



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 9, 2025

Contact: (608) 237-9181

## **COLUMN: Our State Deserves Bipartisan Environmental Conservation**

“Wisconsin has a rich history of environmental conservation. It benefits our health, our earth, and our local economies. As we look forward to the future, making smart policy decisions to invest in successful programs which continue this legacy is paramount. The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is an excellent example of how our state works to support local stewardship projects and it is critical that we keep this program in the next state budget.

“Many know this fund was named after two conservation-minded Wisconsin governors: Republican Warren Knowles and Democrat Gaylord Nelson. The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program honors Wisconsin’s bipartisan commitment to land and water protection. For over 30 years, people across the political spectrum from every corner of the state have championed this program because our environment doesn’t pick sides.

“In the 81st Assembly District alone, 155 projects have received vital funding from this program. It’s our job now to speak up about the importance of protecting environmental conservation in Wisconsin. So many incredible spaces were made possible by Knowles-Nelson Stewardship funds and the benefits are more than just preserving land.

“The health advantages of recreation are personal for each of us. We know that spending time outdoors reduces stress and improves mental well-being. In terms of safety, conservation helps with flood mitigation and increases climate resilience. Of course, the economic windfalls of connecting trails and attracting tourism is undeniable. With over \$2 billion in value generated through Knowles-Nelson dollars, it is well worth the \$11 investment from each resident.

“With Republican legislators now putting this funding in jeopardy it is time to share our support for the 10-year reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program and learn more at [knowlesnelson.org](http://knowlesnelson.org). Let’s keep this bipartisan success story and Wisconsin’s outdoor traditions going strong!”

###

*Representative Alex Joers represents the 81<sup>st</sup> Assembly District, which includes Middleton, Waunakee, and most of northwest Dane County.*