



**BACKCOUNTRY
HUNTERS & ANGLERS**
WISCONSIN

Wisconsin Backcountry Hunters and Anglers Calls on NRB Chair Prehn to Step Down

The Wisconsin Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers calls on Fred Prehn, the chair of the Natural Resources Board to step down from his position. Mr. Prehn should have done so when his term ended on May 1, 2021. Julie Anderson, another board member, who's term ended on the same day, did just that. She stepped down on May 1st to make way for her replacement. As with Anderson, Prehn's replacement was appointed and ready to begin her term on May 1st. Sandra Nass is a qualified candidate and has been forced to watch the May and June meetings from the audience while Prehn occupied the board position that is rightfully hers.

Our government is at its best when its officials are guided by whether a thing is right. It is at its worst when they are guided only by whether they can. There is no question that Mr. Prehn *can* stay in his seat until Ms. Nass is confirmed by the state senate. Likewise, there is no question that Mr. Prehn should not do so. Our Natural Resources Board is comprised of unelected citizens that set the policy for the DNR. Their only form of accountability to the people is that they are appointed by the governor for a set six-year term. By staying past the ending of his term, Mr. Prehn has become worse than an unelected bureaucrat. He has become an unelected bureaucrat that won't leave.

Unfortunately, in these divided times even the innocuous action of calling on an official step down when his term ends will be seen through a partisan lens. Because that is true, we feel the need to state here and now that we have not always agreed with Mr. Prehn's positions while he was on the board. Likewise, we are under no illusions that we will always agree with Ms. Nass' positions if and when she is finally seated on the board. Those are battles for another day. Today, we are making this statement only to ensure the future health of the board. If it is to work for the people, it must be chosen by the people.

Wisconsin has a long tradition of conservation leaders. The greatest of these told us that "ethical behavior is doing the right thing even when no one else is watching – even when doing the wrong thing is legal." The fact that Mr. Prehn is doing this while everyone is watching speaks volumes.

It is time for the citizens of Wisconsin, and for hunters and anglers in particular to let Mr. Prehn and the rest of the Natural Resources Board know that we are watching, and we believe that he is doing the wrong thing. These comments can be sent to laurie.ross@wisconsin.gov, the Board Liaison. Its time for the board to stop playing politics with our resources.

Dear Ms. Ross,



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