

DCEC Newsletter

Environmental News for Door County



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door county environmental council
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SUMMER 2014

"Is The Green Bay Dead Zone Growing?" *What can you do to help?*



Gordon Stevenson

This is one of the issues that will be the focus of the presenter at the free annual D.C.E.C. summer program coming on September 10th. Our featured speaker is **Gordon Stevenson, former Chief of Runoff Management with the Wisconsin DNR** who retired after 26 years with the department. His professional expertise includes watershed-based water resource protection and control of diffuse water pollution sources. Gordon has been instrumental in development of policies and administrative codes for the State of Wisconsin involving both agricultural and urban nonpoint source water pollution. In particular, Gordon has been an architect of Wisconsin's environmental programs that apply to Wisconsin's extensive livestock industry.

Proving that farmers "can cause water pollution was part of my job," Stevenson says, "Some people do not believe that yet. We did not solve all the problems while I was at the DNR. Soil loss is up by 20 percent since 1997. **Half of the land that was once in the Conservation Reserve Program has been taken out.**" Stevenson contends that the manure from the state's 3.4 million head of cattle (**the equivalent of 60 million humans**)

and other animals contains enough phosphorus for growing all of the crops in the state. He notes that three-fourths of the soil samples are showing an adequate to ample reserve of phosphorus now and that nitrate levels continue to rise in the soils of the state, creating unimaginable problems with water quality.

Stevenson cites the recent disclosure of a major dead zone for aquatic life in the bay of Green Bay for which multiple sources agricultural, residential, and commercial were the likely contributors of runoff nutrients and contaminants that caused that condition. Nutrients from the landscape in northeast Wisconsin and the Central Sands have been bled to the surface waters, Stevenson said. "**We've hit the wall. Are we listening?**"

Gordon holds degrees in American history and engineering from the University of Wisconsin. He is a registered professional engineer and also has significant teaching experience and is a former President of the Board of Directors of the Aldo Leopold Foundation and is on the Board of Directors of the Midwest Environmental Advocates. He and his family have a one-acre garden at their home in Black Earth, Wisconsin, and raise chickens sometimes.

Gordon is a powerful and enthusiastic speaker and knows exactly where the blame lies for most of the environmental problems we are facing in these troubled times. Don't miss his powerful presentation!

**Baileys Harbor Town Hall • 7:00 p.m. • Wednesday, September 10th • FREE Admission • Come Early
Serving Refreshments • FREE**

On the corner of County F/EE and Highway 57

Lake Winnebago and Lake Erie Share Problems

Many of you will recall when in the 1970's Lake Erie caught on fire because the industrial waste and petroleum pollution on the surface was significant enough to support fire. After a few dangerous episodes the officials realized that something had to be done and a massive effort resulted in the ultimate cleanup of Lake Erie. This problem never occurred on Lake Winnebago (as far as we know) primarily because there are several freshwater inlets supplying the Lake, and a direct discharge to the Fox River.

Now it appears that a different type of pollution has taken over Lake Erie and has been ongoing in Lake Winnebago for some time, this new pollution factor is excessive amount of nutrients coming into both lakes and causing serious problems. The shore property owners and recreational users of Winnebago have become accustomed to dealing with the annual algae bloom that chokes small harbors and portions of the entire lake during late summer when the water warms.

Both lakes are shallow in comparison to the total area and as a result become warmed more effectively than deeper water bodies, resulting in ideal conditions for algae bloom and the problems. Industrial and agricultural operations and tributaries that bring nutrients surround Lake Erie on all sides; nitrates and phosphorus, to accumulate in the Lake and create the largest algae blooms in recorded history. Large cities like Toledo drawing

water from Lake Erie have found their water source compromised, creating a whole new category of problems.

Lake Winnebago draws from a large watershed that extends all the way to Manitowish Waters, Eagle River, Rhinelander (and beyond) in northern Wisconsin. All the while the flowage is picking up nutrients from fertilizer runoff, animal waste, wastewater systems and natural contributors as it makes the journey down the Wolf River, Embarrass River and a host of other waterways to Lake Winnebago where the nutrients accumulate and provide food for algae.

