## **Governor Scott Walker**

Wisconsin’s Republican Governor Scott Kevin Walker (DOB: 11/2/67) won election in 2010, survived a recall attempt in 2012, and won re-election in 2014, before losing in 2018 to Democrat Tony Evers. Walker previously served as Milwaukee County Executive and in the Wisconsin State Assembly. He ran a brief and unsuccessful campaign for the Republican nomination for president in 2016. Walker, who has gained a reputation for being anti-labor, has been mentioned as a candidate to replace Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke.

Key findings:

**Walker has been criticized by environmental advocates for his positions and actions while governor.** “On the environment, Walker’s been a disaster,” the director of the Wisconsin Sierra Club said in 2014. “I wish I had something good to say about him.” According to a 2014 column in the Capital Times, “make no mistake…The Walker administration has turned over the control of our natural resources to those who see them only as booty…we are a state run by radical extractivists.” The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters described Walker’s “extreme anti-conservation agenda,” and in 2018, an article in the Wisconsin State Journal noted that Walker “has been at the center of an ambitious eight-year culling of environmental regulations long disparaged by businesses. Walker and Schimel have eased penalties for polluters and sued to block federal rules aimed at water pollution, smog and climate-altering greenhouse gases.”

**Walker has taken action against the development of alternative energy sources in Wisconsin.** In 2011, Walker nixed a project that would have converted a coalfired power plant at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to burn biomass. An op-ed that same year cited Walker’s “efforts to weaken or kill measures that reduce our state's reliance on fossil fuels…” In 2014, despite the fact that 35 wind farms were under construction in the Upper Midwest, none were being developed in Wisconsin.

**Walker has gone to great lengths to avoid voicing his opinion on whether climate change is man-made.** “If there are market-based solutions to climate change, why do we need Congress to Act?” Walker said in 2013 after President Obama urged Congress to pursue a “bipartisan, market-based solution to climate change.” The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel wrote in 2014 that “Walker’s stance has been to express concern about climate regulations rather than climate change.” In 2015, Walker announced plans to sue the federal government over new limits on carbon emissions from power plants. That same year, climate wire reported that “when it comes to climate change, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker is one of the biggest mysteries in the field of potential Republican candidates for president. He hasn't publicly denied that temperatures are rising because of human activities. He also hasn't accepted it, according to observers.” He later twice declined to say whether he believed climate change was real and influenced by human activity.

**During his time as governor, Walker undermined enforcement authority at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.** According to a 2014 article in the Wisconsin State Journal, “Walker began remaking the DNR soon after taking office, appointing Cathy Stepp, a former Republican state senator and fierce critic of the agency, as its head. In 2011 he changed the administrative rule-making process to provide more certainty for business in dealing with state agencies like the DNR, and pushed to get the state out of the way of a rapidly growing mining sector that has made Wisconsin the nation's top source of frac sand…Taken together, the changes in environmental regulation are likely the most extensive in decades, said Eric Bott, director of environmental and energy policy for the state business lobby, Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce…The DNR took far less enforcement action against significant polluters during Walker's first three years in office than in former Democratic Gov. Jim Doyle's last three.”

**Walker’s 2015 budget slashed funding for science and research.** In 2015, Walker was criticized for a budget that made steep cuts in personnel in a science and research bureau at DNR. That same year, Walker’s administration considered giving a top natural resources position to a lobbyist for a company proposing a massive iron mine, but backed off because of a federal law barring conflicts of interest. Scientific American reported that Walker had “moved to reduce the role of science in environmental policymaking and to silence discussion of controversial subjects, including climate change, by state employees.” In 2017, Walker tried—unsuccessfully—to kill a magazine published by DNR, which editors said had avoided controversial issues—including climate change—since the start of Walker’s first term. In 2018, the Wisconsin State Journal reported that “Walker’s DNR has defended a decrease in pollution penalties…”

**Walker has controversially supported efforts to vastly expand mining in Wisconsin.** According to an article in the Wisconsin State Journal,“Wisconsin Republicans have been pushing to restart mining since 2011, when Walker was elected governor and the GOP took full control of the Legislature. In 2013, Walker signed Republican state Sen. Tom Tiffany's bill to dramatically relax state iron mining regulations. The bill was designed to help Gogebic Taconite develop an open-pit iron mine near Lake Superior. With strong opposition from American Indian tribes and environmentalists, the company ultimately gave up on the project after deciding wetlands around the potential site made the project unfeasible.” However, controversy continued when it was revealed that the mining company behind the open-pit iron mine donated $700,000 to a pro-Walker group during his attempted recall. In 2017, Walker planned to sign a Republican bill lifting Wisconsin’s nearly 20-year ban on gold and silver mining—a ban he helped put in place as a legislator.

