



WSNetwork News

March 1, 2002

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

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Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line

DNR Independence and PIO Restoration

DNR hearing publication on-line

There may not be a Public Intervenor Office, but a recently published guide can help you plan and initiate your own citizen natural resources actions. The 2001 publication *Being Heard: A Citizen's Guide to DNR Hearings* published by Midwest Environmental Advocates is now available on-line at their web site. You can download the guide at www.midwest-e-advocates.org.

SOURCE: WSN.

Factory Farming

Senate Committee on Labor and Agriculture hears FFPA support

A press conference was held in the Senate parlor before the Wednesday, Feb. 27, hearing on the Family Farm Protection Act. We delivered 6,000 letters from constituents of most of the State Senate asking for support of the FFPA. Press conference speakers included: Sen. Burke, Rep. Plouff, Gerry Jaeger, John Peck, Rev. Sue Larson, and Caryl Terrell.

The hearing lasted from 10:30 until about 4:00. There were approximately 3 dozen speakers, with 21 for the bill and 4 against. Farm Bureau and NFO testified for information only. NFO said supportive things about the bill but took time to point out a number of things they were concerned about. More detail to come. Most of Farm Bureau's comments were positive. Wow. The worst testimony was from Dick Hauser with the WI Cattleman's Association. WI Fed of Coops also testified with much support and a few concerns including firm opposition to restoring WI Consumer Act coverage. The other three opposed were large producers that were concerned about costs of various environmental provisions. One was Laurie Fischer who is a DBA officer and was almost apologetic in her opposition. She liked a lot of what she heard about the measure before she finally testified and said so. The others, Jay Richardson of Spring Valley and John Vrieze of Emerald. She has travelling the state warning communities not to overreact to the hype about CAFOs.

SOURCE: Sam Gieryn, WI Citizen Action.

***New York Times* highlights farm bill's sweeping conservation measures**

The 2002 Farm Bill "could become the most sweeping environmental legislation since the Clean Air Act of 1990," according to an article last week in the *New York Times*. The article points out that the Senate version of the Farm Bill increases conservation spending by \$22 billion over the next decade, and also provides twice the administration's request for nutrition programs. By contrast, the House bill provides nearly \$1 billion per year more for commodity payments than the Senate version.

The article goes on to highlight how geography and each state's commodity base influenced particular votes more than political party, as exemplified by the votes on conservation measures, payment limitations, the packer ownership ban, and the dairy program. The article also points out that new conservation programs (such as the Conservation Security Program) are meant to address the inequities in the current agriculture subsidy system by allowing all producers to participate, including those not eligible for commodity payments. The full article is available at: <http://query2.nytimes.com/search/abstract?res=F30F12F73C5B0C778DDDAB0894DA404482>.

SOURCE: Scotty Johnson, defenders.returns@reply.net.

Group publishes list of farm subsidy recipients

When the Environmental Working Group published their website showing that the richest producers received the lion's share of federal farm commodity payments, they raised quite a stir in farm communities. Some producers, furious that their finances were aired in public, claimed it was an invasion of their privacy. Other producers were more angry with the fact that so few farmers received such a large share of the money. (See the list at www.ewg.org.)

As Congress has moved to improve farm policy one important change supported by family farm groups is "capping" the limits of commodities subsidies to direct them towards those more in

need. Responding to this problem, the Senate passed a proposal called the Grassley-Dorgan Amendment that would limit the amount any single producer could receive to \$250,000.00 and \$270,000 for couples. As the Farm Bill goes to conference this amendment will certainly come under attack, and folks are being asked to call their Representatives and urge them to support a letter by Representatives Bereuter and Pomeroy asking the conference committee to support the Dorgan-Grassley payment limitations. To find out who your representative is and how to contact them go to <http://www.vote-smart.org/index.phtml>.

SOURCE: Scotty Johnson, defenders.returns@reply.net.

Forest Fragmentation

Groundwater Protection

Proposed rules would allow storage of treated surface water in aquifers

Proposed rules that would allow communities to use a unique method of storing treated water underground will be the subject of public hearings scheduled in three communities in mid-March. The proposed rules respond to interest among some Wisconsin communities to use the technology to meet their growing water demands. Under the proposed rules, the DNR would consider each request on a case-by-case basis in order to safeguard the state's groundwater aquifers, says Jill Jonas, a DNR drinking and groundwater official.

