



WSNetwork News

July 15, 2003

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

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Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line

PSC review finds Twin Cities route cheaper than A-W

A story in the July 8 Milwaukee *Journal-Sentinel* reports, "Building a high-voltage power line alongside an existing line between Wausau and the Twin Cities would cost less than a line extending through northwestern Wisconsin from Wausau to Duluth, Minn., a consultant's report concludes. The consultant, R.W. Beck, was hired by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission to review cost projections for the Wausau-Duluth power line after the company proposing the line said its costs had risen significantly since first being proposed four years ago. Beck's report, released Tuesday, found that the line between Wausau and the Twin Cities, known as the King-Weston line, would cost \$384.4 million, compared with a cost of \$410.7 million for Arrowhead-Weston." Read the complete story at <http://www.jsonline.com/bym/News/jul03/153656.asp>.

SOURCE: July 9, 2003, Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel*.



Doyle vetoes budget cuts to Stewardship Fund

Gov. Jim Doyle announced his intention to veto budget cuts to the state's Stewardship Fund at a gathering July 14 at Governor Nelson State Park in Madison. The Governor talks about the veto at <http://media.doa.state.wi.us/doyleveto-stewardship/index.asp>.

In addition to restoring funding to the program, Doyle said his veto would also address the lower \$250,000 review level by the Jt. Finance Committee of Stewardship purchases and the budget's provision to force the DNR to sell \$40 million in state lands.

Thanks to the many individuals from WSN member organizations who voiced their opinions to keep this forward-looking program fully funded.

DNR Independence and PIO Restoration

Fair Motorboat Gas Revenue Allocation

Farm Manure Management & Polluted Runoff Enforcement

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Forest Fragmentation

Story offers insight into people's views on multiple forest use

A lengthy story by George Tresnak in the July 3 Park Falls *Herald* quotes numerous forest users on how they think the Nicolet-Chequamegon National Forest should be managed. The story offers insight into the how recreational, environmental, and economic interests can clash as we try to manage forests for multiple uses. Read the story at http://www.parkfallswi.com/placed/index.php?sect_rank=1&story_id=145568.

SOURCE: Park Falls *Herald* via Will Fantle, wfantle@sbcglobal.net.

Mercury Reduction

PCs short life-cycle: from helpful to harmful

Do you have an old Apple in the attic, an obsolete Dell in the garage, or an outdated HP in the closet? So you bought a new computer to stay on pace with high-tech, and you were left with only one detail: what to do with your old machine.

The rising tide of obsolete computer waste, or e-waste, is a growing problem all over the country. In fact, there are an estimated 300 to 600 million obsolete computers like yours in the United States alone. With the average computer containing about 6 pounds of lead, as well as *mercury*, dioxin-like flame retardants, hexavalent chromium, and dozens of other toxins that have known effects on human health, land-filling your computer can lead to toxic contamination of groundwater and a multitude of other environmental and public health risks.

The Computer TakeBack Campaign is working to solve America's e-waste crisis. The campaign works to enact legislation whereby producers — companies like Dell, HP, Sony — are required to take back obsolete computers from consumers at the end of their useful life, phase out the use of mercury, lead and other toxins used to make the computers, and to recycle responsibly. Producer

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responsibility offers a solution that protects public health and saves taxpayer dollars. The Grass-Roots Recycling Network (GRRN) is leading the effort here in Wisconsin.

All summer long at farmer's markets, festivals, fairs, and concerts, staff and volunteers from GRRN will be spreading the word about hazardous computer waste and building support for the producer responsibility solution so you can get your computer out of the closet and safely recycled. In the meantime, visit our website at www.computertakeback.com, or call us at (608) 232-1830 to set up a GRRN e-waste presentation at your local environmental or civic group's next meeting!

SOURCE: Emily Carpenter, GrassRoots Recycling Network, emily@grrn.org, (608) 232-1830.

