



WSNetwork News

June 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](#)
- [Environmental Education Initiatives](#)
- [Fair Motorboat Gas Revenue Allocation](#)
- [Forest & Habitat Fragmentation](#)
- [Shoreland Zoning](#)
- [Water Regulation and Protection](#)

Read this handy federal **budget** summary from the WDNR.

Attend Community Shares of Wisconsin's 10th Annual Golf Classic (the WSN is a member of Community Shares). **More**

Arrowhead-Weston Line

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

SOUL questions Minnesota Power's actions in relation to ATC

A Notice Of Complaint, was filed by North American Water Office (NAWO) and Save Our Unique Lands (SOUL) at the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission on June 7. The filing alleges that:

- Exemption from the Power Plant Siting Act for this project was granted to Minnesota Power alone.
- Minnesota Power is no longer financially involved in the project, but continues with financing from ATC, appearing to perform such tasks as right of way acquisition and/or condemnation, permitting, all as a proxy for American Transmission Company, who at this time, is not a public utility in Minnesota, and therefore would not be granted the privileges of a state utility.
- Changes in construction granted to Minnesota Power, but listed in American Transmission Companies materials estimate indicate changes in conductors that may require more testing for dynamic stability, especially at the Arrowhead Substation.

Both organizations are requesting the Public Utilities Commission to provide the needed regulatory oversight which protects all Minnesota citizens. George Crocker, Executive Officer of NAWO stated "It just does not add up, MP tells their shareholders one story, ATC tells the state of Wisconsin another. We need the state of Minnesota to examine the facts and set the record straight." Tom Kreager, President of SOUL, agrees "Just follow the money, MP is no longer

financing the project, ATC is. We feel they should have to play by the rules, just as other utilities do.” According to Minnesota Statutes, the Public Utility Commission will need to examine the complaint, and forward to Minnesota Power for examination or explanation of the issues both organizations have raised within the next 20 days. Certain Minnesota landowners, including SOUL, who own land along the established route will face a condemnation hearing regarding that land June 28, 2004.

SOURCE: SOUL, George Crocker, (651) 770-3861, or Linda Ceylor hillsidedairyfarm@yahoo.com.

Paddle event to save Namekagon June 26

To p.1

Last year we hosted the Namekagon River Gathering to speak out for the protection of the Namekagon River. Join us this year in support of the St. Louis, Nemadji, Thornapple, Black, Wisconsin, and Namekagon Rivers — rivers threatened by the proposed Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line which, if constructed, would challenge the beauty and integrity of these rivers. Let’s paddle and celebrate the beauty of these rivers on Saturday, June 26.

Before: Meet at Springbrook Community Center, 8:45 a.m. for coffee and shuttling. Canoe rental available for a fee. Free shuttle.

Afterward: Gather at the Community Center. Lunch provided. Participate in a tribute to Northern Rivers. In addition:

- 1) We encourage representatives of river, watershed, conservation and recreation organizations to gather at the Springbrook Community Center, Friday evening, June 25, for informal socializing and networking. Meet and enjoy the company of other members of the waters community from around the state. Bring information about your organization to share.
- 2) Bring a copy of a favorite photo, or a written memory or anecdote about your favorite northern Wisconsin river(s). Add them to a collage in tribute to our northern rivers. In addition to sharing your contributions with those attending this event, we hope to add them to a future presentation to the Natural Resources Board, to accompany the upcoming petition to upgrade some Northern Wisconsin rivers and streams to Outstanding or Exceptional Resource Water status.
- 3) On Saturday afternoon, stay for lunch at the Springbrook Community Center. Contribute to the collage and participate in Northern Rivers Tribute.

Hosted by the Wisconsin Stewardship Network, SOUL, River Alliance of Wisconsin, Midwest Environmental Advocates, and Clean Wisconsin. To learn more about this event, and about the petition to upgrade the status of a number of Wisconsin’s northern rivers, visit www.wisconsinrivers.org.

To p.1

SOURCE: Lisa Goodman, Northern Coordinator, Local Group Assistance, River Alliance of Wisconsin, 306 E. Wilson 2W, Madison, WI 53703 (608) 257-2424 (x110) goodman@wisconsinrivers.org.

