

Wisconsin Wetland Study Council (WSC)

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 12, 2026 | 10:00 am – 12:00 pm | Teams and in-person

<u>Agenda Topic</u>	<u>Notes/Follow-up</u>
Call to Order	WSC Attendees: Tim Andryk (TA) Jeff Kraemer (JK) Ben Callan (BC) Tracy Hames (TH) Jane Landretti (JL) Stacy Jepson (SJ) Toni Herkert ToH) Other participants: Abby Maslanka (AM) – Martenson & Eisele Tom Nedland (TN) – DNR Allison Willman (AW) – DNR Jennifer Hauser - WWA
Public Comment	AM – questions about how Act 183 Exemptions are applied. • Asked whether artificial and nonfederal exemptions apply to areas of disturbance (i.e. within construction plan) or whether exemptions apply to entire wetland area applied for in an exemption request. Has noticed a change in this treatment from circa 2024. • Asked why GP-16 was allowed to expire in 2022. • BC will work to provide Abby with a written response. And will share the response with the WSC. • TH and JL would like to see the written response. • JK suggested that Act 183 Committee could also discuss. • TN suggested that GP-16 was not reissued because since the Act 183 exemptions came into effect, there were very little to no submittals of GP-16.
Agenda Approval	Decision: JK and TA
Board Minutes Approval	Decision: JL and TH
Wetland Dashboard Update	• TN - Noted consistent trend over recent years with number of artificial exemptions. The jump in temporary impact acres was due to a large individual permit project. Often temporary impacts may be associated with larger IP projects. The number of individual permits with permanent impacts was small at 8 acres. • AW - Noted that more approvals are coming from exemptions rather than permits. • TN – Dashboard gets updated annually.

	• Net gain of 4,610 acres restored/mitigated over 2023-2025. One large project in Juneau Co is credited with nearly 3,000 acres of that gain. • TA – Asked about having WisDOT information integrated. Per TN this is still a goal eventually.
Legislative Update	• ToH – Provided update on the Assured Delineator Program Codification bill. It still needs to be concurred in the Senate, then it will be sent to the Governor.
Federal Rule Making Update	• BC - Provided update on Section 401 Water Quality Certification comments submitted by DNR • BC to provide copy of comments to WSC.
Act 183/Wetland Exemption Committee	• JL – Would like to join the Act 183 Committee • TH – confirmed participating on this committee from WSC are: Carol, Jeff K, Tim A, Jane Landretti. • AW – Noted survey has been submitted. DNR social scientists will be reviewing the data. DNR to report to Committee members on survey results. Committee/DNR to provide survey summary to WSC in May. Survey will be used to inform committee recommendations. • Discussion on Act 183 Report summarizing data and impacts to DNR Wetlands and Waterways Program. - Background on the origin of committee and report: - Sept 2023 DNR memo to WSC: <i>Waterways Program Experience with Act 183 Wetland Exemptions</i> focusing on compressed review timeline and loss of fee revenue, and positions equivalent, compared to GPs. - At Sept 2023 meeting WSC members discussed memo and posed broader questions re: the exemptions data. - Small informal “committee” formed to work with DNR to broaden this report and include other data. • TH/TA and others affirming - Appropriate for author of report to be DNR (since this is describing what DNR is experiencing) at the request of the WSC. And for the report to be used to inform committee recommendations. • BC – Recommends DNR better articulate in the first paragraph DNR is author of report. • AW – Expressed appreciation for the help and collaboration from committee members in developing the report. • WSC does not need to approve report, as it a DNR product, but can recommend the DNR adopts or publishes the report to recognize formal acceptance. • TA – Should WSC take formal action on report? Report is useful and has a lot of good information. • JK – Perhaps recommend DNR posts report to WSC webpage • TH – DNR going to make final edits to report; WSC to take action recognizing report in May. - ToH – recommend first/original memo as an appendix to the Phase 1 report.

	Phase 1 report will be provided to WSC, and WSC will recommend posting to the WSC webpage, as appropriate. • TH – Recommend that the report be sent to WSC with ample time to review before May meeting. • AW – Presented the Committee’s proposed charter • BC – Requested edit that the charter reflect that DNR will provide the Phase 1 report to WSC. • BC – would like the charter for each committee to list committee members • JK – Phase 2 is committee summary of survey data. Phase 3 is WSC providing recommendations to DNR. Phase 3 recommendations should also address DNR’s items in Phase 1 report. • TH – Charter (along with edit) to be sent ahead of May meeting. • Goal – To have report and charter ready with recommendations for WSC by May meeting.
Conservation Committee	• ToH – Would like to join the Conservation Practices Committee. • TH - confirmed participating on this committee from WSC are: Tim A, Jeff K, Stacy, Toni, Jen S. • JK - Have developed a report with a list of recommendations to DNR. Committee would like WSC to approve recommendations. • TH – Would like to see how 6 themes are related to recommendations table • ToH – how many conservation projects are there in a given year? Could there just be a single point of contact for conservation projects, rather than have them spread out to the regions? • BC – replied about past “specialization” structure. • TA/JK – a DNR Waterways Program conservation team is a topic that has been discussed on the committee. • BC – Would like table to include/complete the Task Owner Column. Example – Pursuit of DNR staff would likely require more than just DNR. • JL – Asked about how DNR legal interpretation is reflected in report re: exemption for conservation projects. Would like to further discuss this issue. • BC/TH – WSC members provide comment to JK on draft report by 3/31. TH requests reminder emails be sent. • Goal – Have this document ready with recommendations for WSC by May meeting. • ToH – Recommends WSC support additional staffing requests for DNR where appropriate. Including current Governor Office and following the election for the new Governor’s Office. Would be useful to let them know where we are as a council.

	TA – would like to know when WSC should make recommendations to DNR regarding staffing and budget. Reply - this should happen before mid-year. WSC All Action Item: Provide comments to JK by March 31
Navigability Jurisdiction Topic	Holding for later.
July Field Meeting	July 15 is planned field trip. Little Yellow River, in Juneau County – Necedah Wildlife Area and Meadow Valley Wildlife Area.
New business	
Adjournment	BC and JK