## Alternative Energy

**2011: Walker Nixed a Project that Would Have Converted a Coalfired Power Plant to Burn Biomass; Plant Would Instead Convert to Natural Gas.** “Nixed a project that would have converted a coalfired power plant at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to burn biomass. By converting the plant instead to natural gas, the Walker administration says the state should save about $75 million to $80 million.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 1/30/11]

**2011: Op-Ed Cited Walker’s ‘Efforts to Weaken Or Kill Measures that Reduce Our State’s Reliance on Fossil Fuels…’** According to an op-ed by Spencer Black, “Walker's efforts to weaken or kill measures that reduce our state's reliance on fossil fuels are a microcosm of what is happening nationally. Across the country, the right wing is on the attack against anything that lessens fossil fuel usage. Rush Limbaugh regularly ridicules energy efficient cars. Other conservative broadcasters are waging war against, of all things, bicycling. And the tea party in Congress has found a new, grave threat to America - energy efficient light bulbs…Why has Walker in Wisconsin and the Republican Party in general turned against reducing our use of oil and coal? The answer is found, as it so often is, by following the money. There has been a massive infusion of fossil fuel money into the right wing…When the oil industry says ‘dance,’ Scott Walker dances to their tune, even if it means killing jobs in the renewable energy and energy efficiency industries. Over the next several months, you will see a lot of ads for Walker. Keep in mind who is paying for them - and why.” [Capital Times, 12/14/11]

**2014: 35 Wind Farms Were under Construction in the Upper Midwest But None in Wisconsin.** “This year, 35 wind farms are under construction in the Upper Midwest - none in Wisconsin. ‘We're missing out as a state, and we've actually ceded many good-paying construction and engineering jobs to states that have policies to encourage and attract clean energy developers,’ said Keith Reopelle, senior policy director at Clean Wisconsin.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 9/28/14]

**2015: Walker Changed View on Requirement of Ethanol Use.** “In 2006, Walker strongly opposed an effort for Wisconsin to require ethanol use in mid-grade gasoline, on the grounds the government should not be dictating such rules. But this month at the Iowa Ag Summit, a presidential candidate cattle call of sorts, Walker said he supported maintaining the federal ethanol mandate - though he would like to see it phased out eventually. That earned him a Half Flip.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 3/25/15]

## Climate Change

**2013: Walker: “If There Are Market-Based Solutions to Climate Change, Why Do We Need Congress to Act?”** “Obama: ‘I urge this Congress to pursue a bipartisan, market-based solution to climate change.’ (Walker: ‘If there are market-based solutions to climate change, why do we need Congress to act?’)” [Weekly Standard, 2/25/13]

**2014: Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: “Walker’s Stance Has Been to Express Concern about Climate Regulations Rather than Climate Change.”** “Under Doyle, climate change initiatives slowed as the economy worsened. The economy is stronger today, but Walker's stance has been to express concern about climate regulations rather than climate change. Days after Obama unveiled a plan in 2013 to curb greenhouse gases, Walker and Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal criticized the plan, saying it would hurt states that burn the most coal.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 9/28/14]

**2015: Environmentalists Balked at Walker’s Plans to Sue Federal Government over New Limits on Power Plants’ Carbon Emissions, Saying Proposals “Could Have a Devastating Impact on Wisconsin…”** “Environmentalists balked Friday at Republican Gov. Scott Walker's plans to sue the federal government over new limits on power plants' carbon emissions, saying the governor is ignoring climate change and simply wants to show he opposes government regulation as he mulls a presidential bid…The governor said the standards would result in soaring electric bills as utilities spend billions to comply and threaten the state's manufacturing sector. ‘These proposals could have a devastating impact on Wisconsin because we are so heavily dependent on manufacturing,’ he said. ‘Instead of fighting with states like Wisconsin, the federal government should work with us to find reasonable alternatives.’” [AP, 1/16/15]

* **Wisconsin LCV Said Walker Was in Denial about Climate Change.** “The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters said Walker was in denial about climate change, saying he was ‘trying to score political points with his polluting allies by putting his national ambitions ahead of what's right for Wisconsin.’” [AP, 1/16/15]

**2015: Climate Wire: “When It Comes to Climate Change…Walker Is One of the Biggest Mysteries…He Hasn’t Denied that Temperatures Are Rising because of Human Activities...He Also Hasn’t Accepted It…”** “When it comes to climate change, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker is one of the biggest mysteries in the field of potential Republican candidates for president. He hasn't publicly denied that temperatures are rising because of human activities. He also hasn't accepted it, according to observers.” [Climate Wire, 2/18/15]

* **2015: Walker Said He “Absolutely” Believed Human Activity Contributed to Climate Change, “The Question Is to What Degree…We Shouldn’t Have to Choose between a Strong Environment and a Strong Economy.”** “Walker, who has threatened to sue the federal government in an effort to reduce carbon emission restrictions, said Tuesday that he ‘absolutely’ believes that human activity is contributing to climate change. ‘The question is to what degree,’ said Walker, a supporter of the Keystone pipeline. ‘For us to be environmentally sustainable, we need to be economically sustainable. We shouldn't have to choose between a strong environment and a strong economy. There's got to be a balance. Some of the recent things concern me. For a minimal amount of advancement, we have a big economic impact on our economic resources.’” [Orange County Register, 3/11/15]

**2015: Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: “Asked about Climate Change, Walker Declined Twice to Say Whether He Believed that the Phenomenon Is Real and Influenced by Human Activity.”** “Asked about climate change, Walker declined twice to say whether he believed that the phenomenon is real and influenced by human activity. ‘I believe that the government needs to make sure we balance between a sustainable economy and a sustainable environment,’ Walker said. ‘That's really where the debate in this state and in this country should be on: how do you do both?’” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 4/23/15]

