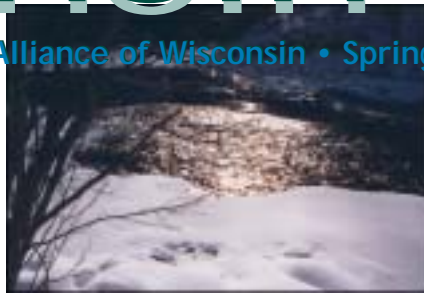


Wisconsin Rivers

A Publication of the River Alliance of Wisconsin • Spring 2003 • Volume 9 • Issue 1



1993 "A healthy river is the heart of a healthy community." 2003

Waters of Wisconsin Conservation Briefing Book

By Anne Sayers, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters

What one resource contains complete information on all of the most important conservation issues in Wisconsin along with innovative policy suggestions? While the answer has always been "none," as of March 2003 the answer will instead be, "The Wisconsin Conservation Briefing Book." Coordinated and published by the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters and the LCV Education Fund, the *Briefing Book* outlines a unified, two-year vision for conservation policy in our state. This book's balanced approach represents the efforts of a coalition of individuals and organizations numbering well over thirty.

The *Briefing Book* presents integrated and concise discussions of conservation issues and solutions from a wide range of areas and also lists corresponding "experts" for each topic. The latter feature gives readers, whether legislators, media, or constituents, the power to pursue even more information on each topic. Such actions are the first step to achieving the *Briefing Book's* ultimate goal: turning innovative policy recommendations into sound conservation laws.

Despite Wisconsin's many recent water-related successes, water quality and quantity issues remain in dire need of legislative attention. Therefore, the many water issues of concern in Wisconsin take center stage throughout the *Briefing Book*. Each water piece attempts to examine the source of our water problems and follows with suggestions of viable, long-term solutions. The following issue briefs were extracted from the water section of the *Wisconsin Conservation Briefing Book*.

Limiting Mercury Levels in Surface Waters and Fish

For all of Wisconsin's inland waters, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) warns pregnant women, nursing mothers, women of childbearing age, and children under 15 to severely limit the amount of sport fish they eat to one meal per month

Briefing continues on page 6...



Above and top: The Namekagon River in winter. For more Namekagon background, see our new feature, "Know Your River," on page 9. Photos by Lisa Goodman.

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River Alliance of Wisconsin



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A Final Stream of Thought

Diana Toledo
Acting Executive Director

In this space, typically reserved for Executive Director Todd Ambs' regular column, we instead reprint Todd's farewell letter to River Alliance of Wisconsin friends and members. As of January, Todd left his position with the River Alliance to join the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as Water Division Administrator.

Todd served as the River Alliance's Executive Director since 1998. Over the past four years, the organization has grown dramatically in membership, staff size, budget, effectiveness and political influence. Much of this success is due to Todd's leadership, his commitment to river protection, and his creativity in finding solutions where there often appeared to be none.

The River Alliance will miss Todd Ambs, although we look forward to working with him in his new capacity as Wisconsin's "water chief." By the time this newsletter reaches your mailboxes, our search for a new Executive Director should be nearly complete, and we'll be ready to face new challenges and meet future successes under new leadership. See our back page for a photo collage of Todd over the last few years.

Wishing you all a happy spring,



Diana Toledo
Acting Executive Director

Reprinted from January 7, 2003

Open Letter to all River Alliance members:

With a mixture of regret and excitement, I wish to inform one and all that I will be leaving the River Alliance at the end of this month. I am honored to have been asked to serve as the Administrator for the Division of Water in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and will begin my work there at the beginning of February.

For four years the River Alliance of Wisconsin has been my professional home. I am awed by what the organization has accomplished in that time and owe that success to the tremendous staff, board, dedicated volunteers and generous members who have made our record of accomplishment possible. We are already hard at work to ensure a seamless transition and I am confident that a new executive director will continue to lead this organization as an effective and respected



voice for the flowing waters of Wisconsin. I look forward to continuing to work with this great organization in a new capacity.

