

WISCONSIN GROUNDWATER COORDINATING COUNCIL

Nov 2018 Meeting

10:00 am – 12:00 noon, Friday November 9, 2018

DATCP office building (2811 Agriculture Dr. Madison, WI)

Members present: Jim Zellmer (DNR), Bruce Rheineck (DNR), Lori Bowman (DATCP), Ken Bradbury (WGNHS), Bob Pearson for Patricia Trainer (DOT), Jon Meiman (DHS), Moira Harrington for Jim Hurley (UWS), Brad Johnson (DSPS)

Introductions, agenda repair: Chair, Jim Zellmer, called the meeting to order. Noted was that on agenda next GCC meeting was listed as scheduled for Feb 16, 2019, date should be **Feb 8, 2019**.

Consideration of Aug. 17, 2018 meeting minutes: minutes approved as drafted.

Outreach and Partnership Subcommittee Update: Bruce Rheineck (DNR) reported that the OP subcommittee continues to work on updating published well testing/contaminant information brochures/literature. Proposed revisions to the existing *Tests for Drinking Water from Private Wells* brochure have been completed and the subcommittee would like GCC approval to get “end user” review of the revised brochure content, language and format. Motion to approve by Jon Meiman, second by Lori Bowman, approved by unanimous vote. The subcommittee will next be working on revisions to the *Bacteriological Contamination of Drinking Water Wells* brochure.

Joint Solicitation update: Moira Harrington (UWS) reported that that 16 groundwater research proposals had been submitted for consideration for potential FY 2020 Joint Solicitation funding. The estimated funds available from UWS and state agencies for FY 2020 is approximately \$ 400,000 and the total amount requested to fund the 16 submitted proposals is about \$ 730,000. Jen Hauxwell will be recruiting and coordinating UWS “outside” peer reviews of the submitted FY 2020 proposals and the GCC Research and Monitoring JS Workgroup will review the proposals and meet in Jan to discuss review comments. Funded researchers will be notified in March of 2019.

Technical Presentation: Dave Johnson (DNR) provided a presentation on *Evaluation of recent private water supply well nitrate sampling results*. Newly constructed water supply wells must be sampled for nitrate and Dave described a strategy for estimating the depth, in an area with elevated nitrate, below which groundwater is likely to have “safe” (below 10 mg/L) nitrate concentrations. Well sampling nitrate results are compared to individual well casing depths and reported static groundwater levels and, based on this comparison, an estimate is made of how far below the water table in a specific area a well should be cased to obtain water with nitrate below 10 mg/L. Dave also described an evaluation effort that estimated statewide costs, related to new well construction and treatment needed to address high nitrate in groundwater, to be over \$ 400 million.

Technical Presentation: Beth Finzer (DNR) provided a presentation on *Evaluation of compliance options for noncommunity public water supply systems with nitrate MCL exceedances*. There are approximately 300 small public water supply systems in WI with nitrates above 10 mg/L. About 284 of these systems are transient non-community systems with nitrate concentrations above 10 mg/L but below 20 mg/L. These systems may operate under a “continuing operation” policy that allows the systems to serve water above 10 mg/L nitrates provided they post that fact. The DNR is considering a new 5 – 10 year “sunsetting” effort to get these systems to reduce nitrates to below 10 mg/L via new well construction or nitrate treatment.

Agency Updates:

DSPS: Brad Johnson reported that the DSPS POWTS Section has begun using a new electronic database for plan/spec review and licensing. The database allows users to apply online, upload plans, pay fees and schedule appointments. He also said the agency has contracted with UW-Madison to develop a POWTS education program and is planning the first Wisconsin POWTS conference to be held next year.

DHS: Jon Meiman reported that DHS has been working with the army on a human health risk assessment for the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant and that the army had tested for some PFAS compounds at the site. He said the agency is also working on a CDC funded PFAS biomonitoring study of anglers in WI and that EPA is providing funds to states to test for PFAS compounds in schools and day care centers. He reported that DHS toxicologists are continuing review of the "Cycle 10" list of substances for potential groundwater standard development.

DOT: Bob Pearson reported that work is continuing on a nitrate contaminated DOT rest area water supply well and emphasized the significant effort often needed to deal with nitrate contamination.

WGNHS: Ken Bradbury reported that the Survey is now hiring to fill 4 vacant positions. He said the Survey, along with the USGS and USDA, is involved in a project in southwest WI to test water supply wells in Grant, Iowa and Lafayette counties for bacteria and nitrates. Survey staff are assisting with the Central Sands Lake Study and have also completed work on a Groundwater Atlas of Bayfield Co., now under review. Bedrock mapping of Jefferson Co. is planned for next year.

DATCP: Lori Bowman reported the agency has hired a new hydrogeologist in their nonpoint runoff program and a new Bureau Director, Lacey Cochart. She said that work is continuing on the isoxaflutole herbicide monitoring studies and that the agency is finishing internal review of their neonicotinoid pesticide report and will provide it to EPA when finalized. The agency is also investigating 3 sites with atrazine in groundwater above standards. These exceedances could lead to new atrazine prohibition areas, although rulemaking would be required to establish new areas.

UWS: Moira Harrington reported that UWS is in the process of recruiting a water/groundwater resources related post-doctoral position for next year and can split costs with any state agency that would be interested in hosting and mentoring a fellow.

DNR: Jim Zellmer reported the agency is currently involved with about 12 PFAS contamination sites, and is also working with other states to provide information for PFAS toxicity studies now underway at EPA and ATSDR. The agency continues work on the Central Sands Lake Study and is also working with the Town of Armenia Grower's Coalition on providing safe water to effected Town residents and additional well testing. Rulemaking continues on NR 812, water supply well construction, with public hearings expected to be held in Jan., and also on NR 538, beneficial use of industrial byproducts. In Sept the agency hosted the EPA Region 5 Source Water Protection meeting that included updates on state PFAS management strategies and groundwater virus studies. Jim also noted that the PECFA program sunset date is June 30, 2020.

Meeting adjourned

**Next GCC Meeting: 10:00 am – 12:00 noon; Friday, February 8, 2019
at USGS Water Science Center (8505 Research Way, Middleton, WI)**