

**Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council**  
**Minutes of meeting held February 26, 2016, 10:00 – 12:00**  
**U.S. Geological Survey Water Science Center, Middleton, WI**

**Members Present:** Pat Stevens (DNR); Dan Scudder (DOT); Ken Bradbury (WGNHS); Henry Anderson (DHS); John Petty (DATCP); Jim Hurley (UW System), Steve Diercks (Gov's Rep)

**Others Present:** Bob Pearson, Mike Adams and Mike Sproul (DOT); Roy Irving, Rob Thiboldeaux and Ryan Wozniak (DHS); Mary Ellen Vollbrecht, Bill Phelps and Mike Halsted (WDNR); Lori Bowman and Stan Senger (DATCP); Jen Hauxwell (UW System); Carolyn Voter (UW-DNR).

- 1) **Welcome** – Chair Pat Stevens called the meeting to order.
- 2) **Approval of Minutes** - The minutes from the November 2015 meeting were approved as drafted (motion by Hurley, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Diercks).
- 3) **Technical Presentation – DOT Role in Groundwater Protection and Use of the Winter Severity Index.** DOT hydrogeologist Pearson recapped the Wisconsin DOT's groundwater research and management dating to the 1970's on road salt and stormwater. Pearson currently serves on a national committee to evaluate the pros and cons of stormwater infiltration. Meteorologist Mike Adams described the winter severity index, the purpose of which is to reduce salt use and allocate funds among county contractors.
- 4) **National Groundwater Monitoring Network Data Portal** –Chuck Dunning, USGS Water Science Center Assistant Director, and national project leader Daryll Pope, described the USGS national data portal and upcoming opportunities. For 70 years USGS has collaborated with entities collecting and providing groundwater data. USGS is seeking additional data providers, particularly providers of groundwater quality data. Data in the portal can be collectively analyzed to portray background conditions and check for changes. Wisconsin groundwater level monitoring data is currently contributed to the portal. Funding is available to support new data providers with the next call for proposals in spring 2016.
- 5) **Progress Report on Update of GCC Report to the Legislature** –Water Resources Institute Graduate Fellow Carolyn Voter displayed the proposed map format for dashboards representing aspects of groundwater management. Voter and Vollbrecht described and circulated the current list of collaborative efforts and 2015 recommendations for future comment. Discussion items included groundwater quality data for contaminants other than nitrate, and the amount and nature of legislative feedback on the report.
- 6) **Update on Joint Solicitation** – Hurley noted that the Groundwater Research Advisory Committee will meet immediately after GCC to rank proposals submitted for FY2017 funding.
- 7) **Agency Updates**  
**DATCP** – Petty reported that \$250,000 will be made available for producer-led watershed projects, with requests for proposals due April 1 and July 1, 2016. He mentioned changes in the county land and water grants program, including development of performance measures.

**DOT** – Scudder noted his appreciation for the opportunity to update GCC on DOT activities.

**Governor's Rep** – Diercks reported continued grower interest in legislative debate on high capacity well legislation. He is preparing for the May GCC presentation on grower-sponsored agriculture-related groundwater research.

**WGNHS** – Bradbury reported that WGNHS is working with USGS and the Nature Conservancy on groundwater modelling for the Mukwonago River watershed. Proposals for expanded animal feeding operations have resulted in funding of WGNHS studies in Kewaunee and Bayfield Counties, with additional requests from other counties. Bradbury is initiating a strategic planning process for WGNHS.

**DHS** – Anderson reported intensive work on lead issues but also frequent inquiries about arsenic and strontium.

**UWS** - Hurley noted that the WRI Water Policy fellowship will continue for a second year, allowing an advanced graduate student the opportunity for surface water policy experience at DNR. He reported on the potential for expanded groundwater research funding through USDA.

**DNR** – Stevens reported on the recent meeting of the Great Lakes Commission and the continuing support for watershed-based efforts under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. He noted DNR's continuing effort to analyze its work to focus on priorities and gain efficiency. Stevens reported that work groups convened by DNR to address well contamination in susceptible parts of Kewaunee County are beginning to identify feasible actions.

Anderson moved to adjourn (Bradbury 2<sup>nd</sup>) and all were in favor.

Next meeting: May 13 at WGNHS

Respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen Vollbrecht