



# WSNetworkNews

May 15, 2001

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**Notice to groups and clubs in Northern Wisconsin** — The WSN's regional hub in Tomahawk, WI, is holding a "GreenChat" boat cruise June 8 in conjunction with the League of Conservation Voters Education Fund. The cruise will bring sporting, conservation, and environmental leaders together with representatives of the print and electronic media to discuss how to better get the word out about your group's activities.

Contact Hub coordinator Jim Wise of Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Lakeland Area (ECCOLA) for more details at (715) 453-3676, or [ecowise@newnorth.net](mailto:ecowise@newnorth.net).

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## Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line

### Bush task force to propose legislation easing power line land acquisition

President Bush's energy task force plans to propose legislation allowing the seizure of private property to accelerate the construction of electrical power lines, three administration officials said on May 8. Such a change could have big impacts for the proposed Arrowhead-Weston transmission line. Check the full story at <http://www.jsonline.com/news/nat/ap/may01/ap-bush-energy-pla050801.asp>.

SOURCE: Alice McCombs, [nocrandonmine@yahoo.com](mailto:nocrandonmine@yahoo.com).

## **Protesters greet shareholders at May 8 Allete annual meeting**

Shareholders arriving for Allete, Inc.'s annual meeting Tuesday, May 8, were greeted by a couple dozen opponents of the 250-mile-long power line proposed line. Allete, based in Duluth, is the parent company of Minnesota Power. Minnesota Power has teamed up with the Wisconsin Public Service Corp. to propose the power line.

Demonstrators carried protest signs and passed out leaflets to shareholders, asking them to reconsider the project. Mark Liebaert of SOUL said several shareholders have been sympathetic to the group's concerns that:

- trees must be cleared to install the power line,
- the possible health effects of electromagnetic fields from the line, and
- the source of much of the power for the project is a controversial dam in Manitoba that was opposed by Cree Indians whose land was flooded by the structure.

Visit the web site of the Duluth News Tribune for further information about the protest.

## **SOUL op-ed piece compares Wisconsin and California energy situations**

A recent article by Dr. Richard Rosen and Attorney Pamela McGillivray discusses whether the proposed Arrowhead-Weston line is necessary in order to avoid the energy problems being experienced in California.

The authors discuss two major differences between the systems, concluding that "neither of the two facts about Wisconsin...depends on the Arrowhead-Weston transmission line being built."

For a copy of the essay, e-mail the WSN at [wsn@chorus.net](mailto:wsn@chorus.net).

SOURCE: SOUL e-mail

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## **DNR Independence**

### **Despite opposition at hearings, draft DNR split bill offered**

Three Republican legislators — Senator Bob Welch and Representatives John Gard and DuWayne Johnsrud — have sent a draft, yet-to-be-numbered bill to split the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to fellow legislators asking for co-sponsors despite the public's nearly 50-to-1 opposition to the proposal at two state hearings last week.

People wishing to view the draft DNR split legislation may contact the WSN at [wsn@chorus.net](mailto:wsn@chorus.net) for a copy in Acrobat Reader format. NOTE: The draft is 320 pages long, and the .pdf file is 740k.

The following summary of the bill comes from the Legislative Reference Bureau:

“Under current law, the department of natural resources (DNR) administers programs relating to air quality, water quality, water supply, wastewater, recycling, solid and hazardous waste, mining, environmental cleanups, wetlands, shoreland zoning, navigable waters (including dams and piers), state parks and other recreational properties, forestry, the Stewardship Fund, the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway, wildlife (including hunting,

fishing, and trapping), endangered resources, boats, snowmobiles, and all-terrain vehicles. DNR is governed by a seven-member board and has a secretary who is nominated by the governor, and with the advice and consent of the senate appointed.

This bill divides DNR into two agencies: the department of fish, wildlife, parks, and forestry (DFWPF) and the department of environmental management (DEM). The division takes effect on July 1, 2002. Under the bill, DEM administers programs relating to air quality, water quality, water supply, wastewater, recycling, solid and hazardous waste, mining, environmental cleanups, wetlands, shoreland zoning, and navigable waters (including dams and piers). DFWPF administers programs relating to state parks and other recreational properties, forestry, the Stewardship Fund, the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway, wildlife (including hunting, fishing, and trapping), endangered resources, boats, snowmobiles, and all-terrain vehicles. Both agencies are governed by seven-member boards. Each board nominates and, with the approval of the governor, appoints the secretary of its department.

