



WSNetwork News

March 15, 2002

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

Click to jump to news on these WSN priority issues:

- [Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line](#)
- [DNR Independence and PIO Restoration Combined!](#)
- [Factory Farming](#)
- [Forest Fragmentation New!](#)
- [Groundwater Protection](#)
- [Mercury Reduction](#)
- [Metallic Mining](#)
- [Shoreland/Wetland Protection](#)

WSN names two new Hub coordinators for Western and Southeastern WI.

Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line

SOUL moving on energy concerns

SOUL is moving forward on several issues in regards to responsible energy usage. We currently are serving on an Advisory Committee that will rewrite PSC rules to making it easier for small-scale distributed generation to become a part of the grid. Encouraging small generational additions would make the grid more friendly to customers who wish to provide not only their own energy, but to take any extra they do not use, and return it to the grid.

Many small generators could provide an alternative to larger scale generational needs. Also, the lights would be on in certain areas when the larger grid is compromised due to weather or other unforeseen events. All of this leaves a smaller footprint on our environment for our energy needs.

We will additionally be attending the 40th Annual Rural Energy Conference. A "round table" discussion will guide this group in its direction for Rural Energy Issues, the most important of these being Stray Voltage Issues and Rural Power Quality. It is our hope that a format for true dialog between the frustrated citizens and farmers impacted by stray

Statewide Senate budget hearings to be held next week

Concerned about cuts to the Stewardship Fund and other natural resources programs? The Senate 2001-2003 Biennial Budget Committee, chaired by Sen. Jauch, has scheduled five public hearings on the budget reform bill as recommended by the Joint Finance Committee and the Assembly. The hearings are:

- **10 a.m., Tuesday, March 19** — UW-Superior. Kathryn Ohman Theatre, McCaskill Hall, Belknap Street and Catlin Ave., Superior.
- **10 a.m., Wednesday, March 20** — UW-Eau Claire. Davies Center Ojibwa Room, 105 Garfield Ave., Eau Claire.
- **10 a.m., Thursday, March 21** — UW-Green Bay. Details forthcoming.
- **1 p.m., Monday, March 25** — UW-Milwaukee. Student Union Fireside Lounge, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd., Milwaukee.
- **10 a.m., Tuesday, March 26** — UW-Madison. Details forthcoming.

voltage, regulators, legislators, and utilities can begin. These are powerful issues that need to be addressed for not only our physical health, but for the health of the rural economy.

Arrowhead-Weston still awaits its appeal. The entire record, including all exhibits has been transferred to the Marathon County Court. We still await a hearing date.

SOURCE: Linda Ceylor, SOUL.

Douglas County execs meet to review new Arrowhead route

The Superior *Daily Telegram* reported on March 13 that Douglas County Executive Committee members met in closed session this week to consider Minnesota Power's new route for the Arrowhead-Weston transmission line. Two Douglas County committees last month refused to allow the line onto county-owned property. "The revised route comes into Wisconsin through the Village of Oliver then turns east," the paper reported. "It continues south to cross just north of the Upper St. Croix Lake into Washburn County. Besides Douglas and Washburn, the line crosses through Rusk, Clark, Marathon, Taylor counties."

New Thunder Bay transmission line announced

While [the just-announced Manitoba-to-Thunder Bay, ON, transmission line] is not specifically Arrowhead-Weston, this comes from the expansion of Manitoba Hydro. I have seen quite a few letters to the editor and op-ed pieces discussing Manitoba Hydro and other Canadian governmental utilities that may merge under the umbrella and operation of Manitoba Hydro. Allete (Minnesota Power) has had a marketing agreement with Manitoba Hydro for more than three years. This line sounds like another greater play for Hydro to move power to the US disregarding an environmental justice or enforcement of the Northern Flood Agreement.

I would not be surprised to see some of this power end up on Arrowhead-Weston, but then they do have to build it first. Even the article admits that's a problem for the utility.

SOURCE: Linda Ceylor, SOUL.

Feingold surveying residents on energy questions

Please take a moment to fill out this simple survey, which Senator Feingold is offering as an easy way to provide him input to him on various energy questions at www.senate.gov/~feingold/issuearea/forum_energy.html.

DNR Independence and PIO Restoration

Factory Farming

MEA develops comments on egg laying factory

I wanted to pass along to you all some comments I have drafted on a WPDES permit for a large egg laying factory in southeast Wisconsin. It looks like the Clean Water Act is no longer the only avenue for controlling the impacts of mega livestock factories in Wisconsin. The comments argue that DNR-regulated mega livestock factories are subject to hazardous waste reporting requirements under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA). Both of these reporting requirements are enforceable by citizens like you.

The usefulness of the reporting requirement is that we can gather much-needed data on emissions of toxic chemicals (ammonia, VOCs, and hydrogen sulfide) from confinement facilities. The comments also present an argument that mega-livestock factories are subject to state and federal Clean Air Act requirements as well.

[Contact MEA for a copy of the comments being referred to.]

SOURCE: Andrew C. Hanson, Attorney, Midwest Environmental Advocates, 22 E. Mifflin St. Suite 301, Madison, WI 53703 (608) 251-5047, www.midwest-e-advocates.org.

Environmentally friendly livestock info available

What follows is some information about two new, free resources about environmentally friendly livestock systems available in print or on line (in both .html and .pdf) from USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN). *Profitable Poultry* and *Profitable Pork* are each 16-page informational bulletins featuring a mix of scientific research and farmer experience in an easy-to-read format. Both address manure management, soil-building and water quality. See <http://www.sare.org/bulletin/poultry/> and <http://www.sare.org/bulletin/hogs/>.

SOURCE: WDNR "Basin Briefs," 2-27-02

WED video hits nerve with DATCP Board

Also from the Feb. 20 edition of *The Country Today*, the DATCP Board was "peevied," "extremely upset," and very unhappy and insulted after being shown a video, *Muddy Waters: Are Wisconsin Waters Singing the Blues?* from Wisconsin's Environmental Decade. The video was sent to board members before their unanimous vote on ATCP 50. Bureau Director Al Shea said some numbers

cited in the video were “skewed.” DATCP Board Member John Malchine said to Terrell, “We very seldom see your group attack the sewer district of Milwaukee for dumping a billion gallons of raw sewage into Lake Michigan, yet if one farmer pollutes a stream...I wish your group would also recognize the fact that the ag community has done more than any group in this country’s history to clean up its act when it comes to herbicides, pesticides, erosion control, minimum tillage, no-till tillage, and all of the things we use with the rotations to minimize the use of chemicals as much as possible, and yet we’re always the ones catching the flak.”

SOURCE: WDNR “Basin Briefs,” 2-27-02

Alabama law would stifle water, noise suits

From the Birmingham (AL) *News*: Alabama environmentalists are upset at proposed legislation that they say would limit the ability of people living near large hog farming operations to sue over water and other nuisances as long as the farms are operating within state and federal guidelines. Under the provisions of the proposed Family Farm Preservation Act, if someone takes a farmer to court and loses, the plaintiff has to pay the farmer’s legal fees. Opponents claim the bill is designed to help large corporate farming operations and not the average family farmer. Similar legislation was approved by the Alabama House last year but died in a state Senate committee. More at http://www.al.com/news/birminghamnews/index.ssf?/xml/story.ssf/html_standard.xml?/base/news/10142865392045936.xml.

SOURCE: WDNR “Basin Briefs,” 2-27-02.

Iowa groups to take on large-scale farming operations over run-off

From the March 10 Des Moines (IA) *Register*: Environmental groups in Iowa are poised to take on large-scale farming operations over runoff and other environmental concerns. And observers believe the conflict will be on the scale of the fights that occurred in the Pacific Northwest over the spotted owl and the struggle that has pitted the crab industry against chicken farmers in Maryland. For the first time in decades, Iowa lawmakers are authoring and debating legislation that limit where hog confinements can be built, limit where manure can be spread, and adopt other measures that prevent fish kills and other unwanted by-products from the state’s largest-in-the-nation hog industry. See <http://desmoinesregister.com/news/stories/c4780934/17573215.html>.

SOURCE: WDNR “Basin Briefs,” 3-13-02.

Forest Fragmentation

Minnesota ignores warnings on forest ATV damage

The Minneapolis *Star Tribune* on Feb 25 reported that the Minnesota DNR “dismissed warnings from its scientists about potential environmental damage from a planned network of more than

1,500 miles of motorized recreational trails on state forest land....” The warnings came from internal DNR documents, memos and e-mails. In a plan made public last summer, the DNR downplayed concerns that all-terrain vehicles, off-road motorcycles and trucks pose a threat of increased erosion and other environmental degradation.

In January, a Cass County district judge ordered the DNR to study environmental issues. According to the story, “The DNR has decided to appeal the order, saying such studies can be done later if needed. Yet the boom in ATV use is causing rutting, wetlands damage and plant destruction in state and county forests. State law allows the vehicles to be driven almost anywhere in 46 of Minnesota’s 58 state forests, creating haphazard trails through woods and wetlands, and on old logging trails and forest corridors.”

SOURCE: Minneapolis *Star Tribune*.

Virginia open space protection bill sent to Governor

Last week, on a 91-7 vote the Virginia house sent HB 346 to the Governor. The bill provides that a locality may provide in its zoning or subdivision ordinance standards, conditions and criteria for clustering of single-family dwellings and the preservation of open space developments.

SOURCE: Jud Lounsbury, jud@serconline.org.

Groundwater Protection

DOT relents over Hwy. 164 project’s groundwater concerns

Congratulations, you did it! Persistent citizen pressure on the Wisconsin DOT and your legislators has paid off! Yesterday, we received word from our group’s state-certified soil and water scientist, Dr. John Thresher, that the DOT will immediately install groundwater monitoring wells along Highway 164 in Ackerville (near the proposed bridge construction zone) and then conduct tests for trichloroethylene (TCE) and arsenic contamination which has plagued this area for many years and will be made worse if DOT drives pilings into this pollution as part of its bridge project.

SOURCE: Jeffrey M. Gonyo, jmgonyo@execpc.com.

Rain garden brochure published

The brochure *Rain Gardens: A household way to improve water quality in your community* is now available. Copies of the colorful publication (DNR WT 731-2002), developed by the DNR and UW-Extension, are available from Rick House, at (608) 246-5343.

SOURCE: WDNR “Basin Briefs,” 2-27-02

March 22 water workshop at Chicago's Kent College

The Canadian Consulate General in Chicago is working with Chicago-Kent College of Law to put together program on water law that would be relevant to the discussions currently underway in the Council of Great Lakes Governors to develop a 'standard' to assess Great Lakes water removal proposals (both in-basin and out-of-basin).

We have assembled a stellar group of panelists for the day-long March 22 event. It is intended to be a workshop/roundtable format with an emphasis on discussion and exchanges of views among policy makers and influencers. The keynote address will be by Mr. Tom Baldini, the U.S. Chair of the International Joint Commission. We look forward to a very lively and stimulating discussion of the issues on March 22nd at Chicago-Kent College of Law. See <https://applications.kent-law.edu/ilpo/water.asp> for more information.

Sources on groundwater nitrate health effects listed

Because we received so many inquires in response to our posting on nitrates, I'm posting a follow-up with several documents you can access on the web. For interpretation or if you have additional technical questions, one of our best resources have been toxicologists at our state department of public health. REMINDER: As with any drinking water contaminant, applicable health standards are routinely established assuming exposure to a SINGLE contaminant in specific media. Where multiple contaminants are present in drinking water supplies, for example, health standards for any single contaminant generally do NOT apply as synergistic, additive, and other risk factors come into play.

- **Blue Babies and Nitrate-Contaminated Well Water** — www.uwsp.edu/water/portage/undrstnd/blbaby.htm
- **Nitrate in Drinking Water Associated with Increased Risk for Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma** — http://cis.nci.nih.gov/fact/3_55.htm
- **Nitrate and Health** — <http://www.cheec.uiowa.edu/nitrate/health.html#Risks>.

SOURCE: Laura Olah, Executive Director Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger E12629 Weigand's Bay, South Merrimac, WI 53561 (608) 643-3124.

Dells students told to 86 the Perrier

The New Haven town board refused on March 7 to donate \$300 to a group of Wisconsin Dells High School students starting a school store unless they promised not to sell Perrier products. They were asked to come back when they had such a guarantee in hand.

SOURCE: news story.

Mercury Reduction

State Senate passes Plouff-Robson mercury thermometer ban bill

The Wisconsin State Senate passed legislation banning the sale and distribution of mercury thermometers on March 12. The bill was introduced by State Senator Judy Robson (D-Beloit) and State Representative Joe Plouff (D-Menomonie). The measure, modeled after Minnesota law, prohibits the sale and distribution of most thermometers containing mercury. An estimated 15 percent of mercury air emissions occur from the breakage of mercury thermometers. Breakage or improper disposal of thermometers also contributes to mercury's accumulation in our water. Once in the water, the element is transformed into a neurotoxin and works its way up the food chain and into the fish we eat. The Robson-Plouff bill now moves to the Assembly for consideration.

SOURCE: Reps. Plouff and Robson.

Writer considers mercury thermometer bill's near-term fate

It appears doubtful that the Assembly will take [the Plouff-Robson mercury bill] up, although the measure could be put into the Budget Repair Bill. If it does not pass both houses, the measure will die, but it is expected to be introduced early in the next session of the Legislature, which begins in January, 2003. A link to the bill is at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/2001/data/SB435hst.html>.

SOURCE: John Reindl, Dane County.

Metallic Mining

State Assembly inaction kills both mining bills

The Assembly has adjourned the regular session only meet in special session March 14 to work on budget issues. This means that the mining bills are basically dead for this session. There remains a very small, outside chance of getting them dealt with during the special session, but it is very unlikely that even if one or more comes up that they would be voted on.

