



# WSNetwork News

February 15, 2002

News on issues of common interest to Wisconsin's sporting, conservation, and environmental communities.

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The WSN has revised its statewide priority issues. Click on these two issue headings for an update.

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## Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line

### Douglas County committees refuse utilities access to land

Two Douglas County committees voted on Jan. 31 to deny Minnesota Power permission to enter county land to work on the proposed Arrowhead-Weston transmission line. An estimated 15 percent of the 208-mile route approved by the Public Service Commission lies along public land. About 13 miles of this total are on land owned by Douglas County. Wisconsin Public Service Corp. has the power to condemn *private* property, but it cannot do the same with *public* property.

Mark Liebart, a member of the Forestry Committee stated, "The utilities are only beginning to understand that Douglas County takes its resolutions, and the views of its county citizens, very seriously. When the county, numerous townships, and citizens at public hearings made the statement "NO LINE in Douglas County", they meant what they said."

SOURCE: News reports and SOUL.

### SOUL attorney advises on power company trespassing

As counsel to SOUL, I am writing to advise you and the members of SOUL that the utilities have no right to enter private property absent permission from the landowner. Those who are threatened should ask for a legal memorandum purportedly giving the company power to go onto the land and to call our firm.

Members of SOUL will be represented by our law firm if they are sued. We view this as a simple case of intimidation by Minnesota Power. They do not have a certificate of need from the PSC and they have no statutory right to trespass.

SOURCE: Ed Garvey, SOUL attorney.

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## **DNR Independence and PIO Restoration**

### **WSN combines DNR independence and PIO restoration issues**

The restoration of an independent, board-controlled DNR was one of the issues upon which the WSN was founded. At the Jan. 25 WSN annual meeting, the WSN Steering Committee voted to combine the DNR independence issue with restoration of the Public Intervenor Office, thereby opening a priority issue slot for our new forest fragmentation issue.

### **DNR forestry account audit released**

The State of Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau released its evaluation of the state Forestry Account Feb. 12. The account supports forestry and other activities within the DNR and other state agencies. The account is funded primarily by a forestry mill tax, which is paid by all owners of taxable property in the state.

State Representative Joe Leibham (R-Sheboygan), Co-Chair of the Legislative Joint Audit Committee, said that the audit was requested due to concerns raised by legislators regarding the use of funds for non-forestry related expenditures. “The concerns behind the audit request may be valid,” Leibham said “The audit indicates that revenues from the forestry fund support a variety of non-related expenditures within the DNR.”

Leibham said that while the majority of the account funds spent by the DNR were for activities related to forestry, the audit did reveal that in fiscal year (FY) 2000-01, \$18.7 million from the account was spent for DNR administration, a total of 27.8 percent of the total Forestry Account expenditures. The audit also reported that while the DNR funds 644.1 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions from the Forestry Account, only 449.7 FTE were assigned to work directly in support of forestry activities. “The audit raises legitimate concerns over the use of forestry funds and positions for non-forestry related efforts,” Leibham said. A full copy of the audit is at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lab/>.

SOURCE: Rep. Leibham.

### **DNR reacts to critical Forestry Fund audit**

“The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is investing more than 98% of its forestry funds on activities directly benefiting forestry in Wisconsin,” Secretary Darrell Bazzell said Tuesday commenting on a newly completed audit study.

Bazzell said he regretted that some people are using numbers in the report to mischaracterize how DNR is investing important Forestry Account dollars. The complete DNR reaction to the audit is at [www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/news/RBnews/2002/020213forestryauditco.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/news/RBnews/2002/020213forestryauditco.htm).

SOURCE: WDNR.

## Says forestry problems lie with Governor

I think that somewhere along the line we need to point out that any problems with the DNR, forestry or otherwise, need to lain at the feet of those that have been in charge of that agency since 1995. Thompson/McCallum took control of that agency in spite of huge opposition on the slim excuse they wanted “accountability.” That was it, no other reason given, no petitions to do it, no public support. If it costs taxpayers another round of money to reorganize this agency (again), that is the fault of the Governor. How quickly we forget.

SOURCE: Jim Wise, [ecowise@newnorth.net](mailto:ecowise@newnorth.net), (715) 453-6015.

