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10/13/2009

RESOLUTION REQUESTING MICHIGAN LEGISLATURE TO ADOPT STATE-WIDE BAN ON USE OF RESIDENTIAL FERTILIZERS CONTAINING PHOSPHOROUS

Whereas, excess phosphorous introduced to lakes, streams and reservoirs produces conditions that promote the growth of nuisance plants, increases anaerobic conditions reducing available oxygen (oxygen dead zones) for fish and other aquatic organisms resulting in algal blooms that can result in further fish kills; and

Whereas, high phosphorous levels were responsible for oxygen "dead zones" in Jordan Lake and the Nashville Mill Run (Thornapple River) in Barry County and there are alarming signs that many inland lakes and streams are not supporting designated uses due to phosphorus loading; and

Whereas, the vast majority of residential property soils do not require phosphorous supplementation and that unneeded supplementation will not stay in the soil but rather run off into local water supplies such as lakes and streams; and

Whereas according to the State Department of Environmental Quality, one pound of phosphorous is enough to promote the growth of 500 pounds of algae; and

Whereas, recent research shows that phosphorus levels in the Huron River dropped an average of 28 percent after Ann Arbor adopted an ordinance in 2006 that curtailed the use of phosphorus on lawns; and

Whereas, Governor Jennifer Granholm also recently signed a law significantly reducing the amount of phosphorous allowed in household dish and laundry detergents sold in Michigan beginning in 2010; and

Whereas, this year local officials in some Michigan communities that already banned the use of phosphorous containing residential fertilizers indicate the transition was seamless and without difficulty; and

Whereas, many retailers and some lawn care companies have already begun voluntary elimination of phosphorous containing fertilizers out of concern for our waters; and

Whereas, the Right to Farm Act allows the agricultural industry to use phosphorous necessary to sustain crop production and that this industry will not be impacted by a residential fertilizer phosphorous ban; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Barry County Board of Commissioners requests the Legislature of the State of Michigan to draft and pass a state-wide ban on the use of residential fertilizers containing phosphorous to preserve our lakes, streams and reservoirs from degradation.

Be it further resolved that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to Governor Jennifer Granholm, Senator Mike Prusi, Representative Steven Lindberg and the other 82 County Commissions in Michigan.

Dr. Michael Callton, D.C. Chair
Barry County Board of Commissioners

Pamela A. Jarvis, Clerk
Barry County Clerk