Governor Doyle spoke yesterday about a new day for our state. I plan to bring that same commitment to my work at the DNR. We must approach our challenges, which are many, by bringing people together in an open and inclusive way to take a fresh look at how we protect and restore our most precious natural resource - our water. At the same time we must recognize the great work already being done by the tremendous staff at the Division of Water and build on those successes.

I also take with me into the agency a heartfelt thanks to everyone who is a part of the rapidly growing conservation community in Wisconsin. We have over 300 lakes associations, nearly 100 river and watershed groups, many dedicated hunting and angling groups, a tremendous network of land trusts, a number of great statewide organizations and a university system that for a century has applied Bob LaFollette's "Wisconsin Idea" for the benefit of our environment. This powerful combination helps to make this state what it is - a place where the conservation ethic is not just a slogan, but something that is embedded into the fabric of what makes Wisconsin special.

We will need that collective energy in these difficult budgetary times if we are to meet the essential challenge of protecting and restoring our 15,000 lakes, 44,000 miles of rivers and streams, 5.3 million acres of wetlands and precious groundwater resources in the months and years to come.

I look forward to continuing to work with all of you in a new capacity to meet that challenge.



Todd L. Ambs

River Alliance of Wisconsin



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The River Alliance of Wisconsin is a statewide nonprofit, nonpartisan citizen advocacy organization dedicated to protecting and restoring Wisconsin's rivers.

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Wisconsin Rivers is a quarterly publication of the River Alliance of Wisconsin. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of our funders. Articles are invited for consideration.

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Legislative Report

Scott Froehlke, River Alliance Board Chair

Doyle Leads "Green" Team

Governor Doyle spoke to Madison's environmental and conservation leaders the day before he submitted his first budget, and his message was subdued but hopeful. In so many words, he asked for a period of grace – for a year or two – while he tackles the immense budget challenge Wisconsin is facing. After the budget recovers and the economy hopefully rebounds, the Governor expects to advance a more ambitious conservation agenda.

Meanwhile, his budget makes a generous commitment to the Stewardship Fund. In his remarks to the conservationists, he also said that a first priority is the purchase and protection of property around the proposed Crandon mine. And he spoke of a plan to protect green space in and around Milwaukee.

The really extraordinary aspect of this new era in state government is the number of "green" leaders now working inside the Administration, including the River Alliance's former Executive Director, Todd Ambs (now Administrator for the DNR's Division of Water). Anyone who knows these folks knows they didn't sign up to pose for pictures.

Legislation to Monitor

There are two developing legislative initiatives of particular interest to river advocates. One is the effort underway to devise a high-capacity well permitting system. Under current law, unless a municipal water supply is threatened, anyone is free to sink a high capacity well and pump an unlimited supply of groundwater, regardless of its impact on aquifers or surface water. Nearly two years ago, the River Alliance teamed with the Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association, Inc. and University of Wisconsin experts to fix this gap in our water laws. Look for draft legislation in the upcoming weeks.

The other initiative is the water resources account at the DNR that funds grants for local lake and river protection efforts. It is funded through the motorboat gas tax, using a formula established fifteen years ago, to estimate average yearly motorboat fuel consumption. The formula has never been readjusted to reflect today's larger and more numerous boats. Advocates for the change estimate a more realistic formula (from the current 50 gallons/boat/year to 75-100 gallons) could garner an additional \$6 million for programs to protect water quality and recreational opportunities.

We expect to see leadership from the Doyle Administration on the groundwater front. DNR Secretary Scott Hassett has predicted the emergence of a state-of-the-art groundwater extraction program in the near future. Motorboat gas tax changes have proven to be a tougher sell. The absence of a solid study indicating average yearly motorboat gas use in Wisconsin hinders our efforts to sell a revised formula to lawmakers. And everyone is skittish about reallocating funds in the current budgetary climate.

Updating the formula is the right thing to do – and it eventually will get done – but is this year the right time to do it? Perhaps the River Alliance should call for the DNR and DOT to collaborate on a study to determine a fair formula for the distribution of gas tax revenue – and get stakeholders to commit beforehand to supporting whatever number emerges.