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People ask Bush to tighten mercury component of "Clear Skies"

The Environmental News Service on July 8 reported, "Some 138 members of Congress and more than 100 physician, health, environmental, and consumer groups have formally asked President George W. Bush to tighten mercury restrictions within his air pollution plan, known as 'Clear Skies.' In a letter released Monday,

138 members of the U.S. House of Representatives asked Bush to make changes to his proposal to ensure that [control of] mercury emissions are stronger, not weaker, than current law. The Clear Skies initiative sets a cap on mercury emissions from coal fired power plants, which are the nation's largest source of mercury emissions. But critics say the cap of 26 tons in 2010 and 15 tons through 2018 falls short of what could be obtained under existing law."

SOURCE: Environmental News Service, <http://www.ega.org/index.php>.

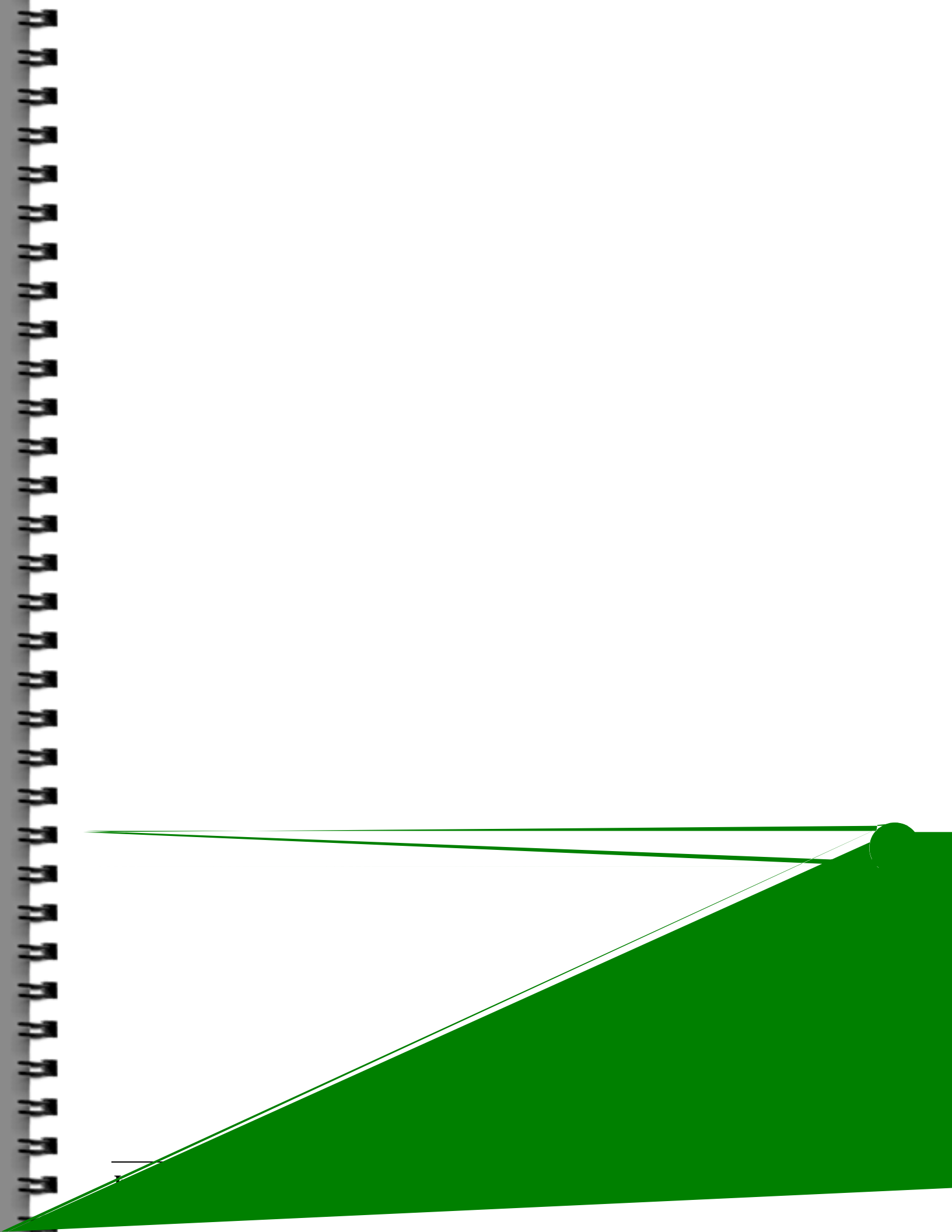
BACKGROUND: MERCURY'S HEALTH THREAT

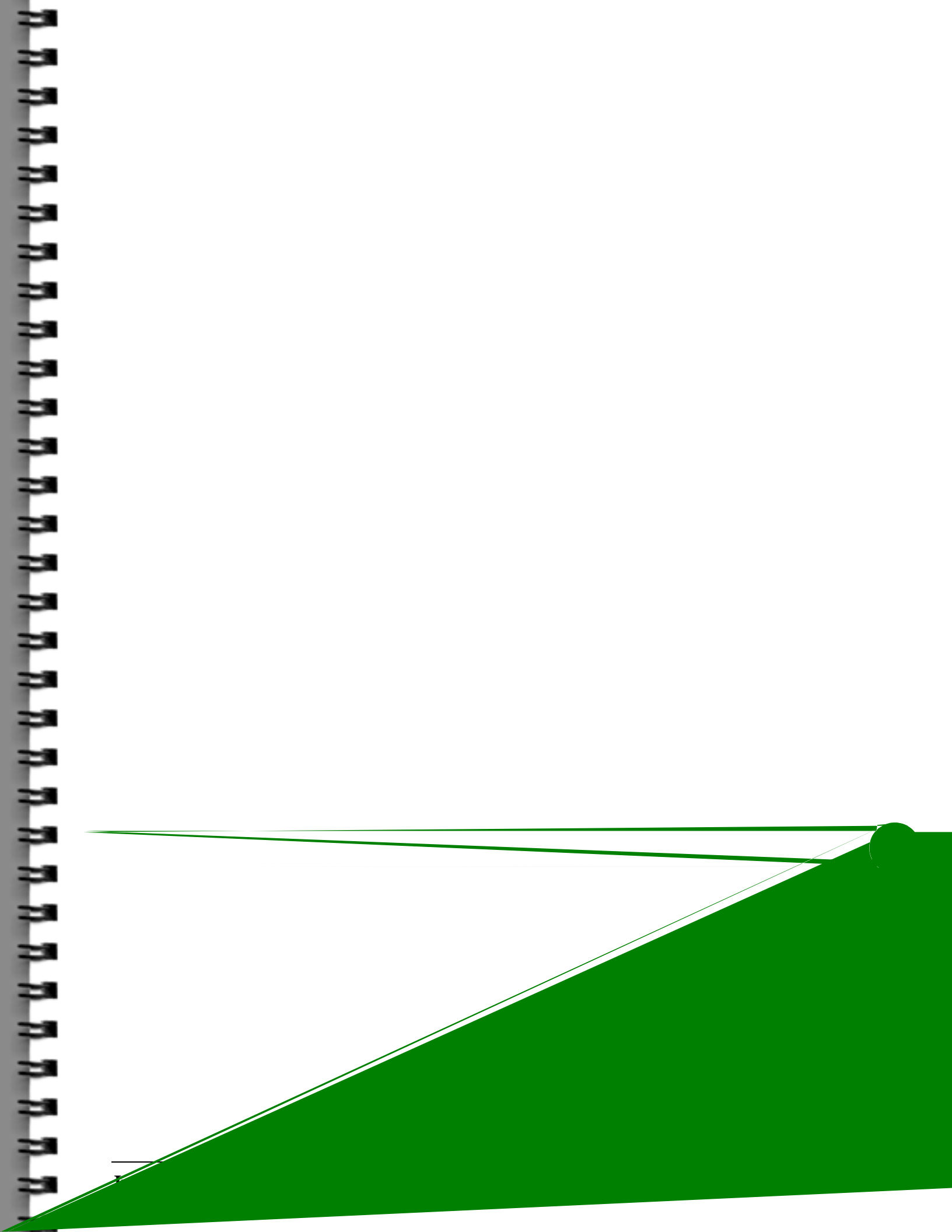
The primary health risk from mercury emerges when airborne mercury falls into surface waters where it can accumulate in streams and oceans. Bacteria in the water transform mercury into methylmercury, which fish absorb when they eat aquatic organisms and humans absorb when they eat fish.