Under current law, DNR has seven division administrators who serve outside of the classified service. Under this bill, DEM has two division administrators and DFWPF has three division administrators, all of whom serve outside of the classified service. This bill also requires DFWPF to designate a chief warden, who serves outside of the classified service, to supervise conservation wardens; requires DFWPF to designate an internal affairs officer to investigate complaints against conservation wardens; and requires DFWPF to designate a complaint officer to resolve those complaints.”

## **Onalaska DNR split hearing finds few supporters**

The following report on the Onalaska DNR split hearing last Wednesday comes from Tom Wilson of the WSN’s Western Hub:

“Darrell [Bazzell] gave a very eloquent defense of the department and its funding allocations, and George Meyer also spoke clearly on why this was a bad idea. Other speakers included Bill Howell, Harry Meinke, Mark Schulz, Dan Flaharity, Raymond Brannagan, Randy Roswell, Don Last, Gail Free, Dave Clausung, Robert Miller, Joe Zanforth, Michael Dornan, Lowell Klessig, Rolland Lee, Marie Anderson, Betty Wolcott, Bill Buckley, Will Fantle, Cy Post, Doug Rich, Ray Starrett, Richard Ash, Virgil Roberts, Barbara Frank, and Al Geddicks. (Apologies for mutilating the names in this list.)

All spoke extremely well. There were also many others who came, registered their opposition with either written statements or hearing slips, but then left to attend to other business. Reporters were there from several papers including the *Journal-Sentinel* and at least three TV cameras running almost the time including WI public TV.

I entered former Michigan DNR head Howard Tanner's letter into the record (Johnsrud wouldn't let me read the whole thing, but I summarized the main points and read the final recommendations and left hard copy with the committee)."

## **Green Bay DNR split hearing attendees say "kill this proposal"**

Here is a summary of the Green Bay DNR split hearing last Friday from a Sierra Club member:

"[The] session in Green Bay started at 1:00 and ran steady to 7:30. Three people were in favor and all else were strongly opposed — about 30 people spoke, mostly from fish and wildlife groups like Wisconsin Conservation Congress, Trout Unlimited., etc. The JFC seemed to have an ingoing bias in favor of the split and didn't seem to budge despite the overwhelmingly lopsided opinions of the audience.

The most impactful testimonies were made by other government agencies who appreciate dealing with one integrated DNR, particularly the federal guy from NRCS. He says WI is doing a lot better at getting WRP and CRP federal money because of the integrated organization."

## **Onalaska hearing attendee finds Johnsrud criticism of Bazzell offensive**

Sec. Bazzell — and former Sec. Meyer — made wonderful presentations [at the Onalaska DNR split hearing]. They were real heroes. After thoughtful and intelligent testimony by Sec. Bazzell, Rep. Johnsrud asked him if he had "ever killed a deer." Sec. Bazzell said "No." RJ asked Bazzell if Fennessy had ever killed a deer. Sec. Bazzell said, "No." RJ asked Bazzell if the 3d in charge had ever "killed a deer." Sec. Bazzell replied something like, "I don't know" I can't remember. Rep. Johnsrud said, "I don't want to be mean-spirited, but this goes to the heart of the matter: You don't have blood in your boots." The implication was that Bazzell was incapable of running the DNR with re: to hunting and fishing because of the fact that he hadn't killed a deer. It was outrageous.

SOURCE: WSN correspondent in attendance

## **DNR split hearings 7:1 against proposal**

A list of people registering or speaking for or against the DNR split hearing at last week's hearings shows that nearly 70% opposed the split. A total of 115 spoke against the split, while just eight were for it. The above numbers do not include the more than 40 signed post cards opposing the split from a recent WSN mailing that were given to the committee in Green Bay.