/

**Environmental Education
Initiatives**

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

WWA wetlands posters free for classrooms, libraries

Many wetland enthusiasts answered our call for photos as part of our “Wetlands Up Close” photo contest last fall by getting out their cameras and boots and capturing wetland magic on film. Thank you to all who submitted an entry to our Wetlands Up Close Photo Contest. Winning photos are featured on this educational poster that explores the value of wetlands in words and in images. Help us spread the word about the values of wetlands by posting a copy. Posters are free for classrooms or libraries, and are available to others for the cost of shipping and handling (\$3). To order a copy of the poster, e-mail or call our office at (608) 250-9971.

SOURCE: Wisconsin Wetlands Assn., wetlands@wiscwetlands.org (608) 250-9971.

To p.1

Watershed training scholarship offered

The Conservation Technology Information Center’s Know Your Watershed Program is offering a scholarship to a two-week Watershed Partnerships training seminar titled, “Collaboration for Environmental Decisionmaking.” The course, presented by the Federal Executive Institute and Management Development Centers, emphasizes community-based partnership building and decision making in a watershed framework. Through classroom instruction, small group exercises and hands-on experiences, the course covers leadership, communication and problem solving skills; technical information; group dynamics; and regulatory program information. Bringing together a diverse mix of professionals from varying backgrounds, organizations, and geographic areas, the seminar provides excellent opportunities for networking and relationship building. The Know Your Watershed scholarship will cover the \$3,900 tuition fee, which includes lodging and meals, as well as all travel expenses. The training will be held in Denver, Colo., Nov. 8 - 19, 2004. The application deadline is August 31. More information on the course is available at www.leadership.opm.gov/content.cfm?cat=WP.

SOURCE: Jill M. Reinhart, Water Quality Specialist, Purdue University, kyw@ctic.purdue.edu.

Fair Motorboat Gas Revenue Allocation

WSN issue chair: Peter Murray, WI Assn. of Lakes, ptmurray@wisconsinlakes.org

To p.1

Maine seeks to halt 'liquidation harvesting'

A story in the May 26 Kennebec (Maine) *Journal* at <http://www.kjonline.com/news/local/689908.shtml> reports, Gov. John Baldacci approved new rules intended to make it harder to buy, strip, and quickly resell plots of timberland. The rules take effect in January 2005 and are meant to substantially eliminate so-called "liquidation harvesting" within five years. The new rules require landowners, who want to buy, cut, and sell parcels within five years, to do one of the following: limit harvesting to 50 percent of the merchantable timber, as it existed when the parcel was bought; have a harvest plan signed by a licensed forester; or, use a logger or forester who has successfully completed a training course accredited by the Forest Service. The new rules do contain 12 exemptions, including owners who have less than 20 acres and owners whose activities are independently certified by a third-party. Supporters of the initiative urged lawmakers to crack down on liquidation harvesting because they said the practice removes portions of larger forest ecosystems, thereby shrinking animal habitat and outdoor recreation opportunities for people. Woodland owners who already practice sustainable harvesting said they have been devastated by liquidation harvesting.

SOURCE: SERC *Wildlines Report*, June 1, 2004.

To p.1

Public hearing set on emergency rules for grading along waterways

Emergency rules that allow many grading projects along lakes and rivers to be approved through a shorter general permit review are the subject of a public hearing June 16 in Madison. The public hearing on the emergency grading rules will be held at 3 p.m. in room 041 of the State Natural Resources Building (GEF 3), 125 S. Webster St., Madison. Emergency rules that allow many grading projects along lakes and rivers to be approved through a shorter general permit review are the subject of a public hearing June 16 in Madison.

The proposed emergency rules covering shoreland grading were approved by the Natural Resources Board May 10 and effective for 150 days. They are part of a larger package of emergency rules to implement 2003 Wisconsin Act 118. That law, passed in January to streamline the permitting process for projects along waterways, sets up a three-tier system allowing some activities to be exempt from permitting unless they occur along sensitive waters, others to proceed with a shorter, more general Department of Natural Resources review, and still other activities to undergo the lengthier individual permit application and review process.

