

Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council
Minutes of meeting held August 1, 2014, 1:00 – 3:00
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
101 South Webster Street, Madison.

Members Present: Dan Scudder (DOT); Russ Rasmussen (DNR); James Robertson (WGNHS); Henry Anderson (DHS); John Petty (DATCP); Jim Hurley (UW-System), George Kraft (Gov. Rep.).

Others Present: Rebecca Larson, Matt Holly and John Panuska, UW-Madison Biological Systems Engineering; Kevin Masarik (UWSP); Lori Bowman (DATCP); Henry Nehls-Lowe, Roy Irving and Anke Hildebrandt (DHS); Mary Ellen Vollbrecht, Liesa Lehmann-Kerler, Amanda Ripperger, Marty Nessman, Laura Chern, Dave Johnson, Gretchen Wheat (DNR).

1) Approval of Minutes - The minutes from the May 2, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved with minor corrections (motion by Kraft, 2nd by Anderson).

2) Technical Presentation –Rebecca Larson, Department of Biological Systems Engineering at UW-Madison presented results of her research entitled Silage Leachate: Water Quality Assessment and Treatment. The research is part of an effort to identify and promote practices that reduce leachate. Practices such as harvesting at the correct moisture level make a significant impact. The need to collect and treat leachate is well accepted. The amount of nutrients carried in runoff from storage facilities is not as well recognized but can be very high (e.g., 86 mg/L at one research site). To design effective recovery system, Dr. Larson’s research measured water volumes and concentration of contaminants in runoff at points in time throughout storm events and at different locations in the collection and treatment train. Results suggest that high storm flows are best directed into vegetative treatment and lower flows collected for treatment. Results also suggest that soil amendments (e.g., biochar) reduce the leaching of contaminants through vegetative treatment areas. Parallel work on additional sites is being done by Discovery Farms and will add to the available data in advance of additional outreach.

3) Report of Outreach and Planning Subcommittee – Co-chairs Mary Ellen Vollbrecht and Kevin Masarik reported on the work of the subcommittee as assigned by GCC to review current outreach activities and recommend priority actions. The subcommittee inventoried ongoing agency outreach activities and materials. Following review of activities and materials, the subcommittee made a set of recommendations:

- Increase focus on health messages – agencies should review new materials or those slated for revision, and ongoing outreach efforts, to ensure that where appropriate health messages are incorporated and consistent with DHS advice
- Develop advice on how to assess personal health risk – DHS should review and, as appropriate, develop information for assessing personal health risk that can consistently be used by all agencies as part of advising on water testing, interpreting water test results and deciding on a water supply action.
- Develop advice on how to decide on water supply action – DNR and DSPS can collaborate on advice; agencies and partners should incorporate into their outreach
- Agencies should focus on collaborating to develop and deploy a unified on-line well water decision support tool to implement overarching recommendations 2 and 3.
- The subcommittee will reconvene in one year to assess progress and develop recommendations for outreach to target audiences.

Recommendations were unanimously accepted (motion by Kraft; 2nd by Petty)

4) **Decision on 2014 GCC Report to the Legislature** – Rasmussen thanked all of the GCC members and agency staff for their cooperation to complete the enhanced report. Vollbrecht highlighted the major changes for 2014: the addition of the dashboard indicators of groundwater condition, knowledge and awareness; minor changes to recommendations and updated agency activity reports. Members discussed ways to gauge the legislative and public response to the new report format. Feedback will be solicited in the transmittal of the report from DNR and by an ongoing mechanism at the report webpage. Feedback from these sources as well as web analytics will be reported to GCC in December. The report was approved unanimously (motion by Anderson, 2nd by Hurley).

3) Agency Updates

DATCP – John Petty reported that an expert panel will take the next steps in the agency’s review of the Livestock Siting Facility Siting Rule (Ch. ATCP 51 Wis. Adm. Code) in September. He explained changes in the distribution of funds to states under the new Farm Bill, including that DATCP along with other Midwest state ag agencies has applied for USDA’s Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Lori Bowman reported that Bayer Crop Science, in response to DATCP’s outline of a proposed registration order, indicated its intent to continue seeking Wisconsin registration for the herbicide isoxaflutole. DATCP is examining the role that pesticides, especially neonicotinides, play in bee population health and the effect on crop pollination. Neonicotinides have been detected in groundwater.

UWSP – George Kraft reported on initial results of groundwater research results including pharmaceutical and personal care product detections in groundwater and potential for use as tracers. He observed that the Little Plover River level is less than half of the public rights stage. Kraft plans a trip to meet with Minnesota colleagues who are working on groundwater quantity management for the Straight River and invites others to join him.

DOT – Dan Scudder alerted members that DOT is currently updating its runoff management procedures, including rulemaking.

UWS - Jim Hurley noted that work on the FY16 Joint Solicitation is already beginning. Maureen Muldoon has been invited to join GRAC. Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change (WICCI) will begin work again in September .

WGNHS – Jamie Robertson highlighted research work beginning at WGNHS, including the first work to assess impacts of large-scale heat exchange on groundwater. Chippewa County groundwater study continues to produce results. Work on interpretation of Devonian era deposits and Quaternary geology will help us understand factors in the movement and quality of groundwater today. Preliminary results of the study of groundwater quality changes during land use change from agriculture to unsewered residential tentatively indicate that groundwater quality may not be better or worse, but different.

DHS – Henry Anderson reported that DHS is receiving many calls about nitrate and pathogen issues in groundwater. He indicates that while lab capacity to detect infectious agents is increasing interpretation to determine sources remains challenging.

DNR – Russ Rasmussen introduced new Private Water Supply Section Chief, Liesa Lehmann. He reported on DNR efforts to meet the increased demand for high capacity well permits. New

February 28, 2014 GCC meeting minutes

hydrogeologists have been hired and others reassigned in order to provide timely and thorough review. Staffing and recently-implemented efficiencies are expected to bring the decision time back to the 65 day statutory timeframe by the end of 2014. He reported that workplan is being developed for pump tests to determine headwater stream impacts of the iron ore mine proposed in Ashland and Iron Counties.

6) Adjourn and Next Meeting – Kraft moved (Petty 2nd) to adjourn. At the request of members, a revised meeting date will be sought for the November 21 meeting at DATCP.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen Vollbrecht