



WSNetworkNews

Premier issue — April 15, 2001

Click to jump to news on these WSN priority issues:

- [Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line](#)
- [DNR Independence](#)
- [Factory Farming](#)
- [Groundwater Protection](#)
- [Mercury Reduction](#)
- [Metallic Mining](#)
- [Public Intervenor Office Restoration](#)
- [Shoreland/Wetland Protection](#)

Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line

Transmission line Congress resolution introduced in many counties

The following Conservation Congress resolution was distributed by Save Our Unique Lands (SOUL) for introduction in various counties in Wisconsin.

Title: Conservation Congress should reaffirm opposition to the Arrowhead-Weston bulk transmission line

Problem:

The proposed high voltage bulk transmission line from Duluth/Superior to Wausau will further fragment Wisconsin's landscape, crossing numerous rivers, streams, National Scenic Trails and dividing many large blocks of mature forests. Construction of this line ignores less costly and less environmentally devastating alternatives. At present our state has no energy policy and will not have a Smart Growth comprehensive land use policy in effect until 2010. We feel that a comprehensive energy policy for Wisconsin is necessary to prevent degradation of Wisconsin's unique, pristine environment.

WHEREAS, Public Service Commission Staff has written a Final Environmental Impact Statement and provided technical testimony that: supports an alternative low voltage transmission upgrade states of eleven environmental considerations Arrowhead-Weston fails on nine,

WHEREAS, DNR staff has provided testimony in opposition to this project,

WHEREAS, National Park Service provided information to the Final Environmental Impact Statement in opposition to this project,

WHEREAS, eighteen new generating plants have been proposed for Wisconsin's energy needs,

WHEREAS, there have been over one hundred resolutions in opposition to this project, from counties, towns, tribes and various organizations,

WHEREAS, all Wisconsin waters are now contaminated with mercury, with the addition of this project will increase mercury levels in our waters due to the increased coal burning from states to our west.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting held in _____ County, April 9, 2001 recommends that the Conservation Congress take what ever action necessary to prevent the construction of this unnecessary project, and promote the many alternatives which are far less degrading to the environment such as distributed generation, solar, wind, and conservation, as the bulk transmission line is not in the best interest of a sustainable energy future.

SOURCE: Stacy Volk, Save Our Unique Lands (SOUL) wakeupwisc@aol.com, www.wakeupwisconsin.com

DNR Independence

Factory Farming

Senator Burke to introduce Family Farm Budget Amendment

As part of the drive to pass a Family Farm Protection Act for the state of Wisconsin, Senator Brian Burke will introduce an amendment to the proposed state budget that will provide \$10.6 million annually for measures to improve family farm profitability and control manure runoff and soil erosion.

Please attend the one remaining budget hearing April 20 in Milwaukee and voice your support for the Family Farm Protection Act and the soon-to-be-introduced Burke Amendment on family farms. The hearing is at Washington High School from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Note that you will need to get there early in order to have a chance to speak. Plan on being there all day. It's hard work, but it's worth it. You will have 2-3 minutes to speak, so be concise.

For more information, contact:

Sam Gieryn
Citizen Action Family Farm Stewardship Campaign Coordinator
(608) 256-1250 ext. 13
sgieryn@wi-citizenaction.org
1202 Williamson Street, Suite B, Madison, WI 53703

Groundwater Protection

Legislative Council to hold navigable waters meeting

The Navigable Waters Recodification committee will meet at 10 a.m., Friday, April 20, in room 225-NW of the state Capitol. They will discuss the recodification of subch. II of Ch. 30 dealing with navigable waters.

Johnsrud introduces high-capacity well bill

Rep. Du Wayne Johnsrud has introduced AB-311 to amend 281.17 (1) of the statutes; relating to approvals for high-capacity wells. The bill will go to the Assembly Environment committee.

Its sponsors include Representatives Johnsrud, Wade, Bock, Gunderson, Hahn, Huebsch, Hundertmark, F. Lasee, McCormick, Musser, Olsen, Pettis, Seratti, Townsend, Wood and Underheim. Cosponsored by Senators Burke, Baumgart, Schultz and Roessler.

(E-mail the WSN at wsn@chorus.net for a copy of this bill.)

SOURCE: Stu Grimstad, Wisconsin Trout Unlimited

Conservation Congress passes high-cap well question

These are the results of the high-cap well question on the April 9 Spring Hearing ballot:

NUMBER	QUESTION	YES	NO
63	Moratorium on new high-capacity wells	4,656	375

(E-mail the WSN at wsn@chorus.net for a copy of the entire CC results.)