Introducing Carl & John's Paddlin'

Announcing some breaking news from the paddlesports industry:

Long time River Alliance friend and business member Carl Busjahn recently announced the sale of his business, Carl's Paddlin', to industry veteran John Haugen-Wente.

Though John takes charge of paying the bills and signing paychecks at the newly re-named Carl & John's Paddlin', Carl will continue working regular hours at the shop through 2003. Visitors will still find the newly remodeled shop at the same location, with quality canoes and kayaks, friendly, knowledgeable staff, and Carl's jokes.

Carl and John are pleased with recent developments. Both were looking for a change, and Busjahn says he "couldn't have asked for a better arrangement." John was long-time manager at Rutabaga. With John Haugen-Wente purchasing the shop on February 11, Carl notes, "things have come full circle."

The River Alliance wishes John and Carl the best of luck. (Read more about Carl & John's Paddlin' at www.paddlin.com.)

It's Our 10th Anniversary! 1993-2003

Save the Date
River Alliance Annual Dinner
Saturday, November 15, 2003

River Alliance of Wisconsin



Save the Date
Saturday, November 15, 2003

River Alliance Wish List

Any donations of items, time or skills will help our organization immensely! Our list does not need to end here, either. If you have an idea for a donation, please contact us at 608.257.2424 or wisrivers@wisconsinrivers.org.

Items

- Computer Monitors (17" +)
- Digital Camera
- Conference Phone
- Camera Bag
- Vacuum Cleaner
- Office Supplies

Skills

- GIS Training
- Publication Design
- Carpentry
- Web Design

Tools for Successful River Protection in 2003

Local Groups Assistance Program Update
Lisa Goodman, Northern Region Coordinator

River Works 2003-2005 Follow Up

Yes, it's coming! As detailed in the last newsletter, attendees of last November's Rivers 2002 conference took part in developing *River Works 2003-2005: A Citizen Action Plan for Wisconsin's Watersheds*. Through a series of facilitated breakout sessions, conference participants identified issues of concern to form a framework for a citizen action plan to protect our watersheds.

The six issues listed below were identified by conference participants as priority areas of concern. Participants discussed each of the issues at length and began to identify goals and actions to address each. Six workgroups formed to address each of the issue areas. The selected issues are:

- River Access
- River Corridor Land Use
- Water Quality: Urban nonpoint
- Water Quality: Agricultural nonpoint
- Property Rights
- Urbanization

The River Alliance is now recruiting additional volunteers to join each of the six workgroups. *If you are interested in the issues listed above or if they pertain to the work of your local watershed organization, we invite you to join the workgroup for that issue area.* To view a summary of the *River Works 2003 - 2005* findings, including more detail on the goals and actions identified for each issue, visit www.wisconsinrivers.org.

Next Steps

In the coming weeks, all conference attendees will be mailed information pertaining to *River Works* follow-up. Our goal is to bring together each of the working groups for an initial meeting by this April, where we will begin addressing next steps for each issue area. While *River Works 2003 - 2005* is a collaborative effort of many river and watershed organizations around the state, the River Alliance is committed to serving as coordinator for this effort. Again, we invite all of you who are interested to contact us to add your name or your organization's name to any of the workgroups. Please contact Diana Toledo or Lisa Goodman.

Take Your Group to the Next Level, Board Training Available

The River Alliance is now offering a new one-day training for Board members of all-volunteer river and watershed organizations. This training is based on the tool, *Benchmarking Your Organization's Development*, developed by the Institute for Conservation Leadership to help all-volunteer groups assess their own organizations and identify ways in which their groups can become more effective and sustainable in the long-term.

Prior to the training, board members of participating organizations will be asked to fill out an online survey about their organization. The training will focus on these survey responses. Our staff will help groups prioritize critical areas of concern and develop a work plan to address them.

Over the coming months, we will be offering this "Benchmarking Workshop" in different regions of the state as listed below. If you are interested in taking advantage of this training opportunity or learning more about it, please contact Diana Toledo or Lisa Goodman.

