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Bill to Improve Water Infrastructure in State Parks Passes Senate Committee

MADISON- Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) released the following statement after 2017 Senate Bill 421, authored by Senator Cowles and named the Parks Revitalization Act, was passed through the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy by a 5-0 vote:

“Our state parks are not only critical in showcasing the best of our state’s natural beauty, but they provide hundreds of millions of dollars in economic activity while generating thousands of jobs in the tourism and service industries. Moreover, the impact of our state parks is growing. In 2016, 17 million people visited the State Park System, which is a 21% increase from the decade prior. While the environment in our state parks may be pristine, the infrastructure is certainly not.

“Good drinking water quality should not be optional when it comes to the health and safety of our visitors. The Parks Revitalization Act is designed to tackle the ongoing issue of degrading water infrastructure in some of our most visited parks. By addressing these critical water infrastructure projects, we can continue to ensure that our state park visitors have an enjoyable outdoors experience and continue to patronize our parks. I hope to see this bill brought before the entire Senate in an upcoming floor session.”

The Parks Revitalization Act uses up to \$4.5 million in authorized but unobligated Knowles-Nelson Stewardship funds from FY 2016-17 to complete critical water infrastructure projects in some of the most frequented state parks. Some of these parks may include Devil’s Lake, High Cliff, Kohler-Andre, Peninsula and Willow River State Parks. Some of these projects may include drinking water fixture replacement, septic system replacement, vault toilet replacement, water line replacement, and waste storage areas.

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