Web site conducting Perrier poll

The Wisconsin Rapids web site is taking an online poll on the Perrier proposal. You may want to contact people and let them know they can vote for or against the plan. The web site address is: <http://www.wisrapids.com/>

SOURCE: Eric Uram, Sierra Club, eric.uram@sierraclub.org

Mercury Reduction

Metallic Mining

Conservation Congress passes two mining question

These are the results of the two mining questions on the April 9 Spring Hearing:

NUMBER	QUESTION	YES	NO
76	Ban use of cyanide in mining	4,532	411
77	No approval of perpetual pumping of groundwater	4,003	320

Milwaukee votes to ban cyanide

The Milwaukee City Council has approved our resolution to ban cyanide in Wisconsin mining! Thanks to MIC Milwaukee.

SOURCE: Zoltan Grossman, mtn@igc.org

Student Mine Summit planned for April 27-29

A Student Mine Summit is planned for April 27 (for high school students) and April 28-29 (for college students) at the Mole Lake Chippewa Reservation near the proposed Crandon mine site.

A new printable poster is available on the Midwest Treaty Network website at:

HTML POSTER http://www.alphacdc.com/treaty/sms_poster.html

STUDENT MINE SUMMIT INFO http://www.alphacdc.com/treaty/youth_edu.html

Please print off some to post in your local schools, campus, or student gathering spots! Posters are also be available in Madison at the Greens Infoshop (31 University Square; door open 24 hrs.). For more information, call 715-295-9997 or 675-8642.

Natural Resources Board given DNR mine update

Larry Lynch of the WDNR gave a presentation to the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board at its March meeting. Lynch indicated the purpose of the presentation was to “highlight changes that have occurred” in the project within the last three years.

The following notes come from Linda Sturnot of the Mining Impact Coalition. Since many of you cannot attend such meetings, Linda’s note is reproduced below, even though it is quite lengthy....

“WDNR presented an information packet to each board member that included basic info. and two maps (one of the general area, and one close up of the mine site/facilities). Lynch gave a very general summary of the project and pointed out the site in proximity to the Wolf River, Mole Lake reservation, Rice Lake, Nashville, Crandon and Lincoln, wetlands, etc. He indicated the project was complex and there are over 30,000 pages of info. being reviewed by WDNR.

“Lynch described the ore body and stated there were ‘lesser amounts of gold & silver.’ He pointed out access to the site, explained what backfilling and tailings are and said ‘if you can remove pyrite you reduce the potential for acid mine drainage.’ He VERY briefly touched on liners, leachate and the cover system. He addressed the soil absorption system (90 acre area) where access water would be discharged and stated the 38 mile pipeline had been replaced by a process where treated water would be pumped back underground and into Swamp Creek. (He did NOT mention the pipeline is still in NMC’s proposal).

“He pointed out the rail corridor from the site to the Soo line for shipping material to be processed off site. Lynch indicated there are three ‘important and significant changes’ that have occurred in the project design/proposal over the last 3 yrs:

“1) A grouting umbrella over the ore body — Lynch described grouting as a ‘very important element’ that would cover the top of the ore body and extend vertically down the sides to reduce inflow and decrease ground and surface movement through fractures. Board members showed their ignorance on this subject (and all others) and someone asked whether the technology was conclusive in protecting ground/surface water inflow. Lynch indicated the grouting technique has been used by the industry for a long time and made no reference to any ‘problems.’

“2) Wastewater — The Board expressed most interest in high capacity wells at the mine site. Lynch said he ‘didn’t know’ how many wells would be on site so he couldn’t provide the exact rate of pumping but said NMC projects 350-800 gallons per minute. Board asked how the DNR evaluates this issue.

“Lynch indicated under state mining laws consideration is given to pumping impact on municipal wells and surface water and private wells. Board asked what is net loss to aquifer? Lynch replied

'depends on where you measure it' - and that there would be 'no appreciable loss to the Wolf River.' NR Brd asked about future droughts and % of uncertainty (in groundwater flow model). Lynch pointed out the Town of Lincoln local agreement includes inflow greater than 600 gallons/min. would require surface water mitigation plan (matching hard water or a portion of treated water to loss of groundwater).

"3) Pyrite Separation — Lynch pointed out the pyrite separation is an added step in the milling process where NMC will recover the pyrite (99%) = net neutral facility. Also includes monitoring - if greater than anticipated they will add additional LIMESTONE. (here's the connection with all the new requests for quarry expansion in S.E. Wisc.). Lynch referred to pyrite separation as a 'positive change.'

"Lynch stated DNR's main focus is groundwater issues:

- 1) Ground water flow models — he stated the DNR is running their own model at a 'more conservative evaluation.'
- 2) Reflooding of the mine site — and whether the contaminated water/backfilling would comply with state groundwater standards. Lynch pointed out the company submitted a reflooded mine management plan and NMC 'predicts no groundwater problems.'

