



Thursday Note

An Update on Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Issues

Volume 14, Issue 9

Thursday, October 13, 2011

Turn the Page: Zelazny Resigns As Executive Director of WLWCA

After five fantastic years I have decided to move on. I have informed the Board of Directors my last day will be November 2, after which I will take a position in Chilliwack, BC. I cannot express in words my gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of WLWCA over that time. You are too numerous to name and are the heart and soul of an active membership.

I would like to think I left WLWCA a better place than when I started. Progress was incremental, but I believe the organization is in a very good position to face the future. We have excellent partnerships with state and federal agencies, as well as excellent relationships with partner organizations. No relationship is as important right now as the one with the Wisconsin Association of Land Conservation Employees (WALCE). I am referring, of course, to the proposed merger.

Now that I am leaving WLWCA, I no longer have a stake in the matter. I deliberately remained quiet during Ad Hoc Committee negotiations because I believe the decision to merge should be made by considering the long-term health of the association and not because of individual opinions. However, I have a unique vantage point and I think that a merger of the two organizations would bring significant strength in numbers.

The real question is: How do we define our membership? Currently our membership is defined as the county supervisors and appointees who are assigned the Land Conservation Committee in his or her county. While that was a winning way to get members in the past, it is much more difficult today. Consolidating county committees and downsizing of county boards has reduced the number of supervisors serving LCCs. With fewer LCC members, supervisors are increasingly reliant on the qualifications and institutional memory of the Land Conservation Department staff. It is a natural fit to have staff formally join the association.

Other reasons for merging are self-evident; a merged organization has more members, and therefore more clout in the state legislature, governor's office and agencies. A merged organization will have a bigger and better annual conference. A merged organization will be better able to raise money through better attendance at the annual conference and by providing the networking interactions that generate fundable ideas and regional funding proposals.

As I reflect, I see an organization that has grown stronger both internally, and as a credible partner to other organizations and agencies. Our continued development depends upon clearing the path forward. We have come a long way in five years. I would like to think a successful merger is the event that caps off my very enjoyable time with WLWCA. I wish all of you the very best of luck.

~Julian Zelazny, Executive Director

WLWCA President Wagner Passes on Well Wishes to Zelazny, Looks to Future

I'd like to publicly thank Julian Zelazny for his five years with the organization, bringing us back from where we were then to where we are today. In my opinion, his leadership made us a much better organization. He sought out new partnerships with other organizations that helped us further our agendas. He actively championed the organization's goals and objectives. He lobbied our legislators for funding such things as the staffing grant. He also overhauled our operation to save us real dollars in our budget.

At the same time, he has also brought us thru some very tough times in the last three years. He personally sacrificed salary to keep us moving through those times, and that was way above and beyond the duty of an executive director for any organization. Moving forward in the next four to six months will be challenging to say the least. I have confidence in our board and office staff that we will carry on with our everyday operations. The poster and speaking contest and our annual conference will go on as planned. If the merger with WALCE moves forward the first task for a new board will be to begin the process of finding a new executive director.

I think everyone connected to county land and water conservation efforts in this state owes Julian a huge "thank you!" I personally wish him great success in his new position.

~Charles Wagner, President

Farewell Gathering for Zelazny Scheduled November 2, 4:30pm, Great Dane Pub in Madison

Join WLWCA to wish Julian Zelazny good luck on his new endeavors in British Columbia. On November 2 WLWCA staff will head to The Great Dane Pub off Madison's Capitol Square at 4:30pm to say good bye and reflect on Julian's great commitment to the organization, and his efforts to protect the conservation of Wisconsin's natural resources. We hope you will join us.

~Kirsten Moore, Office Manager

2011 WLWCA Annual Conference Registration, Deadlines, and Business Reminders

Registration materials for the 2011 WLWCA Annual Conference scheduled December 8-9 at Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells are available online at www.wlwca.org/conference.html. The conference is your opportunity to learn conservation messaging from Eric Eckl of Water Words That Work, find out more about statewide conservation issues, network with statewide colleagues, bid at the Youth Education Silent Auction, and cast your vote on the WLWCA-WALCE merger. Here's a list of deadlines to help counties prepare:

- **Friday, October 21:** Deadline for areas to submit Conservation Farmer of the Year and Outstanding Supervisor nominations to Chris Schlutt (chrisschlutt@wlwca.org) at the WLWCA office. Winners will be honored at our awards banquet December 8. Conservation Farmer of the Year promotes total farm conservation accomplishments by recognizing farmers performing outstanding conservation work. *The state winner hosts the 2012 Conservation Observance Day and the county who submitted the entry has their 2012 WLWCA dues waived.* The Outstanding Supervisor Award recognizes a LCC supervisor who has provided strong and effective leadership in promoting resource conservation through their own actions and work in their community. See www.wlwca.org/consawards.html to find out more.
- **Friday, October 28:** Deadline for areas to submit resolutions as well as the official attachment stating the contact person, conference speaker, and any additional information helpful in understanding the resolution to Chris Schlutt (chrisschlutt@wlwca.org) at the WLWCA office. Resolutions received after October 28 may be brought to the floor during the annual meeting with a 2/3 vote. The form is available at www.wlwca.org/resolutions.html.
- **Friday, October 28:** Deadline to complete area poster and speaking contests. Send posters and speaker registrations postmarked, Emailed or faxed by Saturday, October 29 or hand delivered Tuesday, November 1. Winning speakers are recognized at the December 8 awards banquet and winning posters are sent on to the NACD national poster contest. See www.wlwca.org/posterspeakingcontest.html.
- **Friday, November 4:** Deadline to submit registration for the 2011 WLWCA Annual Conference and receive regular conference prices. Late fees apply to registrations Emailed/faxed/postmarked after that date. See www.wlwca.org/conference.html.
- **Monday, November 7:** Deadline to register for a room at Chula Vista Resort and be guaranteed the state rate. Contact Chula Vista Resort at 855-529-7628 and use booking ID 19278.
- **Friday, December 2:** Deadline for LCC Chairs to submit signed WLWCA Business Meeting proxy forms to WLWCA by US Mail. See www.wlwca.org/conference.html to download the proxy form.
- **Monday, December 5:** Deadline for LCC Chairs to fax signed WLWCA Business Meeting proxy forms to WLWCA at 608-441-2676.
- **Friday, December 9, 9:15am:** Deadline for LCC Chairs to submit signed WLWCA Business Meeting proxy forms by fax to 608-254-7653 at Kirsten Moore's attention or Email to kirsten@wlwca.org.

~Kirsten Moore, Office Manager & Chris Schlutt, Program Coordinator

Merger Update: WLWCA Membership to Vote on Bylaws Changes at Annual Meeting December 9, Webinar October 18

The vote for WLWCA membership to adopt the draft bylaws merging WLWCA with the Wisconsin Association of Land Conservation Employees will take place December 9 at the 2012 WLWCA Annual Conference. A general session to discuss the merger with the Ad Hoc Committee is scheduled December 8. In accordance with Section 14 of WLWCA's current bylaws, the final draft of the bylaws and the resolution brought by the WLWCA board of directors were sent on October 6 to the LCD list serve as a 60 day voting notice to the counties. County conservationists were instructed to forward the final draft of the bylaws and the resolution to LCC chairs for consideration during LCC and fall area association meetings.

Section 3 of WLWCA's current bylaws states: "Every LCC in the state of Wisconsin shall be deemed to be a voting member of this association unless the LCC declines in writing to be a member or their membership dues are lapsed." Section 5 defines: "A Member which has not paid the membership dues in full by May 31 of the current year shall be considered a lapsed Member." If you have questions regarding whether or not your county had paid 2011 dues in full by May 31 of this year, please contact Kirsten at 608-441-2677 or kirsten@wlwca.org. To view the most recent bylaws, visit www.wlwca.org/PDFs/governance/12-10-2010%20Bylaws.pdf.

LCC chairs who need to designate a proxy to vote at the annual meeting should visit www.wlwca.org/PDFs/governance/2011%20Annual%20Business%20Meeting%20Voting%20Proxy%20Form.pdf to download the form and follow the guidelines (proxy forms REQUIRE a signature from the LCC chair). Only county LCC chairs or their designated proxies will be able to register to vote on a county's behalf.

Find out more about the merger at your fall area meetings, where representatives of the WLWCA board of directors and the WLWCA-WALCE ad-hoc merger committee will be available to take questions. WALCE is also hosting a merger Webinar scheduled October 18 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. Visit tinyurl.com/walce-merger from any computer to participate. More information about the possible merger is available at www.wlwca.org/wlwca_walce.html.

~Kirsten Moore, Office Manager

State Conservation Awareness Poster and Speaking Contest Scheduled November 5 in Stevens Point

The WLWCA State Conservation Awareness Poster and Speaking Contest will be held Saturday, November 5 9:00am-12:30pm at the Best Western Grand Seasons Hotel in Waupaca. **We are still seeking volunteers to make that happen (volunteers need to arrive by 8:15am).** Volunteers may receive a hotel room at single-rates free of charge. Please Email or phone kirsten@wlwca.org by Wednesday, October 19 to show your support for WLWCA youth programs by volunteering for this event.

Participating areas: Please remember that parental signatures are required on the state forms for both the poster and speaking contests for students to qualify to win. All posters need to have the state form affixed to the back of the poster. Winning posters and winning speaker forms should either be handed to WLWCA Executive Director Julian Zelazny at your area meetings or sent to the WLWCA office postmarked no later than Saturday, October 29 (speaker forms may be submitted time-stamped October 29 via fax or Email to kirsten@wlwca.org). We will not accept posters or speaker entries day of event, WLWCA must receive them ahead of time. We do ask that all guests at the speaking contest pre-register to participate (there is no fee to participate).

