

**Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council**  
**Minutes of meeting held February 16, 2018**  
**at the United States Geological Survey office**  
**8505 Research Way, Middleton, WI**

**Members Present:** Pat Stevens (DNR), Dr. Jonathan Meiman (DHS), Brad Johnson (DSPS), Ken Bradbury (WGNHS), Bob Pearson for Patricia Trainer (DOT), Jim Hurley (UWS), Steve Diercks (Governor's Rep.), Lori Bowman for John Petty (DATCP)

**Others Present:** Bruce Rheineck (DNR), Bill Phelps (DNR), Jen Hauxwell (UWS), Kevin Masarik (UW-Stevens Point), Paul Juckem (USGS)

**1) Welcome** – Chair Pat Stevens called the meeting to order.

**2) Approval of Minutes** – Motion to approve minutes from the Nov. 10, 2017 meeting (Johnson motion, Diercks 2<sup>nd</sup>), minutes approved by voice vote.

**3) Technical Presentation** – *Regional Variability of Nitrate Fluxes in the Unsaturated Zone and Groundwater in Wisconsin* – Paul Juckem (USGS). Paul presented research on the study of nitrate nitrogen transport processes and geochemical reactions during movement through the unsaturated zone and regional scale groundwater flow systems. This work utilized vertical flux methodology (VFM) and process based modelling approaches to estimate local factors affecting nitrate movement, transport and transformation across large agricultural areas. These methods and modelling techniques could potentially be used to optimize crop management strategies and reduce nitrate losses to groundwater.

**4) GCC Outreach & Partnership Subcommittee** – Subcommittee co-chairs, Bruce Rheineck and Kevin Masarik, discussed potential future committee activities, including updating current public information brochures on well testing and water supply bacteriologic contamination. They said they plan to hold four subcommittee meetings over the coming year to work on this task and asked GCC members to endorse the effort, and also to appoint Agency staff to currently vacant subcommittee positions. GCC members voted to support the effort (Diercks motion, Johnson 2<sup>nd</sup>). Members also suggested that coordination with UW Extension might be beneficial, and that this also might be an opportunity to utilize new communication methods, such as using social media, to get information out to the public.

**5) FY 2019 Joint Solicitation update** – Jen Hauxwell reported that GCC Research and Monitoring Subcommittee and UW System Peer Reviewer reviews had been completed for the 11 proposals submitted this year. She said that after the afternoon's Groundwater Research Advisory Council (GRAC) meeting a ranked list of the proposals should be completed. The expectation then would be, to be able to notify researchers about project funding in March. GCC members discussed need for increased funding for Joint Solicitation as individual project costs have increased for a number of reasons, including the need to now provide graduate student tuition in project budgets. Suggested was to approach the Legislature for additional funds, potentially fund fewer projects but with increased dollars per individual project, and possibly to investigate partnerships with private funding sources.

**6) Agency Updates:**

**DHS** – Meiman reported that DHS is currently working with DNR on public health issues related to the possible dissolution of the Dalton Sanitary District. He said the Agency has also been involved with the occurrence of PFOA and PFOS compounds detected in water supply wells in the vicinity of the Marinette Tyco Fire Protection Products test site. He reported the Agency is also still actively working on issues related to lead in drinking water in Milwaukee and other communities.

**DSPS** - Johnson reported that DSPS has sent changes to the POWTS code to the Legislature, and that these changes will likely be published this spring. He also said the Agency is working with state technical colleges on soil tester soils training courses, and also with the UW Engineering Professional Development program on training for prospective certified soil testers.

**WGNHS** - Bradbury reported that recently available WGNHS groundwater related publications include the Bayfield Co. water table map, a hydrogeology of Kewaunee Co. - Town of Lincoln report and a report on improvement of the state groundwater monitoring network. He also said that Agency staff were currently working on the Central Sands Lakes Study, and also on a Door County wetlands project. Ken is serving on the National Academies/USGS Water Science and Research Committee working on a "Future Water Resource Needs for the Nation" project. He also reported that UW-Extension is currently in the process of merging with UW Madison, and that it is also being internally reorganized.

**DOT** – Pearson reported that the Agency is moving to their new offices in the Hill Farms state office building. He said they're currently waiting on allocated federal funds to begin planned projects. He also pointed out that Ken Bradbury's work on the Little Plover River groundwater flow model is being published in the journal *Groundwater*.

**UWS** - Hurley reported that an article about the history of the GCC had been written by Marie Zhuikov, and that that article could be accessed on the Water Resources Institute web site at: <https://www.wri.wisc.edu/news/unique-state-council-coordinates-wisconsin-groundwater-research-and-protection>. He also said that they're in the process of doing strategic planning for the Sea Grant Program and that they're now taking applications for five program fellowships.

**Governor's Rep.** – Dierks reported that DNR Water Use Section staff, Adam Freihofer and Bob Smail, had presented information on high capacity well water use and the Central Sands Lakes Study at the Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association (WPVGA) annual meeting. He also said that the WPVGA had provided about \$ 400,000 in funding for UW research projects.

**DATCP** – Bowman reported that groundwater studies at isoxaflutole herbicide use sites are currently underway, and that results from last year's sampling at those sites is expected soon. She also reported that the Agency has completed a draft report on neonicotinoid pesticide occurrence in groundwater, and that once finalized it will be provided to EPA. She said that the DATCP reorganization has been completed and that they currently have one groundwater vacancy. She reported that DATCP now has some funds to finance groundwater research, and also that the Agency is currently in discussions with DNR about transfer of the CAFO regulatory program.

**DNR** – Stevens reported DNR staff are working on the Central Sands Lakes Study and that there is now a study web site available. He said the DG Program study groups are meeting regularly and are getting valuable input from stakeholders. He also said that the DG *Well Driller Viewer*, designed to provide well drillers with setback, construction and approval information, is now available online. He said that DNR is currently investigating PFOA and PFOS contamination sites in Wisconsin, and that the Agency is currently discussing potential move of the CAFO regulatory program to DATCP. Lastly, Pat notified the GCC that he is moving to the DNR Assistant Deputy Secretary's position, and that there will likely be a new person taking over as the GCC Chairman.

- 7) **Motion** proposed to thank Pat Stevens for his contributions and efforts serving as GCC Chairman for the past three years (Hurley motion, Bowman 2<sup>nd</sup>), unanimously approved by voice vote.
- 8) **Adjourn and Next Meeting** - The next meeting will be on Friday, **May 18, 2018**, at the **WI Geological and Natural History Survey – Mt Horeb facility** (211 S. Blue Mounds Street, Mount Horeb).

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Bill Phelps