**2015: AP: “Walker Has Not Made Climate Change a Focus of His Campaign…But…Signed the ‘No Climate Tax’ Pledge to Oppose Any Legislation that Would Raise Taxes to Combat Climate Change.”** “Walker has not made climate change a focus of his campaign, but he has spoken at the Heartland Institute, a group that denies man-made climate change. Walker also joined more than a dozen other coal-reliant states suing the Environmental Protection Agency to block the so-called Clean Power Plan, which would require states to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 30 percent by 2030. Walker has also signed the ‘no climate tax’ pledge to oppose any legislation that would raise taxes to combat climate change.” [AP, 7/2/15]

**2015: Walker Criticized Obama for Calling Global Warming Top Threat Facing Future Generations.** “Walker said in his speech that President Barack Obama has called global warming, or climate change - he used both terms - the top threat facing future generations. That's a narrower version of a Walker claim we checked in June. In that claim, Walker said Obama had told the U.S. Coast Guard Academy ‘that the number one threat to the military and the world today is global warming.’ That drew a rating of Mostly False. We noted in that item that Obama had on various occasions, and in a general context, said there is no greater threat to the world than climate change. But in the speech Walker cited, the president told Coast Guard graduates that climate change was a serious threat, not the number one threat to the military or the world.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 7/15/15]

**2015: New Republic Declared Walker “The Most Dangerous Candidate on Climate Change.”** “The New Republic has declared GOP presidential candidate Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker 'The Most Dangerous Candidate on Climate Change.' The evidence against him? Walker has rejected President Barack Obama's Clean Power Plan, noting the 30 percent required reduction of coal-generated electricity in Wisconsin (currently 62 percent of the state's electric power) in the next 15 years would harm the state's economy while doing nothing to prevent global warming or improve public health. Further proof Walker is dangerous is his embrace of fracking and defense of the state's frac sand mining industry against outside environmental groups who've lobbied to shut it down, and his budget-balancing proposals, including spending cuts for state natural resource and environmental agencies. The New Republic surmises these factors prove Walker is anti-environment. Walker is a climate realist and for this sin, he must be condemned by The New Republic…” [The Heartlander, 7/17/15]

**2015: Walker Called Clean Power Plan “a Buzz Saw to the Nation’s Economy…”** “The Obama administration announced new regulations to cut carbon emissions from power plants on Monday, a move that quickly prompted Gov. Scott Walker to vow Wisconsin will join other states in a lawsuit challenging the first-ever requirements to lower plants' carbon pollution. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said the plans The would reduce carbon emissions by 32% from 2005 levels by 2030. The cut is bigger than an earlier draft that sought to cut emissions by 30%. Environmentalists and public health advocates praised the regulations. The cut in carbon emissions would help attack global warming and provide reductions in other emissions that create soot and smog. Less air pollution would lead to fewer asthma attacks and other respiratory diseases…'President Barack Obama injected another contentious issue Monday when he unveiled new emissions limits on power plants designed to address climate change. Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker called the move 'a buzz saw to the nation's economy.' 'I want to balance a sustainable environment with a sustainable economy,' Walker said.' [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 8/4/15]

**2015: Walker: “We’ve Had Enough of a President Who Proclaims that the Greatest Threat to Future Generations Is Climate Change.”** “‘Political rhetoric will not keep us safe. We've had enough of a President who proclaims that the greatest threat to future generations is climate change,’ Walker will say. ‘America can and must do better. At the very least, you deserve a commander-in-chief who tells you the truth. And here it is: we are at war with radical Islamic terrorism. It will not go away overnight. This is a generational struggle. And these radical groups will continue to grow if we do not destroy them.’” [The Examiner, 8/28/15]

**2018: Wisconsin State Journal: “In 2016, Walker’s Administration Provoked a Backlash from the Public and UW-Madison Professors by Quietly Removing Climate Change Information from State Web Sites.”** “In 2016, Walker's administration provoked a backlash from the public and UW-Madison professors by quietly removing climate change information from state web sites.” [Wisconsin State Journal 10/22/18]

**2018: Wisconsin State Journal: “Walker…Framed…Opposition to Greenhouse Gas Rules in Economic Or Legal Terms…”** “Walker and Schimel have framed their opposition to greenhouse gas rules in economic or legal terms. While some Republicans have publicly tried to cast doubt about global warming, Walker and Schimel have mostly declined to discuss their views.” [Wisconsin State Journal 10/22/18]

**2018: Wisconsin State Journal: “Walker’s Campaign Is Being Bolstered by $3.1 Million in Advocacy Advertising Announced in August and September by Americans for Prosperity Wisconsin…”** “Walker's campaign is being bolstered by $3.1 million in advocacy advertising announced in August and September by Americans for Prosperity Wisconsin, part of the network run by billionaire oil and petrochemical magnate Charles Koch. Schimel's campaign has received thousands of dollars from a Koch political action committee.” [Wisconsin State Journal 10/22/18]