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## Factory Farming

### **CORRECTION: Mega farm mismanagement figure lower than reported**

The last *WSNetwork News* included a story about a Midwest Environmental Advocates report on factory farm pollution with an incorrect headline. Half of the state’s mega farms are *not* mismanaging waste; the number is roughly 20%. For more information about the report, contact Melissa K. Scanlan, Executive Director, Midwest Environmental Advocates, 22 E. Mifflin St., Suite 301, Madison, WI 53703, (608) 251-5047, [www.midwest-e-advocates.org](http://www.midwest-e-advocates.org).

## State farm package introduced in Sheboygan

Wisconsin’s ailing family farmers got a boost Feb. 14 as State Senator Brian Burke (D-Milwaukee), and State Senator Jim Baumgart (D-Sheboygan) announced the introduction of the Family Farm Protection Act, a proposal designed to make Wisconsin “the most family farm friendly state in the Union.” Calling the Act a major commitment to Wisconsin agriculture and rural communities, Senator Baumgart said it will invest \$8.1 million annually in the future of farming by providing funding for modernization, expansion of markets, transitions into profitable organic and grazing production methods and farm education programs.

The following organizations support the Family Farm Protection Act:

- Wisconsin Farmers Union
- Family Farm Defenders
- Growing Power

- American Raw Milk Producers Pricing Association
- Dane County Farmers Market
- Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin
- Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group
- Wisconsin Citizen Action
- Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter
- Citizens for a Better Environment

*(NOTE: Contact the WSN for more information about the bill. We have several backgrounders that make the bill's intent and provisions easy to understand.)*

## **Farm Bill scores two conservation victories**

Family farmers and conservationists scored two big victories [Feb. 12] with the failure of the Crapo amendment and the passage of language to clarify the intent of the Johnson-Grassley packer ownership ban. The Crapo amendment would have removed a voluntary water conservation program that allows farmers to transfer water rights on a temporary or needs-only basis, in order to preserve stream flows for endangered fish and wildlife. A motion to kill the Crapo amendment passed 55-45.

The other victory was on secondary amending language offered by Grassley to clarify that the packer ownership ban, which passed in December, is not intended to outlaw contracts or joint ventures. A motion to kill the amendment failed, 46-53, and the amendment passed by voice vote. Passage of the clarifying amendment will make it very difficult for Senator Craig to pass his amendment, which would replace the packer ownership ban with a study of the issue. Please see [www.familyfarmer.org](http://www.familyfarmer.org) for continued coverage of the Senate Farm Bill.

Scotty Johnson, [defenders.returns@reply.net](mailto:defenders.returns@reply.net).

### **BACKGROUND ON 'CAPTIVE SUPPLIES'**

Meat packers are acquiring an increasing percentage of the cattle and hogs they slaughter through arrangements known as "captive supplies" — livestock that packers either own themselves or control through contracts with farmers and ranchers. These livestock are called captive because they are tied to one packer instead of being subject to normal market forces of supply and demand.

Four companies control more than half of all U.S. hog slaughter and more than 80% of U.S. fed cattle slaughter. In such a concentrated market, buyers (the packers) can use captive supplies to manipulate markets much as Enron is alleged to have used its dominant market share and unregulated forward contracts to manipulate energy markets. The estimated cost to family farmers and ranchers from the increased use of captive supplies amounts to more than \$1 billion per year for cattle alone.

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## **Forest Fragmentation**

### **WSN adopts forest fragmentation issue**

The WSN adopted one new statewide priority issue at its annual meeting in Stevens Point Jan. 25 — concern over forest fragmentation in Wisconsin. By adopting this as a new WSN issue, the

WSN hopes to draw attention to this change in the landscape and identify people who are interested in learning how this trend is affecting the state's flora and fauna. If you would like to work on this issue, contact either John Schwarzmann of ECCOLA at (715) 356-4206 or Chris Nehrbass of the Sierra Club at (715) 848-0971.

Groups and individuals are also encouraged to forward the dialogue on this issue by sending news and information on the subject to the WSN for inclusion in this newsletter.

SOURCE: WSN.

## **Public input sought on Northern Highlands forest plan**

State officials are asking for public comment on management alternatives to the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest (NHAL) Master Plan. Alternatives include land management, recreation, and wild resource areas on the 225,000-acre property, the state's largest state forest. Interested citizens are invited to participate in a one of these open houses around the state:

- **Wednesday, Feb. 27**, Fitchburg Community Center (Madison area), 5510 Lacy Road
- **Thursday, Feb. 28**, Brookfield City Hall/Community Center (Milwaukee area), 2000 North Calhoun Road
- **Wednesday, March 6**, Boulder Junction Community Center, 5386 Park St.
- **Thursday, March 7**, Wausau, Marathon County Public Library, 300 1<sup>st</sup> St.

