

# ***CLEAN WATER COALITION***

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **CLEAN WATER COALITION RECOGNIZES KEY PLAYERS IN POLLUTED RUNOFF RULEMAKING PROCESS**

MADISON – The Clean Water Coalition (CWC) today presented awards to key individuals who made Wisconsin's new polluted runoff management rules a reality. The awards are a gesture of thanks from the Coalition for the collective hard work, persistence, and dedication to protecting Wisconsin's water quality. Individuals recognized with a *Clean Water Amber* award include:

### **Senator Brian Burke and Representative DuWayne Johnsrud – Got the Ball Rolling Award –**

During the Budget deliberations of 1999-2001, two legislators pulled in a small group of farmer and agribusiness interest groups to discuss the impasse on non-point water pollution. In the room with Burke and Johnsrud were the Farm Bureau, the Municipal Environmental Group and Wisconsin Rural Development Center. Many observers were surprised to see a budget amendment emerge that directed the DNR and the Department of Trade, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (DATCP) to overhaul and redesign the Nonpoint Regulatory Program. Also, the Farm Bureau stayed at the table throughout the process as result of their involvement in the 1999 budget amendment. For Getting the Ball Rolling, the Clean Water Coalition recognizes Senator Brian Burke and Representative DuWayne Johnsrud.

### **Senator Jim Baumgart – Feet To The Fire Award –**

As Chair of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, Senator Baumgart worked tirelessly to ensure that these new rules were as strong and effective as possible. Thanks to his leadership several key provisions were either added or changed in the rules. He led the effort to send the rules back to the DNR for more modifications which ultimately led to the buffer resolution which will produce a statewide vegetative buffer standard for agricultural lands by 2008. The Senator also secured several improvements in the rules implementation package developed by DATCP. Finally, we want to acknowledge the hard work of Senator Baumgart's key staff person on the rules, Pat Henderson.

### **Dennis Frame – Truth or Consequences Award –**

Very early in the process of developing these rules, then Trempealeau County extension agent Dennis Frame began to ask the question, "How will we know if the best management practices employed through these rules are working?" That initial question ultimately led to the creation of the Discovery Farm project, a part of the Wisconsin Agricultural Stewardship Initiative. Today, on the ground research projects are underway at a number of farms across Wisconsin and many more are planned. The CWC looks forward to working with Dennis in the coming months to learn what management practices are best able to control polluted runoff.

### **Ron Seely – Media Coverage Award –**

The coalition recognized Wisconsin State Journal Reporter Ron Seely for writing about the rules as they wound their way through many versions and technical debates. Although the debates over vegetative buffers, funding for farmers and phosphorus standards may not have had the kind of appeal that makes a good 30-second sound bite, Ron was able to write about the issue in a manner that gave newspaper readers an understanding of its relevance to their lives.

### **Darrell Bazzell on behalf of DNR staff – Work Horse Award –**

The coalition presents DNR Secretary Darrell Bazzell with the "Work Horse" award to accept on behalf of the many people within the DNR who put countless hours into the nonpoint pollution rules. People like Russ Rassmussen, Al Shea, Carol Holden and many others spent years drafting and redrafting the rules. They listened to and summarized public comments and redrafted the rules based on those comments, met with DATCP and outside groups and redrafted the rules based on their input, and listened to the Natural Resources Board and redrafted yet again. The result of their hard work is something to be proud of - the strongest water quality law in the country.

### **Secretary Harsdorf on behalf of DATCP staff – To the Challenges of New Partnerships**

To James Harsdorf, Secretary of Agriculture, on behalf of DATCP staff, we present an award for taking on the challenges of pursuing a new working relationship with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and with Wisconsin's counties in order to design and implement the runoff rules. Special recognition is also extended to Mike Dummer, chairman of the Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Board.

### **Pat Leavenworth – Special Appreciation Award –**

The coalition would like to present a "Special Appreciation" award to Pat Leavenworth, State Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, for providing critical assistance with the technical standards that form the basis for these rules.

### **Rebecca Baumann on behalf of the county conservationists – Reality Check Award –**

We would like to present the "Reality Check Award" to Rebecca Bauman (executive director of the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association) for drawing attention to where the rubber meets the road for the new nonpoint rules. We ask her to accept this award on behalf of all the county conservationists that helped us understand the impact and implementation needs of the rules. We'd like to specially recognize: Bill Hafs, Brown County; Pete Van Airdale, Winnebago County; Troy Krupahl, Washington County; Bill Schuster, Door County; Dan Masterpole, Chippewa County; and Perry Lindquist, Waukesha County; for their special efforts during this long process. We intend to continue to work closely with them on securing adequate funding at the county level for the critical issues of implementation, monitoring and enforcement.

Also being recognized this evening are some of the key organizations that are part of the Clean Water Coalition. Thanks are extended to the Wisconsin Association of Lakes, Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group, the John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club, the River Alliance of Wisconsin and Trout Unlimited, for their continued efforts in protecting our waters from polluted runoff. Please join us in recognizing these individuals and organizations for their hard work and dedication to clean water.

The CWC, in particular the River Alliance of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Public Information Research Group (WISPIRG), would like to thank the Beldon Fund for the generous support they provided for the work of WISPIRG and the CWC.

Finally, the CWC wishes to thank Todd Hanson, state coordinator of the Wisconsin Stewardship Network, for his generous donation of the awards. A master home brewer, Todd created the "Clean Water Amber" beer for the event. Each award winner receives a bottle of beer with the Clean Water Amber label. The label on the bottle includes a goal that our waters should be "fishable, swimmable and brewable." The bottle also features a warning that reads, "Government Warning: If drinking this beer leads to an upset stomach, please seek and implement a strong buffer!"

The Clean Water Coalition, an alliance of almost 40 conservation organizations representing more than 160,000 citizens, will be working to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of these new nonpoint pollution rules.

