



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

September 30, 2021

Mr. Preston Cole
Secretary
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
101 S. Webster Street
P.O. Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Secretary Cole:

As the leaves begin to change and another summer season comes to a close, Wisconsinites are soaking up every last minute of warm sunshine. One of the best ways to do this is by hopping on a bicycle and going for a ride on one of the many trails that crisscross the state.

Unfortunately, the Elroy-Sparta Trail, “one of the most popular trails in the country” according to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website, remains partially closed.

We ask you to open this popular trail as quickly as possible.

Flooding devastated the 17th Senate District and 50th Assembly District in August 2018 destroying homes, businesses, parks, and trails. As noted on the DNR website, six miles of the Elroy-Sparta Trail remains closed because of storm damage received more than three years ago. Every day that the trail remains closed is another day that visitors and tourism dollars are not flowing into Juneau County and Monroe County.

Since the flooding, we have been working diligently to make sure the trails are fully re-opened. However, our work has been met with resistance, shifting deadlines, and false promises.

First, the Governor vetoed a small amount of funding that was included in the 2019-2021 Wisconsin State Budget for repairs to the trail. Not only did the Governor veto the funding, he sent the money to Madison.

Then, we were told the DNR had secured enough funding for the repairs. Unfortunately, this was not the case and it took not one, but two votes of the Building Commission to secure enough funding.

Third, we were originally told the trail repairs would be completed in time for the 2020 season. Now, we have been told the repairs will not be complete until at least December 2021.

Our constituents are sick and tired of the political games, bureaucratic incompetence, and delays. **We implore you to open the entire Elroy-Sparta Trail as quickly as possible.** Thank you for your time and consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Howard Marklein
17th Senate District

Tony Kurtz
50th Assembly District