“We want to give communities greater flexibility in how they meet growing demand,” Jonas says. “But we must protect our groundwater aquifers, and make sure the storage technology is used only where it does not introduce contaminants into groundwater or cause chemical interactions that can pose a health threat.”

The rules also seek to promote conservation by requiring, as a condition of using the technology, that a community document measures to save its water supply and use it as efficiently as possible. Public hearings on the rules are set for:

- **March 12, Madison** — 9 a.m. in the Third Floor Conference Room, State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), 125 S. Webster, St.
- **March 13, Oak Creek** — 1 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Oak Creek City Hall, 8640 S. Howell Ave.
- **March 14, Green Bay** — 1 p.m. in Room 310, Green Bay City Hall, 100 N. Jefferson St.

Written comments will be accepted on the proposed rules through the end March 31, 2002, and can be sent to Rich Roth, DNR, 101 S. Webster St., Madison, WI 53707.

SOURCE: WDNR.

Michigan tribes suing Perrier

Three Bands of Michigan Indians have filed suit in federal court against Perrier and the State under the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) to prohibit Great Spring Waters of America (GSWA)/Perrier from diverting or exporting water from the Sanctuary well site in Mecosta County, part of the headwaters of the Little Muskegon River, which of course flows into the Muskegon and into Lake Michigan.

I propose a conference call to discuss a coalition of Michigan and Great Lakes organizations to intervene in the suit, broadening both the standing and interests that are stake in the case. The rivers and lakes of Michigan and the Great Lakes, and connecting waters, are impressed with a public trust under *Illinois Central Railroad v Illinois*, 146 US 387 (1892), and the citizens of Great Lakes states and Canada are legally recognized beneficiaries of this trust. As such, citizens of these states have as much or more of a right than the Indiana bands within the region to these waters and their bottomlands and natural resources. The public trust doctrine in effect is the fundamental “treaty” between citizens and their government.

It would appear that citizens, and organizations who represent them, would have standing to intervene and enforce the obligations and requirements of WRDA. The goal of the suit is two-fold: declaratory judgment that the GSWA/Perrier project is subject to WRDA, including an injunction that prohibits any diversion or export until the condition subsequent of governors’ consent has been met in accordance with the plain language of WRDA; and declaratory judgment that Michigan DEQ is acting contrary to the terms of the WRDA.

SOURCE: Terry Swier, tswier@centurytel.net.

EPA grants to WDNR slated for cuts

In the Feb. 13 *Janesville Gazette*, The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency would cut more than \$4 million in grants to the DNR under President Bush’s budget proposal. The cuts would affect municipalities’ efforts to build or expand sewage treatment plants as well as their efforts to reduce wastes from water runoff. Curt Witynski, assistant director for the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, said the potential impact for cities would be doubly damaging if Gov. McCallum’s budget proposal, which calls for the phasing out of shared revenue, is passed. “When it comes to sewers and storm water treatment, that’s just something that has to be provided for,” Witynski said. “It cannot be cut or not get done. It’s just that something else might have to get pared back.”

SOURCE: WDNR correspondence.

Maine to help farmers build manure storage facilities

From the Feb. 15 *Kennebec (ME) Journal*: Maine is preparing to award \$2.2 million to help farmers build manure storage facilities designed to prevent animal waste from entering freshwater supplies. In 2001, the Maine Department of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Resources handed out \$2.3

million in their nutrient management grant program. Grants can cover as much as 75 percent of a project's total cost, with a maximum of \$100,000 per applicant. More at www.centralmaine.com/news/stories/020215manure_k.shtml.

SOURCE: WDNR correspondence.

Program awards groundwater models to schools

Teachers from 24 Wisconsin schools have received models that show how water moves through the ground so they will be better able to demonstrate to students how human actions can have an impact on the state's groundwater resources. The teachers received the free groundwater movement models after going through training on how to use the model in their classrooms. Teams of two teachers from each school were selected to receive the training after submitting a plan describing how the model would benefit their students. The training was provided by Department of Natural Resources staff at workshops held recently in the Eau Claire and Green Bay areas. The training workshops are coordinated by DNR, but involve a number of federal, state and local agencies and organizations. Contact Dave Lindorff, Wellhead Protection Program Coordinator, for more information toll-free at (877) 268-9355.

SOURCE: WDNR.

Mercury Reduction

Hearing set for rules to reduce mercury in wastewater

Rules aimed at reducing mercury in wastewater that municipal and industrial treatment plants discharge to lakes and rivers are the topic of a public hearing on March 13 in Madison. The proposed rules move Wisconsin from focusing solely on reducing mercury that enters a treatment plant to an approach that also seeks to control the mercury released into Wisconsin lakes and rivers from the treatment plant's effluent pipes, according to Tom Mugan, the DNR wastewater engineer. Mugan led development of the proposed rules, which involve the creation of section NR 106.145 and revisions to chapters NR 211 and 219 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

Wastewater contributes less than 1 percent of the total amount of mercury entering the environment from all man-made sources, but all municipal wastewater contains some level of mercury. The mercury comes from sources including dental and medical waste, broken thermometers, and human wastes flushed into the sewage treatment system, as well as significant amounts from rain and snow. Air emissions from coal burning plants and other industrial sources contribute the bulk of mercury entering Wisconsin's waters, where it can accumulate in fish and other aquatic life, and eventually in the tissues of humans and wildlife that frequently eat fish.

A PUBLIC HEARING will be March 13, Madison — 10 a.m. in room 611B of the State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), 101 S. Webster St.

Written comments will be accepted on the rule through the end of the March 20, 2002, and can be sent to Tom Muga at WT/2, DNR, 101 S. Webster, Madison, WI 53707. For a copy of the draft rules and more information about Wisconsin efforts to remove mercury from wastewater, visit the DNR Web site. From the home page use the "Go to some top topics" drop down bar and select "mercury" and then click on the "DNR mercury news" to find a link to the proposed revision rule at www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/wm/mercury/mercury.htm or contact Tom Muga at (608) 266-7420

SOURCE: WDNR.

Metallic Mining

Fox Valley Assembly Republicans ask for vote on mining bill

An Assembly bill that will both protect the surrounding environment and allow for safe and effective mining is in line to receive a vote in the Environment Committee after a group of Fox River Valley Assembly Representatives formally requested action this week.

"We decided the most expeditious way to move this bill forward is to send a written request to the committee chairman, asking that he schedule it for a vote," said Rep. Gregg Underheim. "Our spring floor session is winding down and it's imperative we allow the full Assembly to vote on this important piece of bipartisan environmental legislation."

As written, 2001 Assembly Bill (AB) 547 requires all mining waste to be treated the same as other waste is. The mining waste would be subjected to chemical testing with a disposal facility designed and constructed based on the amount of waste generated. The DNR would also be barred from granting any exemptions or modifications to the new mining waste rules.

"Wisconsin's current mining laws won't adequately protect the water and the land surrounding new mines, like the one proposed in Crandon," said Representative Terri McCormick (R-Grand Chute), the bills author. "AB547 isn't meant to halt all mining operations in Wisconsin, it will just force mining companies to adhere to the same environmental standards other industries must."

Many of the chemicals used in mining would be considered hazardous, and the bill would characterize the waste generated by these chemicals as hazardous. Currently, mining facilities enjoy an exemption from the state's groundwater quality standards that other companies don't. AB 547 eliminates those exemptions.

"Understandably, bills that revise the state's mining rules and codes are controversial in nature, but if we want to ensure future mines don't harm the environment, we need to get this bill a committee vote and then push it to become law," said Representative Judy Krawczyk (R-Green Bay), the Assembly's lead co-author.

Just last week, the Assembly's Environment Committee held a lengthy public hearing on the bipartisan bill, with favorable testimony being offered by people from various regions and professions as well as legislators from both parties.

SOURCE: Reps. McCormick, Krawczyk, and Underheim.

Mining Capitol rally and lobby days planned for March 5 and 6

Governor McCallum has scheduled his "State of the State" address for Tuesday evening, so the Assembly has cancelled its floor session for the day. There will therefore not be a March 5 vote on the bills to ban cyanide in mining and end special treatment for the mining industry. It is not clear when the votes will be rescheduled, but they will happen within a week after Tuesday, and perhaps not at a convenient hour.

The Tuesday noon rally WILL STILL BE HELD at 12 noon at the King St. entrance of the Capitol (another rally will be happening at the State St. entrance), followed by a CITIZENS' LOBBY DAY on the two mining bills. The postponement of the vote actually gives us time to put more pressure on the Assembly Environment Committee members to hold a vote on the bills. Three Republican Reps wrote the letter below, also asking for a Committee vote.

The CITIZENS' LOBBY DAY will give us more of a voice in the process than simply attending the floor vote. We will schedule meetings with Committee members. Please also make a morning or afternoon appointment with your own Assembly Rep. (who will be in the building despite the floor session cancellation). We will not simply follow the legislators' agenda or schedule; we are asking them to follow our agenda.

SOURCE: Wisconsin Campaign to Ban Cyanide in Mining, www.alphacdc.com/treaty/cyanide.html.

Shawano bus to shuttle people to Capitol rally

There will be a bus to Madison from Shawano on March 5. Anyone wanting to join us should call (715) 526-3426 by Thursday at the latest. The bus will leave Shawano 8 a.m. and leave Madison by 5 p.m. or sooner, depending on time of vote. The cost will be about \$15 (less if more people get on board).

SOURCE: Judy and Len Pubanz, Protect Our Wolf River (POW'R), Shawano, (715) 526-3426, pubanzon-wolf@webtv.net.

Tape of Jan. 14 mining legislation meeting available

The WSN has a tape of the mining legislation meeting it co-sponsored in Appleton Jan. 14 for those interested. The tape features presentations by the cyanide ban and no special treatment bills' authors Reps. Judy Krawczyk and Terri McCormick. Also featured is a question-and-answer session with mining authority Dr. David Hambley. Contact the WSN at for a copy.

WWEP to hold meeting March 30

The Wolf Watershed Educational Project (WWEP) will have its monthly meeting on Saturday, March 30 in Stevens Point in the UW-SP University Center (10 a.m.-3 p.m.). From Hwy 51, take Business 51 (Division St.) exit. Follow Division to Briggs Street; take a left. The University Center is at the end of Briggs. Thanks to the Progressive Action Organization for hosting the meeting. For info: log on to www.nocrandonmine.com, or write Wolf Watershed Educational Project, PO Box 14382, Madison WI 53714; mtn@igc.org, Hotline (800) 445-8615.

SOURCE: Wolf Watershed Educational Project.

Report Reviews gaps in cyanide regulation at mines

Community groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Europe and the United States just released a report exposing the danger of unregulated cyanide compound releases from mines around the world. Submitted to both the UNEP and the EU, some of the key findings are:

- Mining waste should be regulated in the same manner as other chemical or industrial waste.
- The public needs independent studies and monitoring.
- Answers are needed about the presence, persistence, and toxicity of cyanide and related compounds in the environment.
- Mining cyanide-leach wastes have the potential to negatively impact water systems, potentially causing human intake of several toxic substances to increase.

More at <http://www.mineralpolicy.org/publications/pdf/DecodingCyanide.pdf>.

Shoreland/Wetlands

Support for nonpoint rules shown at Assembly hearing

Thank you to all those who testified in person, submitted testimony, made phone calls, met with representatives, and wrote letters for yesterday's [Feb. 28] Assembly Natural Resources hearing. It was very clear that there is a lot of support for strong rules to prevent polluted runoff...and very clear that we want the mandatory buffer practice returned to the rules. THANK YOU again!

From now through May, the nonpoint rules will be moving through the Legislative process. We will need your help to pull them safely through this final step. There is even a chance it will take longer. The rules could be sent back to the DNR or DATCP for changes. Changes and hearings are moving very quickly at this stage; sometimes we only have a few days notice before hearings. Just yesterday, the Legislature posted the Senate Environmental Resources hearing on TUESDAY, MARCH 5 in CAPITOL ROOM 300 SE at 10:00 a.m. We need your help at each step along the way! With a sustained effort of testimonies, phone calls, and letters, legislators will understand

that the nonpoint rules are an important opportunity — even a historic opportunity — to start cleaning up and preventing the number one source of water pollution.

Please testify, call, or write to a Senator on the Environmental Resources committee (see contact information listed below). Based on the main questions asked at yesterday's Assembly Natural Resources hearing, I have added more specific information and clarified issues in the message below.