May 2003	West Central Wisconsin
June 2003	Northern Wisconsin
July 2003	Northeastern Wisconsin
September 2003	Southeastern Wisconsin
October 2003	Southcentral Wisconsin

Announcing! Watershed Advocate Toolkit

We're proud to announce the completion of the *Watershed Advocate Toolkit: A Series of Helpful Tools for River and Watershed Protection*. The tools are designed to help local groups strengthen their river conservation work and their internal structure. Of particular note is the tool *Using the Clean Water Act to Protect Wisconsin's Waters*, a 50-page manual that can help you make use of this powerful legal tool to protect your own river, stream or watershed.

The *Toolkit* is available online at www.wisconsinrivers.org/LocalGroups/pubspage.html.

You may also order a hard copy of the Clean Water Act tool by downloading the online order form or contacting us at 608-257-2424. Cost is \$10 for members; \$15 for non-members.

River Links

Library Resources for Your Group

Announcing *River Links*, our Local Group lending library. A selection of resource materials that will help build strong watershed protection organizations in Wisconsin is now available through your local public library by making an interlibrary loan request. For a list of available materials and information on accessing them, visit www.wisconsinrivers.org to download a copy of the River Links brochure.

We would like to thank the Wisconsin Departments of Public Instruction and Natural Resources for their support of this project.

New Program Intern

We would like to introduce the new Local Groups Intern, Heidi Fassnacht. A Madison native, Heidi has a masters degree in geology and civil engineering. This spring she will help coordinate a number of projects, including *River Works 2003-2005* follow up. Welcome Heidi!

River Alliance Local Groups contacts:

Diana Toledo, diana@wisconsinrivers.org, (608) 257-2424 (southern Wisconsin)

Lisa Goodman, goodman@wisconsinrivers.org, (608) 441-8410 (northern Wisconsin)

Watershed Advocate Toolkit
A Series of Helpful Tools
for River and Watershed Advocates

Do you want to know:

- How to grow and maintain your group's member base?
- How to raise money and where to seek funding?
- How to organize river clean-ups?
- More about small dam removal?
- How to use the Clean Water Act to protect your waters?

Get Your Watershed Advocate Toolkit!
Now Available from the River Alliance of Wisconsin.
www.wisconsinrivers.org - 608.257.2424

Upcoming Local Groups Events

River Protection Grant Workshops April 3, 17

The deadline for applying for DNR River Protection Grants is May 1! To learn more about this grant program, contact Lisa Goodman or Diana Toledo, or attend the following free workshops (pre-registration is required). Workshops are sponsored by the River Alliance, DNR, UW-Extension and the Wisconsin Association of Lakes.

- Thursday, April 3, 6-9pm, Rhinelander
Bill Klase (715) 365-2658
william.klase@ces.uwex.edu
- Thursday, April 17, 9am-3pm, Rice Lake
Darren Lochner (715) 836-5513
darren.lochner@ces.uwex.edu

Wisconsin Lakes Convention April 10-12

As part of the Year of Water celebration and the 25th Annual Wisconsin Lakes Convention (April 10-12, Green Bay), the River Alliance joins the Wisconsin Association of Lakes, Wisconsin Wetlands Association and Wisconsin Ground Water Association for "Where the Waters Meet," a one-day workshop for held on Thursday, April 10th.

Registrations are being accepted now - for details, please visit the WAL web site at <http://207.21.241.161/convention/WIlakesconv03.htm>

Namekagon River Gathering May 10

Join others to paddle our federally designated Wild and Scenic Namekagon and voice concern about the proposed 250 mile Arrowhead-Weston transmission line ("The Line"). If built, the proposed Line would cross the Namekagon and numerous other northern rivers. Following the paddle, there will be a hearing to accept testimony regarding the proposed Line. If you can't attend, submit your comments.