To p.1

The emergency grading rules were designed to get in place before the 2004 spring construction season and are likely to change before permanent rules grading rules are adopted before the 2005 construction season, according to Todd Ambs, administrator of the DNR Water Division. The agency is developing the permanent grading rules and will use public comments from the public hearing on the emergency grading rules to help shape the permanent rules.

SOURCE: Mary Ellen Vollbrecht, WDNR, (608) 264-8554.

To p.1

Water Regulation & Protection

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

Groups encouraged to sign letter calling for more Annex 2001 hearings

I would encourage everyone to sign on to this letter [to Governor Doyle as outlined in the last issue of *WSNetwork News*]. Currently DNR is planning to hold only one hearing near Lake Michigan, (Green Bay) and none near Lake Superior. The only other hearing will be one in Chicago. In contrast the State of Ohio is planning on holding eight hearings. Clearly the importance of this issue merits more real opportunity for public involvement.

CORRECTION: UW-EC web site link

There was an incorrect link in the last *WSNetwork News* to the UW-Eau Claire web site developed by Geography 378 students to examine global issues relating to water privatization and commodification. The correct link is <http://www.uwec.edu/grossmzc/WATER/>

The letter being circulated begins:

“On behalf of the conservation and environmental organizations listed below, we urge you to take the utmost advantage of the approaching public comment period for the draft Great Lakes Charter Annex (Annex 2001) implementation agreement by providing accessible opportunities for public comment, education, and dialogue. The Council of Great Lakes Governors is currently scheduled to hold two public hearings in the Great Lakes basin, one in Chicago and another in Toronto, within the anticipated 90-day public comment period. We do not believe this will give enough opportunity for the approximately 34 million people living in the Great Lakes basin to learn about and engage in this issue. We recommend that additional opportunities for public input and education be developed on an individual state and provincial level to provide increased opportunities for the public to be included in this process and respectfully request your leadership in this matter.”

Contact Derek Scheer for more information on the letter at dscheer@cleanwisconsin.org.

SOURCE: George Meyer, WI Wildlife Federation, georgemeyer@tds.net.

To p.1

AG announces suit against cranberry grower

Attorney General Peg Lautenschlager announced today that she has filed a public nuisance lawsuit against a cranberry grower on Lac Courte Oreilles, in Sawyer County. The lawsuit, filed in Sawyer County, seeks to abate the nuisance conditions caused by the defendant’s pollution of the

lake by releases of fertilizer and other the pollutants over the course of many years. The lawsuit, which was filed jointly with a number of homeowners on the lake against William Zawistowski, a Sawyer County resident, alleges that Lac Courte Oreilles, the eighth largest natural lake in Wisconsin, has been used by the public since before Wisconsin became a state, for commerce, transportation, fishing, swimming, boating, and the enjoyment of its natural beauty, but has now become a public nuisance as a result of the defendant's operations. More at <http://www.thewheelerreport.com/releases/June04/Jun11/0611dojsawyer.PDF>. Some WSN member groups have praised this action, including Midwest Environmental Advocates, the Sierra Club, Trout Unlimited, and the Wisconsin Wetland Assn.:

- <http://www.thewheelerreport.com/releases/June04/Jun14/0614environmentalscranberry.PDF>.
- <http://www.thewheelerreport.com/releases/June04/Jun15/0615wetlandscanberry.PDF>.

To p.1

MEA, Sierra Club lawsuit forces Cintas oil cleanup

Midwest Environmental Advocates represented the Sierra Club in an enforcement lawsuit to stop Cintas Corporation, the county's largest industrial laundry, from sending excessive amounts of oil and grease into Lake Michigan. Cintas is one of five industrial laundries that discharges water directly into the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District system, but is the only industrial laundry that failed to invest in the pretreatment machinery necessary to remove excessive amounts of oil and grease from its wastewater. Success! In response to our lawsuit, Cintas agreed to install the equipment needed to significantly reduce pollution and pay \$95,000 in penalties and fees, of which \$47,200 will go to two non-profit environmental groups that are working to protect urban water resources in Milwaukee. To read the Milwaukee *Journal-Sentinel* article on the settlement, visit <http://www.jsonline.com/news/metro/may04/231036.asp>.