What must be done? We have to control the sources of the nutrients that are coming downstream and those that are directly discharged into Lake Winnebago and eventually into Green Bay where it travels along the east shore, creating a stagnant "dead zone". Natural currents (counter-clockwise) bring the dead zone further north each summer. Animal waste spills, broken sewage pipes, agricultural methods that have all changed becoming more intensive, all play a part in creating the problem. A lot of finger pointing does not solve the problem, the buck has to stop somewhere and local, county, state and federal agencies are the responsible entities for allowing this to happen.

(JMV)

U. S. Humane Society Input Session

Recently, on July 8th DCEC's Jerry Viste along with representatives from Kewaunee Cares, Lynn and Nancy Utesch, met with state and federal level officials from the United States Humane Society. Representing the Society was Eric Swafford who is the Director of Rural Outreach and Development, from Pikeville, TN, and Melissa Tedrowe, the Wisconsin State Director, based in Madison. The purpose of the meeting was to enlist local organizations in support and to gain any input local people might have in helping to make the Humane Society more effective and visible.

Eric Swafford, who spends much time "on the hill" lobbying for animal rights legislation in Washington, presented an update on the pending legislation that constantly meets with powerful opposition by vested-interest powers in the capital. Getting any favorable legislation passed is a real challenge. Melissa, at the State level, was interested in how their group might be more effective and visible, in view of the gag orders that have been enacted to prevent disclosure of mistreatment.

The discussion led to various topics to increase visibility and give the organization some clout in dealing with animal abuses. The concept that the Society is involved primarily with pets and household animals needs to be changed, to make the public aware that confinement animals need to have more attention than they receive presently. One suggestion was that the Society would prepare a well-published operating statement that defines their position and concerns for confinement animal welfare, and that it should be supported by action and penalties when necessary to make the needed changes. The animal welfare organization — in order to be effective — needs financial backing comparable to the big agriculture interests that step in when a conflict arises over new planned expansion or new practices that are known to be detrimental to animal and human welfare.

An observation that was brought out in this brief conference was this, "If animals are not being mistreated or abused, there should be no need for a gag order, as there would be nothing to hide, nothing that could not be observed by anyone interested" The very presence of a "gag" order implies that something is wrong. Think about it!

(JMV)

Your Proposed Electric Rate Change

Electric rates for Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) such as Wisconsin Energy (WE), Madison Gas & Electric (MGE), Alliant, and Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) are established through complex and expensive proceedings involving extensive testimony before the Public Service Commission (PSC). Such utilities are regulated monopolies that are granted an exclusive right to serve with assured rates of return on all prudent investments required to provide reliable electric service to customers in their respective service areas. Defense of the public against excessive monopolistic prices is then provided by the three-person PSC which is appointed by the Governor.

Both the utilities and the PSC, of course, have substantial staff resources to vet any proposed electric rates. The PSC also receives customer complaints and input during the rate cases and grants limited funding to qualified interveners who can also file formal testimony. The Citizen's Utility Board (CUB) and Renew Wisconsin, for example, often file testimony in such cases to present the customer perspective. Proposals for new rates are typically filed in spring, contested throughout the year, with PUC decisions in December on rates that then take effect on January 1 of the following year.

WPS filed a rate case in April, 2014 to establish new rates that would take effect on January 1, 2015. Each of our electric rates includes a fixed charge (\$/day) plus a variable charge (\$/kWh) plus sales tax of 5.0% and a 3.0% levy (on some but not all accounts) to fund the Wisconsin Low Income Assistance program to provide essential electric services to those who cannot afford the full cost. The rate changes being proposed by WPS are summarized in the following table. Although the WPS filing shows somewhat different current rates, we used the actual figures from August and October 2013 bills for this comparison. The startling structure of the proposed changes involves remarkable increases in fixed charges with modest decreases in the rates per kWh. In light of substantial consumer interest in distributed generation and energy efficiency, electric utilities are now facing decreasing kWh sales. Thus, they are attempting to retain their revenue streams by shifting their rate structures to fixed rather than variable costs. This will lead to bill reductions for large consumers and bill increases for small consumers.

