



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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## **EVERS ABANDONS BRILLION FARMERS IN DEAD-OF-NIGHT**

*Governor's veto of Brillion Marsh dredging project costs thousands in crop losses due to flooding*

**MADISON, WI...** Gov. Evers' dead-of-night veto of the Brillion Marsh dredging project, which hurts area farmers and families who worry about flooding every year, has nothing to do with renewing the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program, two area lawmakers said today.

State Rep. Ron Tusler (R-Harrison) and State Sen. André Jacque (R-New Franken), who put funds for the project in the state budget, said his veto shows the Governor is more interested in playing political games than relieving the suffering of local Brillion residents.

"Governor Evers talks a big game about supporting farmers and outdoor recreation, but only when it's politically convenient," Rep. Tusler said. "His veto in the wee hours proves he has no interest in helping rural Wisconsin unless it benefits Madison or Milwaukee."

For the past two budgets, Rep. Tusler and Sen. Jacque submitted funding requests for this critical project to provide long-overdue relief to the residents of Calumet County to protect agriculture and our community, while properly restoring the Manitowoc River. The project was approved by the Legislature, but Gov. Evers vetoed it at 1:30 am Thursday, claiming he would not approve earmarks without an extension of the Stewardship program.

"But Gov. Evers approved funding in the budget for multiple similar DNR earmarks, including the Kewaunee Marsh within my district," Sen. Jacque said. "The Governor chose to play games at the expense of Brillion to score political points, something I expect him and his DNR Secretary-designee to answer to in the days to come."

The lawmakers said the kicker is, the Governor's veto still leaves the \$70,000 in place with no statutory guidance on how to use it.

"So the DNR still gets the \$70,000 - without any constraints on how they use it," Rep. Tusler said. "The people of Brillion deserve to know where that money goes and I fully intend on holding the DNR accountable."

"This veto is the height of hypocrisy," Sen. Jacque said. "While the Governor was targeting Brillion, he left similar DNR projects in the budget, including Browns Lake dredging, Green Lake Sediment Inactivation, and the Echo Lake and Rothschild Dams."

The Brillion dredging project was designed to help over 100 farmers and other residents along the Northern Branch of the Manitowoc River who face devastating annual flooding due to river backup. This project would have provided long-overdue relief to these farmers, who suffer thousands of dollars in crop damage each year, and would have also reopened the Brillion Marsh to kayakers and outdoor enthusiasts, restoring a cherished natural resource to the community.

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