"Lynch indicated there is a generic time schedule for the EIS. The trigger date is referred to as the 'X' date. When the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is ready the public hearing will be held 4 months after that. 'It could happen late this year - provided the analysis is complete.' The Board asked 'when will the law suits begin - and WHO will they sue?' DNR atty. was asked to summarize legal process including contested case hearing and possibilities of grps. seeking injunctions on construction. Mentioned that process would be lengthy - 30-60-90 Ph.Ds could testify. Circuit court would request records generated by contested case hearing.

"Lynch mentioned the Flambeau Project experience and that the protesting party failed to file within the required deadline. Lynch mentioned something about going to the District Court of Appeals and Judge (name?) in Forest Co. Brd. member said 'wouldn't that be interesting.' (Ken may have gotten the name). Then of course all the way to the Supreme Court. Atty. also mentioned possibility of lawsuits at the federal level.

"Lynch indicated in closing that the Irrevocable Trust Fund issue still need to be resolved (but not before the draft EIS). It is required however before the final EIS. There was NO mention of the use of cyanide at the site (to our surprise ?! - members of the Brd didn't bring it up).

"Lynch's presentation was favorable to NMC in that he promoted the project in a very non-threatening, non-specific manner. I don't believe the Brd has the education or even a general understanding of the magnitude of this project to realize its full impact on our ground and surface waters."

"Both Lynch and Ken Fish were interviewed following the WDNR presentation by Wisc. Public Radio."

SOURCE: Linda Sturnot, Mining Impact Coalition, frankesturnot@email.msn.com

Public Intervenor Office Restoration

Shoreland/Wetland Protection

Citizens Announce W3 Effort to Document Wetland Losses in State

Conservation and citizens groups announced the kick-off of W3 on April 12. Wisconsin Wetlands Watch, W3, encourages sportsmen and women and other outdoor advocates to report suspicious wetland fill activities and document the loss of wetlands throughout the state due to lax regulations.

“For three months, a million or more acres of Wisconsin wetlands were protected only by ice. Now, they’re protected only by citizens,” said Dave Cieslewicz, Executive Director of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin. “Until the legislature acts, citizens have to take the lead in protecting wetlands in their own communities.”

“While out and about this summer, I hope that each and every sportsman and woman keeps their eyes and ears open,” said Jeff Bord, Executive Director of Wisconsin Waterfowl Association. “Armed with cameras, video cameras and cell phones, you can make a big difference in the fight to protect the land we all hold dear to our heart. Sportsmen understand the importance of these areas for the continuation of their sport. Wetlands provide essential habitat for good waterfowl hunting and wetlands contribute to good water quality so essential for good fishing.”

WHERE TO SEND W3 REPORTS

1. DNR Warden (1-800-TIP-WDNR; 1-800-847-9367) or your county Water Management Specialist or as a backup, the Wetland Team Leader at the central DNR office at 608-266-7360.
2. Midwest Environmental Advocates at 608-251-5047. MEA is a legal and technical resource center for community groups who are working for environmental justice. Visit their website at <http://www.Midwest-e-advocates.org> or mail to MEA, 122 State St #200, Madison WI 53703.

(Visit the WSN web site for a copy of the wetland violation report form mentioned above.)

SOURCE: Caryl Terrell, Sierra Club, 608-256-0565, cterrell@execpc.com.

Wetland restoration workshops for landowners

The Wisconsin Wetlands Association and numerous partners are coordinating wetland restoration workshops for landowners this year. The first workshop is a two-part event, scheduled for May 4-5 and July 13-14 in the Lake Michigan coastal county of Ozaukee.

The workshops will provide hands-on tools and experience for landowners interested in restoring wetland acres. The restoration objective is to simulate original conditions in the wetland sites, including hydrology, soils and vegetation as closely as possible using simple and complex techniques to reverse the damages and impacts to each wetland.

Partners on the workshop include Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, Riveredge Nature Center, the Wisconsin DNR and US Fish and Wildlife Service.

SOURCE: Charlie Luthin, Wis. Wetlands Assn., wetlands@execpc.com.

WSNetworkNews is published twice monthly by the Wisconsin Stewardship Network, a coalition of Wisconsin hunting, fishing, conservation, and environmental groups.

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.

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.

Newsletter contributions are welcome. Send news of your group's activities relating to Wisconsin's priority issues to State Coordinator Todd Hanson at wsn@chorus.net.

Subscriptions to *WSNetworkNews* are available free. To opt in or out of this distribution list, either visit our web site at www.wsn.org or e-mail us at wsn@chorus.net.