## Department of Natural Resources

**2014: Wisconsin State Journal: “Walker Began Remaking the DNR Soon after Taking Office…Pushed to Get the State out of the Way of a Rapidly Growing Mining Sector…”** Walker began remaking the DNR soon after taking office, appointing Cathy Stepp, a former Republican state senator and fierce critic of the agency, as its head. In 2011 he changed the administrative rule-making process to provide more certainty for business in dealing with state agencies like the DNR, and pushed to get the state out of the way of a rapidly growing mining sector that has made Wisconsin the nation's top source of frac sand. Two years later, Walker signed legislation loosening iron mining regulations, paving the way for a giant iron mine to start operations in the Penokee Hills of northern Wisconsin. Walker said the law would protect the environment while bringing certainty to the mine permitting process.” [Wisconsin State Journal, 8/10/14]

* **“Taken Together, the Changes in Environmental Regulation Are Likely the Most Extensive in Decades…Said Director of Environmental and Energy Policy for the State Business Lobby…”** “Taken together, the changes in environmental regulation are likely the most extensive in decades, said Eric Bott, director of environmental and energy policy for the state business lobby, Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce. ‘It has been rather dramatic,’ agreed George Meyer, a former DNR secretary who now directs the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. Walker's approach, Meyer said, represents the sharpest change in direction in natural resources protection since at least the 1970s.” [Wisconsin State Journal, 8/10/14]
* **Former DNR Secretary Said DNR Scientists Far Less Frequently Advise Legislature on Emerging Environmental Problems.** “He claimed DNR scientists far less frequently advise the Legislature on emerging environmental problems or unwanted ramifications of proposed laws unless asked, something DNR spokesman Bill Cosh disputed… An example: In 2010, new limits were placed on industrial phosphorus emissions that contribute to smelly, sometimes toxic algae in lakes. WMC said those limits would be too costly, placing the state at a competitive disadvantage. This year, Walker signed a law extending compliance deadlines by up to 20 years and providing less costly options if the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency agrees the law will adequately protect water.” [Wisconsin State Journal, 8/10/14]

**2014: Wisconsin State Journal: “DNR Took Far Less Enforcement Action against Significant Polluters during Walker’s First Three Years in Office than in Former…Governor Jim Doyle’s Last Three…”** “The DNR took far less enforcement action against significant polluters during Walker's first three years in office than in former Democratic Gov. Jim Doyle's last three. Under Walker, the agency issued an average of 257 violation notices per year, compared to 486 from 2008 through 2010. Walker's DNR referred an annual average of 31 cases to the state Department of Justice for prosecution compared to 67 in Doyle's last three years. During Doyle's last term as governor, the volume of vacant DNR positions stayed under 9 percent until the start of fiscal 2010, when it hit 13 percent, records show. Six months into Walker's first year in office, 20.5 percent of the DNR's 2,728 positions were vacant, at a time when there was a huge wave of state employee retirements as Walker and the Legislature prepared to decertify most public employee unions and increase employee payouts for benefits. But by July of this year, the DNR vacancy rate had fallen to 10.6 percent.” [Wisconsin State Journal, 8/10/14]

**2014: Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: “Since 2011, Walker and the Republican-Controlled Legislature Have Put Little Emphasis on New Regulations, But Instead Have Tried to Cut Red Tape…”** “Since 2011, Walker and the Republican-controlled Legislature have put little emphasis on new regulations, but instead have tried to cut red tape, reverse policies of Gov. Jim Doyle, a Democrat, and make the state Department of Natural Resources more responsive to those it regulates. ‘There have been real significant strides,’ said Eric Bott, director of environmental and energy policy for Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce, the state's largest business group, which lobbied heavily in support of the mining law. ‘Huge improvements from a regulatory perspective, I would say, over the last four years.’” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 9/17/14]

**2015: Walker Criticized for Budget that Made Steep Cuts in Personnel in a Science and Research Bureau at DNR.** “Environmentalists are criticizing Gov. Scott Walker's budget for making steep cuts in personnel in a science and research bureau at the Department of Natural Resources. The employees include scientists and others with master's and doctoral degrees who perform research for the DNR on environmental regulation and wildlife management policy. Walker's budget would cut 18.4 positions in the Bureau of Scientific Services. The bureau has a total of 59.4 budgeted positions, although 9.4 are currently vacant. That would be a 31% cut in total budgeted positions and a reduction of 18% of the positions now filled in the bureau. All told, Walker's budget would cut 66 positions from the DNR. Of this, about 28% would come from the science group. Environmentalists questioned whether scientists at the agency were coming under attack for research that has sometimes provoked criticism. But a northern Wisconsin lawmaker who has been critical of some DNR research agreed with Walker's plan…” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 2/7/15]

**2015: Walker’s Administration Considered Giving Top DNR Position to Lobbyist for Company Proposing Massive Iron Ore Mine.** “Gov. Scott Walker's administration considered giving a top natural resources position this year to a lobbyist for a company proposing a massive iron mine, but backed off because of a federal law barring conflicts of interest. Seitz ended up getting a different appointment from Walker, with the Public Service Commission…The DNR is the state's chief environmental enforcement agency and was overseeing early stages of work on Gogebic's proposal for the mine, which would have operated for decades over a 4-mile-long area…The company, which successfully lobbied for changes in state iron mining laws, funneled $700,000 to Wisconsin Club for Growth. The group helped Walker and Republicans survive recall elections in 2011 and 2012 and helped ensure the Senate had the votes to pass a bill easing mining regulations.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 4/7/15]