BASIC MESSAGE: The urban side of the rules are quite strong and should be passed as is. On the agriculture side, the most important best management practice was removed from the final draft. Vegetated buffers of at least 20 to 35 feet are the most effective means of trapping sediment and other pollutants. Mandatory vegetated buffers can be included in the rules without putting the CREP program at risk. If you are a constituent of the committee members, please call or write. See list of committee members below.

- Sen. Jim Baumgart, Chair Room 306 South State Capitol P.O. Box 7882 Madison 53707-7882 Telephone (608) 266-2056 (888) 295-8750
- Sen. Dave Hansen Room 319 South State Capitol P.O. Box 7882 Madison 53707-7882 Telephone (608) 266-5670 (866) 221-9395
- Sen. Robert Wirch Room 316 South State Capitol P.O. Box 7882 Madison 53707-7882 Telephone (608) 267-8979 (888) 769-4724
- Sen. Robert Cowles Room 123 South State Capitol P.O. Box 7882 Madison 53707-7882 Telephone (608) 266-0484
- Sen. Dale Schultz Room 310 South State Capitol P.O. Box 7882 Madison 53707-7882 Telephone (608) 266-0703 or (800) 978-8008

SOURCE: Steph Adams, Clean Water Coalition Coordinator, River Alliance of Wisconsin, cleanwater@wisconsinrivers.org, (608) 441-8411.

Motorboat gas tax adjustment draws crowd at Senate hearing

Only two dissenting voices testified against the proposed motorboat gas tax adjustment bill (SB-468) yesterday, Feb. 28, before the Senate Environment Committee. The Dept. of Transportation testified that a one-year delay in implementing any adjustment would be preferable so the DOT could plan for the additional \$6.8 million they will have to allocate back to the WDNR. Meanwhile, Bob Cook of the Transportation Development Assn. seemed less amenable to any adjustment at all. He questioned the formulas showing increased boat usage and horsepower, referring to a need for a “broader discussion on increased [motorboat] use.” He brought up the subject of increased boat registration fees as a way to capture funds for lake and river programs. He also said people need good roads to get their boats to lakes. However, over a dozen others were supportive of the bill, including representatives from the WI Assn. of Lakes, the WI Waterfowl Assn., the Federation of Fly Fishers, the River Alliance, and others. Paul Heinen of the WDNR, who testified, “The motorboat fuel formula is an appropriate source of funds for these programs. The bill brings the old 1985 50 gallon per motorboat number up to a much more realistic 80 gallons per

boat. It is only fair that the payers of the tax receive the benefits.”

SOURCE: Todd Hanson, WSN.

Letters, calls sought in support of motorboat adjustment bill

We need your support for Senate Bill 468, which corrects the unfair underestimate of motorboat gas tax revenues — without affecting the price of gas at the pump — and provides support for critical water programs (lakes, rivers, and wetlands grants, and water quality protection through implementation of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program). SB468 is identical to SB443, but has added Representative DuWayne Johnsrud as a major sponsor. The bill language can be viewed at www.legis.state.wi.us/2001/data/SB-443.pdf.

Please ask members of the Senate Environmental Resources Committee and your local legislators to support SB468 – the fair allocation of the motorboat gas tax to support water programs. (Members of the Senate Environmental Resources Committee are noted in a story above.) SB468 is sponsored by Sen. Rob Cowles (R-Green Bay), Rep. DuWayne Johnsrud (R-Eastman), and Sen. Fred Risser (D-Madison) and has bi-partisan support in both the Senate and Assembly. It would adjust the formula used to estimate state tax revenues from fuel sold to motorboat operators.

SOURCE: WI Assn. of Lakes.

Ashley bill opposed at Capitol hearing

Just three people spoke or registered in favor of the Ashley Furniture Bill at the Feb. 21 Senate Environment Committee hearing in Madison. Meanwhile, about two dozen people opposed the bill, including former DNR Secretary George Meyer, who noted that the company’s planned use for the wetland — a truck staging area — could be accomplished by staging trucks near Ashley’s

BACKGROUND ON MOTORBOAT GAS TAX:

Currently the formula estimates annual, per boat consumption of 50 gallons. This formula was set in 1989 and has not kept pace with changing boat and motor types and associated fuel consumption. Average motorboat horsepower has gone from 55 hp in 1990 to 87.5 in 2000. And many of the smaller horsepower engines today are personal watercraft and other vessels with significantly higher fuel consumption than the open hull boats with small outboards in common use years ago. Boat sizes have also increased. Today, more than 40% of the boats registered in Wisconsin are between 18 and 39 feet in length. The result? Motorboat fuel taxes are being used for road improvement and maintenance.

SB468 would raise the estimated annual fuel consumption to 80 gallons annually, the amount proposed by Wisconsin DNR in the 2002-2003 biennial budget. This estimate is conservative when compared with other Midwestern states: a 1995 Ohio study estimated that boaters used 299 gallons per year, and a 1999 Minnesota study estimated over 100 gallons.

The 80 gallon estimate would generate \$6 million annually, which is only 0.7% of the motor fuel gas tax revenues in the state. This amount would convert less than two miles of a two-lane highway into four lanes.

Under SB468, the increased funding would be used for several priority water resources initiatives. The Wisconsin Association of Lakes regards increasing the motorboat gas tax allocation as a fair way to keep Wisconsin waters safe and enjoyable for all citizens and visitors, while protecting the economic value of these resources through lake, river, and wetlands grants to local entities; water safety; shoreland protection and restoration, wetlands protection and restoration; and nonpoint source runoff con-

manufacturing plant. A DNR employee who has worked with Ashley in Arcadia over the years also testified that Ashley had agreed a number of years ago to not pursue additional wetland fill request through the WDNR.

SOURCE: WSN.

Stream users reminded of “keep feet wet” law change

A law effective September 1, 2001, allows people to walk on any exposed shore area of a stream up to the ordinary high water mark without the permission of the landowner only to go around an obstruction. Such obstructions can include a trees or rocks, shallow water for boaters. or deep water for wading trout anglers. That law reverses a 1999 law that generally allowed people to walk on exposed shore area along streams below the ordinary high water mark without the landowner’s permission. The ordinary high water mark is the point on the bank or shore where the presence and action of surface water is so continuous as to leave a distinct physical mark either by erosion, destruction of terrestrial vegetation or other easily recognized characteristic. That mark is considered the boundary between public water held in trust by the state and the upland.

“For streams, it’s essentially back to, “keep your feet wet,” with one exception,” says Mike Lutz, a Department of Natural Resources attorney who works on law enforcement issues. “You can leave the water to go around an obstruction using the shortest possible route and remaining within the ordinary high water mark.” In addition, a member of the public may not enter the exposed shore area along a stream except from the water, from a point of public access on the stream, or with the permission of the landowner. For lakes, Lutz says, “it’s the same for the public as it’s always been, “keep your feet wet, period.”

Wisconsin’s Public Trust Doctrine, a body of law found in the State Constitution, state statutes, and court decisions, charges the State of Wisconsin with the responsibility of protecting public waters for all citizens’ use and enjoyment. The doctrine holds that Wisconsin’s public waters belong to everyone, and it protects the public’s right to fish, swim, boat, hunt and enjoy the natural scenic beauty of Wisconsin’s waterways. “We’re very fortunate that our public trust Doctrine recognizes a right of public use that’s is among the best in the country,” Lutz says, and adds that Wisconsin’s stream access laws are also among the most expansive in the country.

The 1999 law sought to broaden that access along streams, but concern from farmers and other property owners adjacent to streams led to the partial reversal of that law in 2001 through a budget provision introduced by Rep. DuWayne Johnsrud.

SOURCE: WDNR and WSN.

Bill to require E. coli testing at beaches introduced

AB-873 calling for E. coli testing has been introduced by Rep. John Richards. The bill requires testing for E. coli and posting of advisories at beaches on the shores of Lakes Michigan and Superior. The bill has been referred to the Public Health Committee.

Says Freese proposal bad for Mississippi River

A Sierra Club representative is critical of a measure being promoted by Rep. Steve Freese (Assembly Resolution 56) to approve the Army Corps to expand the locks and dams along the Mississippi River. Brett Hulsey says the proposal “would be a \$1 billion boondoggle that will pollute the river, threaten fishing and hunting, and waste tax dollars.”

Rep. Freese disagrees. “Pending the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers navigational study, I believe we will find that increasing lock and dam lengths on the river is in our best interest, both economically and environmentally.”

The resolution is in the Assembly Committee on Rules, which is expected to take it up before March 14. Co-sponsors include Reps. Gronemus, Loeffelholz, Musser, Hahn, and Sykora. Sen. Kevin Shibilski is having a companion Senate resolution introduced in the Senate. Contact the WSN for a copy of the resolution.

SOURCES: Brett Hulsey, Senior Midwest Representative, Sierra Club, 214 North Henry, Suite 203, Madison, WI 53703 (608) 257-4994 and Rep. Steve Freese.

GLAHNF grant deadline approaching

I am circulating an announcement about this spring’s “small grants program” (up to \$3,000) of the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund (GLAHNF). Please circulate to appropriate organizations within the Great Lakes Basin that may be eligible for these grants. WWA serves as the “Wisconsin Hub” for GLAHN, and we would be happy to discuss potential project proposals with any applicant. Note that the deadline is March 31.

SOURCE: Charlie Luthin, Director, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, (608) 250-9971.

Update on fish kill data collection in Wisconsin

I want to update everyone on our progress with the DNR and our effort to get better data collection and dissemination for fish kills and spill investigations. I’m encouraged by everyone’s interest, and I think such wide support will benefit us down the road. Groups contacted so far include the Izaak Walton League — Midwest Office, Izaak Walton League — Wisconsin Division, Midwest Environmental Advocates, the Wisconsin Stewardship Network, Sierra Club — John Muir Chapter, River Alliance of Wisconsin, Badger Fly Fishers, Wisconsin BASS Federation, and Northern Thunder.

Our issue was first broached with the DNR at the meeting some of you attended on Feb. 12 with Sec. Darrell Bazzell. I understand the issue was well received, but no commitment was made at that time. I tried to contact Secretary Bazzell today to set up a meeting, either with him or someone he designates as a contact person, to describe our concerns in detail and put a workable plan in place. Ideally, our meeting(s) would be during the second full week in March (3/11- 3/15). Please let me know your availability during that week and for the rest of March if that week does not work. If you have any questions or other ideas, please drop me a line.

SOURCE: Michael Hand Izaak Walton League, Midwest Office, 1619 Dayton Ave, Suite 202, St. Paul, MN 55104, (651) 649-1446, mhand@iwla.org.

Poll reveals Midwesterners' attitudes on environmental legislation

Lake, Snell, Perry and Associates have completed a new poll for the National Caucus of Environmental Legislatures. The poll was conducted in August 2001 and reached people in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The poll focus is on state level legislative action, so often includes questions about enacting laws. For a full report of their findings, visit: <http://www.ncel.net/midwestpoll.pdf>

SOURCE: Scott Cooper, Associate Professor of Biology, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse

ANNOUNCEMENTS

State's largest progressive conference March 16 in Milwaukee

Please consider making the trek to Milwaukee on March 16 for the Wisconsin Citizen Action Convention. This is the largest annual gathering of progressive individuals and organizations in Wisconsin. Over 400 attended our last convention. Contact us for more information.

Sam Gieryn, sgieryn@wi-citizenaction.org.

Fox Valley TU Cabin Fever Day March 16

Jason Borger and Rich Ostoff are the headliners at the Fox Valley Trout Unlimited "Cabin Fever Days" event March 16 at Waverly Beach Bar in Menasha. Contact Tom Deer for more information at (920) 725-6077.

Eco-JAM 2002 April 21 in Green Bay

This years theme is "Embrace a Diverse Planet!" We will celebrate Earth Day with music and dance of many nations, food, children's activities, local grassroots organization booths on preservation, and conservation ideas for the whole family! Join us April 21 from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the

historic West Theater, Broadway St., Green Bay. For more information: cfossen@dep-ere.k12.wi.us.

Prairie enthusiast conference March 8-9

Just a reminder that the Annual Prairie Enthusiasts Banquet and Conference will be held on the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse campus on March 8 and 9. Additional information can be obtained by going to www.theprairieenthusiasts.com and click on conference.

Nature writing workshop March 9

I will be teaching a half-day nature writing workshop at Canterbury Books in Madison on Saturday, March 9. If you think that any of your members might be interested in attending such a workshop, please do have them call or e-mail me for more info.

SOURCE: Carol LaChapelle, madmoon55@hotmail.com.

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.

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