

WISCONSIN GROUNDWATER COORDINATING COUNCIL

May 2020 Meeting

10:00 am – 12:00 noon, Friday, May 15, 2020

Virtual Meeting held via Skype

Members present Jim Zellmer (DNR), Sara Walling (DATCP), Ken Bradbury (WGNHS), Bob Pearson for Patricia Trainer (DOT), Jim Hurley (UWS), Roy Irving for Jon Meiman (DHS) and Brad Johnson (DSPS)

Agenda repair, Feb 2020 meeting minutes: Chair, Jim Zellmer called meeting to order; motion (Sara W. motion, Ken B. second) to approve Feb 14, 2020 meeting minutes - approved

FY 2021 Joint Solicitation update: – Jen Hauxwell (UWS) reported on FY 2021 JS project funding; a total of eight FY 2021 JS groundwater research projects have been selected for funding by UW and agencies; UW System will be funding five projects, DNR will be funding one project, DATCP will be funding one project, and DNR and DATCP will be jointly funding one project. Jen plans to have the RFP for next year's Joint Solicitation out in August and requests that GCC Members provide her with updated agency priorities and projected research funding available in FY 2022 for the RFP.

2020 GCC Report to the Legislature: – Bruce Rheineck (DNR) reported that the draft Report will soon be available on a SharePoint site, and that he'll be contacting GCC members about the timeline for reviewing Report drafts and for updating their agency Report sections.

Possible GCC meeting at Capitol highlighting research informed policy: – Discussion of possible future GCC effort at the Capitol to emphasize how groundwater research has been used to inform agency policies; possibilities include GCC meeting at Capitol w/Legislators invited to attend and poster displays of groundwater research projects in rotunda; example discussed of radium research used to assist communities in siting and constructing new, safe water supply wells.

Technical Presentation: Kevin Masarik (UW-Stevens Point) provided presentation and demonstration of Public Water Supply Nitrate Trend Tool; student at UWSP developed tool; uses public water nitrate data set; public water supply systems required to test for nitrate on regular basis so good consistent data set for tool; tool graphs well nitrate and shows trends, and provides maps and box plots of data; can be used by county and state agencies to identify problem areas; limitations of tool include only use of public well data (so may not be representative of "shallow" groundwater quality in rural areas) and isn't set up to incorporate changes in well construction or pumping rates, or changes in reported well nitrate levels due to nitrate reduction treatment.

GCC Logo - update from Outreach & Partnership Subcommittee: – Bruce Rheineck (DNR) reported that the O&P Subcommittee had finished work on a GCC logo; GCC members reviewed logo design and motion made (Ken B. motion, Jim H. second) to adopt - logo design approved; will be used on well sampling related "fact sheets" and other GCC related publications.

FY 2021 JS Research Project issues: GCC members discussed possible problems researchers might encounter this year, including ability to hire students, access to laboratories, and the possible need to extend contract funding; GCC members will check on research funding contract flexibility and possible options if projects need to extend beyond original contract dates.

Agency Updates:

DATCP: Sara W. reported that agency is continuing studies evaluating isoxaflutole herbicide impacts on groundwater and surface water; that FY 2021 JS research project contracts are being drafted; that limited field work on pesticides will be conducted this spring; Sue Porter representing agency on nitrate technical advisory committee; producer led program working well; agency conducting webinar for farmers and plans to add gw related topics in future

DHS: Roy I. reported that agency has hired new health assessor working on sites with environmental concerns; that Amanda Cook hired as public health educator working on chemical contamination issues; that Gavin Dehnert, DHS/UW Water Resources Fellow, now working on gw standard recommendations; that agency continues work on Cycle 11 gw standard recommendations and is looking at possible combined substances recommendations; have assisted with DNR Cycle 10 Stakeholder meetings; are working on draft manganese health fact sheet and continuing program testing for lead at childcare centers

DSPS: Brad J. reported that Branden Piper was new agency Division of Industry Services Administrator; that projected state budget cuts may not affect agency significantly as DSPS is revenue generating agency; that agency is evaluating ways to make plan review more efficient and provide quicker turn around times; that agency had determined that there are issues with hydrograph method for determining site seasonal high groundwater level and agency is now evaluating sites approved in past using the method and working with counties on this issue

DOT: Bob P. reported no new agency updates at this time

WGNHS: Ken B. reported that the quaternary geology map of Oneida Co. has been completed and posted; that the GSA North-Central Section meeting will be held as a virtual meeting this year; that WGNHS field work is being limited to single person work this spring; that agency has received USGS funding to create a statewide quaternary geology map; that bedrock and glacial geologic maps for Bayfield, Jefferson and Dodge Counties are being worked on; that agency will be conducting glacial and groundwater study projects in the Chequamegon National Forest under a Forest Service grant and that new results from the SWIGG groundwater study are now available

UWS: Jim H. reported that all UW summer classes are to be held online, that research work on campus has been curtailed and that University staff are taking furlough workdays this summer/fall; May "Water at UW Spring Symposium" was very successful with approximately 400 participants and approximately 400 YouTube views; the spring scheduled UW PFAS workshop postponed but may be held late summer/fall; four UW Fellowships to begin soon, with DNR Fisheries/Water Use Fellowship scheduled to start Sept. 1

DNR: Jim Z. reported that the agency has hired two PFAS research scientists, Matt Silver in DG Groundwater Section and Pat Gorsky in the Water Quality program, and Mimi Johnson, from DHS, now DNR PFAS policy person; Wisconsin PFAS Action Council action plan delayed, agency staff commenting on federal revised lead/copper rule and proposed PFOA and PFOS MCL development; agency Water Initiatives Steering Committee (WISC) nitrate reduction study group formed; NR 140 groundwater standard, NR 809 PFAS MCL and NR 151 nitrate reduction rulemaking efforts underway; revisions to NR 812 and NR 538 completed; recent WI Attorney General opinion issued that DNR has authority to consider cumulative impacts when evaluating water use issues, agency has completed coordination of the Town of Armenia groundwater study evaluating nitrate impacts from agricultural activities and study underway

Meeting adjourned