

BREAKING Gov. Scott Walker extends chamber of commerce theme with new DNR chief

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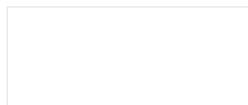
Gov. Scott Walker extends chamber of commerce theme with new DNR chief

STEVEN VERBURG sverborg@madison.com 1 hr ago



Dan Meyer was appointed DNR secretary by Gov. Scott Walker. Above, Meyer in a 2003 file photo.
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MORE INFORMATION



Gov. Scott Walker on Monday announced he was appointing Dan Meyer, a former chamber of commerce director, as state Department of



Secretary Cathy Stepp leaving DNR to join Donald Trump's EPA

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Natural Resource secretary.

Meyer replaces Cathy Stepp, who Walker appointed in 2011, saying he wanted someone with a "chamber of commerce mentality" in charge of the department.

Conservation groups have been highly critical of Stepp for failing to defend the DNR from budget cuts, relaxing enforcement of pollution violations and presiding over persistent shortcomings in its protection of water and air quality.

Like Stepp, Meyer is a former Republican member of the Legislature.

"Dan Meyer will be an outstanding DNR secretary," Walker said in a statement. "He understands the balance between protecting our natural resources and supporting economic prosperity in our state. As a highly respected former legislator and mayor who cares deeply about conservation, Dan will serve in the best interests of Wisconsin."

Meyer represented a district around Eagle River in northern Wisconsin from 2001 to 2012. Before that he was mayor of Eagle River and executive director of the Eagle River Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center, the governor's office said.

Stepp resigned recently to take a post in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

During her tenure, Stepp drew rebukes from members of the public after the department removed language about the causes of climate change from its website. She publicly supported Walker and the GOP-controlled Legislature when they withdrew tax support for state parks and eliminated the jobs of research scientists who studied the impact of mining and climate change on wildlife habitat and water quality.

The governor's office said Meyer was an "avid outdoorsman" who was a strong advocate for the environment, with a particular interest in

protecting Wisconsin's lakes from invasive species.

Meyer didn't seek re-election to the Assembly in 2012, saying his 12 years in the Legislature was enough. He served as mayor of Eagle River from 1997 to 2001.

"I am honored to serve as DNR secretary," Meyer said in the statement from the governor. "Our state is blessed with an abundance of natural resources, and we will work to responsibly protect them and ensure they remain a source of recreation, tourism, economic growth, and rich natural history now and for our children."

Meyer's salary will match the \$127,026 Stepp made, Walker spokesman Tom Evenson said.

This article will be updated.

Steven Verburg | Wisconsin State Journal

Steven Verburg is a reporter for the Wisconsin State Journal covering state politics with a focus on science and the environment as well as military and veterans issues.

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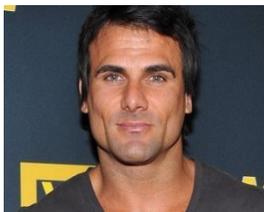
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