



WISCONSIN GROUNDWATER COORDINATING COUNCIL

May 2023 Meeting Minutes Hybrid Meeting held at USFS Forest Products Lab and via Zoom 9:30 am – 12:00 noon, May 12, 2023

Members present Steve Elmore for Jim Zellmer (DNR), Mark McColloch (DATCP), Eric Carson (WGNHS), Jen Hauxwell for Jim Hurley (UWS), Sarah Yang (DHS), Barry Paye (DOT), Steve Diercks (Governor's Rep)

Agenda repair, Feb 2023 minutes Chair, Steve Elmore, called meeting to order; approval of Feb 10, 2023 meeting minutes (with minor UW edit); Eric C motion, Mark M second - minutes approved by voice vote

FY 2025 Joint Solicitation groundwater research priorities – Jen H reported that seven of the ten FY 2024 Joint Solicitation groundwater research proposals were funded this year (three by UWS, three by DNR and one by DATCP); while the number of submittals for FY 2024 was low the funding rate was high; the FY 2025 Joint Solicitation RFP will be released in early July with a Nov 1, 2023 due date; a webinar is planned for Sept 8, 2023 to provide info on the Joint Solicitation process

2023 Annual GCC Report to the legislature – Bruce Rheineck (DNR) provided an update on the 2023 GCC Report to the Legislature; planned is to have draft revisions to the report completed by June 16; this year's report will be streamlined to make it more readable and to emphasize more recent agency actions; the draft report will be put on a SharePoint site – if someone who needs to work on the report is unable to access the Report SharePoint site please let Bruce know and he will arrange access

Update on DNR Water Use Program activities - Adam Freihoefer (DNR) provided an update on Water Use Program activities; program covers both the Great Lake Compact and high capacity well regulation; 2021 water use report now out and available online – report covers both groundwater use and surface water withdrawals; water use website now has groundwater related “story maps” of general hydrogeology, water withdrawals and water use monitoring; program has two rulemaking efforts now underway – Service Area Plan proposed rule and Great Lakes Diversion rule; 2021 WI Supreme Court decision confirmed DNR authority to consider impacts on Waters of the State when regulating hi-cap well groundwater withdrawals for irrigation, industrial use, municipal water supply, etc. – reviews are very diverse, can range from couple days to couple months for a complex review; program working on water resources inventory that includes streamflow monitoring, springs inventory info, hi-cap well pumping data, USGS lake level monitoring results, UW-SP Central Sands baseflow data, etc.

Technical Presentation - Bill Phelps (DNR) provided a presentation on *Prevalence and source tracing of PFAS in shallow groundwater used for drinking water in Wisconsin*, the department's PFAS research project, funded by EPA and carried out by Matt Silver; study included PFAS analysis of water samples collected statewide from residences that use a private well; an equal area grid approach was used to divide the state into 450 study areas of approximately equal size; parts of designated study areas with known PFAS investigation/contamination sites were excluded; residences with an available well construction report were identified; study focused on “shallow” groundwater – so residents in each of the 450 study areas with wells cased or screened 40' or less into aquifer were selected and offered opportunity to participate in study, one resident per study area was selected; trained sampling teams collected water samples – analysis at WSLH for PFAS and at UW-Stevens Point (WEAL) for other water quality parameters, PFAS results – 71% of collected samples had detect for PFAS; of 44 PFAS analyzed for, 22 were detected; 1% of detected PFAS were above WI DHS PFAS health guidance values (4% above proposed US EPA MCL/health based water concentration value); PFAS results correlated with rural “developed” land use and with detection of human waste indicator parameters (artificial sweeteners and pharmaceuticals); study concluded that home septic system discharge is likely significant source of PFAS in WI shallow groundwater

Agency Updates

DOT: Barry P reported that Bob Pearson's hydro position has been filled; agency continuing to promote salt brine use; agency continues to address salt storage violations

DATCP: Mark M reported that Brian Kuhn continuing as acting Agriculture Resource Management Division Administrator; agency is currently recruiting for a hydro; 29,000 gal of firefighting foam has been collected under DNR/DATCP program to collect and dispose of fluorinated firefighting foam; public rollout of the neonicotinoid insecticide report completed and now on the web; annual surface water and groundwater - ag chemical monitoring reports now available on the web; 2023 Statewide Agricultural Chemical Survey underway - sample collection expected to be completed by the end of Aug; 20 projects funded under Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Grant Program (NOPP) - about \$1.5M in funding, Susan Mockert is WI NOPP manager; public hearing/comment period on ATCP 50 rulemaking related to Silurian Dolomite conservation practices (necessary to implement DNR NR 151 Silurian bedrock agricultural performance standards) planned for June

UWS: Jen H reported that there is currently information available on the Water Resources Institute web site related to three possible groundwater related research funding opportunities,: also Sea Grant Program funding opportunities related to study of emerging contaminants, including PFAS; Post-Grad Fellowship program to place Post Masters/Post Doc Fellows with state agencies continuing; Water@UW-Madison program research/outreach spring symposium held May 5th; mini-grant program applications now under review; 40 undergraduate students funded to work on water related summer projects; 31 undergraduate artists, from multiple UW campuses, involved in Flow Project to create water inspired art - can link to gallery through Water@UW-Madison web site

DHS: Sarah Y reported that agency staff continue to support state PFAS investigation efforts including expanded area PFAS sampling in Town of Stella (Oneida Co.) and statewide public water supply PFAS sampling - agency working with local health departments and public to provide information on health effects associated with PFAS water test results; agency continuing work on CDC Environmental Health Hazard grant efforts including mini-grant funding opportunities; agency is planning to work with UW on providing an opportunity for new post-doc fellow to work at the agency through the UW Post-Grad Fellowship program; hiring for new public health Chief Medical Officer now underway

WGNHS: Eric C reported that he will continue as acting Director through end of July; interviews with candidates for Director position planned for June; Mike Parsen leaving agency and taking new position in Switzerland; Survey is looking at future hydrogeologist staffing needs considering that there might be retirement vacancies in the near future; agency to receive up to \$700K in grants for geologic mapping efforts; final SWIGG study open-file report now available; staff continue work on statewide groundwater level monitoring program - climate monitoring to be included at some sites

DNR: Steve E reported that NR 140 revisions to add *E. coli* bacteria groundwater standards now at Legislature for review/consideration; now working on NR 140 rule revisions to add PFAS groundwater standards; new public water MCLs for PFOA and PFOS now in place - systems now required to monitor for those compounds - results on DWS system; NR 812 rules to allow well construction with Portland limestone cement now finalized; Waste Management beginning work on revisions to NR 500 rules related to groundwater monitoring and compliance at landfills; Well Comp Program reviewed 206 applications and granted 121 awards (about \$2M of \$10M available funds), including grants for non-community wells and well abandonment, Program doing outreach: flyers, radio, State Fair, Farm Tech Days, etc.; agency is updating interim guidance on land application of waste containing PFAS and will be including PFAS sampling requirements in some WPDES permits; results of voluntary municipal drinking water system PFAS sampling efforts to be on web soon; surface water sampling for PFAS now planned for Town of Stella in Oneida Co.

Meeting adjourned