Connecticut tops WI by voting to reduce mercury 90% by 2008

The Hartford *Courant* reported on July 3 that a new Connecticut law (HB 6048) that in five years will greatly reduce mercury emissions from the state's coal-burning power plants is being hailed as the first legislation of its kind in the nation — the product of an unusual collaboration between environmentalists and an energy company. Signed into law by Gov. John G. Rowland (R) last month after unanimous approval in the state House and Senate, the landmark Public Act 03-72 will, by 2008, reduce the amount of mercury emitted by coal-fired plants by 90 percent. It also provides for the possibility of more stringent reductions in 2012. Approval of the legislation comes while Congress and the Bush administration continue to wrangle over how to regulate harmful emissions from the nation's power plants. The EPA has said that it will propose mercury regulations for power plants by December 2003 and issue regulations a year later. "Until a national policy is approved, the Connecticut timetable is reasonable and consistent with what is being proposed on the federal level," said Neil Brown of PSEG Power, one of only two coal-burning plants operating in Connecticut, which is the only plant affected by the legislation. Wisconsin

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Shoreland Zoning & Water Protection

Ruling forces St. Croix County shoreline zoning compliance

Attorney General Peg Lautenschlager announced July 11 that the State of Wisconsin has prevailed in a lawsuit before the Wisconsin Court of Appeals that sought to ensure zoning protection for the Lower St. Croix River, its shorelines, and environs in St. Croix County. The Court of Appeals affirmed an earlier decision by Judge Scott Needham that granted judgment to the State and ruled that St. Croix County must enforce its riverway ordinance in the entire portion of the Lower St. Croix Riverway that lies within the County.

Lautenschlager said that the Lower St. Croix River was selected in 1972 for special protection under the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. In response, the Wisconsin Legislature required counties to adopt riverway zoning that complies with minimum zoning standards adopted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. St. Croix County's riverway zoning ordinance has been in effect since 1975. In February of 2000, St. Croix County passed an amendment that removed a portion of the County from coverage by the St. Croix Riverway zoning ordinance, Lautenschlager said. The County claimed that the State had no authority to require it to enforce riverway zoning in that portion of the Riverway that was administered by the federal government. The State, at the request of the Department of Natural Resources, filed suit and asked the Court to nullify the County's amendment.

The Court of Appeals agreed with the State. The Court held that the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act did not preempt State and local governmental regulation of the Lower St. Croix River and that the State has authority to exercise its police power and require zoning protection in the federally administered zone. The Court of Appeals affirmed the judgment of the circuit court, nullifying the amendment to the County's riverway zoning ordinance, because it was enacted in excess of the power granted to the County by the State.

Wisconsin/Minnesota joint plan for updating Lower St. Croix shoreline rules subject of July 31 hearing

Wisconsin and Minnesota are updating their rules governing development along the scenic bluffs and other shoreline areas of the Lower St. Croix River, which is designated a national scenic river and thus due special protections. Wisconsin's proposed changes will be the topic of a July 31 public hearing in Hudson. The hearing begins at 5 p.m. in the lower level community room in the St. Croix County Government Center, 101 Carmichael Road. Public notices were mailed July 1, triggering a 45-day public comment period on the proposed rule revisions that ends at the close of the day Aug. 15.

