed several high-profile conservation issues to fail to progress despite having immense public support.

The *Conservation Scorecard*, released today by the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, records legislators' votes on a variety of conservation-related bills ranging from renewable energy and protecting the Great Lakes to increasing hunting and recreational opportunities.

This year's *Scorecard* shows that the average score in the state Senate was 88 percent, the highest average score for a legislative body since the first *Conservation Scorecard* in 2001-2002. The average Assembly score was 64 percent, a dramatic improvement from the previous session's average Assembly score of 41 percent. In addition, there are 30 Conservation Champions this year, defined as legislators that scored a perfect 100 percent, which is more than any previous session (See detailed list below).

Twenty-one individual bills, including the budget, were included on the *Conservation Scorecard 2007-2008*. Of these bills, sixteen were bills that improved environmental and public health protections or expanded recreation opportunities in Wisconsin. The remaining five bills rolled back existing natural resource protections. Seven of the bills scored were ultimately adopted into law and all of these were pro-conservation legislation.

“While this legislative session will go down as one of the most productive in recent memory for significant conservation victories, the lack of leadership on important issues like solving global warming and reestablishing an independent DNR Secretary indicate that there were missed opportunities this session as well,” said Jennifer Giegerich, Capitol Liaison for the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters.

The highlight of the legislative session was Act 227, the passage of the Strong Great Lakes Compact. Senators Cowles, Jauch, Lehman, and Miller and Representatives Mason and Richards were named to the Conservation Honor Roll in recognition of their year-long effort to ensure that strong water protections were included with the baseline Compact in the final legislation.

The failure of Assembly Bill 504 to receive a vote in the Assembly was a lowlight of the session. AB 504, which would have re-established an independent DNR Secretary, was introduced in with an impressive 49 co-sponsors, representing both parties and chambers. After nearly 100 citizens and organizations testified in favor of the bill at a public hearing before the Assembly Natural Resources Committee, AB 504 passed out of the committee with only one dissenting vote. Despite this overwhelming support, the bill was never scheduled for a vote in the Assembly. Speaker Huebsch was named to the Conservation Dishonor Roll for allowing politics to trump public support for this popular bill.

The Conservation Scorecard is produced by the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters both as a tool to hold legislators accountable to their constituents and as a resource for voters. The legislation is originally vetted by the Conservation Scorecard Advisory Council, an independent and diverse group of citizens. The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Board makes the final decision on which bills to include, as well as the Honor Roll and Dishonor recipients.

To view the Conservation Scorecard and corresponding maps online, please visit:
<http://conservationvoters.org/scorecard/>

-MEDIA ADVISORY-

Media are invited to attend local events celebrating the conservation successes of the 2007-2008 legislative session and recognizing pro-conservation legislators hosted by the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters. Each of the local parties listed below begin at 6:00 pm with the program beginning at 6:30.

July 23	Green Bay: Titledown Brewing Company, 200 Dousman Street
July 29	Milwaukee: Milwaukee Environmental Consortium- 1845 N. Farwell Ave.
July 30	Racine: Java Vino, 424 Main Street
August 5	Eau Claire: Houligan’s Steak and Seafood Pub, 415 S. Barstow Street

###

The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to electing conservation leaders to the state legislature, holding legislators accountable and encouraging lawmakers to champion conservation policies that effectively protect Wisconsin’s public health and natural resources. More information can be found at <http://conservationvoters.org>

Conservation Champions*

Representative	Terese	Berceau	76	Madison
Representative	Spencer	Black	77	Madison
Representative	Jason	Fields	11	Milwaukee
Representative	Cory	Mason	62	Racine
Representative	Joseph	Parisi	48	Madison
Representative	Sondy	Pope-Roberts	79	Middleton
Representative	Christine	Sinicki	20	Milwaukee
Representative	Tony	Staskunas	15	West Allis
Representative	Barbara	Toles	17	Milwaukee
Representative	Robert	Turner	61	Racine
Representative	Terry	Van Akkeren	26	Sheboygan
Representative	Josh	Zepnick	9	Milwaukee
Senator	Roger	Breske	12	Eland
Senator	Tim	Carpenter	3	Milwaukee
Senator	Spencer	Coggs	6	Milwaukee
Senator	Russell	Decker	29	Schofield
Senator	Jon	Erpenbach	27	Middleton
Senator	Dave	Hansen	30	Green Bay
Senator	Robert	Jauch	25	Poplar
Senator	Pat	Kreitlow	23	Chippewa Falls
Senator	Julie	Lassa	24	Stevens Point
Senator	John	Lehman	21	Racine
Senator	Mark	Miller	16	Monona
Senator	Jeffery	Plale	7	South Milwaukee
Senator	Fred	Risser	26	Madison
Senator	Judith	Robson	15	Beloit
Senator	Jim	Sullivan	5	Wauwatosa
Senator	Lena	Taylor	4	Milwaukee
Senator	Kathleen	Vinehout	31	Alma
Senator	Robert	Wirch	22	Pleasant Prairie

Conservation Honor Roll**

Senator	Rob	Cowles	2	Green Bay
Senator	Robert	Jauch	25	Poplar
Senator	Pat	Kreitlow	23	Chippewa Falls
Senator	Mark	Miller	16	Monona
Senator	John	Lehman	21	Racine
Senator	Lena	Taylor	4	Milwaukee
Representative	Cory	Mason	62	Racine
Representative	Marc	Pocan	78	Madison
Representative	Jon	Richards	19	Milwaukee
Representative	Jeff	Smith	93	Eau Claire

Conservation Dishonor Roll***				
Senator	Mary	Lazich	28	New Berlin
Representative	Sheryl	Albers	50	Reedsburg
Representative	Michael	Huebsch	94	West Salem
Representative	Dan	Meyer	34	Eagle River
Entire Wisconsin State Legislature				

*Conservation Champions are legislators that scored a perfect 100%.

**The Conservation Honor Roll recognizes legislators who went the extra mile to protect Wisconsin's natural resources.

***The Conservation Dishonor Roll recognizes legislators who went the extra mile to jeopardize Wisconsin's natural resources.