SOURCE: Midwest Environmental Advocates, advocate@midwestadvocates.org.

June Natural Resources Magazine has water focus

The entire June *Natural Resources Magazine* issue is water resources-oriented articles. This issue has an excellent summary of the 'hypolimnetic withdrawal' project at Devil's Lake by Dick Lathrop, Tim Astfalk, John Panuska, and Dave Marshall. This is the state's most popular park, hosting over a million visitors every year. Since the late 1860s farms, resorts, cottages, outhouses, and a park sewer main broken in the late 1970s all contributed pollution, particularly leached phosphorus, to the high, forested lake. Devil's Lake has "...no outlet to naturally dilute and flush out the phosphorus." Phosphorus stored in the bottom sediments are now being slowly removed by withdrawing waters through a sunken pipe placed near the bottom of the lake — sort of like an aquarium syphon. This is a no-maintenance, no-electricity option that will run several weeks a year for perhaps 15 years. A WDNR Section 319 grant funded this project in 2002/2003 when the pipe was installed. More at <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/news/on/2004/on040608.htm#art7>

To p.1

SOURCE: WDNR "Basin Briefs," 6-9-04.

2004 Soil and Water Conservation Society Conference July 24-28

The 2004 Soil and Water Conservation Society Conference will be held July 24-28 at the Radisson Riverfront Hotel in St. Paul, Minnesota. A variety of workshops, plenary and concurrent sessions and educational tours will cover:

Topic 1: Soil and environmental quality. Assessment tools for quantifying conservation program effectiveness and Finding common ground on soil quality--balancing benefits with pitfalls

Topic 2: Agricultural Management and Environmental Quality. Climate change impacts on soil and water conservation; air quality in the US; Fugitive dust emissions; Improving water quality through agricultural drainage water management systems; and The Conservation Security Program: Setting the standard for a new era of conservation polity.

Topic 3: Assessing the effectiveness of conservation and environmental programs. Is NRCS EQIPped to get the most from EQIP? Assessment of the effectiveness of conservation practices, including watershed case studies. Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CLEAP). An overview of proposed economic analysis in the USDA Conservation Effects Assessment Project. Process based watershed research to evaluate the effectiveness of conservation programs.

SOURCE: WDNR "Basin Briefs," 6-9-04.

Defenders of Wildlife initiate FOI request on USDA program

What is the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) doing with hundreds of millions of dollars from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)? Defenders of Wildlife is trying to find out. We want to know how much EQIP money NRCS is providing to factory farms for manure-related practices, such as building manure lagoons. We also want to know what steps the NRCS is taking to ensure that this money is being used in an environmentally responsible manner. On November 20,

2003 Defenders requested information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). NRCS provided only sketchy aggregate data that makes it impossible to know how much factory farms are getting and for what purpose. This poses a problem. While the NRCS has acknowledged that environmental review may be needed for some EQIP contracts, with incomplete data the public has no way of knowing what proposals are being funded or whether the environmental reviews are being done in accordance with law. We have appealed the NRCS's inadequate FOIA response and will keep readers tuned into developments. Read more about this on-going issue in the next Rural Updates! newsletter. For a NRDC report on the environmental effects of Factory Farming see: <http://www.nrdc.org/water/pollution/cesspools/cessinx.asp>.

SOURCE: Defenders of Wildlife, *Rural Updates!*, June 8, 2004, sjohnson@defenders.org.

AG files suit against 3M over Wausau discharge

Attorney General Peg Lautenschlager announced on June 8 that the Department of Justice has settled an environmental enforcement lawsuit in Marathon County against Minnesota Mining and

Manufacturing Company (3M) for alleged water pollution violations. According to the complaint, which was filed at the request of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), 3M owns a plant in Wausau, at which it manufactures crushed mineral granules for roofing materials, and generates a byproduct referred to as “grey sand.” On May 27, 2003, more than 2,000 gallons of water containing approximately 490 pounds of grey sand, which had spilled at the plant, were discharged into the Wisconsin River through a storm sewer on the property. Under the terms of the settlement agreement, 3M will pay \$7,500 for the violation.

