

Happy Earth Day? Scott Walker's DNR Announces 57 Layoffs

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MADISON – As we today celebrate Earth Day, the holiday founded by great Wisconsin Democrat Gaylord Nelson, who understood that the wealth of our nation and our state was in our air, water, and forests, Scott Walker's administration is sending out layoff notices to 57 staffers at the state Department of Natural Resources.

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel is [reporting](#) that 57 staffers, to include 27 employees in the Bureau of Science Services, a unit subject to severe cuts in the Walker-GOP budget, have begun receiving formal notices that they might face layoff as part of the current Walker-GOP budget.

Wisconsin's abundant natural resources that fuel tourism, the state's second largest industry, and treasured pastimes like hunting and fishing have always been one of our state's great strengths. The state Department of Natural Resources has historically served to protect the quality of our air, land, and water, as strong environmental safeguards are essential to enhancing economic development and our ability to create jobs and opportunity.

Unfortunately, Scott Walker's approach to protecting our conservation heritage has been indifferent at best and openly hostile at worst. Whether it's dangerous, rushed mining legislation written by and for mining companies, the rollback of modest regulations, or attacks on local control that caused many green energy companies to flee Wisconsin, Scott Walker and his Republican Party have imperiled the environment in favor of corporate campaign cash from radical billionaires like the Koch Brothers.

"Given his horrible record on protecting Wisconsin's natural resources, it's fitting that Scott Walker's celebration of Earth Day involves laying off 57 employees at the Department of Natural Resources," Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Mike Tate said Wednesday. "Gutting environmental protections and denying climate change might make Walker more popular with far-right caucus voters as he runs for president, but Wisconsinites aren't beholden to radical extremists at the expense of our conservation heritage."