**Scientific American: Walker “Moved to Reduce the Role of Science in Environmental Policymaking and to Silence Discussion of Controversial Subjects…”** “As Scientific American reported way back in 2015,[3] Walker has 'moved to reduce the role of science in environmental policymaking and to silence discussion of controversial subjects, including climate change, by state employees.' He's dismantled environmental regulations, and attempted to slash staff at the state Department of Natural Resources, getting rid of a third of its scientists and firing a bunch of the department's 'environmental educators,' because why would you waste state money on spreading liberal propaganda to innocent schoolchildren? And just like Rick Scott[4] did in Florida, Wisconsin also tried to prohibit state workers from even saying the 'C' word[5] at all. And then there's that website. Urban Milwaukee[6] columnist James Rowen details how the DNR's website has been purged of any science whatsoever, changing a page that had actually been a pretty decent introduction to how climate change is affecting the Great Lakes into a couple of paragraphs of shrugging and saying, gosh, we dunno.” [Wonkette, 12/27/16]

**2017 Walker Budget Would Kill Self-Supporting Magazine Published by DNR, which Editors Said Avoided Controversial Issues—Including Climate Change—since Start of Walker’s First Term in 2011.** “Gov. Scott Walker's budget would kill a self-supporting magazine published by the Department of Natural Resources that two former editors say has avoided controversial issues, including climate change, since the start of Walker's first term in 2011. Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine is slated to cease publication in February 2018 - a move the Walker administration says will allow the DNR to be more efficient and concentrate on its mission of managing natural resources and protecting the environment. In its budget last week, the Walker administration said ending the magazine would save $300,000 in fiscal 2018-'19 and eliminate two full-time positions. Wisconsin Natural Resources has a circulation of about 75,000, including 40,000 persons who receive the magazine when they buy a $165 conservation patron license, which includes multiple fish and game licenses. In a statement, Walker's spokesman Tom Evenson said that, ‘It is not the government's role to produce magazines that duplicate what is available in the private market.’ But the former editors say the magazine allowed the DNR to highlight natural resources issues the agency was working on, and gave the agency a platform to communicate to the public and champion the natural charms of the Badger state. Also, they said the publication has supported itself through subscription sales - DNR officials do not dispute this - and that the two positions that the Walker administration says it will cut are vacant.” [Oshkosh Northwestern, 2/14/17]

* **Democratic Members Didn’t Understand Rationale for Cutting Magazine’s Publication Schedule** “Democratic members also said they didn't understand the rationale for cutting back the magazine's publication schedule, and they noted that a former magazine editor reported being pressured to soften coverage related to climate change and endangered species after Walker took office in 2011.” [Daily Cardinal-university of Wisconsin, 5/31/17]
* **Joint Finance Committee Voted to Continue Publication of Popular Outdoors Magazine.** “The Joint Finance Committee also voted Wednesday to continue publication of a popular outdoors magazine that Walker had wanted to end, a proposal that led to a loud public outcry among longtime readers who said the move was politically motivated.” [AP, 6/1/17]

**2017: Walker Appointed Attorney with Conservative Political Credentials But No Experience Working within DNR as Agency’s New Chief Legal Counsel.** “Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker has appointed an attorney with conservative political credentials but no experience working within the state Department of Natural Resources as the agency's new chief legal counsel. Walker's spokesman wouldn't discuss the governor's appointment of Jake Curtis, but Curtis' last employer described him as a skilled lawyer who has been a key adviser in partisan election campaigns. And he has advocated for relaxed pollution rules. Curtis will be the first DNR legal counsel without a strong grounding in the areas of law that underlie department regulations on fish and wildlife, forestry and environmental quality, said George Meyer, a former department secretary and lawyer who now directs the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation.” [Daily Cardinal: University of Wisconsin, 11/30/17]

**2018: Wisconsin State Journal: “Walker and the Republicans…Have Rolled Back Environmental Regulations…”** “Walker took office in 2011 saying he would make the state Department of Natural Resources more business-friendly. Walker and the Republicans who control the state Legislature have rolled back environmental regulations, saying fewer strictures will entice more businesses to locate in the state. But conservationists say the change has come at a cost: Destruction of wetlands has accelerated, threats to drinking water are worsening, and billions of gallons of new groundwater withdrawals have been permitted in places where state scientists warned they would harm lakes, streams and drinking water.” [Wisconsin State Journal 10/22/18]

* **“Walker’s DNR Has Defended a Decrease in Pollution Penalties…”** “Walker's DNR has defended a decrease in pollution penalties by claiming it emphasizes resolving violations with minimal formal action, an explanation former DNR executives have challenged.” [Wisconsin State Journal 10/22/18]

## Keystone

**Walker Sent Letter of Support for Keystone XL Pipeline.** “Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker is sending another letter in support of the proposed Keystone XL pipeline that would deliver oil from Canada to refineries along the Gulf Coast. Walker addressed the letter Thursday to Secretary of State John Kerry urging the project's approval. The letter is similar to one he sent in April and comes after the State Department found the pipeline would have little impact on the environment. Walker says the pipeline would create up to 9,000 jobs in Wisconsin over 20 years. The Obama Administration has delayed a decision on the pipeline for years. Environmentalists and some landowners oppose the project, while oil companies and the Canadian government support it. [AP, 3/7/14]