This event is free of charge, but you must pre-register. Contact Logan Edinger, SOUL at 715- 474-2435, edinger@centurytel.net, or Lisa Goodman at the River Alliance. Event is co-sponsored by the River Alliance, SOUL, Wisconsin's Environmental Decade and Wisconsin Stewardship Network. To learn more about the Line, visit www.angelfire.com/wi/wakeupwisc/home.html

Clean Water Coalition Springs Ahead

New Publications and the Motorboat Gas Tax

Jennifer Jankowski

Spring is the time when snow starts to melt, washing pollutants such as manure and sediment into Wisconsin's waterways. But this spring we have something positive to look forward to. Wisconsin now has the strongest polluted runoff protections in the nation. In 1997, the state legislature passed legislation directing state agencies to revise administrative rules regulating polluted runoff. In response to the revision, a broad coalition of anglers, farmers, environmentalists, and conservationists joined together to form the Clean Water Coalition as a way to ensure that the polluted runoff rules would adequately protect the environment and human health. The CWC is comprised of 31 diverse organizations and we would like to welcome four new members: the Waukesha County Environmental Action League, Izaak Walton League Wisconsin Division, Musky Club of Wisconsin, and Price County Waterways Association.

Citizen Tools

In late fall of 2002, the Clean Water Coalition released *Protecting Your Water from Polluted Runoff - A Citizen's Toolkit to Using Wisconsin's Laws to Reduce Polluted Runoff*. This 30 page toolkit outlines

the new polluted runoff management program and how citizens can get involved in its implementation. The toolkit was distributed to members of the coalition and is also available on the internet. The toolkit was the first of a series of efforts to educate Wisconsinites about the new rules and how they can get involved. The coalition also plans to hold numerous workshops across the state of Wisconsin starting in late spring 2003 and continuing until spring 2004. These workshops will be organized around the toolkit and will bring information and resources to citizens and groups concerned about polluted runoff in their community. The workshops are designed to engage as many citizens as possible in the new program and to help make its implementation successful.

In addition to ensuring successful implementation of the polluted runoff rules, the Clean Water Coalition has decided to support additional efforts to protect Wisconsin's waters. These efforts include changing the motorboat gas tax formula, creating strong groundwater quantity protection, and improving and increasing citizen water quality monitoring.

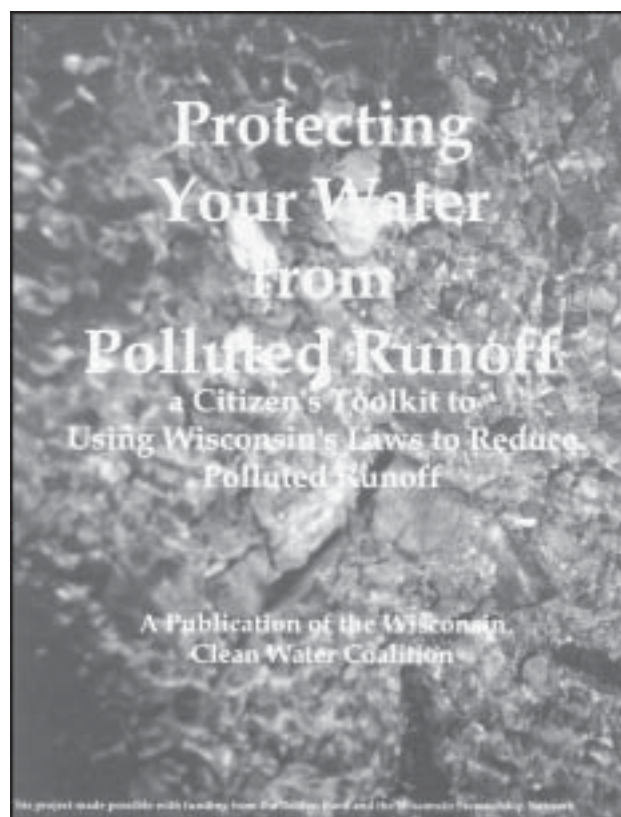
Motorboat Gas Tax

One of the biggest concerns for the CWC and many others in this state in these tight budget times is how to secure adequate funds for the programs vital to protecting our water quality. One way to secure additional funds for water resources, without raising taxes, is to change the motorboat gas tax formula.

