



## 2010 Annual Report of the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association, Inc.

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***A Record of Success:*** By any measure, 2010 was a great year for WLWCA. In spite of a very challenging economy, we succeeded in balancing the WLWCA budget for the second year in a row, meeting or exceeding all our program goals, and persuading legislators to vote for our conservation and budget priorities.



**Board President Charles "Chuck" Wagner of Kewaunee County**

It was an election year for county supervisors so some change to the WLWCA Board of Directors was expected. President Allen Carothers of Buffalo County left the board and Charles "Chuck" Wagner of Kewaunee County joined the board and succeeded Mr. Carothers as President. Tom Rudolph of Oneida County remained in the position of Vice-President. Kathryn McKenzie of Douglas County took on the position of Secretary/Treasurer. Other board members are newcomers Tami Schraufnagel of Eau Claire County and Joe Piechowski of Washara County, Dorothy Burwell of Walworth County, Herb Cornell of Vernon County and David Hammer of Lafayette County. We would like to thank Allen Carothers, Patrick Laughrin of Calumet County and Jack Van Dixhorn of Sheboygan County for their service to the board.

***Conservation Programs:*** WLWCA continues to run successful conservation programs.

### **Conservation on the Land Internship Program**

WLWCA has coordinated this statewide program since 2003 thanks to a Congressional earmark courtesy of Senator Herb Kohl. Through partnering with the land conservation departments and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service we were able to help place 37 interns in 34 counties throughout Wisconsin in 2010. Chris Schlutt is the program coordinator and works to identify host counties, posts available opportunities, and serve as the main contact for land conservation departments, students and universities. Most interns work for county LCD or NRCS offices. Their responsibilities vary greatly depending on county priorities, and include GIS mapping, lake and stream monitoring, writing conservation and manure spreading plans, youth education, field checks, monitoring and controlling invasive species and planting rain gardens. This highly successful program provides college students with a unique opportunity to receive hands-on experience and assist county staff with their workload.

### **Envirothon**

2010 was an exciting year for Wisconsin Envirothon: Groundwater Protection through Urban, Agricultural and Environmental Planning. Middleton High School represented Wisconsin and took sixth place overall at the Canon Envirothon in Fresno, California, taking first prize in both wildlife and the current issue oral scenario. Fifty-four states, provinces and territories participated in the 2010 Canon Envirothon.

At the state level, 10 teams from all over Wisconsin participated in the day long environmental education competition, with Middleton High School, Conserve School and Luxemburg-Casco High School winning the top three rankings. Wisconsin Envirothon also had great financial and in-kind support from Wisconsin Energy Foundation; Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board and the Dairy Farm Families of Wisconsin; the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; the Wisconsin Association of Land Conservation Employees; the University of Wisconsin-Center for Watershed Science and Education; the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; Canon

Envirothon; Bradshaw Knight Foundation and more. A complete listing of 2010 sponsors will remain on our Web site until the end of the year.

WLWCA is looking forward to the 2011 Wisconsin Envirothon: Salt and Fresh Water Estuaries on April 21 at the Wisconsin Lions Camp in Rosholt. In preparation for next year, WLWCA Youth Coordinator Kirsten Moore has been busy finding new ways to connect with students, teachers and supporters. In October and November, Ms. Moore gave talks and exhibited at the Wisconsin Association of Environmental Educators Conference and the Wisconsin High School Conference on the Environment. In 2011, Ms. Moore will be leading a panel discussion at the WALCE Professional Improvement Conference helping land conservation staff learn how counties can support the event. Wisconsin Envirothon is also enjoying new endorsements from both the Agricultural Education and Environmental Education coordinators at the Wisconsin Department of Instruction. Committed funders for 2011 already include Plum Creek Marketing, Kikkoman Foods, Midwest Environmental Advocates and Conserve School. Conserve School will no longer be bringing teams to the Wisconsin Envirothon due to the new school structuring, but we are thrilled to be building a new relationship with the school so that future teams will continue to benefit from this important educational event.

### **Conservation Camp**

Trails End Camp near Bruce, Wisconsin, was once again the site of WLWCA Conservation Camp for high school students. Thirty-five campers from as far away as Dane and Crawford Counties attended the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual event which ran from June 22 through June 25, 2010. A highlight of camp was the voyageur canoes, graciously loaned to us by the DNR. The canoes are replicas of those used in the 1800's by the original voyageurs during the height of the fur trading business. Each canoe holds up to 10 paddlers. It was quite the effort to have 10 high school students paddling in the same direction and at the same speed.

We had a rain filled week which made some of the outdoor hikes a bit more challenging. High water also made canoeing the Chippewa River more adventurous. The length of the trip on both days had to be extended by four miles because canoes were moving "right along."

One activity not affected by the rain, though, was the trout stream renovation project. Thanks to Barron, Bayfield, Clark, Crawford, Iron, Price, Rusk, Taylor, and Vilas Counties for sending staff to run camp. Without these counties sending staff free of charge, camp would be too costly to operate and would cease to exist. Planning is well underway for the 33<sup>rd</sup> WLWCA Conservation Camp, the theme of which is "Wisconsin Bat-itats."

### **Poster and Speaking Contest**

The 53<sup>rd</sup> State Conservation Awareness Poster and Speaking Contest took place at the beginning of November. Posters from Oneida, Portage, Washburn, and Florence Counties will represent Wisconsin in the NACD "Conservation Habits=Healthy Habitats" poster contest this January. Speakers from Wood, Oneida and Marquette Counties will present their winning speeches at the dinner banquet during this year's annual conference. Banquet attendees can look forward to hearing about a host of topics including whooping cranes, gypsy moth, and blue-green algae. The annual Conservation Awareness Poster and Speaking Contest is fully funded by the contributions and generosity of membership during the WLWCA Annual Youth Education Silent Auction and Raffle. Thank you for your support!

### **Standards Oversight Council**

The Standards Oversight Council (SOC) is a multi-party program sponsored by USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service; the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection; the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; UW Extension; WLWCA and the Wisconsin Association of Land Conservation Employees. In 2010, the Standards Oversight Council Coordinator Kevin Hogan and the volunteer work teams continued

work on several technical standard projects, finalized a new stormwater management practice, initiated one new project to revise an existing technical standard, and finished a re-design of the SOC web site. Specifically, SOC and the SOC Coordinator accomplished the following:

- SOC finalized a completely new Conservation Practice Standard on Infiltration Trenches for the Dept. of Commerce. A SOC work team comprised of representatives from state, county and municipal agencies involved with non-point programs, as well as consulting engineers, prepared the new stormwater management standard that establishes criteria for infiltration trenches collecting and storing runoff until it can infiltrate into the subsurface soil. It includes criteria for site selection, trench design, construction, operation and maintenance.
- The SOC work team revising the NRCS 634 Waste Transfer technical standard made significant improvements with the help of two public reviews of the draft conservation practice standard, which sets criteria for systems to transfer manure and other farm production wastes. The work team also is preparing a new 634 Construction Specification and a 634 Companion Document.
- Progress was attained in 2010 by the SOC work team currently modifying the NRCS 313 Waste Storage Facility technical standard. The team has been addressing topics related to the standard's site assessment and soils investigation criteria, making the 313 standard compatible with NR 243 (CAFO rules), and updating the standard's tables on criteria for liners of waste storage facilities.
- A new SOC work team was formed in the summer of 2010 to revise the feed storage leachate and runoff control provisions of the NRCS 629 Waste Treatment technical standard. The work team will consider new research and lessons learned since the original feed storage leachate and runoff provisions were created in 2007.
- SOC worked with the DNR to revise the 1004 Bioretention for Infiltration technical standard, which was originally created in 2004 by a SOC work team. The revised standard incorporates input from a public review and improves the criteria for engineered soil mixture used as filtering media in these bioretention structures.
- With the help of web designers at the UW-Extension Environmental Resources Center, the redesign of the SOC web site was completed in 2010. The new site is visually more appealing, easier to navigate, and contains more useful information.

An update to the SOC Work Plan was completed. The work plan prioritizes SOC's technical standard projects for the next two-year period.