Questions regarding the open house meetings and the Master Plan process for the NHAL may be directed to Dennis Leith, NHAL Forest Superintendent, 8770 Hwy. J, Woodruff, WI 54568 or by e-mail to: [dleith@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:dleith@dnr.state.wi.us).

SOURCE: WDNR.

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## **Groundwater Protection**

### **Groundwater Council releases summit highlights**

At this time, the GCC would like to announce the availability of several products generated from [last fall's] Groundwater Summit. These are available on the GCC Web Site at [www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/gcc/](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/gcc/). Click on "Wisconsin Groundwater Summit" near the bottom of the page). You may also contact Tim Asplund, GCC Staff Person, for print versions of these products:

- Highlights from the Summit and list of proposed outcomes,
- A Participant List, with e-mail addresses and phone numbers,

- “Uncovering the Quality and Quantity Issues of Wisconsin’s Buried Treasure” by Jim Krohelski, George Kraft, and Ken Bradbury (Powerpoint presentation in PDF format),
- Summary of Breakout Session Discussion (available as a PDF or HTML table).

*(NOTE: Copies of these documents will be on the WSN’s 2003 annual conference CD.)*

At this time, the GCC is seeking feedback and clarification from Summit participants on this matrix and welcomes further comment. Please provide your comments to Tim Asplund no later than March 15, 2002. Ultimately, the matrix will be used to develop action items and strategies along with the other components of the Summit. Please note that videotapes of the morning presentations are available for loan.

SOURCE: Timothy R. Asplund Groundwater Section WDNR Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater, 101 S. Webster, PO BOX 7921 Madison, WI 53707, (608) 267-7449, [asplut@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:asplut@dnr.state.wi.us).

## **Water resolution passed by Farmers Union**

At the 2002 Wisconsin Farmers Union State Convention held on February 9-10 at Wisconsin Dells, the following Protection of Water Resolution passed unanimously:

Whereas, water is a basic human need with inherent rights and responsibilities:  
 Whereas, water is a public trust to be used for the good of all:  
 Whereas, water is not a commodity for exchange in the marketplace;  
 Therefore be it resolved, that Wisconsin Farmers Union support the following principles for water management in Wisconsin:

1. Water ownership and control must reside in the hands of government as recognized representatives of the people;
2. Potable water must be protected for human consumption and basic needs including the production of food;
3. The State should develop and adopt a sustainable water protection strategy to conserve and protect water.

Be it further resolved that Wisconsin Farmers Union work with other organizations for the furtherance of these principles.

Also at this state convention, Anita Nelson and Hiroshi Kanno, introduced the idea of our Chautauqua and received the endorsement of the Columbia County Farmers Union to participate in this event.

SOURCE: Hiroshi Kanno, WSN Groundwater Issue Chair.

## **Governors, Premiers pledge diversion protection this year**

Seven months after signing the Annex 2001 plan for protecting the Great Lakes against large-scale diversion, the region's 10 governors and premiers have finally released a timeline to negotiate the formal, legally binding agreement that would carry out the promises of the annex. The governors and premiers plan to present a draft reform agreement to the basin public in June of this year, followed by a 90-day comment period.

All ten jurisdictions have agreed to hold public meetings to accept citizen comment on the draft plan. They will then revise the draft plan based on the public comment and complete a final document for signature by all 10 governors and premiers in late November.

SOURCE: Reg Gilbert, Great Lakes United, [reg@glu.org](mailto:reg@glu.org) via Tom Wilson.

## **Groundwater safety topic at Sugar River Watershed Assn. meeting**

The Upper Sugar River Watershed Association Annual Meeting will be held Thursday, Feb. 21, from 7-9 p.m. at Deer Creek Sportsman's Club, 8475 Miller Road, Verona, WI. The topic is "Drinking Water of the Upper Sugar River Watershed: Is your well water safe to drink?" What is "safe"?

## **Florida county wins water protection victory**

The Florida Supreme Court has handed Marion County a victory in an effort to protect its water supply. The high court ruled last week that it would not consider an appeal from Dunnellon resident Joe Priest, who sought a special-use permit from the county to pump 100,000 gallons of water a day from part of his 108-acre property near the Rainbow River.

The ruling lets stand an appellate court decision that upholds Marion County's right to deny Priest's request. County Attorney Gordon Johnston informed the county commissioners of the decision on Tuesday. Several commissioners expressed satisfaction about defying the odds and prevailing in a case no one gave them a chance to win.

Neither Priest nor representatives of the Connecticut-based Perrier Group of America — which sought to buy the water he wanted to pump — could be reached for comment. In September 1999, Priest applied to the county for a permit to pump 500,000 gallons of water a day, which was to be sold to Perrier for bottling as Zephyrhills Natural Spring Water. Priest later modified his request to try to win approval.

SOURCE: [www.saveourspringsinc.org](http://www.saveourspringsinc.org).

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## Mercury Reduction

### **Plouff, Robson offer mercury thermometer ban bill**

Rep. Joe Plouff and Sen. Judy Robson have drafted legislation to ban the sale and distribution of mercury thermometers in Wisconsin.

“The mercury in fever thermometers poses health and environmental threats,” stated Plouff. “Improper disposal contributes to the release of mercury into our rivers and lakes. Once in the water, the mercury is transformed into the highly toxic methylmercury and works its way through the food chain and into the fish that we eat.”

“Knowing what we now know about the dangers of mercury thermometers, it is irresponsible to continue to permit their sale and distribution,” Robson said. “Safer alternatives are available.”

SOURCE: Representatives Plouff (608) 266-7683 and Robson (608) 266-2253.

### **Minnesota mercury ban update**

I have not yet seen the [WI mercury thermometer ban] legislation, but the Minnesota law bans most thermometers, not just fever thermometers as banned by local ordinances in a dozen communities in Wisconsin. Michigan is also working on a similar statute, which received approval by a legislative committee last week.

SOURCE: John Reindl, [reindl@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:reindl@co.dane.wi.us).

### **PSC takes hits for mercury position**

A group of environment and outdoors groups have rapped the Wisconsin Public Service Commission for making “false and misleading” comments about proposed limits on mercury emissions from state power plants. The groups said the PSC gave inaccurate testimony during hearings before the WDNR, including incorrectly referring to one air pollutant as “nitrous oxide” (laughing gas) when it was actually the pollutant nitrogen oxide.

“All this would be humorous if it were not such a serious indictment of the commission’s credibility,” said Keith Reopelle of Wisconsin’s Environmental Decade.

“Sport fishing groups want tough mercury regulations because we feel strongly about the fishery resource and even more strongly about protecting our children’s health,” said Russ Ruland, president of the Musky Club of Wisconsin. “The PSC’s comments make you think they don’t care about either.”

SOURCE: Wisconsin’s Environmental Decade.

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## **Metallic Mining**

### **Assembly hearing on ‘No Special Treatment’ Bill next Tuesday**

AB 547 — the Assembly version of SB 271, the No Special Treatment bill — has been scheduled for a public hearing at 11 a.m. Tuesday, February 19, in the North Hearing Room (second floor) of the State Capitol. PLEASE attend if you can, and spread the word ASAP to others concerned about mining and about the proposed Crandon mine.

Please note that the committee has NOT scheduled a hearing on either version of the bill to ban cyanide in mining.

SOURCE: Bill McClenahan Martin Schreiber & Associates, [bill@martinschreiber.com](mailto:bill@martinschreiber.com).

### **Potawatomi cyanide bill campaign on airwaves**

You may have seen the TV ads, heard the radio ads, or seen the mailings or the billboards. The Forest County Potawatomi have begun the ad campaign to help pass the mining bills SB-160 and SB-271. The big push on the two bills is THIS MONTH. Please, even if you have already contacted your Assembly Representative, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR REP AGAIN. The Crandon mine conflict has been going on even longer than the wars in Afghanistan. It's time to bring an end to mining battles in Wisconsin. Thanks!

SOURCE: Zoltan Grossman, [mtn@igc.org](mailto:mtn@igc.org).

### **Wolf Watershed Educational Project meeting Feb. 23**

The Wolf Watershed Educational Project will have its next monthly meeting on Sat., Feb. 23 in Shawano from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at 125 South Sawyer, in the Community Center at the SW corner of the City Hall/Police Building, across from the Public Library, just south of Hwy 47/29. Thanks to Protect Our Wolf River (POW'R) for hosting the meeting.

We'll discuss the new Forest County Potawatomi ad campaign for SB-160 and SB-271 on TV, radio, mailings, and billboards. (Billboards are at Crandon on Hwy 8 West, Oshkosh on 41 north of 26, and Madison at East Washington/North streets across from Burger King.) We'll also discuss plans for a possible Assembly Environmental Committee hearing on the mining bills, BHP Billiton office cuts, Nashville's plans since state Court of Appeals has upheld the Local Agreement, and more.

SOURCE: Zoltan Grossman, [mtn@igc.org](mailto:mtn@igc.org).

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## Shoreland/Wetlands

### Ashley Furniture bill hearing Feb. 21

The Ashley exemption Bill (AB-580) is scheduled to be heard by the Senate Environment Committee chaired by Senator Baumgart on Thursday, Feb. 21 at 10 a.m. in Room 300SE of the State Capitol. These bills allow an exemption from state law to Ashley Furniture Industries of Arcadia to fill a 14-acre floodplain wetland that lies adjacent to the Trempealeau River in Trempealeau County.

Ashley desires to fill the wetland in order to build a storage facility for their existing manufacturing facility. DNR technical staff have categorized the site as a functional wetland, and a permit is required for any fill activity. Ashley has never applied for a permit for this action from the Army Corps of Engineers nor from the DNR.

The wetland fill exemption was originally passed into law by the State Legislature, signed by Governor Thompson, as part of the 1999-2001 Budget Bill. Wisconsin Wetlands Association and four other statewide organizations, including Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, River Alliance of Wisconsin and Wisconsin's Environmental Decade sued Ashley over this exemption. After a timely and costly lawsuit, we won an important decision by a circuit court judge in August, 2001, who indicated that the exemption language in the budget bill was unconstitutional.

In act of arrogant defiance, Ashley turned hastily to their local state legislators and again coaxed them to champion their special exemption through legislative channels. To our dismay and against our protestations, Assembly Bill 580 passed with a large margin in the Assembly last November, and this bill now languishes with the Senate Organization Committee (Senator Moen, the co-author, sits on this Committee). In the meantime, the Senate Environment Committee is holding its hearing on the Senate version of the bill, SB 290. In the meantime, we must be certain that AB

#### **BACKGROUND — Why the Wisconsin Wetlands Association opposes the Ashley Bill**

1. A 14-acre wetland would be filled for the construction of what is, essentially, a warehouse (most fill projects that are approved are < 0.5 acres in size). We argue that there are better places to build a storage facility--not in a floodplain wetland. Filling a floodplain wetland (especially in the steep valley of the Trempealeau River) would obviously reduce water-retention capacity of the site, increase flood volume and intensity downstream, eliminate the water cleansing properties provided by the wetland, and destroy wildlife habitat.

2. Ashley should FIRST apply for their permit through appropriate channels as is required by law. We expect Ashley, as with every other person or company, to follow the normal permitting process. The DNR requires an "alternatives analysis" for wetland fill projects that might help identify other locations for the construction of their building. The permit application also provides details of the project proposed. These details are presently unavailable to the public.

3. This exemption, if passed, would set a terrible precedent by allowing a single entity an exemption from state law. We feel that all individuals and companies should be given identical treatment under the law. No special exemptions for campaign contributions! We can only imagine that other companies are already "lining up" with their special exemption bills ready to be shared with targeted legislators, with the argument, "If you can do it for Ashley, you can certainly do it for us."

580 does not reach the Senate Floor without a hearing. The public should have an opportunity to share their opinion on this important issue.

SOURCE: Charlie Luthin, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, 222 S. Hamilton, Suite #1, Madison, WI 53703, (608) 250-9971, <http://www.wiscwetlands.org>.

## Urgent support needed on motorboat gas tax bill

Senator Cowles and Representative Johnsrud have drafted a bill (LRB 3345/1) that would update the motorboat gas tax formula, resulting in an additional transfer of over six million dollars annually into the state "water resources account." The additional funds would be used to increase funding for

- the River and Lakes Protection grant programs,
- to fund the implementation of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), and
- to fund a newly created Wetlands Protection Grant Program.

Please contact your Senator and Assembly Representative today, and urge them to support LRB 3345/1.

### BACKGROUND — Motorboat gas tax and its purposes

Many conservation programs that protect water quality, recreational opportunities and support the efforts of local river, watershed and lakes organizations around the state are funded by the Wisconsin state tax on motorboat fuel. A formula is used to estimate the portion of fuel tax monies that are generated by motorboats, and these funds are then transferred into the state "water resources account." However, due to increases in the numbers and the size of recreational boats used in Wisconsin waters in recent years, the current state formula underestimates the funds generated by motorboats, resulting in the use of motorboat fuel taxes for road improvement and maintenance.

LRB 3345/1 proposes to change the formula to reflect the increased fuel consumption of motorboats in Wisconsin by increasing the number of gallons used in the formula from 50 gallons to 80 gallons. This will generate an increase in the gas tax transfer of over 6 million dollars. This increase in funding will:

- Provide additional support to various Department of Natural Resources programs, including the River Protection and the Lake Protection Grant programs. The River Protection Grant Program has been instrumental in providing funds to help form and build the capacity of local river and watershed organizations active in Wisconsin;
- Assist with the administration and implementation of CREP (a federally-funded conservation program), by providing funding to counties and to the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP); and
- Create a wetlands protection grant program, under which local units of government and nonprofit conservation organizations can receive financial assistance for projects that protect, enhance and restore wetlands.

SOURCES: Wisconsin Assn. of Lakes and River Alliance of WI.

## DATCP Board passes ATCP 50

The DATCP board passed ATCP 50 this week without any further changes. Overall, the rule looks very good. Many of our concerns have been addressed, including the addition of a phosphorus standard, the strengthening of the determination for economic hardship, cost share tied to longer easements, and more staff funding for counties. Representative Ott and Representative Johnsrud voiced their support for the ATCP 50 to the DATCP board.

SOURCE: Steph Adams, [cleanwater@wisconsinrivers.org](mailto:cleanwater@wisconsinrivers.org).

## Black calls for water pollution enforcement audit

State Assembly Democratic Leader Spencer Black has officially requested an audit of state water pollution enforcement, in the wake of a troubling research report by an environmental watchdog group. “The strictest law, no matter how well intentioned, is of little value if it is not vigorously enforced.” Black said. “The people of this state treasure our lakes, streams and rivers and they expect the state to act vigorously to make sure our waters are protected from polluters.”

SOURCE: Rep. Black.

## Web site looking for water events

The River Alliance webmaster will soon be updating our website calendar of upcoming water-related events. Past calendar items have included events such as river clean ups, group meetings, workshops and training events, canoe races, water festivals, etc. If you or your organization would like to see your events posted, please send them to [michaell@wisconsinrivers.org](mailto:michaell@wisconsinrivers.org) by February 28.

SOURCE: River Alliance of Wisconsin.

## Private wetland restoration hearings set

Proposed rules that seek to encourage landowners to restore wetlands for conservation purposes will be the subject of public hearings in mid-March. Currently, people interested in restoring wetlands for conservation purposes are regulated the same as those who want to dredge or fill in wetlands to allow their development or other project to proceed. The proposed rules would streamline the process property owners must follow before starting a project to restore or manage wetlands, cutting by two-thirds the time it takes for them to learn whether they have state permission to proceed. The proposed rules, which would become NR 353 of the Wis. Administrative Code, would carve out a separate process for beneficial activities regarding wetlands, now a relatively small proportion of all wetland cases. The public hearings are set for the following dates:

- **March 12, Madison** — 2 p.m. in Room 027 of the GEF 2 building, 101 S. Webster St.
- **March 13, Oshkosh** — 5 p.m. at the Oshkosh Public Library
- **March 14, Eau Claire** — 2 p.m. at the DNR Regional Office

Written comments on the proposed rule are due by close of business on March 22 and may be directed to Scott Hausmann, DNR, 101 S. Webster, Madison, WI, 53707. For more information contact the WDNR’s Scott Hausmann at (608) 266-7360.

SOURCE: WDNR.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **Chautauqua organizing meeting March 2**

We have scheduled our Thunder Valley Chautauqua planning meeting for March 2, Saturday, at Country Kitchen Restaurant in Wisconsin Dells. It is located at intersection of 12 & 16 west of the bridge. We will meet at 10:00 a.m. We will reserve one of their rooms under my name.

In preparation for this meeting please send me items for the agenda. Also I need other groups that you feel should be invited to this meeting. Remember we want to be inclusive and not exclusive. We need to get some unions involved in this effort. Anyone have some good union contacts?

SOURCE: Hiroshi Kanno, [HiroK8@aol.com](mailto:HiroK8@aol.com).

### **Nonprofit lobbying workshop April 22**

The Alliance for Justice announces its “Worry-free advocacy: understanding the rules of nonprofit lobbying and election-related activity” workshop scheduled for April 22 in Chicago. These day-long workshops are designed to help nonprofit managers, staff, and volunteers understand the legal rules governing lobbying and election-related activity by nonprofit groups. Registration is only \$20 and will be on a first-come first-serve basis. Registrants will also be able to sign up for one-on-one technical assistance the day after the workshop with an Alliance attorney-trainer. For more information (including the agenda) and to register, go to <http://www.afj.org/worryfree>.

### **Stormwater conference Feb. 19-21**

Early registration discounts are still available for one more week at the regionwide stormwater conference that Fox-Wolf Basin 2000 is hosting Feb. 19-21, 2002 at the Pioneer Inn in Oshkosh. Titled “Stormwater 2002: Tying the Pieces Together - Design, Ordinances, Policies, and Economics,” For further details on the upcoming 2002 conference, watch Fox-Wolf Basin 2000’s conference website at [www.fwb2k.org/basin/sw/stormwater02.htm](http://www.fwb2k.org/basin/sw/stormwater02.htm) or e-mail [fwoffice@athenet.net](mailto:fwoffice@athenet.net).

### **John Ikerd addressing state’s largest progressive gathering March 16**

That’s right folks, John Ikerd, the renowned rural sociologist and champion of socially and environmental just food systems will be in Wisconsin on Saturday, March 16, to address both urban and rural activists at the Wisconsin Citizen Action Convention. More than 400 activists from around the state attended the last WCA convention.

SOURCE: Sam Gieryn, [sgieryn@wi-citizenaction.org](mailto:sgieryn@wi-citizenaction.org).

## Midwest isolated wetlands conference Feb. 20-22

This is a follow-up announcement/reminder about the Midwest Ephemeral/Isolated Wetlands Conference and PARC (Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation) Midwest Meeting in Chicago, February 20-22. An announcement page can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/r5water/ephemeralwetlands/2002conf.htm>.

## Capacity-building workshops for conservation groups planned

The River Alliance of Wisconsin is planning two capacity-building workshops for conservation organizations this Spring.

**Saturday, April 20th** — Strategic Partnerships: Building Successful Collaborations and Coalitions. Riveredge Nature Center, Newburg, Wisconsin. A one-day training to help you determine when a collaborative approach is needed and how to structure a coalition for success. Cost: \$45 (\$35 early registration)

**May 4-5th** — Using the Media to Communicate Your Message Effectively. Riveredge Nature Center, Newburg Wisconsin (lodging provided at Wellspring Retreat and Conference Center, just across the Milwaukee River). A two-day training designed to help you develop a media strategy for your organization's conservation work and learn the "how-tos" of getting your message out through the media. Cost: \$85 (\$75 early registration).

SOURCE: Diana Toledo, Local Group Assistance Manager, [diana@wisconsinrivers.org](mailto:diana@wisconsinrivers.org).

*WSNetworkNews* is published twice monthly by the Wisconsin Stewardship Network, a network of Wisconsin hunting, fishing, conservation, and environmental groups.

**The WSN's Steering Committee** consists of representatives from the following organizations: Concerned Citizens of Newport, ECCOLA, Federation of Fly Fishers, Izaak Walton League of America, Lake Superior Greens, Madison Audubon Society, Muskies, Inc., Northern Thunder, Pheasants Forever, River Alliance of Wisconsin, Save Our Unique Lands, Sierra Club — John Muir Chapter, Wisconsin Association of Lakes, Wisconsin State

B.A.S.S. Federation, Wisconsin Conservation Congress, Wisconsin's Environmental Decade, and Wisconsin Trout Unlimited.

**The WSN's mission** is to build a cooperative network that strengthens Wisconsin's stewardship ethic for the betterment of its people and natural resources.

**Editorial contributions** to this e-newsletter are welcome. Send news of your group's activities relating to the WSN's priority issues to State Coordinator Todd Hanson at [wsn@chorus.net](mailto:wsn@chorus.net).

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