



## 2018 WISCONSIN CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE U.S. SENATE

**OUTDOOR RECREATION INCLUDING HUNTING AND FISHING IS A MULTI-BILLION-DOLLAR INDUSTRY** in Wisconsin and the United States, supporting jobs and economic development in rural communities. But for many sportsmen and women, hunting and fishing are more than a pastime – they are a passion. Hunters and anglers care deeply about wildlife, habitat and the public lands they have used for generations. They also have a long track record of civic engagement.

For all of those reasons, the Wisconsin Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers developed a short general public interest questionnaire for every candidate listed in a contested 2018 general election race for Governor, U.S. Senate, Secretary of State, and State Treasurer. Our goal was to develop questions that affect all Wisconsinites, but which are not often considered during the course of a typical political campaign.

Two candidates are running to hold one of two Wisconsin Senate seats for the next six years. We submitted the same questions to each campaign on August 29th. We followed up numerous times, in equal measure, with emails, and phone calls to ensure they had received the questionnaire. We reminded each campaign a week in advance as the deadline to respond approached. Additional time was provided if requested.

For the Senate seat, we received responses from Incumbent Democrat Tammy Baldwin and Republican Leah Vukmir.

The candidates' answers are on the following pages. We specifically asked the candidates to keep their answers short. We hope that Wisconsin voters of all political backgrounds will find the responses informative.

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers is a nonprofit charitable 501(c)(3) organization. We do not endorse or oppose any candidate or party for any political office. We do urge all eligible Wisconsin residents to vote.

### TAMMY BALDWIN DEMOCRAT

#### WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO WISCONSIN SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. SENATE?

I believe it is critical that we continue to protect and improve access to public lands for a variety of uses, including hunting and fishing. I've been proud to champion the Land and Water Conservation Fund so we can protect public lands and multiple-use forests for future generations. I'll continue to focus on protecting wildlife health, habitat, and fighting for cleaner waters and working lands that provide ecosystem benefits to protect the places our sportsmen and women enjoy.

#### WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

I oppose the transfer of management authority of federal lands away from federal managers and will continue to fight against efforts to downsize federal lands as we've seen in Utah, with marine monuments, and elsewhere. In order to keep federal lands well managed, we must address maintenance backlogs, ensure our public land managers have the resources to get the job done for the public, and ensure that the federal land managers have a strong working relationship with residents who live near and make a living off of the federal lands.

While I oppose transferring management authority, I do believe there is a role for federal agencies to work more collaboratively with state, county, and local governments, as well as stakeholder groups and tribes, to best deliver on shared ecological and public access goals and avoid conflicts that undermine public trust and support for federal management

#### DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

I believe we need to invest more in conservation, wildlife health and habitat protection, maintenance of public lands, and in protecting lands for the public. With the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, we have seen substantial economic benefits resulting from cleanup, habitat restoration, and efforts to improve water quality. These types of economic benefits from investments in public lands, wildlife management, and the health of private working lands could benefit other parts of our state and nation as well.

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I have focused my efforts on ending fire borrowing and fighting for strong funding for the Forest Service, National Park

Service, and other agencies and programs that address wildlife health and support effective state level management through federal pass-through dollars.

#### THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

Yes, I am a cosponsor of the bipartisan bill S. 569, the Land and Water Conservation Authorization and Funding Act, which would permanently reauthorize and fund the LWCF. The LWCF has been an instrumental tool to protecting and preserving some of America's most special natural and historical sites for future generations. It has also helped to establish parks in communities across Wisconsin, providing the public opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors from day to day as well as on excursions. Public access to open spaces and the outdoors greatly enriches the lives of millions of Americans every day and we must continue to carry on this proud tradition.

#### DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

I believe that wilderness areas play an important role in providing access for hunting and fishing, especially as they help to expand public access to hunting and fishing spots and can reduce the proximity of sportsmen and women who are out taking advantage of the hunting and fishing seasons, which improves safety and the quality of the experience.

I also believe that public support for public lands is strongest when lands are managed in a way that the public can access lands where their particular recreation interests are allowed. In Wisconsin, we have a range of opportunities, from wilderness to snowmobiling trails; from hiking the Ice Age Trail through urban areas and across farm lands to large, infrequently traveled sections of the Chequamegon Nicolet National Forest. When decisions are made on the uses of these areas, there must be extensive public consultation.

#### ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE?

While the diligence of mitigation efforts ranges from operation to operation, in extractive industries we often learn after the fact that the operation had a more serious environmental impact than projected, even if they abided by the required mitigation steps. I believe we must continue to improve our understanding of the most effective ways to minimize environmental impacts from industrial activities and to work with industry to find ways to achieve these improvements that are operationally feasible, which will help to ensure they are used more faithfully.

#### DO YOU SEE A NEED TO FOR FEDERAL FUNDING TO SUPPORT EFFORTS, INCLUDING RESEARCH, TO CONTROL THE SPREAD OF CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD) AND REDUCE PREVALENCE RATES OF INFECTED ANIMALS WITHIN AFFECTED AREAS?

Yes, I see a need for increased research, funds for testing, and the deployment of more effective and responsive strategies for reducing the prevalence and spread of the disease. The US Department of Agriculture and the US Geological Survey play important roles in supporting the states on this disease, and I am continuing to fight for funding for both, including funding for the nation's premier wildlife health investigative lab, the USGS National Wildlife Health Center, located in Madison. Wisconsin benefits from being home to this center, and it has assisted with CWD research as well as research on White Nose Syndrome and Avian influenza.

#### THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

We must make stronger federal investments in the maintenance backlog, and I will continue fighting for this as a member of the Appropriations Committee. We cannot rely on fees to accomplish this or we will end up substantially limiting access to public lands based on ability to pay a high entrance rate.

#### DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

I am open to the discussion on updates to grazing practices, and I believe that any decisions should be based on science and robust opportunities for public input in a transparent process.

#### WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

I am a strong supporter of the Endangered Species Act and believe it has done a great deal to prevent species decline and extinction. Any changes made to the Act must be faithful to improving upon its purpose and helping it to further species conservation, rather than weakening it.

#### DO YOU SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT WOULD DELIST THE GREAT LAKES WOLVES? IF THE ANSWER IS YES, IF ELECTED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO PASS SUCH LEGISLATION?

Yes, I have cosponsored and advocated for multiple bills and amendments to use a targeted approach to delist wolves in the Western Great Lakes. The wolf has recovered in our region. We must acknowledge that the Endangered Species Act has worked, and therefore it is time to return management of the population back to the Great Lakes states. I will continue to work with my colleagues to find a way forward to get this done.

### LEAH VUKMIR REPUBLICAN

#### WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO WISCONSIN SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN THAT YOU CAN AFFECT IN THE U.S. SENATE?

As Wisconsin's senator, I will work to provide Wisconsinites with the ability to hunt and fish on our public lands. I will ensure public lands remain open and accessible to hunters and fishermen, as they have been for generations. I will continue to preserve our protected lands and make sure they are properly maintained and enjoyable for everyone who wishes to use them, whether that is avid hunters, experienced fishermen, or Wisconsinites that just like to enjoy the natural splendor of our great state.

#### WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARD THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS, INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY?

As someone who believes strongly in state's rights, management of public land is always more effective when experts closest to the ground are monitoring it. Although the federal government provides excellent resources they cannot always address the needs of specific regions. Giving power to the states to address their lands will best serve wildlife and the environment. Too often we see unintentional consequences from federal regulations that intend to do good but inflict harm because of their broad nature.

#### DO YOU FEEL THE BUDGETS FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ARE TOO HIGH, TOO LOW OR ABOUT RIGHT?

The Department of Interior has several land and wildlife management agencies within it. I think it is important to examine if these agencies are using tax dollars efficiently and appropriately. Whether their budgets are too high or too low is a question of how that money is spent and whether it is spent for the right reasons. I will work to ensure every dollar appropriated to protect public lands will be used for that purpose and not be wastefully spent or distracted from that cause.

#### THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES THIS YEAR. DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION AND FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

The Land and Water Conservation Fund serves an important purpose of protecting some of our most beautiful landmarks across the country. It is important we continue to protect our natural resources and preserve our national and state landmarks. To continue to authorize this fund, we must recognize serious budget issues facing our country and look at how we can effectively focus the fund on preserving and maintaining our current parks. Too often we see this fund as an opportunity to buy new lands, when we desperately need to put that money to use revitalizing already public land.

#### DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WILDERNESS DESIGNATIONS OR OTHER PROTECTIVE DESIGNATIONS FOR PUBLIC LAND TEND TO IMPROVE OR REDUCE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITY?

It's important that we look at the reason for assessing certain lands with protective designations and whether or not it is necessary. Protective designations tend to be introduced for specific reasons on a case-by-case basis. In these instances, it is important we measure the impact on sportsmen versus the need for the designation.

#### ENERGY COMPANIES TYPICALLY HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, WHEN OIL, GAS OR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS. DO YOU BELIEVE ENERGY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN MEETING THEIR MITIGATION OBLIGATIONS OR SHOULD THEY BE REQUIRED TO DO MORE?

Lawmakers, wildlife agencies, and business must work together to determine the appropriate mitigation obligations to protect wildlife, maintain public lands, and encourage economic success. Mitigation is an important part of the federal public land program to be able to continue to offer access and preserve our environment. Collaboration from all parties involved in this important land protection process will create successful mitigation program that supports energy needs and protects our public lands.

#### DO YOU SEE A NEED TO FOR FEDERAL FUNDING TO SUPPORT EFFORTS, INCLUDING RESEARCH, TO CONTROL THE SPREAD OF CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD) AND REDUCE PREVALENCE RATES OF INFECTED ANIMALS WITHIN AFFECTED AREAS?

It is important we protect Wisconsin's proud hunting heritage and ensure a healthy and bountiful deer population. The Wisconsin DNR has studied the spread of CWD extensively and implemented plans to stop its spread. I support Governor Walker's further efforts to contain and limit the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease through limiting the movements of affected deer herds. If the disease continues to extensively spread, I think we can then examine the need for federal funding. When controlling a public health issue like CWD, we must keep every option on the table. Wisconsin has a long tradition of deer hunting and we must do all we can to ensure that tradition continues.

#### THERE IS A HUGE BACKLOG OF MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LAND FACILITIES, SUCH AS NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES. WOULD YOU PREFER TO TACKLE THAT BACKLOG THROUGH INCREASED USER FEES OR BY INCREASING THE AGENCY BUDGETS?

Maintaining our beautiful national parks not only has a benefit to everyday users, but also has an economic benefit to our entire nation. Maintenance and infrastructure upgrades will encourage more citizens to explore our beautiful country. First and foremost, I think in every government agency we can identify wasteful spending. In Wisconsin, we have ensured that money is used appropriately and not diluted to other departments or agencies. The same misappropriation happens at the federal level, on a much greater scale. If we eliminate waste and ensure funds are appropriately used, I do not believe it will be necessary to raise user fees or increase the agencies budget through higher taxes. America truly has some of the most beautiful parks in the world, and properly maintaining them benefits everyone.

#### DO YOU SEE A NEED TO MODIFY GRAZING PRACTICES ON FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS IN THE WEST? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU PROPOSE?

I think it is important we examine the current grazing practices and determine what changes can be made that benefit all interested parties. The Bureau of Land Management has been studying the effects of grazing on the western plains for some time and has been working to improve their grazing practices system. When in office I will work with interested parties to ensure every voice is heard and grazing practices are in the best interests of our public lands.

#### WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT?

The Endangered Species Act has been very successful at protecting and preventing iconic species from going extinct, including the symbol of this great country the Bald Eagle. It is important we remain vigilant of species with severely declining populations. At the same time, the Endangered Species Act was passed more than 40 years ago and in that time we have vastly improved our knowledge of protecting endangered species. I think we need to examine the ESA and implement changes that continue to support wildlife and benefit our economy.

#### DO YOU SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT WOULD DELIST THE GREAT LAKES WOLVES? IF THE ANSWER IS YES, IF ELECTED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO PASS SUCH LEGISLATION?

I am supportive of Wisconsin Senator Ron Johnson's efforts to delist the Great Lakes Wolf. The Great Lakes Wolf has made a successful and bountiful comeback from being an endangered species and it is time we recognize that reality. Numerous sportsmen, farmers, and ranchers in Wisconsin have made statements that it is time to delist the Great Lakes Wolf. Unfortunately, this decision is being left up to the DC judges and not wildlife experts in the area. As the next U.S. Senator for Wisconsin, I will continue to push to delist the Great Lakes Wolf and give the State of Wisconsin the ability to responsibly control our wolf population.

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