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Calendar of Events

Northwestern Area Meeting & Summer Tour, Burnett County	Aug. 16
WLWCA Technical Committee Meeting, Stevens Point	Aug. 16
WLWCA Executive Committee Meeting, Appleton	Aug. 22
WLWCA PIC Meeting, Stevens Point	Aug. 26
WLWCA Office Closed, Labor Day	Sept. 2
WI State Technical Committee Meeting, Madison	Sept. 19
WI Counties Association Annual Conference, Madison	Sept. 22-24
WLWCA Fall Technical Tour, Marathon County	Sept. 25
Land & Water Conservation Board Meeting, Madison	Oct. 1
WLWCA Board of Directors Meeting, Wisconsin Rapids	Oct. 2
Fall County Conservationists Meeting, Wisconsin Rapids	Oct. 3-4
WLWCA Board of Directors Meeting, Wisconsin Rapids	Oct. 4
WLWCA Legislative/Administrative Committee Mtg.	Oct. 10
Lake Michigan Area Association Fall Conference, Marinette County	Oct. 11
Northwestern Area Meeting, Poster & Speaking Contests, Spooner	Oct. 18
Lake Winnebago Area Association Fall Meeting	Oct. 25
WLWCA Executive Committee Meeting	Nov. 13
WI State Technical Committee Meeting	Nov. 21

For more information about our events and partner organization events, visit www.wlwca.org/eventscalendar.html

WLWCA Board of Directors

Chuck Wagner, Chair Kewaunee County LWCC	Greg Baneck, Vice Chair Outagamie County LCD
Perry Lindquist, Sec'y Waukesha County LRD	Bill Schuster, Treasurer Door County SWCD
Joe Piechowski Waushara County LWEC	Tom Rudolph Oneida County C&UEC
Peter Sorce Washington County LCC	Kurt Calkins Columbia County LWCD
Dale Hood Grant County LCC	Marilyn Pedretti La Crosse County PR&DC
Ben Wojahn Vernon County LWCD	Fritz Garbisch Clark County LCC
Kelly Jacobs Eau Claire County LCD	Carolyn Scholl Vilas County LWCD
Tom Fratt Ashland County LCD	Bill Thomas Iron County LCC

WLWCA Staff

Jim VandenBrook
Executive Director
Vacant
Office Manager
Chris Schlutt
Program Coordinator
Gini Knight
Standards Oversight Council Coordinator



Thursday Note

An Update on Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Issues

Volume 16, Issue 4

August 15, 2013

2013 Budget

Success! The Governor signed the 2013-2015 budget into law on June 30, 2013. It included restoration of the Governor's proposed county staffing cuts of \$998,000 in 2014 and \$815,000 in 2015. This will mean that 2014 and 2015 county staff allocations will be roughly \$11,000 to \$14,000 higher than they would have been. Few conservation issues prevailed in this budget so restoring funding for land conservation was a notable victory. It took a lot of hard work on the part of LCD staff, LCC supervisors, Wisconsin Counties Association, WLWCA's legal team, WLWCA staff, and many conservation organizations. Also critical to the effort was strong local engagement of many counties with local Farm Bureau chapters as well as with Farm Bureau's state staff.

~Jim VandenBrook, Executive Director

Mergers and Acquisitions

Look for a survey soon to help get a better handle on the state of departmental mergers in counties and the impact on land conservation offices. On July 11th, WLWCA in conjunction with DATCP presented data to the Adams County "Transition Committee" that was set to take action on merging the Land Conservation office with the Planning and Zoning office, as well as eliminating the County Conservationist position. The committee asked questions and then moved to retain the County Conservationist position and did not take action on departmental merger. The WLWCA officers and staff subsequently met with DATCP to review the response to mergers and how best to provide counties with accurate and useful information as they make these important decisions. A short survey directed to county conservationists and Land Conservation Committee chairs will help determine how best to support local land and water conservation.