**2015: Walker Vowed to Approve Keystone Pipeline.** “Sweating even in his shirt sleeves in the steaming arena, Walker vowed to approve the Keystone oil pipeline, end Chinese cyberattacks, leave ‘no daylight’ between the policies of Israel and America, and end the nuclear agreement being negotiated between the Obama administration and Iran.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 7/14/15]

## Mining

**Wisconsin State Journal: “Wisconsin Republicans Have Been Pushing to Restart Mining since 2011, When Walker Was Elected Governor and the GOP Took Full Control of the Legislature.”** “Wisconsin Republicans have been pushing to restart mining since 2011, when Walker was elected governor and the GOP took full control of the Legislature. In 2013, Walker signed Republican state Sen. Tom Tiffany's bill to dramatically relax state iron mining regulations. The bill was designed to help Gogebic Taconite develop an open-pit iron mine near Lake Superior. With strong opposition from American Indian tribes and environmentalists, the company ultimately gave up on the project after deciding wetlands around the potential site made the project unfeasible.” [Wisconsin State Journal, 9/25/17]

**2012: Walker Pushed for Passage of a Controversial Mining Bill that Could Clear the Way for a $1.5 Billion Open-Pit Mine.** “Gov. Scott Walker is taking his fight for passage of a controversial mining bill to the public in a last-ditch effort to save the legislation - and possibly, salvage the legislative session. The governor on Tuesday urged crowds in Milwaukee, Rhinelander and Green Bay to push lawmakers to pass the measure, which streamlines mine permitting and could clear the way for a $1.5 billion open-pit mine and the 700 jobs officials said it could bring to the state.” [Wisconsin State Journal, 2/29/12]

* **Bill Failed.** “Lawmakers began their session last year with an explosion and are now ending it with a whimper. Gov. Scott Walker and the Republican-led Legislature gained national attention for an agenda that ranged from limiting liability lawsuits for businesses to repealing most union bargaining for public employees. But in their final push, the GOP governor and legislative leaders said they wanted to create jobs by passing two key bills - one to help boost venture capital funding for state businesses and the other to overhaul mining regulations. Now as recall elections loom and the legislative session ends, both bills are failing. Walker and Republicans tout their list of other accomplishments while Democrats question whether the governor made effective use of the GOP's control of state government to create jobs.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 3/9/12]

**May 2012: After Legislation Failed, Walker Said Door Was Still Open for Iron Mine in Northern Wisconsin that Could Bring as Many as 700 Jobs.** “Gov. Scott Walker said Friday that the door was still open for an iron mine in northern Wisconsin that could bring as many as 700 jobs. In March, legislation intended to streamline mine permitting and clear the way for a $1.5 billion mine failed in the Senate. Soon afterward, Gogebic Taconite President Bill Williams said the company was leaving the state. Walker said Tim Sullivan, the former Bucyrus International CEO who now heads the state's business development efforts, was reaching out to Gogebic Taconite. ‘They're frustrated,’ Walker said of the company. ‘But I think they're still interested. If we came back and had a more comprehensive package, I still hold out hope.’ Walker said he had asked Sullivan, who has extensive experience in the mining industry, to bring together mining experts from around the world as well as ‘key conservation leaders’ to see if there is a way to get the mine approved. Walker said he believed the mine legislation failed because of recall-driven politics. A new bill, with some unstated changes, could be approved by the end of the year with bipartisan support, he said.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 5/19/12]

**2013: Walker Signed Bill that Re-Wrote Iron Mining Laws and Could Pave the Way for Construction of a $1.5 Billion Open Pit Mine in Northern Wisconsin.** “Gov. Scott Walker on Monday signed a bill that rewrites iron mining laws and could pave the way for construction of a $1.5 billion open pit mine in northern Wisconsin. Walker made stops in Rhinelander, where he signed the bill, and later in Milwaukee, at P&H Mining Equipment, to underscore the economic benefits of an iron ore mine for the mining equipment sector in southeastern Wisconsin. The legislation was a major victory for Walker and Republicans who pushed several versions over the past year to address objections. The measure relaxes environmental protections for iron mining - but not other forms of mining - and provides more clarity to the state process of reviewing an iron ore mine application. Still, opening a mine is far from a done deal. A new mine would require extensive evaluation from state and federal regulators before permits would be issued. Lawsuits are also likely. Democrats and environmentalists said the changes have the potential to cause environmental harm - especially to streams, wetlands and groundwater - from the removal of millions of tons of rock. They also say Republicans have oversold the economic benefits of a project that could be built because of the legislation.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 3/12/13]

**December 2013: Walker Signed Bill Restricting Public Access to Potential Iron Mine Site in Northern Wisconsin.** “Walker signed a bill that would restrict public access to a potential iron mine site in northern Wisconsin. Gogebic Taconite is looking to dig a 41/2-mile long open-pit mine in the Penokee Hills east of Mellen. About 3,500 acres around the site in the Penokee Hills east of Mellen is open to the public through the state's managed forest program. The company fears protesters are taking advantage of that access to harass mine workers as they conduct mineral sampling and other tests. The Republican bill creates 600-foot restricted zones around mining equipment and roads at the site. Walker's office released a statement Thursday saying the bill focuses on the health and safety of site visitors and mine workers.” [Post-Crescent, 12/13/13]