Minnesota is still working on revising its rules. The two states are changing their development rules to make them consistent with the cooperative management plan for the Lower St. Croix that Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the National Park System agreed to in 2001.

Wisconsin's proposed changes affect Chapter NR 118 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, which establishes the state standards that local government must meet when adopting and enforcing zoning ordinances within their boundaries. The proposed changes seek to better protect the unique geologic, natural, and scenic features of the 52-mile riverway while increasing the flexibility for property owners to repair, maintain and, in some cases, expand homes and other structures that existed before the rules were originally set in 1973, says Al Shea, director of the DNR Bureau of Watershed Management.

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“This important decision will help to preserve for present and future generations the qualities that make the Lower St. Croix River such a special natural treasure in Wisconsin,” Lautenschlager said.

SOURCE: Attorney General Lautenschlager’s office.

River Alliance asking DNR to upgrade various waters’ status

The River Alliance of Wisconsin conducted an analysis of the DNR’s stream rankings in the Northern Rivers Initiative, and found that many of the rivers identified in the Northern Rivers Initiative have higher water quality than many waters currently classified as Exceptional Resource Waters. Moreover, many of those rivers may fall within the definition of Exceptional Resource Water or Outstanding Resource Water under §§NR 102.11 and 102.10. The DNR has expressed a willingness to review the Northern Rivers Initiative to determine whether those waters qualify as Exceptional Resource Waters or Outstanding Resource Waters.

The River Alliance of Wisconsin proposes that a coalition of environmental and conservation groups petition the Natural Resources Board under Wis. Stat. §227.12 to initiate a rulemaking to upgrade and codify the status of approximately 460 northern Wisconsin streams identified in the Northern Rivers Initiative and that currently have the default classification of Fish and Aquatic life. We are now contacting local watershed groups around the state for sign-ons to the petition. We hope to be done collecting org. names by the end of this month. Please contact the River Alliance or Attorney Andrew Hanson of Midwest Environmental Advocates www.midwestadvocates.org directly if your organization would like to join the River Alliance in this petition, or if you have any questions.

[NOTE: The complete text of this petition will be on the 2004 WSN conference CD.]

SOURCE: River Alliance of Wisconsin, 306 E. Wilson St., 2W, Madison, WI 53703 (608) 257-2424 www.wisconsinrivers.org.

Nominations for stream monitoring awards sought

We are seeking nominations to recognize exemplary efforts by individuals and groups in volunteer stream monitoring for the Wisconsin Stream Monitoring Awards. This awards program is designed to promote the awareness of and participation in volunteer stream monitoring work in Wisconsin. The six categories in which volunteers or professionals who support volunteer stream monitoring can be acknowledged are: adult, student, groups, teacher(s) or classroom(s), public employee, and pioneer. You can download the information from the Water Action Volunteers’ website at: <http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav/awards2003.htm>. Complete nominations packets are due September 1, 2003, to Peggy Compton at (608) 342-1633 or peggy.compton@ces.uwex.edu or to Kris Stepenuck at (608) 264-8948 or kris.stepenuck@dnr.state.wi.us.

SOURCE: WDNR “Basin Briefs,” 7-9-03.

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River restoration/rehab workshop Sept. 15-16 in Ashland

A River Restoration/Rehabilitation Workshop for the WI Lake Superior Basin will be held Sept. 15-16 at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center Auditorium in Ashland, WI. For more information contact Mike Kroenke, UWEX Lake Superior Basin Educator for Natural Resources at (715) 685-2674 or mike.kroenke@ces.uwex.edu.

SOURCE: WDNR "Basin Briefs," 7-9-03.

Lake Superior water and land symposium Sept. 10-12 in Odanah

A Lake Superior Water and Land Symposium will be held Sept. 10-12 at the Bad River Casino and Conference Center in Odanah, WI. The symposium is intended specifically for basin residents, local government officials, land use planners, and stewardship organization members. You will learn how human use and activity is compatible with protecting and restoring the basin's irreplaceable land and water resources. Contact Lisa Radke, Lake Superior Binational Forum (715) 682- 1489; or lradke@northland.edu.