~Jim VandenBrook, Executive Director

DNR's Nutrient Reduction Strategy

DNR has hosted a number of meetings to discuss how the agency should respond to EPA's directive to develop a comprehensive strategy to manage nutrient runoff from all sources. As you might imagine, there are many stakeholders worried about the possible impacts of such a strategy. WLWCA and a number of county staff have been providing input. DNR hosted a June 27th meeting of phosphorus management stakeholders and had an open discussion about the impacts of the DNR Phosphorus rules, especially as it pertains to Adaptive Management/Trading and municipal discharge limits. The potential impact of the Phosphorus rules and how they are implemented could mean a brighter or dimmer future for LCDs.

~Jim VandenBrook, Executive Director

Farewell to Kirsten Moore and Welcome to Kim Warkentin

Kirsten Moore, WLWCA's Office Manager and Youth Education Coordinator is now the Director of Cooperative Services with a Madison-based food cooperative, the Willy Street Co-op. Kirsten began work with WLWCA in 2006 during a very tumultuous time for the organization. She was a steady presence and filled the role of Interim Executive Director during the merger of WLWCA and WALCE. WLWCA owes a tremendous amount to Kirsten and we wish her the best of luck in her new career. WLWCA has hired Kim Warkentin to take the position of WLWCA Office Manager/Executive Assistant. Kim has an extensive background working for, managing, and directing non-profit organizations. She has experience in grassroots organizational development, fund-raising, communications, board development, training, and event planning. She has a BA degree in Journalism and Communications from the University of Iowa. Please welcome Kim as she settles into the WLWCA shop in early September.

~Jim VandenBrook, Executive Director

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2013 North American Envirothon – August 4-9, Bozeman, Montana

Wisconsin was represented at the largest high school environmental competition in North America by a five-person team from Luxemburg-Casco High School. This year's competition was held at Montana State University from August 4-9, where 57 teams representing 47 U.S. states, nine Canadian provinces and one Canadian territory competed for a share of \$175,000 in scholarships, host grants and Canon products from the event sponsor.

The North American Envirothon tests teams on their knowledge of soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife and a current environmental issue. Each team's knowledge is tested under the supervision of foresters, soil scientists, wildlife specialists and other natural resource professionals. Teamwork, problem-solving and presentation skills are evaluated as each team offers a panel of judges an oral presentation with recommendations for solving the specific challenge that is presented during the competition. The environmental issue for this year's competition was sustainable rangeland management: achieving a balance between traditional agricultural uses with non-agricultural uses on Montana rangelands.

Wisconsin hosts its own state competition and sends its winner on to the North American competition. Throughout North America, it is estimated that approximately 500,000 high school students participate in the program. From these participants will come the next generation of resource management professionals. Two of the Wisconsin Envirothon team members intend to pursue a natural resource management degree at UW-Stevens Point.

~Jim VandenBrook, Executive Director

Standards Oversight Council Update

One of the several methods SOC uses to invite your feedback is through participating in the biennial Technical Standards Needs Survey. SOC conducts this survey every two years and encourages conservation technicians, agency staff, municipality reviewers, farmers, private sector developers and all technical standard users to participate and provide data on which technical standards need to be updated. Two-thirds of the survey responses were from Land and Water Conservation Department staff. Thank you! Receiving feedback from those of you that install these conservation practices on a regular basis and follow these technical standards is incredibly valuable.

The NRCS standards that rose to the highest priority for revision are Standard 632, Solid and Liquid Waste Separation Facility, Standard 393, Filter Strip, and Standard 395, Streambank Habitat Improvement and Management. The top priority projects for DNR Standards are the development of a new technical standard, Filtration Devices and the revision of Standard 1060, Storm Drain Inlet Protection for Construction Sites. Both DNR Standard 1060 and NRCS Standard 393 are already in the beginning stages of revision and have dedicated staff to lead the revision process. Both of these draft standards will be available broad review comment through the SOC website.