The proposed WPS rates coupled with proposed elimination of the solar grant programs certainly have a chilling effect on new solar investment in Wisconsin. However, WE's current rate proposals are even worse than those of WPS. This raises another significant issue for your consideration. WE has now made a proposal to acquire Integrys, the holding company that owns WPS. WE's average cost per kWh is about 18% higher than that for WPS. In addition, the current WE rate filing would be even more punitive for solar than the WPS filing and would reduce our annual savings by about 25% rather than 15.7% with the WPS proposed rates. The WE acquisition of Integrys is also subject to PSC approval.

What Can You Do About the WPS Rate Proposals?

If you want to see how WPS presents its rationale for the proposed increases, just **google WPSC 2015 Rate Case** and read Ronda Ferguson's direct testimony. If you agree with WPS, do nothing more. If, however, you wish to voice concerns over their proposals, **you can file your comments with the PSC until September 10, 2014 – Go to the PSC web site and search for Docket No. 6690 – UR – 123**). It would also be useful to write letters to the editor of the **Milwaukee Journal Sentinel** and the **Green Bay Press Gazette**. Finally, it would be useful to voice your concerns with the Governor and state representatives.

What Can You Do About the Proposed Acquisition of WPS by WE?

This is an even more complex issue to address than the WPS rate proposals. Grass roots opposition will need to have professional representation to have much impact. RENEW, the Citizens Utility Board, the Energy Law and Policy Center, and the Energy Center of Wisconsin would all benefit from hearing your opinions regarding this proposed merger.

Where Can You Get More Information On These Issues?

Using this website address: <http://action.allianceforsolarchoice.com/page/speakout/stop-solar-attack-wi>

You can visit the RENEW (www.renewwisconsin.org) web site for postings of key developments in the WPS and WE rate cases. RENEW WISCONSIN is actively soliciting additional members to support staff efforts on key issues. Individual annual memberships are just \$35 and lifetime memberships are just \$1,000. Many sustaining members contribute \$25 per month.

(Adapted from July 20th Kexel letter JMV)

Real Testimonials About Center Pivot Liquid Manure Systems

On April 29, 2013, at 1:30 p.m., my three children and I were victims of bio terrorism tourism as we were heading south from the Wisconsin Dells on Highway 12 between Baraboo and Prairie Du Sac. Center pivots in full swing made us roll up those windows and speed even faster as we searched for air that was not burning our lungs and nostrils. Just when we got to a clean pocket of air, the caustic stench happened a second time. A service van on the opposite side of the road had pulled over with the driver sitting on the ground using an inhaler. He could not even operate his vehicle.

The day before on this same route it was full of haze so thick we could not see the usual pines on the scenic hills. We did get to see a guy get out of his car and puke on the side of the road though. Liquefied manure is just a multiplier for hazardous toxins and pathogens to be ingested by citizens doing their everyday activities, you know, like bio terrorism. Agriculture, especially dairy, was never meant to be like this.

Ban the irrigation pivot.

Susan Turner, Warren, Ill



If you have ever traveled through Indiana on Hwy 65, you will run into aerial spraying of liquid manure that is seriously beyond comprehension.

I was traveling at dusk and had seen signs asking travelers to stop at "Fair Oaks Farm" and eat lunch there. As I traveled down the highway I could smell the foul smell of liquid manure we all associate with a CAFO, but could not find the source. 5 miles later, I spotted the Center Pivot Sprayer off in the horizon about another two miles off the highway but you could see the plume in the sunset. Is stunk so bad and burned my eyes and my nose. Those center pivot Sprayers stretched as far as the eye could see.



June 28, 2014 Wysocki Dairy in Juneau County

I could not imagine why anyone would want to stop there to eat engulfed in those noxious fumes? As I drove down the highway I remember feeling so sorry for the neighbors that had to live with this 24/7 and then the further that I drove, I realized that all the houses along the highway for miles were either empty, vacant shells or they were occupied by immigrant labor who probably worked on that CAFO. They had driven out all of their neighbors with the stench, the pathogens, the contaminated water, the lights and the noise and then bought their land at robber baron prices. Force out your neighbors and the profit from their misery and misfortune. What great neighbors, hey?