SOURCE: WDNR "Basin Briefs," 7-9-03.

New rain garden publication available

Build your own: A Rain Garden Manual is a new step-by-step manual available for those who would like to build their own rain garden. The new 32-page publication is available at <http://cleanwater.uwex.edu/pubs/raingarden/index.html>.

SOURCE: WDNR "Basin Briefs," 7-9-03.

LCV seeking help for Clean Water Restoration Act

As many of you know, water issues continue to be a focus of LCV/LCVEF's policy and lobbying efforts, as well as those of the rest of the environmental community. The Clean Water Authority Restoration Act (CWARA) has been introduced in both the House and the Senate, and LCV/LCVEF is working to increase the number of cosponsors. The more groups endorsing the legislation, the easier it will be to persuade members of Congress to be cosponsors. Contact me for a fact sheet, along with a form for endorsing the CWARA and the most current list of cosponsors (so far, Tammy Baldwin is the only cosponsor from Wisconsin). Please tell me by the beginning of next week if your organization will endorse this legislation. Thanks very much for your help with this!

SOURCE: Joy Strawser, League of Conservation Voters Education Fund, (734) 327-7154, joy_strawser@mind-spring.com.

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NPDES permits available online

U.S. EPA is making electronic copies of NPDES permits (i.e., pollutant discharge permits required under the Clean Water Act) and fact sheets for major facilities available online. Permit documents are now available through Envirofacts for about 450 facilities that have had their NPDES permits issued or reissued since November 1. EPA will continue to post copies of permits and fact sheets for major industrial and municipal facilities as existing permits are reissued and new permits are issued. For more information, see www.epa.gov/npdes/permitdocuments.

SOURCE: Diana Toledo, River Alliance of Wisconsin, (608) 257-2424.2002.

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Great Lakes states disagree on protection measures

A story in the June 22 *USA Today* reports that the great lakes make up more than 90% of our fresh water supply in the US, so it comes as no surprise that they are the subject of extensive contention among politicians, bottled water companies, environmentalists, and concerned citizens. At present, the states that border the Great Lakes disagree with one another about how to go about the complex task of managing water access rights. While some enforce strict permitting systems (Minnesota), others do absolutely nothing (Indiana). Until resolute legislative action is taken, it will be largely up to environmental groups to lay down the law — groups like Michigan Citizens for Water Quality, who are in the process of suing Nestle for bottling an ecologically unsound amount of water from Michigan's Big Springs. For more information about this type of issue, visit http://www.serconline.org/waterconservation/pkg_frameset.html.

SOURCE: SERC *Wildlines Report*, July 7, 2003.

Bottled water bill passes California Assembly

An NRDC update reports that over half of all Americans drink bottled water, and about 36 percent drink it more than once a week. Seventy percent of Californians consume some or all of their drinking water from bottled or vended water sources. According to a 1993 poll, nearly half (47 percent) of bottled water drinkers used it at least partially out of concern for their health and safety, but there are no laws to insure that bottled water is cleaner or more healthful than tap water. Currently, consumers have no way of knowing whether the water they are buying is of higher quality than tap water. California AB83 would require companies that sell bottled and vended water to prepare and distribute consumer confidence reports similar to those currently required of public water systems, including summary information about any contaminants detected in the source water. The bill passed the Assembly with the minimum 41 required votes and is now moving through the Senate.

SOURCE: SERC *Wildlines Report*, July 14, 2003.

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River Alliance annual paddle party July 26

This year we're paddling the Baraboo River in celebration of 10 years of successful river protection. In October of 2001, a historic dam removal occurred. Since the removal of the Linen Mill Dam, the Baraboo River has become the longest stretch of river in the nation restored to free-flowing. That's over 115 miles! To view the invitation browse to <http://www.wisconsinrivers.org/invite.pdf>. For more information, e-mail Meagan at members@wisconsinrivers.org or call us at (608) 257-2424.