Through the survey, we also collected specific comments on standards tentatively scheduled to be revised and comments on standards that should be added to the list of standards that need revision. Two additional technical standards, NRCS Standard 643A, Shoreline Habitat, and DNR Standard 1061, De-watering are being added to the next two-year Work Plan based on survey comments. The Council has reviewed all the comments, and is still in the process of incorporating the results into the 2014 – 2016 Work Plan. This updated Work Plan will be posted online in November. You can review more details of the survey results and specific comments from participants through the [2013 Technical Standard Needs survey summary](#).

In other updates, the two active SOC teams are continuing to work towards their goals. The Permeable Pavement standard development team is planning to post the draft standard for broad review by end of year, with an expected publication in the second quarter of 2014. The Nutrient Management standard revision team currently is working through nitrogen management concerns and in the fall will begin discussing concerns of winter spreading of manure. The NRCS is planning to work with various stakeholders to receive feedback on portions of the standard revision as they are drafted, in particular those that already have contacted NRCS with specific feedback.

~Gini Knight, Standards Oversight Council Coordinator

Fall Poster and Speaking Contest moving to Winter-Spring 2014!

This past spring, the Board of Directors created a Youth Education workgroup to discuss options for reinvigorating the current WLWCA poster and speaking contests for youth as well as assess the delivery of the organization's youth education activities. The workgroup developed several recommendations to improve the Poster and Speaking Contest. The WLWCA Board already approved a couple of those recommendations, including:

1. **Move the contest from Fall to Spring.**
 - Gives teachers more time to work with their students and fit the contest into their curriculum.
 - Potential for students to create one speech for multiple speaking contests (i.e. FFA, Forensics)
 - Able to coordinate with the WLWCA Annual Conference.
2. **State Competition will be done in conjunction with the WLWCA Annual Conference next spring.**
 - Saves money by fully utilizing rooms already reserved for the conference.
 - Posters can be on display in the silent auction room (proceeds of the silent auction helps fund WLWCA youth education programming).
 - More volunteers are likely to be available for the contest.
 - Potential for an audience to be in attendance during the awards ceremony.

Please make any necessary scheduling adjustments to your Local Competitions to ensure judging is completed in time for the state competition. Final deadlines are still to be determined, but use following general timeline:

- August 2013 – Notify participants/schools about the contest and the associated changes.
- January 2014 – Local Speaking and poster contest
- February 2014 – Area Speaking and Poster Contest
- March 2014 – State Speaking and Poster Contest

A few other items that are still being considered (stay tuned for future updates):

3. **Remove the "special needs" category option for the contest participants.**
 - WLWCA received various complaints over the years regarding publicity of a child's special need.
 - Special need has been self-determined by participant (no verification requirement or guidelines).
 - The national competition does not have a special needs category.
4. **Create an additional category: Multimedia Presentation (i.e. Video, Powerpoint, etc.)**
 - Opportunities for teachers to more easily work entries into existing curriculum requirements.
 - Increased ability for WLWCA to utilize the presentations/videos as outreach tools.
 - *Note: Currently, there are no national competition opportunities for speaking contest participants.*
5. **Create an additional category: Photo Contest.**
 - An alternative to the Poster Contest that allows for additional participation from individuals and counties that normally wouldn't compete with a poster or other presentation.
 - NACD already has a framework set up for this in the national competition.
 - Could allow for WLWCA to utilize the photographs in outreach materials and program materials.
6. **Develop a separate Youth Education Committee.**
 - Oversight committee would provide direction and develop a strategic approach to all WLWCA youth education activities and would ensure that we reach out to the largest number of youth in WLWCA member counties.
 - Youth education programs provide opportunities to reach out to not only to youth, but also their families and school districts as well as provide newsworthy items to help highlight the importance of our conservation efforts.

NACD has announced the 2014 theme that will be used for our upcoming contest as: "**Dig Deeper – Mysteries in the Soil**". We will be skipping the 2013 theme and NOT be using "Where does your watershed" during this transitional year. Please look for additional information & themed resources as they become available later this summer at www.nacdnet.org/education/resources.