When I got home, I looked up Fair Oaks Farm and found out that they have 55,000 milking cows on this "farm". They have another 20,000 heifers, another 20,000 calves with 50 of them born EVERY DAY to replace those who die those pesky early deaths from being shot up with bovine growth hormones and from being used and abused as a machine only can be.

It occurred to me right then, that this is exactly what all of the CAFO's around us in Kewaunee County, want to be. That is why they keep expanding, and it never seems to end. All they want, all they strive to be is the biggest CAFO on _____ hill. If this center pivot spraying EVER starts here, we can kiss our lives as we know them good bye. I am as certain of this as I am of my own children's names.

Sandy Winnemueller, Kewaunee

The Nasty Life Cycle of Antibiotics

'A post-antibiotic era is a very real possibility for the 21st century'. Antibiotic-resistant superbugs have reached "alarming levels" and pose a global threat to public health, the World Health Organization warns in a report recently issued "Devastating" consequences from untreatable infections including diarrhea, pneumonia, urinary tract infections and gonorrhea now pose a potential threat in every corner of the world, to any person of any age, the WHO states. The report, "Antimicrobial resistance: global report on surveillance," is the first from the global body to look at antimicrobial resistance. Without urgent, coordinated action by many stakeholders, the world is headed for a post-antibiotic era, in which common infections and minor injuries which have been treatable for decades can once again kill.

Effective antibiotics have been one of the pillars allowing us to live longer, live healthier, and benefit from modern medicine. Unless we take significant actions to improve efforts to prevent infections and also change how we produce, prescribe and use antibiotics, the world will lose more and more of these global public health goods and the implications will be devastating.

Resistance to antibiotics used as a last resort treatment for gonorrhea — which infects over one million people every day — was documented in Austria, Australia, Canada, France, Japan, Norway, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Underscoring the urgency of the problem, the WHO states, is that there are no new antimicrobials forthcoming.

"A post-antibiotic era — in which common infections and minor injuries can kill — far from being an apocalyptic fantasy, is instead a very real possibility for the 21st century," the WHO report states. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) last year issued a similar warning on the public health threat posed by drug-resistant superbugs, noting that at least two million Americans now fall ill from antibiotic-resistant bacteria every year and at least 23,000 subsequently die. CDC stated that "**up to 50 percent of all the antibiotics prescribed for people are not needed or are not optimally effective as prescribed.**" It added that "there is evidence that more antibiotics are used in food production than on humans, and that the use of antibiotics for promoting growth [in food producing animals] is not necessary, and the practice should be phased out."

In another recent report, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that over two-million people per year suffer from antibiotic-resistant infections and at least 23,000 people die from them. Antibiotic-resistant bacteria are a pressing public health issue. It is about time we educate the public and make changes in the regulation of the practices that cause these issues. To slow the growth of antibiotic-resistant infections and improve the health of Americans, we must ban the nontherapeutic use of antibiotics on a state and national level.

Still another damning new report from the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) reveals that our government has been ignoring the very real risks to public health from routine antibiotic

abuse in intensive livestock farming. According to the NRDC's new report, "Playing Chicken With Antibiotics," the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) — whose key responsibility is to protect public health — permitted the nontherapeutic use of 30 medically important antibiotics in industrial farming operations, including 18 rated as posing a "high risk" of exposing humans to antibiotic-resistant bacteria, despite knowing this continued misuse in farming could ultimately put human lives at risk. Adding antibiotics to farm animals' feed, day after day, is not what we should be doing. It's not what the doctor ordered and it should not be allowed.

In March 2012, a federal court ruled that the FDA must act on scientific knowledge that the overuse of antibiotics in animals raised for food has contributed to the rise of antibiotic-resistant infections in humans. That decision came in response to a lawsuit filed by the NRDC concerning findings made by the FDA back in 1977. Feeding livestock low doses of penicillin and most tetracyclines, the agency had concluded, might pose a risk to human health. **The FDA never acted on or retracted those findings.**



In a 2-1 decision released July 24, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit ruled that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration need not consider banning the use of antibiotics in healthy food-producing animals. Thursday's finding overturns two district court rulings in cases brought by the NRDC and other groups that would have compelled the FDA to withdraw approval for most non-therapeutic uses of penicillin and tetracyclines in livestock — unless drug makers could prove those substances were safe.