**Mining Company behind Open-Pit Iron Mine Donated $700,000 to Pro-Walker Group during Governor’s Attempted Recall.** “A fresh batch of emails emerged Friday night that shows Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker was deeply involved in raising money for an ostensibly independent group focused on fending off the recall. They came in a court filing from a special prosecutor, who is pleading with a federal appellate judge to let him resume an investigation into what he thinks was potentially illegal coordination between the Wisconsin Club for Growth and Walker's campaign. Walker denies any wrongdoing, and the special prosecutor said after a lower court judge halted his probe that the governor is not the target of his investigation…That's a reference to perhaps the most immediate and politically potent revelation in the latest documents: That mining company Gogebic Taconite LLC cut a $700,000 check to the Walker group. The firm wants to build a controversial open-pit iron mine in the state, and Walker signed a bill in 2013 that helped them by lightening environmental requirements.” [Politico, 8/23/14]

* **Walker Said He Played No Role in Soliciting Cash from Mining Company.** “Gov. Scott Walker said Saturday that he played no role in soliciting cash from a mining company for the Wisconsin Club for Growth during the 2011and 2012 recall elections, adding that no one should be surprised that the probusiness governor backed legislation helpful to the firm. Asked whether he was aware that Gogebic Taconite secretly donated $700,000 to Wisconsin Club for Growth-a pro-business advocacy group directed by the governor's campaign adviser - Walker said, Not to my knowledge.’ When asked if the previously undisclosed funds and subsequent legislation were part of some pay-to-play scheme, Walker said, That's a ridiculous argument.’ Long before the recall elections were launched, he said, he advocated creating jobs in Ashland and Iron counties by permitting the iron ore mine. Nobody’s shocked. that I supported the mine,’ Walker said after a campaign event in Kenosha.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 8/24/14]

**2017: Walker Planned to Sign a Republican Bill Lifting Wisconsin’s Nearly 20-Year Ban on Gold and Silver Mining—a Ban He Helped Put in Place as a Legislator.** “Gov. Scott Walker plans to sign a Republican bill lifting Wisconsin's nearly 20-year ban on gold and silver mining - a ban he himself helped put in place as a legislator. Lawmakers passed statutes in 1998 that require sulfide mining applicants to show a similar mine has operated in North American for 10 years without polluting and a similar mine has been closed for 10 years without polluting. State environmental officials have never made a final determination that any applicants ever met those standards. Walker voted for the ban as a member of the Assembly. The Assembly passed a bill last week that lifts the ban. The Senate followed suit on Tuesday evening, sending the bill to Walker's desk. Walker's spokesman, Tom Evenson, said in an email that the governor supports the bill and intends to sign it. Evenson said if any state in the country can conduct safe and environmentally sound mining it should be Wisconsin.” [AP, 11/8/17]

## Public Land

**2012: Spokesman: “Walker Supports Hunting on Public Land, Always Has Supported Hunting on Public Land, and Will Continue to in the Future…”** “‘Governor Walker supports hunting on public land, always has supported hunting on public land, and will continue to in the future,’ Walker spokesman Cullen Werwie wrote in an email. ‘Governor Walker will not enact 'steep fees' to hunt on public lands. That is crazy.’ Our rating Barrett claimed ‘Scott Walker has a plan to privatize state lands’ and ‘wants to sell our deer to the highest bidder.’ The evidence for the claim goes back to a 10-year-old article that describes Kroll's views about hunting in his home state of Texas, not Wisconsin.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 6/4/12]

**2018: Walker Called on Natural Resources Board to Approve Easement to Make 21,00 Acres Available to Public for Hunting and Fishing.** “Gov. Scott Walker, R-Wisconsin, issued the following news release: Governor Scott Walker today called on the Natural Resources Board to approve an easement purchasing nearly 21,000 acres in Sawyer County that could be available to the public for hunting and fishing at the 84th Annual Convention of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress. This proposed easement would span the Townships of Winter and Draper and would provide opportunities for trapping, hunting, fishing, and waterfowl hunting. The easement agreement will go before the Natural Resources Board for approval at its May meeting. Once approved, it goes to the legislature's Joint Finance Committee for passive review. ‘The Natural Resources Board has worked with us to make land available for Wisconsin families--now they can once again help us by providing nearly 21,000 more acres through this easement,’ said Governor Walker. ‘Not only is this purchase good for outdoors enthusiasts but it also continues the tradition of a working forest that will permanently ensure economic contributions to the state's economy. There are approximately 7.4 million acres of land open to the public for recreation in the state and our administration continues to look for opportunities to increase the amount of land available for public use.’” [Targeted News Service, 5/11/18]

## Transportation

**2015: Walker Dodged Stating View on Renewable Fuel Standard.** “Walker has dodged stating his views on the Renewable Fuel Standard, a federal program that requires transportation fuel sold in the United States to contain a minimum volume of renewable fuel, which in practice is usually ethanol made from corn…The GOP governor…saying last year he wanted to strike a ‘careful balance’ on the issue that - when higher amounts of ethanol are proposed - pits grain farmers and the ethanol industry against other interests, including Milwaukee engine manufacturer Briggs & Stratton Co. and the outdoor power equipment industry.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 2/2/15]

## Water

**2012: Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: “In a Pointed Letter to…Walker, the Owner of Milwaukee’s Lake Express Ferry Says the Governor Is Wrong to Ask the Federal Environmental Protection Agency to Temporarily Extend a Permit that Allows the Ferry SS Badger to Continue to Dump Coal Ash into Lake Michigan.”** “In a pointed letter to Gov. Scott Walker, the owner of Milwaukee's Lake Express ferry says the governor is wrong to ask the federal Environmental Protection Agency to temporarily extend a permit that allows the ferry SS Badger to continue to dump coal ash into Lake Michigan. Sheldon B. Lubar, and his son, David, are the founders and owners of the Lake Express ferry, which operates between Milwaukee and Muskegon, Mich. The Badger, owned by Lake Michigan Carferry, operates between Manitowoc and Ludington, Mich. The Badger is the last coalfired steamship on the Great Lakes. The Badger holds an EPA permit to dump coal ash through Dec. 19. It is estimated that the vessel dumps more than 500 tons of coal ash a season into the lake. The Badger's owners are seeking a new permit to allow it to continue dumping ash. The regional office of the EPA is expected to act on the request this fall. In his letter, obtained by the Journal Sentinel, Sheldon Lubar says Walker has been misled and is ‘supporting further pollution of our state's most precious asset: Lake Michigan.’ ‘You and your administration have chosen to support a Michigan-based business that pollutes our waters despite the availability of cost effective solutions to become compliant, and employs, by their own admission, no more than five full-time equivalent positions in Wisconsin,’ Lubar writes. Lake Express, he said, is Wisconsin-owned, employs 65 people in Wisconsin and is fully compliant with all regulations. ‘We are disappointed in your support of Lake Michigan Carferry. We think you are supporting the wrong company,’ Lubar wrote.” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 10/25/12]

**2018: Walker Pulled Support for National Marine Sanctuary along Shore of Lake Michigan.** “Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker (R) has pulled his support for a national marine sanctuary along the shore of Lake Michigan, despite broad local support for implementing federal protection for dozens of shipwrecks dating to the 19th century. According to a letter obtained by the Sheboygan Press, Walker wrote to NOAA last week to rescind his nomination for a 1,075-square-mile sanctuary. Walker said that the designation would ‘create further unnecessary bureaucratic red tape.’ ‘One of the hallmarks of my administration has been to reduce the regulatory burden on the citizens of the State of Wisconsin,’ Walker wrote. ‘The addition of another level of federal bureaucracy will not materially advance our shared commitment to protecting shipwrecks.’ Walker had nominated the area for protection in 2014, and President Obama endorsed that proposal along with another in Maryland the following year. NOAA released plans for both sanctuaries last year (Green wire, Jan. 6, 2017).” [E&E News, 3/9/18]

## Wildlife

**2017: Conservationists Raised Alarms about Walker’s Fast-Moving Plan to Roll Back Environmental Protections for Foxconn.** “Conservationists are raising alarms about Gov. Scott Walker's fast-moving plan to roll back environmental protections for Foxconn, the Taiwanese manufacturer that says it could bring 13,000 jobs to the state. A public hearing is expected in about two weeks on draft legislation exempting Foxconn from state laws that are otherwise mandatory for very large projects that could harm air, water or wildlife. Walker wants to exempt Foxconn from requirements for an environmental impact statement, a plan demonstrating Foxconn's water usage would be sustainable and state permits for filling in wetlands, building on lakebeds and diverting streams. ‘We are exempting one company from a whole slate of environmental protections without even knowing where the plant is going to be,’ Jennifer Giegerich, a Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters lobbyist, said Monday. ‘They are just handing autonomy to a Chinese corporation that will then have control over water in this state,’ said Raj Shukla, executive director of the River Alliance of Wisconsin. Foxconn wants to build a facility bigger than 11 football stadiums somewhere in southeastern Wisconsin, but details on the location and information about how much water it would use and what pollutants it would emit have not been disclosed. Walker's administration worked out the deal privately, and on Thursday Walker and Foxconn CEO Terry Gou signed a memorandum of understanding. State officials said Foxconn could start manufacturing liquid-crystal display panels in 2020, although the company has made other big announcements elsewhere only to back out The governor's spokesman on Monday repeated Walker's mantra that jobs can be had without sacrificing environmental quality.” [Wisconsin State Journal, 8/1/17]

**2018: Wisconsin State Journal: “Under Walker, Wisconsin Has Been Less Aggressive than Other States in Controlling Chronic Wasting Disease, a Fatal Disease that Has Raced through Wisconsin’s Deer Herd.”** “Under Walker, Wisconsin has been less aggressive than other states in controlling chronic wasting disease, a fatal disease that has raced through Wisconsin's deer herd. Walker recently proposed additional measures. Evers said he would do more.” [Wisconsin State Journal 10/22/18]