

Wisconsin Wetland Study Council (WSC)

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 8th, 2022 | 9:00am - 11:00am | Zoom

<u>Agenda Topic</u>	<u>Notes/Follow-up</u>
Call to Order	<p>WSC Attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tracy Hames- Mandy Minks- Dan Helsel- Paul Kent- Tim Andryk- Matt Howard- Karen Gefvert- Tom Larson- Stacy Jepson <p>Other participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tom Pearce- Jennifer Western Hauser- Josh Brown- Nathan Dhuey- Allison Willman
Public Comment	No public comments received
Agenda Approval	Decision: Agenda approved
Board Minutes Approval	Decision: Minutes approved
New DNR Member	<p>Mandy Minks is leaving DNR for a new position and Dan Helsel, Waterways Program Director, will serve as DNR member. Thank you, Mandy, for all the work you did getting this group started and for your 3 years facilitating wetland stakeholder issues with the Council. We appreciate your commitment to this team.</p>
General Permit Efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Several wetland general permit efforts underway for issuance in 2023• Council interested in reviewing draft general permits as they are ready to be shared.• DNR to plan for presentation on new general permits, Council to provide input.• Wetland GP-1 reissuance ideas: considering USACE NWP for cumulative impact thresholds, defining single and complete project. <p>Action Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DNR send draft general permits when ready for public comment, Council provide feedback and

	<p>determine whether presentation and discussion is warranted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR send out the list of GP efforts with timelines, if applicable, to help Council keep updated.
<p>Wisconsin Wetland Conservation Trust Items</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP Surcharge Fee Wetland Restoration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Funding source for wetland restoration, operating under the Wisconsin Wetland Conservation Trust (which includes the DNR ILF Program) ○ Fees of \$200 from GP-1 wetland permits, set in 2010. ○ DNR operates as a grant and funds are used to match other funding sources, usually federal conservation grants. ○ Since 2020, this program has restored 165 acres across 11 projects, from an investment of \$220,000. ○ DNR considering setting the fee as part of the GP-1 reissuance process. • NRCS Agricultural Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Also operating under the Wisconsin Wetland Conservation Trust ○ NRCS created an agricultural mitigation program in 2014, to offset wetland impacts regulated by the Food Security Act. ○ Program will create wetland banks and credits that can be purchased by producers to stay in NRCS compliance for activities tied to food production. ○ Current grant has funding for 2 mitigation banks. ○ In the future, credits sold would support additional mitigation banks. ○ Outreach and marketing availability to producers will be an important effort to build awareness. <p>Action Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR prepare further presentation on GP surcharge wetland projects, discuss what additional fees would be used for.
<p>DNR Efforts under Wetland Grants – EPA, NRCS, DOA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several efforts underway, Tom Nedland will be point of contact for many of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Natural scenic beauty incorporation into updated WRAM or Wetland Quantification Tool ○ 2013 Mitigation Guidelines update to incorporate NR 350 aspects and current practices ○ Wetland Rapid Assessment Methodology (WRAM) update

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wetland Quantification Tool (WQT) creation – joint effort with MN BWSR and EPA; target implementation in 2024. ○ Stream Quantification Tool (SQT) creation; target implementation in 2023. ○ Rapid Floristic Quality Assessment (FQA) – completed, now incorporate into WRAM. ○ NRCS agriculture mitigation grant ○ Coastal wetland mapping grant (DOA Coastal Mgmt. Program) ○ Coastal technical assistance grant (DOA Coastal Mgmt. Program) <p>Action Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DNR to present on stream quantification tool at a future meeting, potentially by USACE staff.
<p>Recent Questions and DNR Planning for Act 183 Exemption Implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Educate about nonfederal wetland determinations for prior converted wetlands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NRCS certified “prior converted cropland” determinations can be used for nonfederal purposes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2020 WOTUS provision change for no “take backs” by EPA/USACE for prior converted croplands. ▪ Includes farmland that was cropped prior to 12/23/1985 with an ag commodity, land was cleared, drained, or manipulated for planting, has continued in agriculture. ▪ Woodland, pasture, and hayland without a history of annual tillage and cropping do not qualify as prior converted cropland. ● Clarify benefits of nonfederal wetland confirmation process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not required in nonfederal exemption process, optional service from DNR. ○ Allows for the delineation to be approved for 15 years instead of 5 years. ○ May be helpful to solidify state exemption eligibility if WOTUS changes over time. ○ Does not impact federal jurisdiction or mitigation. ● Wetland Training for Regional Planning Commissions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DNR supports regulations in areawide water quality mgmt. plans (NR 121). ○ Plan to provide training to RPCs for wetland quality and better fitting regulations within DNR exemption determinations. ● Additional Discussion Items

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Agricultural structures included under the nonfederal exemption ○ Mitigation decisions regarding secondary impacts under exemptions <p>Action Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DNR outreach and education – can send narrative to Farm Bureau regarding changes, presentation also available. Plan for next 6 months.
Integrated Watershed Management Committee report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Committee speaking with long-term DNR staff to better understand permitting practices around wetlands, stormwater, and watersheds. <p>Action Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summarize and present on permitting discussions at next meeting
Future business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WSC members need to take a ~15 minute open records training, as required by DOA to serve on the Council. ● Next meeting, 11/10/22, 10:00 am – noon.