In recent years, leading public health experts and agencies have sounded the alarm over the declining effectiveness of antibiotics in human medicine and the resulting increased threat of **Methicillin - Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)** and other difficult-to-treat infections, including the new exotic disease becoming a killer in west African nations. A White House advisory committee is expected to issue a report on the topic in the next few weeks.

Authorities generally agree that the predicament is a result of antibiotic overuse in both humans and animals. As the appeals court noted in its opinion, "for each dose of antibiotics given to humans for medical purposes, four doses are given to livestock for non-medical reasons to encourage faster, healthier growth."

This use of small amounts of antibiotics for large groups of animals over long periods of time can create ideal conditions for bacteria to develop resistance. Bacteria that can withstand the drugs will survive and reproduce, while bacteria susceptible to the drugs will die off. It's a microscopic survival of the fittest.

Who is really in charge?

More Government Help For Industrial Agriculture

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) may be looking to use emerging technology in products for livestock that could make animals on factory farms gain weight and absorb medications faster. The technology in question is nanotechnology, the process of manipulating or creating matter at the molecular level. While there are a range of uses for nanotechnology, including the development of clothing and cosmetics, it has become particularly prevalent in the commercial food sector. Nestle, Heinz, Kraft, and other companies have cumulatively invested billions of dollars into the industry.

FDA indicated that it is "particularly interested" in using nanotechnology to change the chemical, physical, or biological makeup of livestock feed and drugs. The agency has a history of using dangerous or untested technology and additives, often keeping products on the market even after they have been proven as unsafe for human and animal consumption. A spokesman for the Center for Food Safety stated, "We know far too little about the human health and environmental effects of this technology to allow it to slip into our food without rigorous assessment."

FDA released a series of guidances last week on the use of nanotechnology in food products, stating that the agency is not making "broad, general assumptions" about its safety. The documents "encourage" manufacturers to consult with the FDA on the safety of their products before rolling them out to the public, as the agency does not have enough data about potential safety issues of nanotechnology in food products for humans or animals.

The agency has come under fire several times in recent years from public health and consumer watchdog groups such as the Center for Food Safety and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) for its irresponsible oversight of additives in food and medicine, particularly on factory farms. In addition to loosely regulated experimentation with nanotechnology, FDA was also found to use harmful additives like arsenic in order to make animals gain weight faster.

Last year, the Center for Food Safety filed a lawsuit against FDA to respond to a petition, filed by public health and environmental groups, asking the agency to withdraw additives containing arsenic from approved livestock feed. Arsenic is often used in poultry feed to induce faster weight gain. The petition, filed in 2009, showed the harmful effects that organic arsenic compounds can have on animals and humans alike, as well as its tendency to convert into inorganic, cancer-causing toxins. The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy in 2006 called public attention to FDA's use of arsenic in livestock feed, but the agency made no significant changes to its policy since then.

FDA reviewed 30 different antibiotic feeds used to promote growth and prevent disease in animals and poultry on factory farms, where conditions are often unsanitary, and concluded that the products exposed humans and animals to antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Almost all of these additives are approved for use today and at least nine continue to be marketed.

Further complicating matters is the issue of transparency in food and drug approval regulations; a report published by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) noted a range of concerns of the ethics of nanotechnology, and the need to implement measures of some kind to protect the health and safety of workers and the public from the consequences of unregulated release of commercial nanoproducts into the environment."