SOURCE: State of Wisconsin

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## Factory Farming

### Dairy producers told to think of dairies as ‘mini eco-systems’

A feature in the April 26 *Agri-View* discusses in detail the “Proper On-Farm Measures (that) Can Keep Cows, Consumers, (and the) Environment Safe,” reporting on a recent speech from Jim Cullor of the University of California at Tulare’s Veterinary Medicine Teacher and Research Center to the Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin. “You have to think of the dairy as a mini-eco-system, and manage it that way,” according to Cullor. He said producers must put into action environmental plans that take into consideration everything “from the water that falls onto a farm or barnyard to the groundwater that runs under the operation.”

SOURCE: WDNR *Basin Briefs* 5-2-01

### Calf Source seeking to expand operations in Brown County

From the March 19 *Appleton Post-Crescent*: Calf Source wants to expand its operation in Morrison (in southeastern Brown County) from its current 2,100 animals to a maximum of 15,000. Morrison Town Chairman Herold Treichel says Calf Source is “doing everything right. I haven’t heard any complaints about it.” Don Brantmeier, who lives across from the operation, said, “They stop in once in awhile and check on things. It seems like they’re always ready to work with you.” All manure at the farm will be composted, heated, and turned into a fertilizer that looks like peat moss.

SOURCE: WDNR *Basin Briefs* 5-2-01

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## Groundwater Protection

### Perrier puts Wisconsin plant on hold

The Perrier Company announced last Thursday that they were placing their controversial water bottling plant in Adams County on hold for at least five years in favor of a plant outside Grand Rapids, Michigan. “The company intends to reconsider the site several years into the future depending on market demand,” a release from the corporation said. Perrier says they are not terminating their rights to land in Adams County.

## Spring water beaten in two taste tests

Two more taste tests have beaten spring and bottled waters, challenging people's perceptions of these products.

Arlene Kanno of Concerned Citizens of Newport (CCN) reports, "I just completed two one-hour presentations on groundwater to an Elderhostel group in Williams Bay (Lake Geneva) Wisconsin. During the second one I gave the 12 participants a blind water taste test just like Steve did at Sauk County's Earth Day celebration. People had three different waters and were to vote for the one they preferred; they had the option of 'can't tell the difference.' All waters were refrigerated to the same temperature. The results:

Williams Bay tap water — 0  
Kanno farm tap water — 3  
Ice Mountain water — 1  
Couldn't tell — 8"

Another taste was recently performed last week on ABC TV's *Good Morning America*. In GMA's water taste test, 45 percent of the participants chose New York City tap water over bottled and oxygenated water. See [http://abcnews.go.com/sections/GMA/GoodMorningAmerica/GMA010511Water\\_study.html](http://abcnews.go.com/sections/GMA/GoodMorningAmerica/GMA010511Water_study.html).

## Wisconsin Academy launching major water initiative

The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters is launching an initiative called "Waters of Wisconsin: The Future of Wisconsin's Aquatic Ecosystems and Resources." It will look at current water issues like mercury, Perrier bottling, and the Crandon mine.

For more information, see the Wisconsin Academy's web site or see the story at [www.news.wisc.edu/wisweek/view.msml?id=6135](http://www.news.wisc.edu/wisweek/view.msml?id=6135).

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## Mercury Reduction

### WIN alert targeting French Island incinerator

The Wisconsin InterNetwork (WIN) alert system yesterday began soliciting letters to Xcel Energy CEO Wayne Brunetti calling for improvements to Excel's French Island incinerator.

The La Crosse incinerator was recently reclassified as a "large" incinerator under EPA rules, meaning that it should comply with tougher emission standards. The alert notes that the facility produces "excess emissions of dioxin, mercury, cadmium, lead, particulate matter, sulfur, and other [chemicals]."

You can take action on this alert or learn more about the WIN alert system by going to <http://actionnetwork.org/take-action.tcl?key=1369669A21109B0514010653C238>.

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## **Metallic Mining**

### **Town of Nashville appealing Geske's local agreement ruling**

Nashville Town Chairman Chuck Sleeter announced on May 7 that the town will appeal former state Supreme Court Justice Janine Geske's March decision upholding the local agreement the town's former board entered into with Nicolet Minerals.