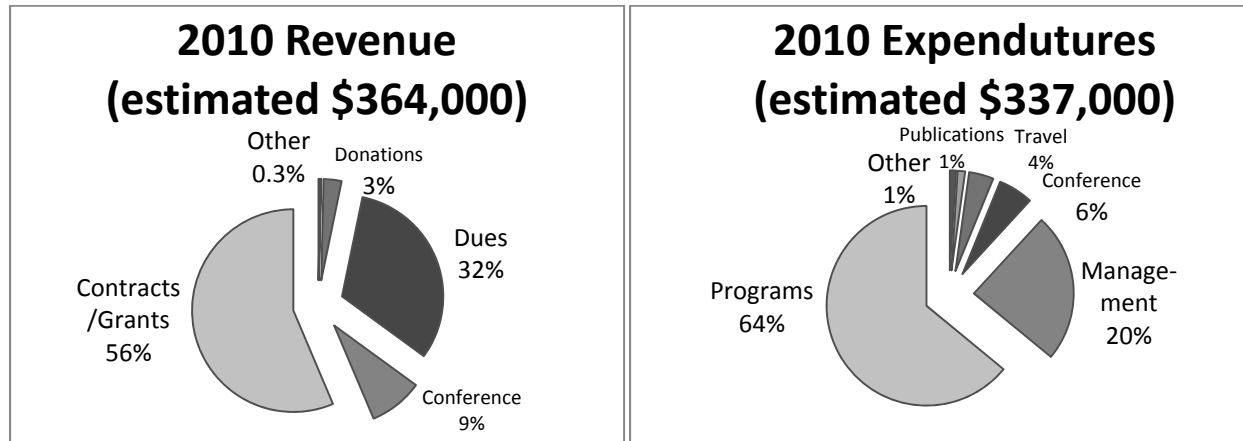
### **Advocacy**

The tremendous budget battles of 2009 are history and we were able to turn our attention from budgets to policy in 2010. Thanks to a very generous grant from Patagonia, we were able to pursue our work on bringing restrictions on the land spreading of wastes in karst areas. WLWCA, in collaboration with a great many partners, employed both grassroots promotion of new karst legislation, as well as lobbying inside the capitol. The karst issue was selected as one of the four conservation priorities by the participants of the League of Conservation Voters priority setting process, and received a tremendous boost from the 500 participants on Conservation Lobby Day in January. In the end, Senator Dave Hansen from Green Bay introduced the bill, but we were unable to find an Assembly sponsor. The Senate bill had a very good hearing and was affirmatively voted out of committee, but time ran out before a vote could be conducted on the floor of the Wisconsin Senate. WLWCA will continue to pursue this legislative action.

A similar tale can be told about the legislation aimed at preventing the over-extraction of groundwater. While this bill enjoyed sponsors in both chambers of the legislature, it was not brought forward until very late in the session, and we ran out of time in our efforts to gain passage. This issue will be the subject of new legislative efforts in the next session.

## Finance

In spite of the continued bad economy, WLWCA has emerged with a healthy and strong budget. Helped by the generosity of our membership, who responded to our request for a special assessment in late 2009, and further bolstered by the dues increase that was implemented for 2010, our revenues from membership have provided the foundation for the budget. Our success in being awarded the Patagonia grant provided further funds to pursue the karst program. Under-spending on some budget lines like lobbying, which was reduced for a variety of reasons, resulted in WLWCA finishing 2010 with a budget surplus. This will form a reserve fund for the 2011 budget to protect against revenue losses.



In recognition of those who support WLWCA financially or with goods or services: **Arrowhead Trophies, Bradshaw-Knight Foundation, Canon USA, Central Wisconsin Environmental Station, the Dairy Farm Families of Wisconsin, Econoprint, Good Harvest Market, Kikkoman Foods, Lake Michigan Land and Water Conservation Association, Lake Poygan Sportsman's Club, Lake Winnebago Land and Water Conservation Association, Lumberjack RC&D Council, North Central Land and Water Conservation Association, Patagonia, Rishi Tea, River Alliance of Wisconsin, Southeast Land and Water Conservation Association, UW-Extension, UW-Stevens Point Center for Watershed Science and Education, UW-Stevens Point College of Natural Resources-Forestry, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, West Central Land and Water Conservation Association, Wildwood Productions, Willy Street Coop, Winnebago Lakes Council, WI Association of Land Conservation Employees, WI Center For Environmental Education, WI Energy Foundation, WI Environmental Education Foundation, WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, WI Department of Commerce, WI Department of Natural Resources, WI League of Conservation Voters and Youth Environmental Projects of Sauk County.** Special thanks for in-kind support goes to all the donors to our annual silent and live auctions!

### Staff –

Executive Director: Julian Zelazny  
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Program Coordinator: Chris Schlutt  
SOC Coordinator: Kevin Hogan

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Gordon Stevenson, DNR  
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### Board Advisors –

Vacant, staff advisor Area 1  
Chad Sampson, staff advisor Area 3  
Vacant, staff advisor Area 5

*To Serve County Land and Water Conservation Committees and Departments to  
Conserve and Enhance Wisconsin's Natural Resources*

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