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Help For Midwest Environmental Advocates

Many of our members have responded to the DCEC letter urging support for Midwest Environmental Advocates, (MEA) the organization now functioning to defend citizen rights in Wisconsin. Our public intervenor office — which was the original watchdog protecting public rights — was removed by the legislature and governor action during the Thompson administration, opening the door to many resource decimating new permits being granted. The MEA staff of dedicated lawyers and human right experts have become the group that is giving legal help to individuals and groups facing water quality and resource decimation projects being proposed statewide. If you have not made a contribution to help support their work, please send any amount you choose to contribute to:

Midwest Environmental Advocates 612 W. Main Street Madison, WI. 53703

We appreciate their support and they need our help to keep active in resource protection

(JMV)

A Four Year Flashback — December 2010

Cathy Stepp, outspoken critic of DNR, picked to head agency Wisconsin State Journal December 2010

Cathy Stepp, a former Republican state senator and outspoken critic of the state Department of Natural Resources, was named Thursday to head the agency by Gov.-elect Scott Walker. Stepp's appointment immediately drew stinging criticism from Democrats and environmentalists.

"Putting Cathy Stepp in charge of the DNR is like putting Lindsay Lohan in charge of a rehab center," said Brett Hulsey, an incoming Democratic state representative from Madison.

Stepp is a former member of the state Natural Resources Board. She also served as state senator from 2002 to 2006. She retired from the Senate in 2006 to help run the family's construction business in Sturtevant, near Racine. Joining Stepp at the DNR as deputy secretary will be Matt Moroney, an attorney and former executive director of the Metropolitan Builders of Greater Milwaukee. State Rep. Scott Gunderson, R-Waterford, was named executive assistant.

Stepp's appointment was one of 14 Cabinet positions Gov.-elect Scott Walker announced Thursday.

In an interview with the Wisconsin State Journal, Walker said he chose Stepp to lead the natural resource agency because her experience as both a business owner and a former member of the Natural Resources Board will allow her to balance environmental protection with economic development.

"I wanted someone with a chamber-of-commerce mentality," Walker said.

A longtime critic of the agency she will now oversee, Stepp served on a legislative committee that toured the state seeking comment and criticism about the DNR. And in a post on a conservative blog last year, Stepp said the people who work at the DNR tend to be "anti-development, anti-transportation, and pro-garter snakes, karner blue butterflies, etc." In the same post, she called agency employees "unelected bureaucrats" who tend to "come up with some pretty outrageous stuff that those of us in the real world have to contend with."

Stepp, who will be paid \$125,000, said Thursday that her past criticisms of the DNR should not affect morale at the agency. "I think it is going to be helpful," Stepp said. "Everybody who works in any big agency or business knows there can be improvements."

Stepp called her first meeting with DNR employees Thursday morning "incredibly warm and welcoming." She said she emphasized that she will have a relaxed management style. She said she will work to streamline environmental permitting and encourage a focus on customer service.

Walker expects more review of environmental regulations and rules, including some already in place. He cited rules recently passed to regulate the discharge of phosphorus, a pollutant that spurs growth of weeds and algae in lakes and streams. Walker said the phosphorus rules could hurt local governments that have to pay for new treatment systems. "Without a doubt, we'll be doing a cost-benefit analysis of every rule," Walker said.

George Meyer, who served as DNR secretary while Stepp was on the Natural Resources Board, had both praise and criticism for the new

secretary. He said Stepp, who is a snowmobiler and turkey hunter, was strong on hunting and outdoor sport issues. But Meyer, who now is executive director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, said when she was a state senator, Stepp supported legislation that weakened environmental protections.

Meyer said his biggest concern is that none of those named Thursday to take leadership roles at the DNR have a professional background in natural resource management...

(Wisconsin State Journal)

Now, Four Years Later.....

The New Ghost Department of Natural Resources – 2014

Four long years have passed and the department charged with protecting the precious heritage of natural resources of the State of Wisconsin has been streamlined, efficientized, scrutinized, politicized, and for most observers, become a ghost of the agency it once was. Wisconsin was historically a leader in resource conservation and protection, recognized throughout our nation for the efforts at ensuring that future generations in Wisconsin would have resources to enjoy as past residents were privileged to utilize. It is as if the memory of the work of significant people: Aldo Leopold, Gaylord Nelson, Sigurd F.Olson, Frances Hammerstrom, Jim Zimmerman, and a host of other ecological influential people had never existed, let alone influenced our state direction:

It is very easy to assume that the happenings of the last four years have been orchestrated to make the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources into a new department with the purpose of making it easier for resources of the State to be "capitalized" for profit. How else can anyone explain the ease with which out-of-state and out-of-country business owners and financiers are able to purchase large tracts of land, establish mining interests, create immense industrial cattle operations and secure multiple high-capacity wells, all under DNR permits. Local citizens and organized groups are having to battle to save their communities from destruction and preserve the vanishing groundwater supplies, while purveyors of intensive and ecologically damaging uses are gaining easy permits with **guaranteed protection from challenges. (gag order legislation).**

Small wonder that Department personnel who have historically defended their position as protectors of natural resources have chosen early retirement as an option to staying on staff and acquiescing to the new Department guidelines. The budget cuts, needed or not, have created an exchange or diminishing of purpose in our defense of natural resources and made it necessary to eliminate critical personnel and cut staff and office hours. This is hardly wise at a time when these personnel are most critical to enforce the few remaining regulations against a **new onslaught of damaging ideas for profit.**

Meanwhile our streams are becoming more polluted with waste runoff, the Bay of Green Bay phosphorus and nitrate levels continue to rise, Lake Michigan is at the upper limit for nutrient maximum allowable. The Lake shore algae and cladophora continue to bloom, and plans are in place and pending approval for new ways to pollute our air with liquid animal waste. (**It's as if these short-term planners were anticipating that these would be the last generations on our planet.**)

Help make them wrong!

(JMV)

"CUT THEM ALL" Door County Park Committee Decision

The boiling controversy over the future of the ash trees in Door Bluff Headlands Park came to a screeching halt on August 12th when the Park Committee made the decision to cut all of the Ash trees in that park. No Emerald Ash Borers (*Agrilus planipennis*) have been found north of Fish Creek which is nearly 19 miles from the Park and the people who support the "wait and see" argument are baffled by the plan to remove all of the trees, healthy or not. Forester Chris Plzak said, "We're not mandating cutting the trees. Doing nothing is a viable option."

Some of the comments from the audience were; "If the trees are removed, it's going to take decades for the park to recover," said Mike Bahrke.

Carole Maronek, who was outspoken last year when Liberty Grove cut trees along Garrett Bay Road leading to the park, asked, "What is the rationale for cutting trees to save trees?" "You can always cut the trees. You can't put them back."

The County Park and Airport committee voted 5-1 — with Richard Haines voting no and member Ben Meyer absent — in favor of a DNR administered sale in three stages, spread over the next several years. Those supporting the harvest were; Richrd Virlee, Charles Brann, Ken Fisher, Tim O'Connor

and Joel Gunnlaugsson. The approved concept is to remove a section of ash trees each year to complete ash removal in a three-year plan. This would **reduce the visual impact and may lessen the amount of public outcry** that happened earlier at the Cave Point operation. More than likely, the first major cutting will occur in the remotest portion of the park or the select trees with the most value will go down first.

The dedicated entrance portion of the Park that is under restrictive covenant to "remain in its natural state" by the donor cannot be treated in the same manner as the unrestricted county park land, so what will have been gained.

It is unfortunate that the preservation leaders who had the wisdom to set aside this precious primeval scenic woodland were not able to partake in the discussion and ultimate action to control possible Ash tree loss by eliminating all of the Ash trees. It is likely there would have been some strong opinions expressed about the wisdom of this action. A debt of gratitude is owed to all of the *purveyors of common sense* who stood fast in defense of letting the trees remain and keep watchful for any infection, then act accordingly with a prescribed plan.

(JMV)

Class — Action Suits Over Odor Complaints

People of Wisconsin who are living under "**smell siege**" should take notice of action that has happened as a result of animal rendering facilities creating a public uproar over offensive and intolerable odors. Residents of the Town of Howard in Brown County have had enough of the constant nuisance odors emanating from the animal by-product processing plant operated by Sanimax LLC on Shawano Avenue and have taken new action. Citizen complaints have risen from 50 in 2012 to double that number currently, with Alderman Tom Sladek, who is among the neighbors who have filed odor complaints with the county saying, "They just want to be able to have windows open and hold birthday parties in their backyards."