All poster certificates, plaques, and posters that do not advance to the NACD contest will be sent back to the counties the week of November 7 via USPS Priority Mail free of charge. Counties that wish to receive their posters via overnight shipping or another shipping vendor may contact WLWCA to make arrangements, however, shipping fees will be charged to the requesting county. WLWCA will not send posters to individual addresses; it is up to the county to distribute to the participants. Posters that advance to the NACD contest will not be sent back to the counties until sometime in late March, 2011 when returned to WLWCA.

We look forward to seeing your area's talented youth artists and speakers representing your conservation issues on November 5.

~Kirsten Moore, Office Manager

2011 WLWCA Annual Youth Education Silent Auction Information Available, Donations Tax Deductible

Information regarding how to participate in this year's silent auction has been distributed with the Email version of *Thursday Note*. The information on how to donate is also available for download at www.wlwca.org/PDFs/programevents/2011%20County%20Auction%20Information%20&%20ID%20Cards.pdf.

All silent auction proceeds benefit WLWCA's youth programs. The Youth Education Silent Auction and Raffle provides 100% of the funding for the State Conservation Awareness Poster and Speaking Contest, and the remainder benefits Wisconsin Envirothon and WLWCA Conservation Camp in Rusk County. Make sure local businesses from your county, agency or organization are represented at this important WLWCA benefit by bringing an item for bid on December 8 to Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells! If you have any questions about how to participate, please contact Kirsten Moore via phone or Email kirsten@wlwca.org.

~Kirsten Moore, Office Manager

2012 Wisconsin Envirothon Scheduled April 20, Following Wisconsin Green Schools Network's Youth Summit

On April 19 and 20, Central Wisconsin Environmental Station will be the site for two environmental education events.

For Thursday, April 19, the Wisconsin Green Schools Network has scheduled a Youth Summit for middle and high school students. Students from around the state will present the community projects they have completed locally and take home new ideas for project inspired by their peers' stories. The Youth Summit will be a one-day event. Scholarships and optional Wednesday night lodging will be available.

Then, WLWCA hosts the 2012 Wisconsin Envirothon. On Thursday night, participating students will enjoy an optional screening of *Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time* and a chance to relax and meet peers from around the state before the big Envirothon challenge. Friday, teams of five students apiece will take challenges designed by natural resources educators and professionals in aquatic ecology, forestry, soils and land use, wildlife and give team presentations on going green with low impact development technology to reduce nonpoint source pollution. This year, Wisconsin Envirothon is opening up enrollment to middle school teams grades 5-8. The middle school teams will take the same challenges the high school teams take and give the same presentations, but will be scored separate from the high school students. The high school teams that wins the Wisconsin Envirothon wins the chance to go to the 25th annual Canon Envirothon: North America's largest high school environmental education competition July 22-28 at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania and compete for scholarships and prizes.

Plan now for the 2012 Wisconsin Envirothon by visiting envirothonwi.org and view the learning objectives, past events, and links to help teams study. WLWCA is currently seeking volunteers for the event and a volunteer sign-up will be available soon.

The 2012 Wisconsin Envirothon has, so far, been sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and the Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education. Find out how to become a 2012 sponsor or volunteer for Wisconsin Envirothon by visiting www.wlwca.org. Schools can elect to participate in the Youth Summit day, the Wisconsin Envirothon, or both! More information including registrations and rates for both events will be posted at: envirothonwi.org and wisconsingreenschoolsnetwork.org. Also, find [Wisconsin Envirothon](#) and [Wisconsin Green Schools Network](#) on Facebook to stay informed.

~Kirsten Moore, Office Manager



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Calendar of Events

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| LM Area Fall Meeting, Luxemburg | Oct 14 |
| WLCA-WALCE Merger Webinar | Oct 18 |
| WC Area Fall Meeting, Eau Claire | Oct 19 |
| Public Records & Open Meetings Webinar | Oct 20 |
| SE Area Fall Meeting, Pewaukee | Oct 21 |
| LW Area Fall Meeting, Fond du Lac | Oct 21 |
| Conservation Farmer of the Year/Outstanding Supervisor Nominations DUE | Oct 21 |
| S Area Fall Meeting, Verona | Oct 27 |
| NC Area Fall Meeting, Wausau | Oct 27 |
| NW Area Fall Meeting, Hayward | Oct 28 |
| Resolutions DUE and Poster & Speaking Area Contests Concluded | Oct 28 |
| Poster & Speaking Contest Registrations DUE via US Mail, Email or Fax | Oct 29 |
| Poster & Speaking Contest Registrations DUE via hand delivery to WLCA | Nov 1 |
| Julian Zelazny's Farewell Gathering At Great Dane, Madison | Nov 2 |
| WLCA BOD Meeting, Waupaca | Nov 4 |
| WLCA Annual Conference Registration Deadline | Nov 4 |
| Poster & Speaking Contest, Waupaca | Nov 5 |
| WLCA Annual Conference, Wisconsin Dells | Nov 8-9 |

For more information, visit www.wlwca.org/eventscalender.html

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WLWCA Staff

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