



WISCONSIN GROUNDWATER COORDINATING COUNCIL

August 2022 Meeting Minutes
10:00 am – 12:00 noon, Friday, Aug 12, 2022
Virtual Meeting held via Zoom

Members present Jim Zellmer (DNR), Mark McColloch (DATCP), Dave Hart (WGNHS), Jim Hurley (UWS), Jon Meiman (DHS), Bob Pearson (DOT), Brad Johnson (DSPS), Steve Diercks (Governor's Representative)

Agenda repair, May 2022 minutes Chair, Jim Zellmer, called meeting to order; approval of May 13, 2022 meeting minutes: Steve D motion, Jon M second - minutes approved by voice vote

FY 2024 Joint Solicitation RFP update – Jen Hauxwell (UWS) reported that Joint Solicitation request for proposals (RFP) sent out on July 18, with due date of Nov. 1, 2022; approximately \$550,000 available this year; JS informational webinar to be held Sept. 7, 2022

GCC 2022 Report to the Legislature - Bill Phelps (DNR) reported that drafting of annual GCC Report to the Legislature completed; Jen H provided some edits for the UWS section of report; motion made to approve report once UWS edits confirmed; Jim H motion, Mark M second, motion approved on voice vote

Technical Presentation - Joel Stokdyk (USGS) and Maureen Muldoon (WGNHS) presented results of the Southwest Wisconsin Groundwater and Geology (SWIGG) study, that evaluated the presence of nitrate and bacteria in homes with private water supply wells in 3 southwestern WI counties, Grant, Iowa, and Lafayette; study had 5 objectives: evaluate extent of private well contamination, evaluate human wastewater and livestock manure contamination, evaluate occurrence of pathogens in homes with private wells, evaluate factors related to contamination (including well characteristics, well siting, geology, rainfall, and groundwater levels) and evaluation of other factors (septic systems, farms, cultivated land) related to contamination; geology in study area is Upper Sinipee carbonate bedrock with Karst topography, surface soils above bedrock are loess, with clayey Rountree formation soils present at top of bedrock in some areas; below Sinipee carbonate bedrock is Ordovician/Cambrian carbonates and sandstone formations; most private wells in study completed in Sinipee and Ordovician St Peter sandstone formations

Study found 27% - 42% of homes sampled had detected coliform bacteria and/or nitrate above 10 mg/L; 138 homes with bacteria and/or high nitrate were sampled and tested for genetic markers of fecal contamination - about 46% had indicators of human, cattle or swine waste, same homes were tested for genetic markers of pathogenic microorganisms - about 48% had indicators that pathogens might be present; study found that: nitrate contamination generally greater where geology allows rapid flow of water and contaminants, microbial contamination generally greater following periods of rainfall and where bedrock is closer to the surface, both nitrate and microbial contamination generally greater for homes with older, shallower wells and human wastewater contamination greater in homes closer to septic systems and at homes with more septic systems nearby, nitrate and total coliform contamination greater for homes closer to farms/cultivated land and nitrate contamination increased when area of cultivated land nearby was larger

Agency Updates

DSPS: Brad J reported that Dan Hereth has been appointed new Secretary of agency; agency continuing to evaluate effectiveness of hydrograph method for determining site depth to groundwater

DHS: Jon M reported that agency continuing to assist with responses at PFAS contamination sites, and with public water supply PFAS testing project; agency staff evaluating EPA PFAS health advisory levels

UWS: Jim H reported that not all expected base funding for WRI included in recent budget - hoping for increase in FY 2023; \$2M available through national competition to fund research - WI researchers received about \$850K for funding for 3 projects; Sea Grant Program continuing to fund emerging contaminant research; Freshwater Collaborative of WI initiative now underway - current funding is \$2M/year with goal to increase funding to \$5M/year next biennium; research coordinator position to be hired; UWS continuing to fund Post Graduate Fellows working at state agencies - have been about 30 since 2016, UW partners/co-funds Fellows with state agencies

WGNHS: Dave H reported that Survey is continuing effort to hire a new director - initially small number of candidates applied, position now being "restructured" to make it a UW faculty position; Eric Carson now serving as Interim Director; agency is looking for hydrogeologist to do county and local groundwater studies; recent agency groundwater research includes SWIGG study and depth to bedrock electromagnetic survey studies in NE, SW and SE WI; agency has grant to hire Post Grad Fellow; continuing to work with Paul Juckem at USGS on "nitrate tool" that could be used by local governments

DATCP: Mark M reported that there have been a number of recent staff changes in the agency - Brian Weigel is now Administrator of the Division of Agricultural Resource Management, Carla Romano has joined the agency as a hydrogeologist; agency web site has been updated; staff have done targeted pesticide sampling in Door Co; planning continuing for next year's statewide agricultural chemical survey; nitrate optimization project efforts underway with up to \$50k/project available; revisions to ATCP 50 underway

DOT: Bob P reported that agency has GIS data, including highway construction project and culvert inventory maps available; agency website has info on state electrification infrastructure corridor plan

DNR: Jim Z reported that agency is continuing its rulemaking efforts to establish groundwater standards in NR 140 for *E. coli* bacteria (and to revise status of total coliform bacteria standards); NR 809 and surface water PFAS standards/rules now in effect; NR 812 revisions to allow PVC cased wells in bedrock now in effect, and agency working on NR 812 revisions to allow drillers to use Type II (Portland) limestone cement; public drinking water system voluntary PFAS sampling effort underway – sampling continuing; private well PFAS sampling project also now underway - UW-Stevens Point sampling teams now collecting samples; WSLH has begun analysis for PFAS, will begin providing results to homeowners soon; Town of Armenia nitrate study continuing - monitoring wells installed, groundwater model developed, expected to be completed this fall

Meeting adjourned