The Brown County Board has talked for almost a year about toughening an ordinance to quickly fine a business that produces odors regularly prompting complaints, but has yet to vote on a proposed change. An existing ordinance says an odor-producer can be fined after three verified complaints within eight hours, and an attempt was made to change to two complaints, which failed after the **Chamber of Commerce** objected. The County may have an added incentive to act when the local class action suit that was filed last year is heard in the next few weeks.

Last week another class-action nuisance suit was filed in Dane County against the same company as citizen complaints about obnoxious odors have become more numerous and residents are objecting. The suit against the company that processes **800 million pounds** of animal by-products each year — **up from 80 million pounds ten years ago** — was originated by the Warshawsky Law Firm of Milwaukee. Sanimax, an international company, also has operations in Montreal in Canada, Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN. and one near Milwaukee. **The outcome of this litigation will determine how people impacted by CAFO operations can gain some control over the air quality they are presently enduring.**

(JMV)

Who Said This?

"...short-sighted men who in their greed and selfishness will, if permitted, rob our country of half its charm by their reckless extermination of all useful and beautiful wild things..."

Theodore Roosevelt in Wilderness Quotes

PRESIDENT: Steve Eatough • Sister Bay

1st VICE-PRESIDENT: Eileen Andera • Sturgeon Bay

2nd VICE-PRESIDENT: Phyllis Ingwersen • Sister Bay

TREASURER: Bernice Shumway • Sister Bay

SECRETARY: Carol Sills • Baileys Harbor

DIRECTORS: Carl Madsen • Sister Bay

Robert Merline • Fish Creek

Dave Tupa • Jacksonport

Paul Leline • Baileys Harbor

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Jerry Viste • Sturgeon Bay

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR: Ray Kostiuk • Fish Creek



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"If you are a DCEC member and would like to serve on the Board of Directors, contact Jerry at 920-743-6003 for more information".



DCEC Membership is current with 2014's calendar year, have you renewed your membership?

- If you haven't renewed your membership, you can renew now for this year and save DCEC some mailing costs.
- You can become a member, quickly and easily, by filling out the included membership blank.
- You can even become a member of the Board of Directors and have a direct influence on issues affecting this great, beautiful county.
- You can renew online with PayPal, it's easy and secure.

DCEC's Mission

"To foster the preservation of Door County's rich heritage of natural resources...for the health, welfare and spiritual uplift not only of its inhabitants, but for generations to come."

door county environmental council

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You Can Also Renew Your Membership Using PayPal



0814

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p.o. box 114
fish creek, wi 54212**

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The ongoing DCEC sponsored homeowner water quality testing program has been completed in all of northern Door County with Sevastopol, Sturgeon Bay and Jacksonport towns as the most recent participants in the program. A combined sample bottle return date for all three towns was completed and the samples all taken to Stevens Point with one vehicle. The registration date deadline and sample bottle pickup dates were in news releases by the towns, giving detailed instructions on how homeowners should proceed. Our Thanks to town clerks; Linda Wait, Ellisa Taylor and Nancy Anschutz for their dedicated support and work to make this project really successful.

There remain only six (6) towns in southern Door County still to be involved in the testing program: Nasewaupee, Gardner, Claybanks, Forestville, Brussels and Union. It has been working quite well to do multiple towns in each annual testing operation and a cooperative venture with two or more towns will enable this entire program to be completed in the next two or three years.

Remember that DCEC pays up to \$500 for each town to utilize in advertising and promotion of the testing program and the complete package of tests is bargain priced at \$110 for the complete spectrum of tests. You need to think seriously about having your well water tested and as a result you will be knowing that the water is safe for your family's health. **Contact your town supervisor or chairman** to let them know you are interested in the testing program. Send an email to: info@dcec-wi.org for a complete listing of the tests included in the full test package cost schedule and it will also be listed in the spring newsletter. Residents who missed the testing schedule in their own town can join in with the 2015 program.

(JMV)

...and, after you read this newsletter, please pass it along to a friend



DCEC Incorporated in 1970 under the laws of Wisconsin as a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation