



WSNetwork News

April 15, 2004

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

Click on these WSN priority issue section links or scan the Acrobat bookmarks on the left:

- [Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line](#)
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- [Forest & Habitat Fragmentation](#)
- [Shoreland Zoning](#)
- NEW** • [Water Regulation and Protection](#)

Former Public Intervenor speak for PIO's return as WSN/ MEA release new report today.



Arrowhead-Weston Line

WSN issue chair: Logan Edinger, Save Our Unique Lands, edinger@centurytel.net

ATC proposes Madison transmission line

An April 12 press release from the American Transmission Company (ATC) reports "it will submit an application to the state Public Service Commission in fall to construct a new transmission line on the east side of Madison. ATC will host two open house events in Madison this week to provide information, answer questions, and get feedback from residents on its proposal." More at http://www.atcllc.com/newsroom/news_20040412OpenHouse.shtml. The open houses will be:

Tuesday April 13, 2004
1-3 p.m. and 5-7 p.m.
Capital City Harley-Davidson
6200 Millpond Rd., Madison

Thursday April 15, 2004
5-7 p.m.
Capital City Harley-Davidson
6200 Millpond Rd., Madison

Environmental Education Initiatives

WSN issue chair: Sarah Lloyd, Concerned Citizens of Newport, Sarah_Lloyd@centurytel.net

Earth Day Coalition events involving hundreds across state

The Wisconsin Earth Day Coalition 2004, a group of over 60 organizations, is seizing this Earth Day as a day to contemplate, motivate and take action! The Coalition plans to engage 600 volun-

teers to go door-to-door in five communities across Wisconsin, delivering literature to 40,000 families about rollbacks to core protections for clean air and water on the state and national level. Readers will have an opportunity to take action by sending a postcard to President Bush and/or Governor Doyle. Help be a part of the action! In each city, the literature drop will last two hours or less and will be preceded by a brief get together, complete with free food and a speaker. For locations visit www.wisconsinearthday.org or contact Anne Sayers at earthday-anne@yahoo.com, or by phone at (608) 850-4585. And don't forget to join us for the celebration in Madison on the evening of April 17 at Marigold Kitchen from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Free food and much merriment to be had. \$5 cover.

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“Sense of Place” conference April 23-25

Gathering Waters Conservancy, with the Midwest Office of the Land Trust Alliance, invites you to the 2004 Midwest Land Trust Conference “Conserving a Sense of Place,” to be held April 23-25 at The Concourse Hotel in Madison. Gathering Waters’ 10th Birthday Celebration will launch this conference, Friday evening, April 23, from 5:30-8:30 at Club Majestic in Madison. Tickets to this party can be ordered on the conference registration form, or by calling Gathering Waters at (608) 251-9131. Scott Russell Sanders, author and distinguished English professor at Indiana University, will deliver the conference keynote address on Saturday evening, and Curt Meine, noted Leopold historian, opens the Conference at Saturday’s Plenary Session.

Gathering Waters marks 10th anniversary

Gathering Waters Conservancy is celebrating its 10th anniversary! You are invited to the birthday party in honor of a successful decade working to protect Wisconsin’s land and water resources. Kick back and enjoy the festivities at Club Majestic (a 96-year-old theater-turned nightclub) from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Friday, April 23. The setting will be merry, and in true birthday party tradition, there will be food and cake, balloons, and games. Sign up for this evening event in the registration form, or by calling Gathering Waters Conservancy.

Conserving a Sense of Place offers land trust practitioners an exceptional networking and educational opportunity. It will feature a “Women in Conservation” breakfast, the “Sense of Place” Poetry and Prose Coffeehouse, a day-long fundraising seminar, board leadership and ecological management workshops, and field trips to breathtaking and historic Wisconsin sites, like Aldo Leopold’s Shack and Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin. “We are confident that Conserving a Sense of Place will be the biggest and best Midwest gathering of land trusts yet,” GWC Executive Director Vicki Elkin said.

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SOURCE: Gathering Waters, http://www.gatheringwaters.org/Calendar_of_Events/conference/index.htm.

SE Wisconsin “Green Pages” link

For the past several years, the Southeast Wisconsin Waste Reduction Coalition has worked with the Milwaukee *Journal-Sentinel* to put out an environmental section in the spring known as the

“Green Pages.” The Internet link to the site is <http://specialsections.onwisconsin.com/sections.asp?refid=&sesid=473155527&sec=7194>.

SOURCE: John Reindl, Reindl@co.dane.wi.us.

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Northwoods ATV group has update on Vilas County ATV ban

As many of you probably know, Vilas County held a referendum in February, and a resolution was passed by 63% of the voters to keep ATVs off of all county lands and forests. You might mistakenly think that the battle is now over. WRONG! Vilas County has 1,400 lakes, hundreds of miles of rivers and streams, along with thousands of acres of wetlands and bogs to go with it's thousands of acres of County Forests. Unfortunately, we have hundreds of thousands of acres of state and national forests in Vilas County, and the Wisconsin Department of Tourism has been convinced by the ATV activist groups that ATVs will bring a lot of added revenue to the county.

Even the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in Madison is on record as saying that they have to offer equal access to all forms of recreation. Therefore in spite of the fact that currently Vilas County is a mecca for silent sports, and can be advertised as such across the country, we are

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Shoreland Zoning

WSN issue chairs: Jim Wise, ECCOLA ecowise@newnorth.net
and Donna Sefton, WI Assn. of Lakes, dfsefton@charter.net

Water Regulation & Protection

WSN issue chair: Derek Scheer, Clean Wisconsin
dscheer@cleanwisconsin.org

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NRB approves emergency Chapter 30 rules

Natural Resources Board members on April 6 approved emergency rules aimed at implementing changes to Wisconsin's program for permitting shoreland erosion control structures, piers, culverts and other development activities along publicly owned lakes and rivers. The board also instructed Department of Natural Resources staff to report back after 75 to 90 days on how the emergency rules are working, with an eye toward incorporating the experience into permanent rules.

The unanimous vote came during a special meeting called to consider the proposed emergency rules that implement 2003 Wisconsin Act 118, which essentially created a three-tier system for regulating projects along lakes and rivers. Board members had delayed a vote March 24 during their regularly scheduled meeting after legislative leaders said they wanted more time to review the proposed emergency rules carrying out the law. Where all activities were previously subject to an individual permit application and DNR review, Act 118 law provided that some activities would be exempt from the permitting process unless they were proposed for trout streams and other sensitive waters, and others would be allowed under "general permits," a shorter, more general review process. Many other activities would continue to require the individual permit and DNR review to minimize harm to critical shoreline habitat. Before the NRB vote today, DNR Water Division Administrator Todd Ambs told board members that agency water officials had met with legislative leaders and stakeholders in the intervening two weeks to try to resolve their concerns, and believe they had successfully done so.

SOURCE: WDNR.

Emergency rule hearing May 19 in Madison

The emergency rules go into effect later this month upon publication in the state newspaper of record and run for 150 days, with extensions possible while DNR develops permanent rules. A public hearing on the emergency rules has been set for May 19 in Madison. Public comments from that hearing will be incorporated into DNR's process in the coming year to develop draft permanent rules implementing 2003 Wisconsin Act 118.

Emergency rules available online

Emergency rules aimed at implementing changes to Wisconsin's program for permitting rip-rap, piers, culverts, and other development activities along publicly owned lakes and rivers go into effect April 19 and are now available online. To view the rules, go to <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/fhp/waterway/emergen->

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Help sought to petition for more “outstanding” waters

The River Alliance, in collaboration with Midwest Environmental Advocates, is preparing a petition to upgrade many of Wisconsin’s northern river segments to Outstanding or Exceptional Resource Water status. Rivers with ORW or ERW status are subject to a higher level of scrutiny when certain activities are being considered, for example, Sewage Discharge (WPDES) permits. The goal of the petition is to ensure that high-quality waters are given the protection they deserve. The petition will be presented to the Natural Resources Board.

The best way to lend your support is to get approval from the board of directors of your organization to join the petition. Any type of organization anywhere in the state can sign on, from river groups and lake associations, to conservation organizations, civic organizations (such as Rotary or Lions Club), professional organizations, interfaith organizations, etc. There is no cost to sign on. For those working in southern Wisconsin who may wonder about the focus of this petition: If the Natural Resources Board agrees that these high quality waters should be upgraded to ORW or ERW status, other high quality waters elsewhere in the state may benefit from similar upgrading. One reason this petition focuses on northern rivers is because of the extensive body of data contained in the Northern Rivers Initiative, from which we have drawn the river candidates for upgrades.

If you wish to sign on, please provide us with the following information:

- The contact person for your organization, as well as their phone, e-mail, mailing address, county(ies) you work in.
- The number of individuals your organization represents. And, if applicable, the number of chapters you represent.

SOURCE: Lisa Goodman, River Alliance of Wisconsin, (608) 257-2424 (x110), goodman@wisconsinrivers.org.

Wisconsin changing fecal contamination law

On April 20, an advisory committee to the Department of Natural Resources will start the formal process of changing state laws governing standards for fecal contamination in wastewater or water in lakes, streams, or other coastal waters. This water quality standard is used for a variety of purposes, including setting limits for wastewater discharges from factories and municipal wastewater treatment plants, and for testing beach water quality.

SOURCE: Toni Glymph, WDNR, (608) 264-8954.

State water policy web site goes online

The “Wisconsin Water Policies Inventory (WPPI)” has finished testing and is now providing citizens with a new, web-based tool for navigating the state’s major policies on any aspect of water including use, protection, quality, and management. It enables Wisconsinites to focus on state policies by topic using keywords and browser features. Visit it at <http://www.aqua.wisc.edu/water->

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policy. The idea for the WPPI, whose search features will be familiar to Google users, grew out of the statewide Waters of Wisconsin initiative spearheaded by the Wisconsin Academy for Sciences, Arts and Letters from 2000 to 2003. The website was developed during the Governor's declared Year of Water by a University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate seminar, in partnership with the UW Aquatic Sciences Center and assisted by a network of agency, university, and non-governmental advisors. The site includes links to the state electronic legislative library maintained by the Legislature, without which the WPPI would not have been possible.

SOURCE: Stephen M. Born, (608) 262-9985, smborn@wisc.edu.

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Late updates on WAL conference this weekend

Some new developments in our agenda for the Wisconsin Association of Lakes Conference this weekend in Green Bay include:

- US Senator Russ Feingold will speak to us Friday morning about the Nation's water resources,
- State Senator Neal Kedzie will speak after the Governor at Friday's luncheon,
- Robert Martin, a former EPA Ombudsman, will speak at the Sat. afternoon closing luncheon about the Environment, Politics & Conscience.

SOURCE: Susan Tesarik, Wisconsin Association of Lakes, Inc., One Point Place, Suite 101 Madison, WI 53719 (608) 662. 0923 tesarik@wisconsinlakes.org, www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexplakes/conventions.

Wetlands restoration handbook in second edition

A second edition of an award-winning handbook that helps landowners restore wetlands is now available online and as a free publication. *The Wetland Restoration Handbook for Wisconsin Landowners*, written by wetland restoration specialists Alice L. Thompson and Charles S. Luthin, encourages responsible and effective restoration of wetlands. The handbook was recently published by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Integrated Science Services in cooperation with the Wisconsin Wetlands Association. Get a free copy by contacting Martin.Griffin@dnr.state.wi.us or (608) 266-0842. An electronic version of the second edition is also available at www.dnr.wi.gov/org/water/fhp/wetlands/resman.shtml.

SOURCE: Dreux Watermolen, WDNR, (608) 266-8931.

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EPA watershed outreach guides published

EPA announces a set of valuable new resources designed to assist local governments, watershed groups, watershed management agencies, and others to plan and conduct effective watershed outreach campaigns:

1) *Getting in Step: A Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns* (Publication # EPA 841-B-03-002), and

2) *Getting in Step: A Video Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns* (Publication # EPA 841-V-03-001)

These two companion guides offer advice on how to effectively raise citizen awareness of NPS pollution and to motivate individual behavior change to develop more water-friendly habits and practices that will lead to cleaner waters for your community and our nation. For a free copy of either/both, contact the National Service Center for Environmental Publications at 1-800-490-9198 or see www.epa.gov/ncepihom. The book is also available as a PDF download at www.epa.gov/nps/outreach.html.

SOURCE: WDNR “Basin Briefs,” 3-31-04.

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Poll: water quality Americans’ top environmental concern

Americans rated water quality concerns at the top of the list of environmental concerns in Gallup’s March 2004 environmental poll. The biggest concern was shown for the quality of their drinking water, with, more than half of all Americans “worrying a great deal” about drinking water quality and 79% expressing some level of worry. And while the percentages are down from previous years, still a whopping 72% of Americans are “worried” about the pollution of rivers, lakes, and reservoirs, and 19% of those sampled “worry a great deal.” The poll also found that Americans with lower incomes tend to have greater concern about water pollution. The poll was conducted in March 2004, for more information contact Josh at jklein@nrdc.org.

SOURCE: Clean Water Network, jklein@nrdc.org.

Florida developers seek redirection of Everglades water.

The March 31 Miami *Herald* at <http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/state/8316355.htm> reports “Florida developers are engaged in an effort aimed at encouraging courts and the Legislature to scrap proposed rules that would help save water for Everglades restoration and state wetlands. The goal of the Everglades project is to restore the natural system that has been drained substantially for years and to construct reservoirs to trap water to be directed to South and Southwest Florida. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection had spent years developing the rules, which were finalized last week after numerous consultations with competing business, government, and environmental interests. Two weeks after those final plans were submitted, the Association of Florida Community Developers filed a legal challenge, arguing that the “vague” wording of the rules doesn’t clarify how much water will be reserved for the environment. The group further questions the very basis of the Everglades project, calling it one of several “natural systems that no longer exist.”

SOURCE: SERC *Wildlines Report*, April 5, 2004, info@serconline.org.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEA seeking Assistant Director

Midwest Environmental Advocates is a non-profit environmental law center that provides legal services to community groups that are working to protect our air and water. We seek an Assistant Director to manage and implement MEA's development, fundraising and internal operations. The Assistant Director will have the unique opportunity to help take an effective small operation and scale-up its reach and impact through implementing sound management and growth strategies. Send resume, cover letter, and three references to Felicia Lin via e-mail advocate@midwestadvocates.org or via regular mail at 702 E. Johnson St., Madison, WI 53703.

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Lake Michigan Federation seeks outreach assistant

The Lake Michigan Federation is seeking an outreach associate to operate out of the Milwaukee area to support the work of the oldest Great Lakes citizens' organization in North America as a voice for clean water, water conservation, fish and wildlife habitat restoration. Deadline for Applications: April 26, 2004, or until position is filled. For more information contact Stephanie Smith, Manager Education Programs Lake Michigan Federation ssmith@lakemichigan.org.

Fish and wildlife report available

The 2002-03 *Wisconsin's Fish and Wildlife Annual Report* is now available on the DNR web site at http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/publications/publce259_2004.pdf.

SOURCE: Megan Matthews, WDNR (608) 267-0859 matthm@dnr.state.wi.us.

Madison computer and electronics recycling roundup April 17

The City of Madison will hold its Ninth Computer Recycling Roundup Saturday, April 17, from 9 -2 p.m. at Cascade Asset Management's recycling facility at 2601 Seiferth Rd. on the East side. This year we will be recycling most electronic as well as computers and televisions. TVs contain a high volume of lead and other heavy metals that can pose a health hazard if landfilled. The best disposal option for old TVs is to have them recycled. This keeps hazardous waste out of the landfill and allows us to reuse the lead and other metals.

SOURCE: gdreckmann@ci.madison.wi.us or 267-2626.

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Community sustainability workshop May 6

Co-authors of the forthcoming book *The Natural Step for Communities: How Cities and Towns can Change to Sustainable Practices*, Torbjörn Lahti and Sarah James will be in Madison on Thursday, May 6. During their visit, Torjborn and Sarah will be presenting a workshop entitled "Bringing Sustainability to the Community." Participants of the workshop will learn basic concepts and principles behind the Swedish eco-municipalities and reasons why these Swedish suc-

cesses are particularly good models for the U.S. Participants will also see case examples and learn specific steps that individuals and organizations can take to bring such sustainable development to their own community.

Also visiting Madison on Thursday May 6th is Michael Jalmby, President of ESAM, a Sweden-based corporation that specializes in providing consulting and educational programs for businesses interested in turning their activities into sustainable practices. Michael will be presenting a workshop entitled “Bringing Sustainability to the Businesses” that will give deep insight into how Swedish companies are working to achieve sustainable practices while improving their communities. Both workshops will be held at The Pyle Center in Madison, 702 Langdon Street, on Thursday, May 6.

SOURCE: Bryant Moroder, Director, Sustain Dane, (608) 819-0689 bryant@sustainedane.org.

New sulfide mining push for Michigan UP predicted

As an author, and activist, I’ve spent several months a year in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula lately. I’ve noticed an increasing sense of concern spread among UP environmental activists in the last year as word spread of sulfide mining exploration activities. The implications are huge and I urge all, whether their zip codes are in Michigan, Wisconsin or Minnesota to pay attention-and help. “Has a new era of sulfide mining begun in Michigan?,” Jon Saari, President of the Upper Peninsula Environmental Council, asked in that organization’s spring 2004 newsletter. He continued, “Are we as a state and region prepared for this particular type of mining? Do we want to regulate it, ban it? The prospecting companies are here en masse, not just Kennecott and its parent transnational company Rio Tinto, but also Bitterroot Resources, Prime Meridian, and Trans Resources. These companies have already purchased or leased hundreds of thousands of acres of mineral rights in the Western Upper Peninsula. Kennecott alone purchased 460,000 acres of mineral right in Marquette, and Baraga Counties in 1994. A story is unfolding which could have great impact on the entire Upper Peninsula; it deserves our closest scrutiny and well-grounded activism.” Read Jon Saari’s complete article, “The Coming Struggle Over a New Mining Era in the U.P.” at www.upenvironment.org.

SOURCE: Eric Hansen, hansene@execpc.com.

Mercury sign-on letter to EPA in works

EPA has proposed a rule that delays cleanup of toxic mercury produced by coal-fired power plants. Public comments on the proposed rule are due April 30th. Please sign-on to the group sign-on letter to EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt and let the administration know power-plant mercury pollution has no place in our waters and fish. The letter will be sent as comments to the docket on the mercury rule. View the letter at: http://www.cwn.org/docs/Grassroots_Hg_Ltr.pdf. To sign on or for more information contact Ann Bordetsky at abordetsky@nrdc.org or (202) 289-2364.

Wisconsin Democracy Campaign update on campaign legislation

The last regular legislative floor period ended on March 11, 2004. This was the last general business floor period of the 2003-2004 legislative session. The legislature ended an extraordinary session on March 25. Bills which did not pass by March 25 died. There is a limited business floor period April 27 to 29 and a veto review session May 11 and 12. The legislature may also call itself into extraordinary session again or the governor may call a special session at any time before the new legislative session begins in January 2005.

Only three campaign and elections-related bills tracked by the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign were received by the Governor for action in the 2003 legislative session.

- AB 1 was enacted as 2003 Act 39 http://www.wisdc.org/other_reform.html (an explicit ban on trading policy favors for campaign donations),
- AB 111 http://www.wisdc.org/other_reform.html was vetoed (requires a person to present an official Wisconsin driver's license or photo identification card in order to vote), and
- AB 600 http://www.wisdc.org/other_reform.html (implements provisions of the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002) passed both houses and is expected to be signed into law by the end of the session.

The remaining list of legislative proposals we tracked, having not received further action beyond that reported on our website, are considered dead this session unless a special or extraordinary session is called. Such action, however, is not likely to occur.

You can still take action to urge important reforms in 2004! Contact the State Elections Board and urge the board to adopt rules requiring full disclosure of soft money and phony issue ads. WDC is asking the Elections Board to adopt rules mirroring the federal McCain-Feingold law defining communications made within 30 days of a primary election or 60 days of a general election that identify a candidate for state office as "electioneering communications" made for a political purpose, thereby subjecting them to disclosure requirements and campaign contribution limits. You can e-mail the state Elections Board at seb@seb.state.wi.us or call (608) 266-8005. Visit our web site www.wisdc.org for additional information.

SOURCE: Beverly J. Speer, Advocacy Director, Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, 210 North Bassett St. Ste 215, Madison WI 53703 (608) 255.4260; speer@wisdc.org.

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Welcome new WSN member organizations

Fox Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Contact: Tony Treml, President, 318 Linwood Lane, Neenah, WI 54956, (715) 479-8528.

Mission: To to conserve, protect, restore, and enhance Wisconsin's trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds. We accomplish this mission at the local and state level with an extensive and dedicated volunteer network.

Milwaukee Chapter of Muskies, Inc.

Contact: Ralph Anderson, President, PO Box 28842, Greenfield, WI 53228, (262) 363-8198.

Mission: To promote a high quality of muskellunge sport fishery; to support selected conservation practices based on scientific merit and carried out by authorized federal and state agencies; to promote muskellunge research; to establish hatcheries and rearing ponds and introduce the species into suitable waters; to support abatement of water pollution; to maintain records of habits, growth, and range of species; to disseminate muskellunge information; and to promote good fellowship and sportsmanship among men, women, and children.

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WSN Member Groups Get connected...join the WSN

Aldo Leopold Audubon Society
Aldo Leopold Foundation
Anishinaabe Nijjii/ Protect the Earth
Badger Fly Fishers, Inc.
Brown County Conservation Alliance
Central WI Chapter of SOUL
Central Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Citizens for a Scenic Wisconsin
Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger
Clean Wisconsin
Concerned Citizens of Newport
Coulee Region Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Door County Environmental Council
EarthWINS
Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Lakeland Areas (ECCOLA)
Families and Friends for Social Responsibility
Family Farm Defenders
Fox Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Frank Hornberg Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Friends of the Jump River
Friends of Milwaukee's River
Green Bay Area Great Lakes Sport Fishermen
Green Bay Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Groundwater Guardians
Habitat Education Center
Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Inland Sea Society
Izaak Walton League of America - WI Division
John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club
Kickapoo Valley Stewardship Alliance
Lake Superior Alliance
Lake Superior Greens
Lakeshore Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Madison Audubon Society
Menomonee Valley Partners
Midwest Environmental Advocates
Milwaukee Chapter of Muskies, Inc.
Mining Impact Coalition of WI, Inc.
Muskellunge Club of WI
Neighbors Standing United
Northern Thunder
Pheasants Forever - Sugar River Valley Chapter
Plover River Alliance
Random Lake Association
Ripley Lake Association

