

THANK YOU BILL (SMITH).

**THANK YOU BOB (GALL) AND THE WORK THE WIS.
VALLEY IMPROVEMENT CO. DOES.**

**SECRETARY GEORGE MEYER, DNR CHAIR TRYVE
SOLBERG ... SENATOR BRESKE, REPRESENTATIVE
HANDRICK,**

**AND CHUCK (SMITH), THE TENNECO CORP., IN ADDITION
TO BEING A WONDERFUL EMPLOYER, IS CERTAINLY A
PUBLIC-SPIRITED COMPANY FOR ITS FINE STEWARDSHIP
OF THE LAND.**

**THIS IS AN HISTORIC DAY IN WISCONSIN, THE PAY-OFF
OF MANY YEARS OF INVESTMENT THAT WILL PAY
DIVIDENDS SUCCEEDING GENERATIONS WILL SHARE.**

**WILLOW FLOWAGE IS 8,720 ACRES OF UNDEVELOPED
WOODLANDS, LOWLAND AND BOG ... 117 ISLANDS AND
73½ MILES OF PROTECTED WATER FRONTAGE.**

THE WILLOW FLOWAGE IS ONE OF WISCONSIN'S MOST PRECIOUS NATURAL TREASURES BECAUSE OF ITS RICH BEAUTY, BOUNTIFUL RESOURCES, AND DIVERSE NATURAL FEATURES.

A FEW MOMENTS AGO I HAD THE PLEASURE OF SURVEYING THIS SHINING NATURAL JEWEL OF NATURE FROM THE WILLOW QUEEN.

I COULD ALMOST SEE THE MUSKIE, NORTHERN PIKE, BASS, WALLEYE AND PANFISH. I NEEDED ALL MY STRENGTH TO PREVENT TRYVE FROM DROPPING A LINE OVER.

BALD EAGLE, OSPREY, LOON AND THE GREAT BLUE HERON NEST HERE AND MIGRATING WATERFOWL USE IT AS A WELCOME FILLING STATION ON THE WAY NORTH AND SOUTH.

ONCE-ENDANGERED WOLF PACKS NOW ROAM THE NORTHWESTERN AND SOUTHERN PORTIONS OF THE FLOWAGE. AND DEER, BEAR, RACCOON, FISHER AND OTTER ALL CALL THE WILLOW FLOWAGE HOME AS WELL.

THE WILLOW FLOWAGE IS SIMPLY A BEAUTIFUL AND BOUNTIFUL RESOURCE THAT THE ENTIRE STATE WILL BE ABLE TO ENJOY FOR GENERATIONS. IT IS AN EXCITING AND APPROPRIATE PURCHASE TO MAKE ON THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR STATEHOOD.

AND WE WERE ABLE TO MAKE THIS PURCHASE FOR THE REMARKABLE PRICE OF \$29 A FRONT FOOT – DRAMATICALLY BELOW THE \$300-\$500 PRICE ON PRIVATE LAND IN THIS SAME AREA. THE \$9.8 MILLION FOR THIS PURCHASE CAME FROM THE STEWARDSHIP FUND.

THE PURCHASE OF THE WILLOW FLOWAGE IS THE SECOND LARGEST IN STATE HISTORY ... SECOND ONLY

**TO THE 22,000-ACRE TURTLE-FLAMBEAU FLOWAGE,
WHICH I MADE IN 1990.**

**DURING MY ADMINISTRATION, I HAVE NOW PURCHASED
187,750 ACRES OF LAND FOR PRESERVATION – MORE
THAN AT ANY OTHER PERIOD IN WISCONSIN HISTORY.**

**WE CAN TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS
OF THE PAST 10 YEARS. WE HAVE PUT AN ADDITIONAL
200,000 ACRES OF HABITAT UNDER PROTECTION SINCE
1987 AN AREA ONE-QUARTER THE SIZE OF RHODE
ISLAND.**

**BUT I TAKE SPECIAL PRIDE IN KNOWING THAT WE ARE
INDEED LEAVING OUR ENVIRONMENT BETTER THAN WE
FOUND IT A DECADE AGO.**

**TRUMPETER SWANS ARE ON THE WAY BACK; WE ARE
CLOSE TO OUR GOAL OF 200 NESTING PAIRS BY THE**

YEAR 2000. WE'VE RESCUED THE BALD EAGLES FROM THE ENDANGERED LIST ... THEY NOW NUMBER OVER 600 PAIRS ... AND THE OSPREY ARE NOW UP TO 360 PAIRS.

WISCONSIN ALSO HAS THE SOUTHERN-MOST PACK OF TIMBER WOLVES IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE. THE RETURN OF THESE SPECIES, KNOWN TO THE PIONEERS WHO FOUNDED OUR STATE 150 YEARS AGO, ARE BIOLOGICAL SIGNPOSTS OF HOW FAR WE HAVE COME AS A STATE.

I HAVE BEEN SO AGGRESSIVE IN PRESERVING OUR NATURAL HERITAGE BECAUSE I BELIEVE IT IS SO IMPORTANT FOR OUR GENERATION TO LEAVE OUR CHILDREN WITH A HEALTHY AND THRIVING ENVIRONMENT.

THE WILLOW FLOWAGE IS AN ASSET THAT WILL BEAR DIVIDENDS FOR GENERATIONS, GRANDFATHERS TO

**GRANDCHILDREN. AS YOU KNOW, I AM AN AVID
OUTDOORSMAN. AND I AM SO BECAUSE OF MY FATHER.**

**HE TAUGHT ME A GREAT APPRECIATION FOR THE
OUTDOORS AND A CONSERVATIONIST'S ETHIC. IT IS
IMPORTANT THAT WE, AS THE FATHERS AND MOTHERS
OF THE NEXT GENERATION, TEACH OUR CHILDREN THE
SAME ETHIC FOR ENJOYING, PROTECTING AND
ENHANCING OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.**

**WITH PURCHASES LIKE THE WILLOW FLOWAGE, OUR
CHILDREN WILL HAVE PRISTINE LAND AND WATER
WHERE THEY CAN TEACH THEIR CHILDREN TO FISH;
SHOW THEM THE BEAUTY OF A BALD EAGLE IN FLIGHT;
TAKE LONG HIKE; AND PASS DOWN TO THEM THE
IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVING NATURE.**

**IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PASS THIS
ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE TO OUR CHILDREN AND THE**

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2:
Gubernatorial Speeches

**NEXT GENERATION, AND I AM PROUD THAT WE ARE
DOING SO.**