

Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council
Minutes of meeting held August 7, 2015, 10:00 – 12:00
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Members Present: Jill Jonas for Pat Stevens (DNR); Dan Scudder (DOT); Madeline Gotkowitz, Interim Director (WGNHS); Henry Anderson (DHS); John Petty (DATCP); Jim Hurley (UW), Steve Diercks (Gov's Rep)

Others Present: Bill DeVita and Kevin Masarik (UWSP); Roy Irving (DHS); Bill Phelps, Joe Traynor, Dave Johnson and Mary Ellen Vollbrecht (WDNR); Stan Senger (DATCP); Bob Pearson (DOT); Jen Hauxwell (UW)

- 1) **Welcome** – Jill Jonas called the meeting to order.
- 2) **Approval of Minutes** - The minutes from the May 2015 meeting were approved as drafted (motion by Diercks, 2nd by Petty).
- 3) **Technical Presentation** – UW-Stevens Point Water and Environmental Analysis Laboratory Director Bill De Vita presented results of research on selection and evaluation of chemical indicators for waste stream identification. The research goal was development of a less-expensive, quicker analytical method to identify the source of well contamination that could be used instead of or in addition to microbiological techniques. Pharmaceutical extraction methods were used to detect human- and bovine-specific compounds such as caffeine, nicotine, medicines and artificial sweeteners. The works so far provides tools that are useful in combination with microbial techniques. Anticipated advancements in chemical analysis techniques may allow more progress on the overall goal. Analysis of groundwater data for study areas has presented some challenges (e.g., conveying the meaning of detections of pharmaceuticals in groundwater) and opportunities (e.g., importance of water and waste infrastructure in subdivision design). Dr. DeVita thanked the GCC member agencies for support of the research through the Joint Solicitation along with a National Science Foundation grant that enabled development of advanced laboratory techniques.
- 4) **Progress Report from Outreach and Planning Subcommittee** – Subcommittee co-chair Kevin Masarik, UW-Stevens Point presented Groundwater Center work to date on an interactive on-line support system to help well owners and well professionals test drinking water wells, understand results and consider follow-up options. After cost, the questions of what to test, how to test and uncertainty about results are the reasons well owners cite for not testing private well water. The subcommittee is at work on a unified, on-line support tool for all agencies to answer these questions as a prelude to increased outreach to health sector audiences. DHS and DNR are developing information about personal health risk assessment and responses to well test results that could be used in the support tool.
- 5) **Decision on 2015 Groundwater Report to the Legislature** – Subject to approval of technical edits to the Recommendations by email, the draft 2015 Report to the Legislature was approved (motion by Scudder, 2nd by Anderson, unanimous vote).
- 6) **Agency Updates**
DHS – Anderson reported that DHS will be reviewing hemoglobin-related blood test results submitted by local health departments to see if there are patterns or causes. Nitrate is one factor affecting

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hemoglobin levels.

Governor's Rep – Diercks described the initial presentations of the Little Plover River modeling and reported high stakeholder interest in the scenario testing process.

DATCP – Petty reported that an agreement with Bayer CropScience is expected this calendar year. The agreement is for registering the herbicide isoxaflutole for use in Wisconsin. DATCP has applied to EPA for funds to conduct statewide random stratified well monitoring to provide a snapshot of groundwater quality. Petty also noted that the draft of updates to the NRCS' nutrient management technical standard is available on-line for public comments. Results of the Livestock Siting review process are nearly ready for review by DATCP Secretary Brancel and will be reported at the next GCC meeting.

UWS - Hurley reported on the status of federal budgets for the Sea grant Institute and federal water resources research. He advised of plans to convene the Groundwater Research Advisory Council (GRAC) in early September. The Council will discuss funding principles for adapting to likely future resource conditions.

WGNHS – Interim Director Gotkowitz announced that Ken Bradbury will begin as State Geologist and WGNHS Director on September 1. WGNHS is contracted for hydrogeologic studies in the Town of Lincoln, Kewaunee County as part of the effort to reduce contamination risk from animal waste. WGNHS is wrapping up work on Little Plover River modeling and ramping up work on the nitrate demonstration project to reduce risk for municipal wells.

DOT – Pearson reported on development of a winter severity index to manage road salt and related environmental impacts. National research indicates that technology for salt storage and application is improving. Bob offered to present results at a future meeting.

DNR – Jonas announced that Pat Stevens, Environmental Management Division Administrator will be DNR's GCC representative. She briefly described DNR's strategic alignment. Former Chair, Russ Rasmussen will continue work on Kewaunee County issues as one of his policy assignments to the DNR Secretary's office. Jonas highlighted ongoing work on the nitrate demonstration project, groundwater quantity modeling, and continuing education for well drillers and related private water professionals. Jonas and Hurley announced that Water Resources Institute Fellow Carolyn Voter joined the DNR staff for this coming year.

Anderson moved to adjourn (Petty 2nd) and all were in favor.

Next meeting: Friday, November 20 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM at DATCP

Respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen Vollbrecht