

Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council
Minutes of meeting held November 20, 2015, 10:00 – 12:00
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection

Members Present: Pat Stevens (DNR); Dan Scudder (DOT); Ken Bradbury (WGNHS); Jeff Phillips for Henry Anderson (DHS); John Petty (DATCP); Jim Hurley (UW System), Steve Diercks (Gov's Rep)

Others Present: Kristen Malecki and Amy Schultz (UW-Madison); Christy Vogt, Megan Christenson, Jenny Camponeschi, Henry Nehls-Lowe and Roy Irving (DHS); Liesa Lehmann-Kerler, Marty Nessman and Mary Ellen Vollbrecht (WDNR); Lori Bowman, Rick Graham and Steve Martin (DATCP); Jen Hauxwell (UW System)

- 1) **Welcome** – Chair Pat Stevens called the meeting to order.
- 2) **Approval of Minutes** - The minutes from the August 2015 meeting were approved as drafted (motion by Petty, 2nd by Hurley).
- 3) **Technical Presentation** – Dr. Kristen Malecki, UW-Madison Department of Population Health and co-director of the Survey of the Health of Wisconsin (SHOW) presented the results of her recent research on factors in decisions about private well testing as well as information about SHOW. Wisconsin is among the states with the highest proportion of households served by private wells. No significant difference was found between the health condition of people drinking from private wells and of people drinking from public water systems. A health concern or real estate transactions were the top reasons for those who did test their private well; no known problem and lack of information were the top reasons for those who did not test. Dr. Malecki's work yielded many other findings to help guide development of information to support private well owners and facilitate outreach through the health care sector.
- 4) **Public Health Tracking 101** – Department of Health Services' Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT) team members Christy Vogt, Megan Christenson and Jenny Camponeschi, described available EPHT data and analyses, including statewide dashboard indicators and environmental health profiles for each county. Wisconsin is among 26 states receiving Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funds for EPHT. The EPHT allows local health departments and others to analyze data about environmental hazards, local exposure and health effects to focus programs and policies.
- 5) **Concepts for Updated Sections to the GCC's Annual Report to the Legislature** –Water Resources Institute (WR
I) Graduate Fellow, Carolyn Voter, introduced preliminary concepts for revamping key sections of the report. The Groundwater Quality section is proposed to feature a consistent format, including public health information and summary information about substance occurrence. Dashboards will also have a consistent format and be titled to reflect the broader report elements (rather than the specific data items). The Benefits of Projects section will be retitled as a Portfolio and utilize a story-telling method,describing the efficiencies and benefits of the GCC's interagency approach.. GCC members provided general direction to proceed as proposed and will provide further review of the list of proposed Portfolio items.

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6) **Update on Joint Solicitation** – Hurley reported that 16 proposals were submitted, including from UW campuses not previously participating. Jen Hauxwell, Water Resources Institute Assistant Director for Research and Student Engagement will head proposal review. Hauxwell reported on the UW's direction to increase student support and to increase project focus on stakeholder interaction (e.g., outreach by researchers to facilitate application of research results).

7) **Agency Updates**

DATCP – Petty reported that Secretary Brancel is considering the recommendations of the livestock siting review process. DATCP is drafting an emergency rule to allow funding of producer-led watershed councils. Groundwater well monitoring will start soon with a new round of results available in about a year. Bowman reported a constructive discussion among agricultural chemical stakeholder groups about the contamination clean-up reimbursement program.

DHS – Phillips reported working with DNR and others to help DHS respond to local health department inquiries about potential health effects from large animal feeding operations and requests to support animal waste related drinking water well contamination response.

WGNHS – Bradbury reported responding to requests from Bayfield, Green and Kewaunee Counties for geologic information to help evaluate groundwater protection practices associated with large animal feeding operations. WGNHS will roll out the updated Dane County groundwater model in January. Successful deep drilling work was carried out this summer in Columbia and Trempealeau Counties, contributing to increased groundwater understanding.

UWS - Hurley reported that Wisconsin's funding for the WRI and Sea Grant are largely intact. He announced plans to name the WRI graduate fellow for a Wisconsinite who has made significant contributions along the lines of long-time coastal extension specialist Phil Keillor (for whom a Sea Grant fellowship has been named).

Governor's Rep – Diercks reported that the Potato and Vegetable growers continue to fund a graduate student doing agriculture-related groundwater research and offered a future presentation.

DNR – Stevens reported that work groups of DNR staff and stakeholders continue work to identify top priority measures to reduce risk of drinking water well contamination in Kewaunee County. He described the different bills currently pending in the legislature on high capacity well review and reported on the recent circuit court decision that groundwater quantity monitoring cannot be required as a permit condition as it is not explicitly authorized by statute.

Members confirmed 2016 meeting dates (below) and subcommittee memberships. WGNHS will add a member to the Monitoring and Research Subcommittee to replace Bradbury.

February 26 at USGS

May 13 at WGNHS

August 7 at DNR

November 18 at DATCP

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

Next meeting: February 26 at USGS

Respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen Vollbrecht