



## WISCONSIN GROUNDWATER COORDINATING COUNCIL

### August 2023 Meeting Minutes

#### Hybrid Meeting held at

UW Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center and via Zoom

10:00 am – 12:15 noon, Aug 11, 2023

**Members present** Steve Elmore for Jim Zellmer (DNR), Brad Johnson (DSPS), Robby Personette (DATCP), Eric Carson (WGNHS), Roy Irving (DHS), Barry Paye (DOT), Steve Diercks (Governor's Rep)

**Agenda repair, May 2023 minutes** Chair, Steve Elmore, called meeting to order; consideration of May 12, 2023 meeting minutes - approved by voice vote

**2023 Annual GCC Report to the Legislature** – Bruce Rheineck (DNR) discussed this year's streamlined report format; report drafting is almost completed and should be ready for submittal to the Legislature by the end of the month; press release is planned; GCC members are asked to review the Report and let Bruce know if they approve as written, or would like to make additional revisions

**Technical Presentation:** Ken Bradbury (UW Geoscience Emeritus Faculty & past WGNHS Director) provided a presentation on his *Perspectives on our changing understanding of groundwater in Wisconsin*; he provided perspectives on how groundwater science, technology, data collection/storage, contamination assessment and resource management have evolved over his time working in the field; Ken discussed the evolution and advancement of groundwater modelling and pointed out the important contributions Wisconsin educators and scientists have provided to this effort; he discussed examples of how evolved groundwater tools and technology had contributed to groundwater quality and quantity management efforts such as development of a statewide groundwater contaminant susceptibility map, WI nuclear waste repository exploration, groundwater issues associated with the Waukesha Great Lakes water diversion and proposed Perrier bottled water groundwater extraction; Ken also provided insight on WI efforts to address a number of important groundwater issues including regulation of agricultural chemicals like atrazine, investigation of possible microbial pathogen transport in fractured rock aquifers, groundwater pumping irrigation impacts on surface waters such as the Little Plover River, and proposed metallic mining projects such as the Crandon copper/zinc mine

**PFAS sampling at Public Water Supply Systems** - Jeff Flashinski (DNR) and Dino Tisoris (DNR) provided information and update on public water system PFAS sampling efforts in WI; for the 2022 voluntary public water supply system PFAS sampling effort - 394 samples were collected from 140 systems – PFHxS, PFBS and PFOA were detected most often; regulatory PFAS sampling at public water systems to assess compliance with new PFOA & PFOS MCLs began this year - as of 8/1/2023, 1,673 samples have been analyzed for PFOA/PFOS – 0 sample results have exceeded 70 ppt PFOA/PFOS MCLs, 14 samples (0.8%) have exceeded 20 ppt DHS recommended PFOA/PFOS health advisory levels, 116 samples (6.9%) have exceeded 4 ppt proposed EPA PFOA/PFOS MCLs; compounds most often detected so far have been: PFBS, PFHxS, PFBA, PFOS, PFOA and PFHxA

#### **Agency Updates**

**Governor's Rep:** Steve D reported that farms, including his, are participating in the DATCP nitrogen optimization project (grant) program; program will hopefully help reduce groundwater nitrogen impacts; growers looking for input on cropping system changes to reduce nitrogen impacts

**DHS:** Roy I reported on agency staff updates – A J Jeninga has moved from agency to emerging contaminant specialist position at UW-Madison, Dr. Sheryl Bedno has begun duties as agency Environmental and Occupational Health - Chief Medical Officer; agency staff continue to support state PFAS investigation efforts including providing information on health effects associated with

PFAS water test results, working with local health departments on private well sampling programs and assisting with evaluation of Tn of Stella PFAS sampling efforts; agency is working with DATCP on developing drinking water health advisory levels for some newer pesticides being detected in groundwater; agency continuing work on CDC Environmental Health Hazards mini-grant program that includes funding opportunities to address hazards impacting small public water systems

**DATCP:** Robby P reported that 29,000 gallons of firefighting foam has been collected under phase II of DNR/DATCP “clean sweep” program to collect and dispose of PFAS containing fluorinated firefighting foam; 2023 Statewide Agricultural Chemical Survey now underway – sample collection should be completed by the end of Aug; NOPP (Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Grant Program) projects now underway – about \$1.58M in funding, Susan Mockert is NOPP Program manager; rulemaking on ATCP 50 underway on Silurian Dolomite conservation practices (related to implementation of DNR NR 151 Silurian bedrock agricultural performance standards); ATCP 72 rulemaking underway that will include required well testing at Air B&B facilities

**DSPS:** Brad J reported on staffing updates, Brad is now Bureau of Field Services Director and April Hammond now POWTS Program Section Chief; agency has filled 2 new plan review positions, currently no new additional funding for plan review; funding proposed in current state budget for WI Fund septic system replacement assistance program; agency continues evaluation of hydrograph method (using gw elevation data from state gw level monitoring network) for estimating local depth to groundwater – method does not seem to be working in some areas (system flooding reported); agency tracking Minnesota Amish “exercise of religion” septic system “gray water” court case to see if there might be implications related to WI POWTS rules/regulations

**WGNHS:** Eric C reported on Survey staffing updates, Mike Parsen has left Survey and taken job in Switzerland; Eric will continue as Survey Director through August 21<sup>st</sup> and Sue Swanson, new Survey Director, will start on Sept 1; Emily Baker has left Survey to take a position as Assistant Professor of Geosciences at Hamilton College, Dave Hart continuing Emily’s work on nitrates in groundwater in Central Sands; Amy Wiersma is now working with counties on groundwater issues

**DNR:** Steve E reported that NR 140 rule revisions adding standards for E. coli (and revising status of total coliform bacteria) now in effect; rulemaking to add gw standards for PFAS now underway; stakeholder meeting on rule EIA held July 14; NR 809 PFOA & PFOS MCLs now in effect - public systems on quarterly sampling schedule; NR 812 rule revisions to allow drillers to use Type II (Portland) limestone cement now at Leg; WA Program continuing work on NR 500 code updates related to landfill gw monitoring and compliance; ARPA Well Grant/Well Comp Program - 302 grant applications received, 190 grants awarded (\$ 2.9M), 55 grants for non-community public wells water systems, 108 Well Abandonment grant applications received – all awarded (\$ 350K); Water Quality Program has new draft guidance on NR 214 industrial wastewater nitrogen loading, Program updating *Interim Strategy for Land Application of Biosolids containing PFAS*; currently sampling >100 industrial/municipal facility sludges for PFAS and beginning to include requirements for sludge PFAS sampling in permits; Private Well PFAS Sampling Project completed, paper submitted for publication, web site for project being created; Town of Stella PFAS sampling effort – private well sampling expanded to 2.5 miles from Starks, area surface water PFAS sampling completed - next PFAS External Advisory Group meeting Aug 18, 2023; results of public drinking water system voluntary PFAS sampling now available

**Meeting adjourned**