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# NEWS RELEASE

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## ***Sierra Club is Appalled by the State Senate's Midnight Wetlands Vote***

**Madison, WI** – On the one year anniversary of Governor Walker's 'dropping the bomb' on state workers and introducing the 'Budget Repair Bill', the Senate is back to its dirty tricks. After senate Democrats stalled the bill by voting against a third reading, Senator Fitzgerald requested the Senate return at 12:01 AM to vote. The Senate voted on party line, for SB 368, or the 'Wetlands Deregulation Bill'.

"It is appalling that the Senate would vote on this bill at Midnight and attempt to keep the vote and debate out of the public eye. This bill jeopardizes sensitive areas throughout the state, including trout streams, outstanding resource waters, and state natural areas," said Elizabeth Ward, Conservation Programs Coordinator for the Sierra Club—John Muir Chapter.

This vote leaves wetlands vulnerable in several ways:

- By deleting the statutory definition of (ASNRI) wetlands, areas with significant ecological, educational or recreational value currently under special protection, it leaves our most valuable wetlands at risk,
- Rolling back the "avoid & minimize" rule no longer requires developers to consider non-wetland sites leaves developers,
- Requiring mitigation too early in the permit process doesn't allow the effects habitat destruction and alternatives to be fully explored; and
- Setting arbitrary, aggressive time limits for DNR staff to review permit applications followed by automatic approval of general wetland permits if time runs out, does not allow the effects to be fully and carefully researched.

The vote early this morning occurred even after a recent study by Earth Economics showed that wetlands contribute at least [\\$3.2 billion per year to Wisconsin's economy in ecosystem services](#). "It is outrageous the Senate took so little concern for our wetlands, and we hope that we do not see this same trickery occur with the mining bill. The people of Wisconsin have a history of stewardship of the land and expect our elected officials to uphold the same values," concluded Ward.

*Founded in 1892 by John Muir, the Sierra Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. The Sierra Club's mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out those objectives. The Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter is made up of 15,000 members and supporters working to promote clean energy and protect water resources in Wisconsin.*

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