



Thursday Note

An Update on Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Issues

Volume 12, Issue 1

Thursday, February 5, 2009

Help For County Conservation Departments

With all the talk about an economic stimulus package, many of you have asked what WLWCA is doing to advocate in favor of bringing federal money to the counties. I'd like to assure you that we have been active in letting our federal delegation and governor know that the counties are ready to begin work right away with projects on the ground.

We have sent letters to each of our U.S. Senators and all of our U.S. Representatives explaining that the county conservation departments have the kind of "shovel ready" projects that the government is looking for and that there is an administrative infrastructure in place to use federal money to establish new jobs in Wisconsin's land and water conservation departments. To that end, our NRCS office is also working internally to bring more conservation dollars to the county departments.

We spoke with the governor's office and followed up with a letter describing how the county conservation departments are poised to implement the important conservation projects that are described in the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force Report on Global Warming. The governor is committed to this project and we believe that county conservation can be an important part of making that program a success.

Finally, we try to stay in contact with staff persons at the offices of our federal elected officials. We will continue to communicate with them to make sure we are up-to-date on the rapidly changing conditions at the federal government level.

If you have any questions regarding these efforts, please contact me at the office or at julian@wlwca.org.

~Julian Zelazny, Executive Director

Conservation Lobby Day is Almost Here

Once again, WLWCA is working with our colleagues at the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters (WLCV) and dozens of other conservation and environmental groups on one of the most impressive displays of grassroots power by Wisconsin's conservation community. The annual Conservation Lobby Day is scheduled for February 25 in Madison. On that day, hundreds of private citizens will descend upon the state capitol and speak with one voice about the issues that are most important. As in past years, four priority issues have been identified via a selection process that involved conservation and environmental groups from throughout Wisconsin.

1. Preserve Groundwater – Wisconsin's Buried Treasure: manage Wisconsin's groundwater resources to preserve drinking water supplies, lakes, streams, and wetlands.
2. Stop Global Warming in Wisconsin: address the threats of global warming in Wisconsin through clean, renewable energy jobs and energy conservation.
3. Restore Conservation Integrity: re-establish an independent DNR Secretary in Wisconsin and make timely appointments of Natural Resource Board members.
4. Protect Wisconsin's Drinking Water: protect Wisconsin's drinking water supplies by making sure we safely spread agricultural, municipal, and industrial waste.

Items 1 and 4 are current WLWCA priorities. The first one is concerned with managing groundwater to ensure that the resource is used in a sustainable manner and not depleted. The fourth one emphasizes the regulation of land spreading of waste, particularly in areas with fractured carbonate bedrock or "karst" formations.

WLCV offers training to volunteers so they may speak effectively to their own legislators about these issues. They also arrange all meetings with your legislator or the legislator's staff. It's a great experience and a terrific example of democracy at work. To register, visit www.conservationvoters.org and follow the links to Conservation Lobby Day. See you on the 25th!

~Julian Zelazny, Executive Director

2009 Wisconsin Envirothon Kicks into High Gear

WLWCA is currently seeking volunteers and sponsors for the 2009 Wisconsin Envirothon to be held Friday, April 24 from 7:30 am-4:30 pm at the Lion's Camp in Rosholt, Wis. All volunteers receive lunch and a 2009 Wisconsin Envirothon T-shirt. All organizations that donate time or money to Wisconsin Envirothon get listed on the 2009 Wisconsin Envirothon T-shirt and, depending on the amount of volunteer time or money that an organization donates, other advertising benefits may also apply.

The current issue for the 2009 Wisconsin Envirothon is "Biodiversity in a Changing World." Students will explore the human and natural impacts on biodiversity, benefits of biodiversity, issues regarding invasive species, climate change, and the causes of biodiversity loss.

