

27 January 10

Mr. Tom W. Schrader, Director
Parks & Recreation Department
City of Stevens Point
2442 Sims Ave.
Stevens Point, WI 54481

Dear Tom:

This is a formal request to the Parks & Recreation Department/Committee to approve moving forward with the application by the City of Stevens Point for one of the first Bird City Wisconsin (BCW) cities. The organization cooperating with the City on this grant application process will be the Aldo Leopold Audubon Society (ALAS) of central Wisconsin.

The BCW initiative has been given a startup grant by the "Together Green" program sponsored by Toyota and the National Audubon Society. Its Wisconsin sponsors are the Milwaukee Audubon Society, the Wisconsin Audubon Council, the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative, Madison Audubon Society and the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin.

BCW is modeled after the highly successful "Tree City USA" program which Stevens Point has belonged to for 29 years. The goal of BCW is to promote the conservation and understanding of birds and recognize cities for their avian stewardship.

To this end, just as with Tree City USA, certain criteria must be met (see attached sheets): 3 criteria must be met from Category #1: Creation & Protection of Habitat (Stevens Point qualifies for criteria A,B,C & G). One criterion must be met from Category #2 (Stevens Point qualifies for criterion "A"). One criterion must be met from Category #3 (Stevens Point will be asked to participate in the American Bird Conservancy "Cats Indoors" program, criterion A). One criterion must be met from Category 4 (Stevens Point already is involved in criterion E and will be asked to participate in criteria A & B). Finally, Stevens Point will be asked to promote International Migratory Bird Day, Category 5.

Once meeting the initial criteria for designation as a "Bird City Wisconsin", the City will have to continue these standards of excellence to achieve the level called a "Sustained Flight Award". Tree City USA has even higher levels of excellence from the basic award. So does BCW. The next highest level is the High Flyer Award and the highest level is a Special Commendation Award. Stevens Point will already qualify for the High Flyer Award if it achieves the initial level and the highest level of Special Commendation Award, is achievable with hard work.

So what does the City of Stevens Point stand to gain from a "Bird City Wisconsin" designation?: 1) the prestige of being recognized as achieving excellence in bird conservation and 2) increased attraction to ecotourists who are looking for communities who promote conservation and sustainability.

What is expected of the City of Stevens Point?: 1) Cooperation with Audubon members to achieve Bird City Wisconsin Status. Such cooperation will include flying the Bird City Wisconsin flag, mounting two signs entering the City and displaying a Bird City Wisconsin plaque (see BCW logo, enclosed) and 2) Shared financing with ALAS.

What is expected of ALAS. 1) Preparation of the BCW grant request to then be signed by City officials and 2) Working with the City toward the goal of "no cost to taxpayers". If that proves difficult, ALAS will split the costs of BCW with the City. At this time, only these major costs are expected: **\$150** for flag, signs and plaque and **\$170** for 1000 "Cats Indoors" brochures.

ALAS asks your support so we can move forward with this request to Mayor Halverson's office and the City Council.

Kent D. Hall, Chair
Bird City Wisconsin Committee
Aldo Leopold Audubon Society
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Cc: Andrew Halverson, Mayor
Todd Ernster, City Forester
Tom Barrett, ED, SPACVB
Larry Graham, ALAS Pres.
John Munson, BCW Comm.