

## WISCONSIN GROUNDWATER COORDINATING COUNCIL

August 2019 Meeting

10:00 am – 12:00 noon, Friday, Aug 16, 2019

DNR Fitchburg Service Center

**Members present:** Jim Zellmer (DNR), Bruce Rheineck (DNR), Sara Walling (DATCP), Ken Bradbury (WGNHS), Jen Hauxwell (UWS) for Jim Hurley, Jon Meiman (DHS), Brad Johnson (DSPS), Steve Diercks (Governor's Representative)

**Introductions, agenda repair, May 2019 meeting minutes:** Chair, Jim Zellmer called meeting to order; May 2019 meeting minutes approved (Steve Diercks motion, Jon Meiman second)

**2019 GCC Report to the Legislature:** Bruce Rheineck reported that the draft 2019 report was complete and that the report features rotating banner that highlights 30 years of GCC funded groundwater research; also included are graphs documenting history of funding from 2 primary sources (UWS and DNR); GCC comments/edits on draft report needed by 8/20/2019; Bruce will send out final draft for GCC vote by 8/26

**GCC Data and Mapping Subcommittee:** Bruce Rheineck presented concept for revived subcommittee; was GCC subcommittee in the past; concept is for committee to coordinate effort to create interagency hydroatlas type geospatial groundwater data system that can gather, share, digitize, present geologic/hydrogeologic info; need GCC approval to proceed with effort; questions raised related to funding, staff time commitment, security and data set size issues; suggested that examples from other states be reviewed and that system details be worked out

**Joint Solicitation RFP update:** Jen Hauxwell reported that up to \$ 350,000 might be available this FY; RFP widely distributed, more social scientists included; GCC members should forward RFP to interested researchers; proposals due Nov 1, then UWS Peer and GCC Research & Monitoring subcommittee review

**Possible GCC recommendations to Legislature's Water Quality Task Force:** Bruce Rheineck led discussion of possible GCC recommendations to Task Force; noted that there are 4 hearings left and that Jim Zellmer would be speaking at the Superior hearing; suggested were for recommendations to focus on: specific locational groundwater issues, support for County Land & Water Agency efforts, focused geologic studies (like SWIGG Study) and significant health related contaminants like lead, nitrate and PFAS; suggested too that Report to Leg might be useful source of timely relevant recommendations and that need for research funding should be emphasized; good idea to highlight past research outcomes/questions answered, students supported and academic articles published, but also to note that some valuable research might not be conducted due to lack of sufficient research funds

**Technical Presentation: Update on PFAS occurrence, investigation, regulation, treatment:** Jay Nielsen (DNR) presented overview of PFAS, including review of known sources, fate/transport and current regulatory efforts, including WI DHS review of PFAS substances for possible gw standards, other state PFAS gw protection standards/guidance levels and informational resources such as ITRC; current WI site investigation updates; future PFAS research needs include new analytical method development, investigation of fate of PFAS in wastewater biosolids and effectiveness of wastewater treatment processes for PFAS removal/reduction; future challenges include source site identification/investigation prioritization, high costs of PFAS analytical testing and regulatory agency staffing levels

## **Agency Updates**

UWS: Jen Hauxwell reported that some PFAS research will be funded through the UW Sea Grant Program and that the UW will be hosting a “PFAS summit”; UW is also jointly funding a UW Water Science Policy Fellow, Carolyn Voter, working in DNR Water Use Program

DSPS: Brad Johnson reported that new electronic system (for licensing and plan review) pilot continuing with phase III release now implemented; final release of system scheduled for June 2020; POWTS construction season delayed due to wet spring and now a lot of plan and spec submittals for review; agency currently working on POWTS outdoor plumbing issues related to Amish state building code (indoor plumbing) religious exemption

WGNHS: Ken Bradbury reported that the Survey’s transition to UW had been completed; Ian Orland has been hired as the Survey Geoscience Program Coordinator and Moe Muldoon is now at the Survey and working on the southeast WI SWIGG study; SWIGG study results have been released showing that 90% of 35 wells targeted for MST sampling had evidence of contamination

DATCP: Sara Walling reported that the agency has been authorized to conduct hearings at 6 locations on revisions to ATCP 51, Livestock Facility Siting Rules; that 28 Producer-Led Watershed Protection farm groups had been funded this year; that DATCP neonicinoid report was sent to EPA; agency staff participating on Rep. Kitchens Nitrate Work Group and assisting with NR 151 revisions

DHS: Jon Meiman reported that the agency had testified on PFAS gw standard development at Water Quality Task Force hearings; agency assisting with PFAS detections and treatment alternatives at Rhinelander public water supply well; currently working on Cycle 11 gw standard development and have new Fellow assisting with literature review; working with EPA on grant with focus on child day care facility environmental hazards evaluation effort including drinking water assessment

Governor's Rep: Steve Diercks reported that wet spring weather had hindered planting this year; that quality sampling was being conducted on rain and irrigation water at field sites in conjunction with GCC funded research project; that growers were waiting for results of Central Sands Lakes Study and that growers were involved with “pollinator plot” bee health studies

DNR: Jim Zellmer reported that Beth Bier is new agency Deputy Secretary; that DNR had an expanded presence at this year’s State Fair which was well received by the public; that (per Governor’s directive) revisions to NR 151, targeted performance standards, were to be proposed; that funding for the Central Sands Lakes Study had not been included in the current state budget; that NR 812 rule revisions had been approved by the NRB; that DNR would request authorization to hold hearings on NR 538 and NR 140 (rule revision) Statements of Scope at the Oct. NRB meeting and that the Town of Armenia gw study was progressing, the Armenia Growers Coalition was continuing to sample wells/provide safe water and DSPS was planning to approve home treatment systems that could treat water with > 30 mg/L nitrate

## **Meeting adjourned**