In November, WLWCA began a new advertising campaign where brochures were sent to all 72 counties and various agencies that support Wisconsin Envirothon. The brochures were stamped for easy mailing to teachers, students, parents, or sponsors who might be interested in participating in Wisconsin Envirothon. Counties and agencies were asked to select mailing recipients, and report back to WLWCA the contact information. The names returned to WLWCA will be used to start an in-house mailing list to continue contacting folks potentially interested in Wisconsin Envirothon. The response has been great! 24 counties and agencies helped distribute the brochure statewide and passed on the names of the recipients. Several counties asked for more brochures to disburse. WLWCA would like to thank Ashland, Barron, Burnett, Dodge, Douglas, Dunn, Grant, Langlade, Oconto, Ozaukee, Pepin, Portage, Rock, St. Croix, Sauk, Sawyer, Shawano, Washington, Waushara, Winnebago, and Wood counties; the Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) for helping distribute brochures. We hope that other counties also passed on the Wisconsin Envirothon brochures and, if you have, we hope you will let us know who we should be contacting in your area. We thank you for your support!

Finally, we are pleased to announce that the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board; Econoprint; Woodman's Markets; Adams, Barron, Marinette, Sauk, Waushara, and Wood counties; DATCP; DNR; USDA-NRCS; and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point have already committed monetary, in-kind, or volunteer support for the 2009 Wisconsin Envirothon. If you know advisors or students who might like to start a team, a company that might be interested in sponsoring Wisconsin Envirothon, or if you are interested in volunteering for the event, please visit our Web site at www.wlwca.org, click on "WLWCA Programs," "Youth Education," and "Wisconsin Envirothon" to see the advisor handbook, an exam archive, sponsorship tiers, and our current list of sponsors. Then Email or call Kirsten (kirsten@wlwca.org) to discuss your support.

~Kirsten Moore, Office Manager

WLWCA Annual Conference Now a Two-Day Event

By a unanimous vote of the Board of Directors, WLWCA has decided to shorten the Annual Conference from three days to two. This will take effect with the 2009 conference in La Crosse.

Responding to member suggestions, and universal concerns about county budgets, the Board changed the format of the event. WLWCA conferences had started on a Wednesday afternoon and ended at noon time on Friday. With the new format, the conference will start Wednesday morning and end Thursday afternoon. The agenda will be very full because we will be offering all the same daytime events and sessions as in the past. The new format makes it possible for participants to stay just one night in the hotel. It also avoids Friday afternoon traffic.

This year, the conference will be held in La Crosse on December 9 and 10. We look forward to seeing you there!

~Julian Zelazny, Executive Director

Working Lands Workshops in Progress Statewide

The Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection's Working Lands Initiative focuses on updating Wisconsin's farmland preservation program and provides new tools to protect working lands. After a round of six successful training sessions with over 450 attendees in 2008, DATCP, the American Farmland Trust's Campaign for Wisconsin Farm and Forest Lands, and numerous state and local groups interested in protecting Wisconsin's agricultural and forested lands are sponsoring another wave of working lands workshops already in progress.

Agendas for the workshops vary depending on goals of local sponsors, but all will feature a presentation by Bob Wagner, senior director of Farmland Protection Programs for the American Farmland Trust. DATCP will also provide information on the components of the Working Lands Initiative proposal. More information on the workshops and DATCP's Working Lands

Initiative can be found at the department's Web site: <http://datcp.state.wi.us/workinglands.index.jsp>. You may also view the press release and Working Lands newsletters about the workshops by visiting our Web site at www.wlwca.org, clicking on "What's Going On" and following the links for the workshop most convenient for you. For further information, contact Coreen Fallat at 608-224-4625 or Keith Foye at 608-224-4603.