SOURCE: Brian Rieselman, RieselmanBJ@DOJ.STATE.WI.US. (608) 266-7876.

To p.1

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Federal mercury rule comment period ends June 29

On June 29th the comment period for the federal mercury rule will close — Please don’t miss this opportunity to protect the health of Wisconsinites! Mercury pollution threatens the health of Wisconsin families, fishing tradition, and tourism economy. Clean Wisconsin is working with state and federal leaders to significantly reduce mercury pollution from coal-fired power plants. Using available technology, by 2008 we can reduce mercury pollution from power plants by 90 percent nationwide, if every power plant takes action.

SOURCE: Shauna Cook, Clean Wisconsin, sacook@cleanwisconsin.org. Please take 2 minutes to link to <http://www.cleanwisconsin.org/action/mercuryaction.html> and sign our letter to the Bush Administration asking for 90% cuts in power plant mercury pollution. You can edit and add comments to personalize your messages!

Utah Phillips benefit concert September 12 in Madison

Ed Garvey announced today that legendary story teller and folk singer Utah Phillips will perform a benefit concert on September 12 at the Orpheum Theatre in Madison starting at 7:00 p.m. as the kickoff event for Fighting Bob Fest III. The concert will benefit Family Farm Defenders and Wormfarm Institute. More concert information can be found at www.FightingBobFest.org.

To p.1

Madison Audubon seeking administrative assistant

Administrative Assistant Position with Madison Audubon for 30 hours/ per week is available July 1, 2004. The Administrative Assistant oversees daily administrative operations of the office of the Madison Audubon Society and collaborates with the organization’s Officers, Board of Directors and other staff to provide administrative support for the organization’s program activities and fund raising. For details call the MAS office at (608) 255-2473. Submit a one-page cover letter

and resume with references by June 17 to the Madison Audubon Society, 222 S Hamilton St. Suite 1, Madison, WI 53703, masoffice@mailbag.com.

WCVI seeking campaign organizer for Green Bay

The Wisconsin Conservation Voters Institute (WCVI) works to improve public health and protect natural resources in Wisconsin by connecting conservation-minded citizens with the policy making process through education, advocacy and implementation of voter participation techniques. WCVI is running an intensive nonpartisan, get out the vote and voter education campaign in the Green Bay area from July, 2004-November, 2004. The goals of the project are to raise the level of the environment in public debate and increase voter participation of members of environmental organizations. Submit resume by June 25, 2004, to Wisconsin Conservation Voters Institute, attn: Kerry Schumann, 306 East Wilson St., Suite 2E, Madison, WI 53703 or kerry@conservationvoters.org.

To p.1

State seeking volunteers for mercury testing

I'm sure most of you heard about this hair study by the state to detect mercury levels. Please circulate the information to people you know who are eating a lot of fish, particular sportspeople who are eating fish caught in Wisconsin. A link to a newspaper article with all the information is at <http://www.madison.com/archives/read.php?ref=tct:2004:06:09:375273:FRONT>.

SOURCE: Kerry Schumann, Executive Director, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, 306 E. Wilson Street, #2E Madison, WI 53703 (608) 661-0845 kerry@conservationvoters.org.

To p.1

Community Shares of Wisconsin 10th Annual Golf Classic

Friday, August 6th, 2004 to Friday, August 6th, 2004

Registration 9:00 a.m. Event at The Meadows of Sixmile Creek — contact: Donna Chan Fisher dcfisher@communityshares.com (608) 256-1066, ext. 12 for more information. Swing, push, pull, fade and hook to support Community Shares of Wisconsin and 60 local nonprofit organizations.

9 a.m. – registration and putting contest 10 am – shotgun start 3:30 pm – awards program & brats, burgers & stir-fry — \$95 single or \$340 per pre-registered four-some. Includes green fees, cart and food. \$31.50 tax deductible. WIN! A golf package for two at The House on the Rock Resort and Golf. Includes one night lodging (shared double room) and four total rounds of golf.

WSN is a Community Shares member organization!