Sleeter said that the board decided to appeal because at issue is whether, under Wisconsin's local mining agreement law, a town can "bargain away" its zoning and regulatory powers to a mining company. The 3rd District Court of Appeals panel, based in Wausau, will hear arguments in the case.

### **DNR's Tans says Crandon Mine still 'years away'**

A May 6 story in the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel* quoted Bill Tans, the WDNR mining review manager, as saying "it's unlikely construction would begin for the proposed Crandon Mine until at least 2005 because any decision likely will trigger a lengthy court fight.

Tans said a draft environmental impact statement could be released late this year, but that the review is only about 75% complete at this time. The process has taking so long because:

- The DNR uses about 25 outside consultants for some of the most technical reviews.
- Nicolet Minerals changed its plans significantly in 1998 after Exxon Coal and Minerals Co. sold most of its interests in the project, triggering new studies and reviews.
- New state laws, including the mining moratorium provision, added new state regulations to address.
- The project is the most complex mine ever proposed in Wisconsin, and it's near the headwaters of one of the most pristine rivers in the state, the Wolf River.

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

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## Public Intervenor Office Restoration

### PIO restoration draws support at DNR split hearings

Comments about restoring the office of the Public Intervenor and an independent DNR secretary were heard at both the Onalaska and Green Bay DNR split hearings last week.

Tom Wilson reports, “Perhaps Ray Starrett’s question [in Onalaska] summed up the day: with such overwhelming opposition to this idea, why are we even here wasting our time on this issue when there are so many other pressing concerns at hand? The one clear message that kept getting pounded on (even by George Meyer) was that this committee really should be addressing the Secretary’s appointment and Public Intervenor issue.”

Barb Frank of the Sierra Club noted, “...a Democrat member of the Committee asked Chairperson Johnsrud when the committee would hold a hearing on the two bills dealing with the Independence of the DNR Secretary and the Public Intervenor’s Office. Johnsrud did not look pleased to be asked this in public and said something about ‘when the Governor asks for them.’”

At the Green Bay hearing, former Secretary George Meyer’s comment about restoring the PIO office and an independent DNR secretary brought a burst of applause from the audience. Rep. Johnsrud then cautioned the audience to be quiet with a comment implying such outbursts were ‘anarchy.’

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## Shoreland/Wetland Protection

### Governor signs wetland bill

At 9:00 a.m. Monday, May 07, 2001, Governor Scott McCallum signed a new wetlands law that restores protection to over 1 million acres of our state’s wetland resources. This new law was signed exactly four months following the Supreme Court decision that eliminated federal and state jurisdiction over “isolated” wetlands.

Wisconsin Wetlands Association applauds the Legislature and Governor for their strong leadership on wetlands protection, with special acknowledgment of the tireless effort of Senator Jim Baumgart and his staff. This is the first state law in the country that fills the gap created by the Supreme Court decision. Our elected leaders listened to the citizens of the State who asked for prompt and complete protection of our wetlands.

We wish to acknowledge the strong and effective coalition of diverse organizations that, working together, have contributed considerable effort in securing this favorable outcome. Among our closest collaborators were:

- Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter,
- Wisconsin Waterfowl Association,
- Wisconsin Council of Trout Unlimited,
- River Alliance of Wisconsin,
- 1000 Friends of Wisconsin,
- Defenders of Wildlife-Wisconsin,
- Wisconsin's Environmental Decade,
- Wisconsin Stewardship Network,
- Madison Audubon Society and Wisconsin Audubon Council,
- Ducks Unlimited-Wisconsin,
- League of Conservation Voters Education Fund,
- Dane County Conservation League, and many more.

This effective coalition will serve as a model for other resource conservation issues that will arise in the future.

SOURCE: Wisconsin Wetlands Association, 222 S. Hamilton, Suite #1, Madison, WI 53703, (608) 250-9971 fax (608) 256-4562, <http://www.wiscwetlands.org>

## **WAL urges support for motorboat gas tax inflation adjustment**

Many of the conservation programs that protect water quality, recreational opportunities, water safety, and scenic beauty in Wisconsin are funded by the State tax on motorboat fuel. This "water resources account" provides grants for local lake and river protection efforts (including wetlands) and funds State lake and river management and wetlands mitigation efforts.