~Coreen Fallat, DATCP

2009 Sand Lake Conservation Camp Scheduled

The 2009 Sand Lake Conservation Camp for youth entering 6th-8th grades this fall will be held June 25-27, 2009 near Crivitz in Marinette County. It provides youth with positive educational outdoor experiences, helps them better appreciate and understand nature, and introduces them to the variety of opportunities in natural resources and conservation careers. Professionals from various natural resource and conservation agencies present programs on topics like wildlife, habitat, ecosystems, water quality, fisheries, forestry, orienteering, and canoeing. These professionals, as well as adult volunteers, serve as overnight staff and group leaders for the duration of camp. This is an exciting and worthwhile event that helps spark an interest in nature and provides positive outdoor experiences. The fee is \$50 if postmarked on or before June 6 and \$65 if postmarked after June 6. Registrations will not be accepted after June 17.

For more information, visit the Marinette County Web site at www.marinettecounty.com under the Land Information Department page, or contact Anne Warren, Marinette County Land & Water Conservation Dept. at 715-732-7784 or awarren@marinettecounty.com. The brochure is also available by visiting our Web site at www.wlwca.org, clicking on "WLWCA Programs," then "Youth Education," and "Sand Lake Conservation Camp."

~Anne Warren, Marinette County LCD

SOC Update

Summarizing accomplishments in 2008, the Standards Oversight Council (SOC) completed work on several technical standards, progressed with developing two companion documents, took the first steps toward forming a new work team to update the NRCS 313 (Waste Storage Facility) and 634 (Manure Transfer) technical standards, updated its internal policy manual, and began work on a redesign of the SOC Web site. Specifically, key SOC accomplishments include:

- Merged previously completed standards for Milking Center Wastewater Treatment and Feed Storage Leachate and Runoff Control into the existing NRCS 629 Waste Treatment technical standard.
- Completed a new, joint DNR/Dept. of Commerce technical standard for evaluating Proprietary Stormwater Sedimentation Control Devices used by municipalities as part of stormwater management programs. This is the first jointly administered technical standard created using the SOC process.
- Completed a major revision of the NRCS 382 Fence technical standard. The revised standard includes updated general criteria to bring the standard up-to-date with current fence technology, and detailed specifications that apply to different fence types.
- Made final edits to a new companion document on Milking Center Wastewater Treatment, and prepared an initial draft of a new companion document for designing Feed Storage Leachate and Runoff Control systems (the primary author is SOC work team leader Matt Blohowiak of NRCS).
- Initiated the formation of a new SOC work team to revise the NRCS 313 Waste Storage Facility and 634 Manure Transfer technical standards.
- Continued its progress on a new Dept. of Commerce technical standard for Infiltration Trenches used in stormwater management. A draft of the standard was distributed for Initial Review in January 2009 to a select group of stormwater management experts.

Going forward into 2009, SOC will follow the priorities set out in its 2008-2009 Work Plan. In addition to starting a new work team to revise the NRCS 313 and 634 standards, SOC intends to form work teams to work on two new DNR technical standards for stormwater management.

~Kevin Hogan, SOC Coordinator



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Calendar of Events

WSTC Meeting, Madison	Feb 18
WALCE PIC Conference, Green Bay	Feb 18-20
WI Grazing Conference, Green Bay	Feb 19-21
IPAW & Prairie Enthusiasts Banquet, Stevens Point	Feb 21
WLWCA Board Conference Call	Feb 23
SOC Meeting, Madison	Feb 24
Working Lands Workshop, Madison	Feb 24
WLCV Conservation Lobby Day, Madison	Feb 25
WCLWCA Meeting, Menomonie	Feb 25
Working Lands Workshops, Oconomowoc & Juneau	Feb 25
Working Lands Workshops, Burlington & Saukville	Feb 26
Working Lands Workshop, Ashland	Mar 10
Working Lands Workshop, New Richmond	Mar 11
Working Lands Workshop, Wausau	Mar 12
Wisconsin Lakes Convention, Green Bay	Mar 18-20
WSTC Meeting, Madison	Mar 19
Midwest Manure Summit, Green Bay	Mar 24-25

*For more information, visit www.wlwca.org and click on
"What's Going On?"*

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