To p.1

WSN Member Groups Get connected...join the WSN

Aldo Leopold Audubon Society
Aldo Leopold Foundation
Anishinaabe Nijiji/ 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
Citizens Natural Resources Assn. of Wisconsin
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.
Musky Alliance of Wisconsin
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
Rusk County Waters Alliance
Save Our Unique Lands
Shaw-Paca Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Smallmouth Alliance Southern WI Chapter
SOUL of Kennan/Catawba
SOUL of Lake Superior
SOUL of Rusk County
SOUL of Sawyer County
Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Standing Cedars Community Land Conservancy
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

NOTICE: This newsletter may contain portions of copyrighted material. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, such attributed material is sent without profit to people expressing a prior interest in this information for research and educational purposes.

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.

To p.1

FY 05 Federal Budget Update – June 11, 2004

Status of Federal Appropriations

The following is a brief update on the status of the federal budget appropriations for FY 05.

The House Appropriations Committee passed the FY '05 spending bill for the **Interior Department and Forest Service** on June 10. The bill provides \$9.8 million above FY 04 levels but \$213 million below the President's budget request. Committee Chairman Bill Young (R-Fla.) said the may go to the House floor next week.

SUMMARY – The \$19.7 billion FY 05 spending package includes:

- **Bureau of Land Management** would receive \$1.7 billion, \$12 million below the President's request and \$46 million below FY 04 funding levels.
- **The National Park Service** would receive \$2.268 billion, \$92 million below the request and \$59 million below FY 04.
- **The Fish & Wildlife Service** would receive \$1.3 billion, \$62 million below the request and \$45 million below FY 04.
- **US Geological Survey** would receive \$944 million, \$18 million above the request and \$7 million above FY 04
- **The Forest Service** funding is \$4.2 billion, \$294 million less than FY 04 but \$8 million above the President's request. There's an additional \$1 billion for emergency wildland fire suppression funds for the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management spread over FY 04 and 05.

Following are a few highlights from the bill:

Land & Water Conservation Fund – Congressman Obey proposed an amendment that would have restored Land and Water Conservation Fund money to a funding level equal to the President's funding request of \$314 for land acquisition and state grants. The committee members rejected the amendment by a vote of 26-28. This amendment would have added \$171.7 million in land acquisition funds for the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service to the bill, as well as nearly \$60 million for the Forest Legacy Program. As passed the bill would provide virtually no money for new federal land acquisition projects in FY 05 for those agencies. The

bill includes about \$50 million for existing programs and emergency projects, and \$91 million for Park Service state grants.

State Wildlife Grants - The bill provides \$67.5 million for the State Wildlife Grants program. Last year's funding was \$70 million, the President's request this year was for \$80 million, the House and Senate letters were for \$100 million and the Teaming with Wildlife coalition rallied for \$125 million.

Wildfire Suppression – The bill would provide \$879 million for fire suppression in FY 05, a decrease from the \$907 million requested by the administration. The committee also included \$694 million for fire preparedness, \$27 million above the administration's request and \$22 million above FY 04 level. For hazardous fuel reduction the President's requested level of \$476 was included.

In addition to approving the Interior spending bill, the Committee approved spending allocations that set the ceilings for the 13 subcommittees.

Following are the energy and environment spending allocations:

- **Agriculture:** \$16.78 billion, down from \$16.84 billion in FY '04.
- **Commerce, Justice, State (including NOAA):** \$39.79 billion, up from \$37.58 billion in FY '04.
- **Defense:** \$391.1 billion, up from \$366.38 billion in FY '04.
- **Energy and Water:** \$28.1 billion, up from \$27.26 billion in FY '04.
- **Foreign Operations:** \$19.39 billion, up from \$17.48 billion in FY '04.
- **Homeland Security:** \$31.76 billion, up from \$29.24 billion in FY '04.
- **Interior:** \$19.73 billion, up from \$19.54 billion in FY '04.
- **Military Construction:** \$10 billion, up from \$9.32 billion in FY '04.
- **Transportation:** \$25.44 billion, down from \$28.37 billion in FY '04.
- **VA-HUD (including the U.S. EPA):** \$92.93 billion, up from \$90.8 billion in FY '04.

The Committee rejected another amendment proposed by Congressman Obey that would have rescinded \$14.2 billion in tax cuts and reallocated that money to a host of programs, including \$1 billion for the clean water state revolving fund.