We gave it a great run and made a lot of progress. Remember that the Moratorium Law fight stretched over two sessions as well. This movement has always been much more than a legislative effort; it has also been an educational campaign. We are still working on many different fronts.

SOURCE: Dave Blouin, Mining Impact Coalition, burroak15@aol.com.

“Pulling motions” on mining bills fail in Assembly

Assembly Rep. Spencer Black attempted a “pulling motion” March 7 on the bills to ban cyanide in mining and end special treatment for the mining industry. Pulling motions are attempts to bypass committees that have blocked legislation (as the Assembly Environment Committee has done with both bills), and bring the bills directly to the floor on a majority vote. They are essentially “votes to have a vote” and are politically unpopular because they weaken the power of committee chairs.

Cyanide Pulling Motion Vote — The motion to pull the cyanide bill from the Committee to the floor failed by a vote of 42 yes-56 no. All Republicans present (except Hundertmark) voted no, as did Democrats Gronemus and Plale.

No Special Treatment Pulling Motion Vote — The motion to pull the “no special treatment” bill from the Committee to the floor failed by a vote of 40 yes-59 no. All Republicans present voted no, as did Democrats Gronemus, Plale, and Riley. Rep. McCormick was absent from the cyanide bill vote for health reasons.

Remember, at least eight Republicans had either signed onto the “no special treatment” bill, or supported a committee vote to bring it to the floor (including Krawczyk, Kaufert, Underheim, Bies, Petrowski, Hahn, Lippert, and others). It was clear that if the bill had passed Rep. Kedzie’s Committee, it would have passed on the floor. But Kedzie never called a Committee vote, and the same Republicans did not vote for the pulling motion. This is not to say these Republicans would not continue to support our mining bills moving through regular channels.

SOURCE: WI Campaign to Ban Cyanide in Mining, mtn@igc.org.

Over 100 attend Capitol mining rally

The Capitol Rally and Citizens’ Lobby Day for the two mining bills went very well today, March 5, 2002. About 100 people attended the weekday rally, from all around the state. The rally was at the same time as a nearby “concealed weapons” rally, and a hazardous materials display. Our rally was covered by Madison Channel 3 and Wausau Channel 9. The *Wisconsin State Journal*, *Capital Times*, and WPR had covered the Monday’s press conference.

The Mole Lake Drum opened with a drum song. George Rock of the Wolf Watershed Educational project emceed, and Dave Blouin of the Mining Impact Coalition explained the status of SB-160 (to ban cyanide in mining) and SB-271 (to end special treatment for the mining industry), still stuck in the Assembly Environment Committee. Caryl Terrell of the Sierra Club read a letter from the four Democratic gubernatorial candidates favoring the two bills (below), indicating that mining will be an issue in the upcoming election (the Libertarian and Green candidates have also been critical of the Crandon mine).

Rep. Spencer Black, who sponsored the Assembly version of the cyanide bill, spoke of plans to force an Assembly floor vote on both bills, no matter what happens in the Committee. Each of the

constituencies involved in the mining alliance was represented. Ken Fish spoke as director of the Menominee Treaty Rights and Mining Impacts Office. Herb Buettner, president of Wolf River Chapter of Trout Unlimited, and Todd Hanson of Wisconsin Trout Unlimited and the Wisconsin Stewardship Network represented sportfishers. For labor, Gary Kandziora of United Steelworkers of America Local 1114 in Milwaukee (the P&H Harnsichfeger local) spoke about unsuccessful company efforts to influence workers for the mine, and Gerry Gunderson and Bob Schmitz of the Committee of Labor Against Sulfide Pollution (CLASP) spoke of all the labor councils that have passed resolutions for a cyanide ban in mining. Students from UW-Stevens Point did a round of environmental cheerleading, and performed a beautiful skit about protecting the Wolf River from greed. Other students attended from UW-La Crosse, Beloit College, UW-Madison, and elsewhere.

The rally closed with a prayer from Robert Van Zile, from Mole Lake, and a Drum Song. Then everyone went into the Capitol and donned orange "Cyanide" t-shirts to lobby legislators. Throughout the day, it became clear just how heavy an impact our movement has had on the Legislature. A number of Reps. said that they received more calls about mining than any other issue; thousands of calls have gone in to the Capitol on this issue.

A number of Republicans and Democrats indicated they would vote with us if a bill was brought to the Assembly floor for a vote, and it was clear that some Republicans were not happy with their leadership's direction on the issue. At least a few have been looking at our websites for information. But Assembly Environment Committee Chairman Neal Kedzie (who has gotten so many calls that his staff has stopped directly answering phones) made it clear he is not interested in advancing the bills.

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

Governor receives letter on mining bills from coalition

Dozens of officials representing Wisconsin environmental, conservation, and sporting groups sent Governor Scott McCallum a letter of concern March 8. The text of the letter is attached to the end of this newsletter.

Corps releases 'Final Scoping Document' for Crandon Mine

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has just released the Final Scoping Document related to the proposed hardrock mine near Crandon, WI. The report is dated January, 2002. The draft scoping document was released during Spring of 2001, and the Corps reported 19 public comments were submitted. The scoping document provides a blueprint for the preparation of the federal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The document also provides insights regarding how the Corps proposes to handle many of the issues stemming from this project proposal in their environmental analysis. It is important to note that the federal EIS is separate but related to the state EIS. The

link to the Final Scoping Document for the proposed Crandon Mine is provided at www.mvp.usace.army.mil/project_info/crandon.

SOURCE: John Koss, jnkoss@newnorth.net.

Shoreland/Wetlands

Senate committee sends runoff rules back to DNR Board

The Senate Committee on Environmental Resources has asked the Natural Resources Board to revisit concerns expressed by environmentalists and others on streamside buffer strips and various wetland provisions. Even though the nonpoint rules do not require approval by the entire Legislature, the Senate committee was within its rights to ask for changes. Earlier the DNR removed mandatory buffers from the rule, saying it would jeopardize more than \$200 million in federal money from the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

Groups testify against Ashley exemption bill

We are still trying to KILL the proposed “Ashley Wetland Exemption” bill in the Legislature (AB 580/SB 290). There was a well-attended hearing on SB 290 in the Senate Environment Committee on February 21. At least 15 individuals testified AGAINST, whereas only one (the lobbyist from Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce) testified IN FAVOR (other than the two authors of the bill, Representative Barb Gronemus and Senator Rod Moen). Ashley representatives were conspicuously ABSENT from the hearing! The Environment Committee did not vote on the bill, and there is no future for SB 290 at this time.

Our fear is that the Ashley exemption will resurface in one of two ways — either AB 580 (the companion bill that already passed in the Assembly) will come to the Senate Floor next week (last week of Session) for a hasty vote, or worse, the exemption will be reinserted as an amendment to the BUDGET REPAIR BILL that is flying through both houses of the Legislature! The latter scenario would be a repeat of the budget fiasco of 1999-2001. Recall that Wisconsin Wetlands Assn. and four other statewide organizations were plaintiffs on a lawsuit over this exemption language, and we WON on the grounds of the exemption being unconstitutional. Were this exemption to AGAIN be inserted into the budget bill, it would speak to the defiant arrogance of the legislators that are pushing this. This would, sadly, end up in the courts once again, a costly and timely endeavor, to say the least.

ACTION NEEDED: Contact YOUR OWN Senator to tell him or her to vote against AB 580, and contact ALL legislators (Assembly and Senate) to discourage the inclusion of the Ashley exemption in the Budget Bill. Furthermore, you may wish to contact the following key Senators and the Governor.

SOURCE: Charlie Luthin, Wisconsin Wetlands Assn.

Shibilski bill urges funding for Mississippi locks

Sen. Kevin Shibilski has introduced SR-15 which urges authorization of funding for modernization of the lock and dam system on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers Inland Waterways Transportation System.

Minnesota looks to ban excess phosphorus, support fish habitat

From the March 4 Duluth (MN) *News Tribune*: A group of bills moving through the Minnesota Legislature would, among other provisions, prohibit the use of phosphorus-based lawn fertilizers, provide money to purchase critical fish habitat, and would allow some of the monitoring data collected by environmental groups to be incorporated into the databases maintained by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. More at <http://www.duluthsuperior.com/mld/duluthtribune/2787745.htm>.

SOURCE: WDNR "Basin Briefs," 3-6-02.

Ikes making progress on WI fish kill data collection

I wanted to update you on our work with the WDNR to improve the DNR's collection and dissemination of fish kill, manure spill, and pollution discharge investigation data. I have spoken with Sec. Darrell Bazzell as well as Mike Staggs from Fisheries and Watershed Director Al Shea.

The good news is Sec. Bazzell said he is very interested our work and is supportive of the meeting we are proposing. In fact, all of the DNR staff I have spoken to realize that the information we would like to see would be very valuable. However, there is also reluctance to devote staff time and resources given the state's fiscal situation. Citing budget cuts in his division, Al Shea refused to sit down with us and will instruct his staff not to meet with us.

I am confident that, given Sec. Bazzell's interest, we can achieve our goals even within the constraints of a tightening budget. An important part of the meeting would be to describe how we are willing to partner with the DNR to see this information made available. As such, I have composed a letter to Sec. Bazzell requesting a meeting with him and the important players at the DNR. He knows that this letter is coming, and it is simply a formal record of our intentions. Please review this letter and lend your support by becoming a signatory group. If you have any questions or comments about the letter, please drop me a line as soon as possible. Thanks for your continued patience as we jump through all the hoops! I look forward to hearing from you about the letter and scheduling a meeting soon.

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

\$3.9 million awarded to municipalities to provide flood control

A total of \$3.9 million in grants is being awarded to 14 Wisconsin cities, villages, towns, and metropolitan sewerage districts to help them mitigate flood damages to Wisconsin homes, businesses

and public facilities. The Municipal Flood Control Grant Program, which was signed into law in 1999, provides 70 percent cost-sharing grants to acquire flood-prone land and structures, flood-proof structures, restore the beneficial functions of water bodies, purchase land and easements for flood storage, construct flood control facilities, and map flood hazard areas. Several of the projects will be funded jointly by the state and the federal Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, thereby leveraging the dollars available through each program to provide greater benefits to flood-stricken communities throughout Wisconsin.

SOURCE: WDNR.

EQIP environmental costshare sign-up announced

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service has announced the statewide sign-up period for the 2002 Environmental Quality Incentives Program will open March 18 and continue through April 19 at all USDA Service Centers in Wisconsin. The program, called EQIP, provides cost sharing to help farmers with conservation practices.

Pat Leavenworth, State Conservationist for NRCS in Wisconsin, announced that farmers can apply for costsharing for several types of conservation practices. Practices eligible for cost-sharing during this sign-up are: nutrient management, residue management, prescribed grazing, and well decommissioning. This year, the \$1,000 limit for well decommissioning has been eliminated.

SOURCE: Renae Anderson, renae.anderson@wi.usda.gov.

CREP fact sheet available

[This River Alliance has] a fact sheet on the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. Eligible counties can sign up through the end of this month. Has your county signed up? The fact sheet includes information on the following questions:

- What is CREP and why is it important to Wisconsin's waters and farmland?
- Who is eligible to receive CREP funds?
- What is the status of CREP?

SOURCE: Steph Adams, Clean Water Coalition Coordinator, River Alliance of Wisconsin

Spring hearings include array of trout water questions

Anglers can vote on a proposal to simplify statewide regulations for trout fishing on Wisconsin's inland waters — and weigh in on specific rule changes on their favorite streams — during the April 8 Spring Fish & Wildlife Hearings. The statewide question on inland trout regulations is the first fisheries question listed and it's also one of the most important. The proposal represents the

first major changes since 1990 to a system with five categories of rules to better match bag and size limits to different waters and the different fishing experiences anglers want.

SOURCE: WDNR.

Deadline extended for comments on stream reclassifications

The deadline for written comments on proposed revisions to rules relating to stream reclassification will be extended through May 1, 2002. The extension responds to a request to extend the original March 15 deadline to allow additional time to review the changes to Chapters NR 102, NR 104, and NR 106 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code related to stream classifications.

DNR categorizes waterbodies according to the kinds of fish and other aquatic life they are capable of supporting if controllable impacts to water quality are managed. The categories are used to calculate the levels of pollutants municipal and industrial wastewater treatment plants are allowed to discharge into that waterbody. Written comments on the proposed rule changes must be post-marked by May 1, 2002 to be considered as part of the formal record for this rulemaking effort. All comments should be addressed to Laura Bub-WT/2, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921. Faxed copies of comments can be sent to Laura Bub at (608) 267-2800.

SOURCE: WDNR.

Manitowoc County recorded 17 fish kills over 15 years

Over the past 15 years, Manitowoc County has dealt with at least 17 reported incidents of animal waste products (mainly liquid manure) causing fish kills in county waters, and better management practices will do more to prevent pollution of streams and rivers from farm runoff than will the new runoff rules, according to Tom Warm director of Manitowoc County's Soil and Water Conservation Department. His comments were reported in a March 10 article in the Manitowoc *Herald Times*. "I don't think anyone has willfully or criminally caused a runoff," Ward said. "There have been no repeat instances, but we just can't afford everyone the opportunity to do it once. Our challenge is to get farmers to take it seriously."

SOURCE: 3-13-02 WDNR "Basin Briefs."

Report cites gull droppings as cause of Milwaukee beach closings

From the St. Paul (MN) *Pioneer Press*: Severe pollution that closed South Shore Beach in Milwaukee last year was caused by seagull droppings, according to a report from the Southeast Wisconsin Beach Task Force. Bacteria concentration in gull droppings is nearly 100 percent e. coli and is 1,000 times greater than for goose droppings, according to Sandra McLellan, a University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee researcher and member of the task force. In addition to getting rid of the gulls, the task force report also suggests reducing direct storm water flows into the lake to prevent

animal waste from washing into the lake at the beach's paved boat ramp. See The *Pioneer Press* story at <http://www.twincities.com/mld/pioneerpress/2002/03/10/living/community/states/wisconsin/2828204.htm>. A more extensive article appeared in the March 7 *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* at <http://www.jsonline.com/news/metro/mar02/25874.asp>.

SOURCE: 3-13-02 WDNR "Basin Briefs."

Kedzie named Builders' Association 'Rep of the Year'

The Wisconsin Builders Association has named State Representative Neal Kedzie (R-Elkhorn) its 2002 Legislator of the Year. Kedzie received the 'Legislator of the Year' and 'Friend of Housing' for his work on two high-profile issues relating to the housing industry and environment over the last legislative session: wetland mitigation and isolated wetlands.

SOURCE: Rep. Kedzie's office.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chautauqua planning meeting March 16

The next organizing meeting for the mid-August Chautauqua being organized by Concerned Citizens of Newport (CCN) and others will be March 16 at the Country Kitchen in Wisconsin Dells at 10:00 a.m. The working theme of the event is returning government to the people — "we the REAL people."

SOURCE: Hiroshi Kanno, CCN.

Natural building gathering March 23-24 in Madison

Sponsored by Helping Hands, this first annual event is for those who are completely new to the ideas of natural building as well as those with a wide variety of knowledge and experience. The focus will be lower-impact construction methods and materials — those that require less processing, embody less energy are local and recycled when possible. For further details, instructions, directions, and registration, see <http://www.sustaindane.org/helpinghands/> or Linda Farmer at clearned@bminet.com or (608) 437-7244.

WSN names new Western and Southeastern Wisconsin Hub coordinators

The Wisconsin Stewardship Network has named two new Hub coordinators. Joining the WSN as Western Wisconsin Hub Coordinator is **Kate Hale** of Eau Claire, while **Monique DiGiorgio** is the new Southeastern Wisconsin Hub Coordinator in Wauwatosa. Hub coordinators serve as local points of contact for WSN groups and the public. They also work on the network's slate of state-wide priority issues, especially as those issues affect their local area. Feel free to contact either Kate or Monique with your natural resources questions. If they cannot help you, they will find someone who can — that's what networking is all about, after all!.

Kate Hale Western WI Hub Coordinator

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Kate Hale is a UW-Eau Claire instructor and a member of Northern Thunder. Kate has lived in Eau Claire and taught at UW-EC since 1987. She has taught environmental issues in first-year composition classes since the summer of 1997, and this has gradually evolved to a specific focus on Great Lakes area environmental issues. She is currently involved in course development to provide writing and literature courses to fit with Environmental Science and other related minors/majors.

A member of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE), Kate serves as one of five faculty directors of the Confluence Center for Chippewa River Studies at UW-EC, which aims at fostering interdisciplinary activities and research as well as linking to the community.

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Monique DiGiorgio has a B.S in biology from the University of Notre Dame. She conducted field work for the past seven years in ornithology and behavioral ecology in southern California, the Big Island of Hawaii and Australia.

As Executive Assistant with the Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers, Monique helped develop the Milwaukee River Watershed Corridor Plan, a comprehensive watershed outreach effort to educate watershed inhabitants about the SEWRPC Regional Natural Areas Plan (a valuable regional planning tool for Southeastern Wisconsin), and the importance of natural corridors or greenways and their relationship to water quality and sound land use.

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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March 8, 2002

Governor Scott McCallum
115 East, State Capitol
Madison WI 53702

Dear Governor McCallum:

During your State of the State address, you stated:

“We accomplished much under this dome last year, primarily by putting political differences aside and working together for the common good. Let me take a moment to highlight a few of these accomplishments:”

“I was pleased to have been able to bring together key legislators, the business community, sportsmen, sportswomen and environmental groups to craft a consensus and pass a law to protect our wetlands and our environment. It is the first of its kind in the nation.”

We are writing to ask that you meet with Assembly leaders as soon as possible to encourage passage of two bills that are needed to protect Wisconsin’s environment from unsafe mining practices.

Your efforts to bring together legislative leaders and lead bi-partisan efforts to pass the wetlands protection bill and the prescription drug benefit program are appreciated and we hope that you might use the same effort to help pass the mining reform laws.

Senate Bill 160 would ban the use of cyanide in Wisconsin mining. An Australian company, BHP Billiton, wants to truck up to 20 tons of cyanide per month to the proposed Crandon mine at the headwaters of the Wolf River. Less toxic alternatives to cyanide are being used in Canada to process the same metals that will be processed in Crandon. Those same alternatives should be used here.

We must not allow a foreign company to jeopardize the pristine habitats and water of Northern Wisconsin with huge amounts of cyanide and its wastes. The risks from on-site spills, trucking accidents and intentional targeting of hazardous materials demand that we ban the use of such massive amounts of this unneeded poison. We must insist that the company use newer and safer technology.

Just as importantly, we must close current loopholes in our mining laws. AB 547 and SB 271 would eliminate loopholes in mining laws and require that mines meet environmental standards that are at least as strict as other industries. The bills would eliminate the current exemption for mining waste from our hazardous waste laws. If mining waste tests as hazardous, it must be treated and disposed of like any other hazardous waste under the bills. Both bills would also eliminate another loophole to ensure that the mine can meet state groundwater standards before being granted a permit.

Mining often takes place in the most pristine environments in our state. But metallic mining accounts for more than half the toxic releases in the country, according to the EPA. And the owner of the proposed Crandon mine has a history of environmental problems, including the 1997 collapse of its mining waste facility in Arizona, a disaster that led to the release of more than 300,000 cubic yards of mining waste into Pinto Creek. Imagine that type of disaster occurring at the headwaters of the Wolf River.

That's why we must ensure that our mining laws are as tough as possible. Wisconsin must demand that the mining company use state of the art technology. We cannot afford to take unneeded risks that we may regret for generations to come.

Neither bill kills mining in Wisconsin. There are alternatives to cyanide. And technologies are available to better protect our water – such as double liners in waste facilities – not the single liner proposed by BHP Billiton. Inexcusably, the Australian company has been unwilling to use these better alternatives. As a result, the governor and the Legislature must pass these bills to protect our environment.

Both bills have passed the Senate. Both bills have the overwhelming support of Wisconsin citizens. Both bills will pass the Assembly if scheduled for a vote. But we need your leadership to help convince Assembly leaders to schedule these bills for a vote.

We appreciate your leadership in protecting Wisconsin's wetlands. We ask you to continue that fight and to protect the wetlands, the lakes, the rivers and the groundwater of Northern Wisconsin. Please urge the Assembly to vote on these bills before the regular session ends next week. For follow up, please contact Caryl Terrell 256-0565.

Sincerely,

/s/

Len and Judy Pubanz
Protect Our Wolf River (POWR)
Shawano, WI

/s/

Phil Emmling, V.P. of Conservation
WI Council of Federation of Fly Fishers
Madison, WI

/s/

Caryl Terrell, Legislative Director
Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter
Madison, WI

/s/

Claire Schmidt, Mining Organizer
Wisconsin's Environmental Decade
Madison, WI

/s/

Al Gedicks
Wisconsin Resources Protection Council
La Crosse, WI

/s/

Lisa Waukau, Chairperson
Menominee Indian Tribe of WI
Keshena, WI

/s/

Todd Ambs, Executive Director
River Alliance of Wisconsin
Madison, WI

/s/

Todd Hansen, State Coordinator
Wisconsin Stewardship Network
Madison, WI

/s/

Beverly Speer, Director
League of Women Voters of WI
Madison, WI

/s/

Chuck Sleeter, Chairman
Town of Nashville
Pickerel, WI

/s/

Bob Schmitz
Wolf River Watershed Alliance
Green Bay, WI

/s/

George Rock
Wolf Watershed Educational Project
White Lake, WI

/s/

Charlotte Dawn
Sokaogon Chippewa Community
Environmental Dept.
Crandon, WI

/s/

Tom Soles
Walleyes For Tomorrow
Fond du Lac, WI

/s/

Dave Blouin, Coordinator
Mining Impact Coalition of WI
Madison, WI

/s/

Sandy Lyon
Anishinaabe Nijjii,
Protect the Earth,
Save Our Unique Lands (SOUL)-
Stone Lake Chapter
Springbrook, WI

/s/

Roscoe Churchill
Rusk County Citizen Action Group
Ladysmith, WI

/s/

Zoltan Grossman & Debi McNutt
Midwest Treaty Network
Madison, WI

/s/

Herb Buettner, Chairman
Trout Unlimited – Wolf River Chapter
White Lake, WI

/s/

Sonny Wreczycki
Rolling Stone Lake P & R. District
Pickerel, WI

/s/

Jim Wise
Environmentally Concerned Citizens of the
Lakeland Area (ECCOLA)
Minocqua, WI

/s/

Don Gilbert, Secretary
Musky Club Alliance of WI
Fond du Lac, WI

/s/

Dana Churness
UW-Stevens Point Progressive Action Org.
Stevens Point, WI

/s/

Becky Katers, Executive Director
Curt Andersen, Vice President
Clean Water Action Council of N.E. WI
Green Bay, WI