River Alliance of Wisconsin
Rock River Coalition
Rusk County Citizen's Action Group
Save Our Unique Lands
Shaw-Paca Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Smallmouth Alliance Southern WI Chapter
SOUL of Kenna/Catawba
SOUL of Lake Superior
SOUL of Rusk County
SOUL of Sawyer County
Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Twin Lakes Conservancy
Waterkeepers of Wisconsin
WI Association of Lakes
WI Conservation Voters Institute
Wisconsin Deer Hunters Association
WI Public Interest Research Group (WISPARG)
WI Resources Protection Council
WI Sharp-tailed Grouse Society
WI State B.A.S.S Federation
WI State Council of Trout Unlimited
WI Wetlands Association
Winnebago Audubon Society
Wolf River Chapter of Trout Unlimited

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WSNetwork News is published twice monthly by the Wisconsin Stewardship Network, Inc., a network of hunting, fishing, conservation, environmental, and other groups interested in protecting and preserving Wisconsin's natural resources.

The WSN's Board of Directors consists of representatives from the following organizations: Brown County Conservation Alliance, Clean Wisconsin, Concerned Citizens of Newport, ECCOLA, Izaak Walton League of America, Madison Audubon Society, Midwest Environmental Advocates, Inc., Musky Club of WI, 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, and Wisconsin Trout Unlimited, plus individuals who serve as at-large members.

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 WSN Exec. Director Todd Hanson at wsn@chorus.net.

Subscriptions to *WSNetwork News* are free. To opt in or out of this distribution list, e-mail us at wsn@chorus.net.

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Restoration of Public Intervenor Office needed now more than ever

Wisconsin's precious natural resources and citizens have suffered significant losses since the elimination of the Public Intervenor Office in 1995, according to a report released April 14 by the Wisconsin Stewardship Network and Midwest Environmental Advocates, Inc. *At a Loss: The State of Wisconsin after Eight Years without the Public Intervenor Office* outlines the far-ranging contributions of the Public Intervenor Office and the detrimental void created by its elimination. The Public Intervenor was instrumental in the passage of landmark legislation, including:

- Wisconsin's DDT Ban,
- 1982 Employees' Right to Know Law,
- Acid Rain Legislation,
- 1984 Groundwater Law and
- Non-metallic Reclamation Bill.

During its tenure from 1967 to 1995, the Public Intervenor Office was able to provide high quality scientific, technical and legal information to defend Wisconsin's waters and other natural resources. Since its elimination, citizens have been forced to spend their own money to defend public resources.

"The entire Public Intervenor Office cost the citizens of Wisconsin less than a nickel each year per person," said Jodi Habush Sinykin, author of the report and Of Counsel to Midwest Environmental Advocates, a non profit environmental law center. "Without the moderating and consensus-building function of the Public Intervenor Office, private citizens and businesses in Wisconsin are now shouldering a far greater burden to defend the public's rights to clean air and water and an accountable and effective government."

Indeed, support for the restoration of the Public Intervenor Office goes far beyond the traditional base of environmental advocates. The Public Intervenor Office provided an important benefit to Wisconsin's business community by reducing legal uncertainty, serving as an industry problem-solver, and protecting Wisconsin's \$11 billion tourism industry.

The report also highlights damage to Wisconsin's natural resources that could have been avoided had the Public Intervenor still been around as the public's advocate. Recently, the EPA issued a Notice of Deficiency to Wisconsin for its failure to properly manage the state's clean air operating permits program. The latest air audit conducted by the Legislative Audit Bureau also found Wisconsin to be among the slowest states in the nation to issue major operation permits and identified a pattern of significant program management deficiencies.

"With budget cuts constraining the ability of the DNR to do its job, and the State Legislature passing environmentally devastating legislation such as the poorly named Jobs Creation Act, Wisconsin's need for a Public Intervenor is now more vital than ever," said Caryl Terrell of the Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter. "This report clearly demonstrates that the restoration of the Public Intervenor Office would be a tremendous benefit for Wisconsin."

View the report at http://www.midwestadvocates.org/media/publications/PIORReport_final.pdf.



Former Public Intervenor Peter Peshek, Kathleen Falk, and Tom Dawson at today's WSN/ MEA press conference.

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