Since boat fuel comes from the same pumps as other motor fuels, a formula is used to estimate the motorboat fuel tax. This formula was set 15 years ago and has not kept pace with changing motorboat fuel consumption. The Wisconsin Association of Lakes (WAL) has urged the Legislature to amend the formula used to estimate motorboat gas tax funds to more accurately reflect the changed fleet now operating on Wisconsin lakes and rivers. The current formula is based on an average consumption of 50 gal. of fuel annually, whereas DNR's budget proposes to increase the estimate to 80 gallons per year. The current motorboat gas tax formula substantially understates the State tax revenue derived from boaters. WAL and other water resource groups agree with DNR that it is unfair to spend boat gas tax on road projects.

We need our members to speak out strongly on this issue. Please contact your Senate and Assembly representatives and urge them to support a change in the motor boat gas tax formula. The tax revenue from boaters is vitally important to the protection and restoration of Wisconsin's lakes, streams, and wetlands. The lake, river, and wetlands programs are among the State's most successful partnerships for natural resources protection. These dollars should be directed to lake and river work where they will provide tremendous benefits for us all.

Please contact your legislators today, and copy Joint Finance Committee Co-Chairs Senator Burke and Representative Gard, Assembly Leaders Scott Jensen and DuWayne Johnsrud, and Governor McCallum at:

- Rep. John Gard, P.O. Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708, (608) 266-2343, [Rep.Gard@legis.state.wi.us](mailto:Rep.Gard@legis.state.wi.us)
- Sen. Brian Burke. P.O. Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707, (800) 249-8173 or (608) 266-8535 [Sen.Burke@legis.state.wi.us](mailto:Sen.Burke@legis.state.wi.us)
- Rep. Scott Jensen, P.O. Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708, (608) 266-2343, [Rep.Jensen@legis.state.wi.us](mailto:Rep.Jensen@legis.state.wi.us)
- Rep. DuWayne Johnsrud, P.O. Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708, (608) 266-2343, [Rep.Johnsrud@legis.state.wi.us](mailto:Rep.Johnsrud@legis.state.wi.us)
- Gov. Scott McCallum, 115 E. Capitol, Madison, WI (608) 266-1212, [Govwis@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Govwis@wisconsin.gov).

If you would like more information, please contact the WAL office at 1-800-542-5253, [wilakes@execpc.com](mailto:wilakes@execpc.com), or [www.wisconsinlakes.org](http://www.wisconsinlakes.org).

SOURCE: Donna Sefton, Executive Director, Wisconsin Association of Lakes, Inc., One Point Place, Suite 101, Madison, Wisconsin 53719, (608) 662-0923 or (800) 542-LAKE; FAX: (608) 833-7179, E-mail: [wilakes@execpc.com](mailto:wilakes@execpc.com)

### **Stream channel design and restoration course offered**

Interfluve Inc., a stream restoration consulting firm based in Bozeman, MT, and Milwaukee, WI, is offering a short course in stream channel design and restoration in Milwaukee, June 11-15, 2001. This course provides training on innovative approaches for repairing disturbed stream and river environments. For more information see <http://www.interfluve.com/courses.htm>.

### **Lake Superior Alliance to meet at Inland Sea Society symposium**

The Lake Superior Alliance's annual meeting will be June 21-24 in Bayfield, WI, under the theme "A Sustainable Future for Lake Superior." The event is being held in conjunction with the Inland Sea Society's Inland Sea Symposium.

The event includes three days of field trips, hands-on workshops, inspiring presentations, and time to roam and enjoy Lake Superior's scenic treasures, the Apostle Islands. The keynote speaker will be Jim Lively of the Michigan Land Use Institute.

More details at [www.superioralliance.org](http://www.superioralliance.org).

SOURCE: Bob Olsgard, 888-281-1735 or [bolsgard@spacestar.net](mailto:bolsgard@spacestar.net)

*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: Citizens for a Better Environment, 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, Sierra Club — John Muir Chapter, Wisconsin Association of Lakes, Wisconsin B.A.S.S. Federation, Wisconsin

Conservation Congress, Wisconsin Council of Sportfishing Organizations, Wisconsin's Environmental Decade, and Wisconsin Trout Unlimited.

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

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