SOURCE: *C.A.N.O.E.*, Citizen Action Network for our Environment, July 3, 2003.

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Highway J Citizen group appeals to Seventh Circuit Appeals Court

The Highway J Citizens Group, U.A.'s federal lawsuit to stop the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WDOT) planned four-lane expansion of Highway J/164 in Waukesha and Washington Counties has now been appealed to the U.S. Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago. The Seventh Circuit has just granted our attorney's motion to expedite our federal appeal which means that, instead of taking the usual nine months to work its way through the appellate court, our case will be decided within the next three months. A three-judge panel will hear our case during the week of September 15th with a decision rendered shortly thereafter.

This federal lawsuit is "our one and only opportunity" to stop the WDOT from destroying our homes, property values, family farms, schools, churches, small businesses, health and well-being, environment (such as air and water quality), neighborhoods, communities and overall quality of life in this beautiful Kettle Moraine area of Wisconsin with this totally unnecessary and fiscally irresponsible highway expansion project. By supporting our federal lawsuit, you can help us change the way the WDOT does business in Wisconsin and prevent these nonresponsive road-building bureaucrats from paving over every corner of our state.

Attorney Robert Corris and Dr. John Thresher (our soil and water scientific expert) have spent many hours diligently preparing a strong legal case for our citizens group. Your generous donations are now urgently needed so we can pay for their valuable efforts and win this four-year long battle for environmental protection and community preservation.

Please make your donation checks payable to: HIGHWAY J CITIZENS GROUP, U.A. and mail them to us at: PO Box 152, Hubertus, WI 53033. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Jeff Gonyo at (262)-644-8334 or e-mail him at jmgonyo@execpc.com.

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WSN Member Groups

Get connected...join the WSN

Aldo Leopold Audubon Society
 Anishinaabe Nijiji/ Protect the Earth
 Badger Fly Fishers, Inc.
 Brown County Conservation Alliance
 Central WI Chapter of SOUL
 Central Wisconsin Chapter of TU
 Citizens for a Scenic Wisconsin
 Clean Wisconsin
 Concerned Citizens of Newport
 Door County Environmental Council
 Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Lakeland Areas
 Families and Friends for Social Responsibility
 Frank Hornberg Chapter of TU
 Friends of the Jump River

Green Bay Area Great Lakes Sport Fishermen
 Green Bay Chapter of TU
 Groundwater Guardians
 Habitat Education Center
 Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter of TU
 Inland Sea Society
 Izaak Walton League of America - WI Division
 John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club
 Lake Superior Greens
 Lakeshore Chapter of TU
 Madison Audubon Society
 Menomonee Valley Partners
 Midwest Environmental Advocates
 Mining Impact Coalition of WI, Inc.
 Neighbors Standing United
 Northern Thunder
 Pheasants Forever - Sugar River Valley Chapter
 Plover River Alliance
 Random Lake Association
 River Alliance of Wisconsin
 Save Our Unique Lands

Shaw-Paca Chapter of TU
 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 TU
 The Muskellunge Club of WI
 Twin Lakes Conservancy
 Waterkeepers of Wisconsin
 WI Association of Lakes
 WI State B.A.S.S Federation
 WI State Council of Trout Unlimited
 WI Wetlands Association
 Winnebago Audubon Society
 Wisconsin Conservation Voters Institute
 Wisconsin Resources Protection Council
 WI Public Interest Research Group (WISPIRG)
 Wolf River Chapter of TU

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WSNetwork News is published twice monthly by the Wisconsin Stewardship Network, Inc., a network of Wisconsin 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, Concerned Citizens of Newport, ECCOLA, Izaak Walton League of America, Madison Audubon Society, Midwest Environmental Advocates, Inc., 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's Environmental Decade, 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.

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