The motorboat gas tax is a portion of the general gas tax and the earnings from that portion fund water resource programs. A formula calculates the percentage of gas used by motorboats in the state of Wisconsin each year. The formula, calculated 15 years ago, assumes each motorboat uses 50 gallons of gasoline a year.

Many feel the formula is outdated and needs to be updated to represent the amount of gasoline motorboats now use. Studies in Minnesota show motorboats using 100 gallons a year. Changing the formula to 100 gallons per motorboat per year would earmark an additional \$8.5 million a year in the water resources fund without the creation of a new or increased tax. Governor Doyle has not included this change in his budget released February 18.

To view the *Polluted Runoff Toolkit* online visit: www.wisconsinrivers.org and click *polluted runoff*.



"Protecting Your Water from Polluted Runoff - a Citizen's Guide" produced by the Clean Water Coalition.

Briefing Book continues...

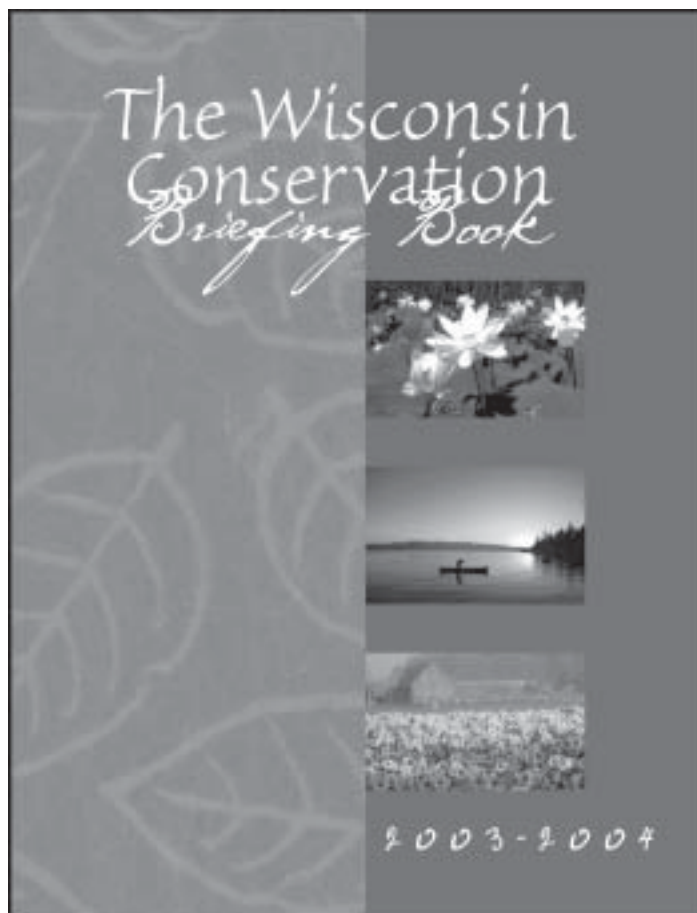
because of high mercury levels. Ninety-two of the state's water bodies have even stricter warnings for some fish species. In Wisconsin, the largest source of mercury pollution is uncontrolled coal-burning power plants. Policy recommendations:

- *Implement a mercury reduction rule with a:*
 - 90% reduction from major stationary air sources by 2010;
 - 100% reduction from major stationary sources by 2020;
 - 100% reduction from other sources by 2020.
- *Ban mercury in consumer products by 2005.*

Regulating Groundwater Withdrawal

Groundwater is the primary source of water for approximately 97 percent of Wisconsin communities and 70 percent of the population. The maintenance of both its quantity and quality are of critical importance to Wisconsinites. Over-withdrawal has already caused shortages and contamination statewide. Policy recommendations:

- *Grant the DNR the authority to regulate high-capacity wells.*
- *Give the DNR the explicit authority to disapprove or limit high-capacity well permits.*
- *Require that high-capacity well operators and groundwater users file periodic reports, and have the DNR establish a central clearinghouse for groundwater-related data, including incidents of contamination.*
- *Expand the DNR's public education and outreach programs on groundwater issues.*
- *To fund expanded public education and outreach programs, pass legislation that will direct the DNR to establish one or both of the following:*
 - *A permit fee for all new wells drilled in the state. A \$150 fee would generate \$2.25 million annually if 15,000 new wells are drilled each year.*
 - *A user-fee for high-capacity wells. Based on \$1 per million gallons of use, this fee would generate \$240,000 per year that could be used to fix problems caused by high-capacity wells.*

Controlling the Diversion of Our Water**Resources**

The unlimited withdrawal of Wisconsin's waters by municipalities, industrial plants, and water-bottling companies will inevitably threaten the sustainability of our water supply. In an effort to protect regional water supplies, Great Lakes governors and premiers are working to enact the "Great Lakes Charter Annex" which would regulate water withdrawals in a sustainable manner and work toward improving the water quality of the Great Lakes and health of its ecosystem. Policy recommendations:

- *Support the following provisions of a Great Lakes Charter Annex:*
 - *Any water withdrawal must result in a tangible "improvement" to the Great Lakes ecosystem.*
 - *Decision-making standards that are flexible enough to reflect environmental conditions.*
 - *Standards for withdrawals apply to all bodies of water, including groundwater, within the Great Lakes drainage basin.*
 - *Congress funds research and management efforts.*
 - *The Great Lakes states and provinces retain decision making authority, with some*

checks and balances by the federal government.

- Standards stipulate that decisions on water diversions and withdrawals are based on ecosystem protection and restoration and cover all of Wisconsin's waters, including groundwater.

• *Until the Annex is enacted, the Wisconsin legislature should:*

- *Adopt the High-Capacity Wells bill.*
- *Require that the DNR address water quantity issues from a watershed perspective.*
- *Lower the amount of average daily water loss required for permit approval.*

Funding the Polluted Runoff Rules

Each year, the United States spends millions of dollars combating the problems associated with polluted runoff, such as beach closures, unsafe drinking water, and fish kills. The rules enacted in Wisconsin in October 2002 address the economic and environmental harm polluted runoff can cause. The polluted runoff rules will be effective only if their implementation and enforcement are properly funded. **Policy recommendations:**

- *Place an excise tax on agricultural pesticides and lawn chemicals to help fund the implementation and enforcement of the new polluted runoff rules. Have the Department of Revenue collect the taxes from retail distributors and lawn-chemical applicators and establish separate appropriations for the DNR and the DATCP, who would use the money to hire personnel to oversee the rules and for educational outreach.*
- *Redirect a portion of "new" ethanol gas tax revenues (the portion produced over and above year 2002 production levels), to establish a stable, long-term funding source for county conservation staff to implement the state's agricultural polluted runoff control programs.*

Reconnecting Wisconsin's Rivers by Removing Small Dams

Many Wisconsin communities will soon face the decision of whether to repair or remove aging dams in their area. Many aging small dams are no longer able to serve their original purpose, are expensive to maintain and repair, pose potential threats to life and property, and have substantial impacts on the surrounding environment. The benefits of removing aging dams vary

Briefing Book continues next page...

Continues from previous page...

from recreational and aesthetic to economic and safety. Policy recommendations:

- *Repeal the provision for cost-share for fish passage. If a dam inhibits fish passage and impairs the public's fisheries, it is the responsibility of the dam owner to pay to fix the problem.*
- *Provide adequate resources for dam removal. The Municipal Dam Repair and Removal Fund is bankrupt, and the Abandoned Dam Fund has been fully allocated with no further funds appropriated. The Dam Removal Grant Program has not yet been passed, but its funds have largely already been allocated.*
- *Develop a licensing program for dams in the state that will collect fees from owners to fund safety inspections of the dams. Funds from the licensing program should go into habitat improvement or restoration of those areas where dams have caused ecological harm. A licensing system should also create a process for decommissioning dams when they are obsolete or unused.*

Water Law Enforcement

With an under-funded DNR, enforcement of our state's water laws is weak. Only five percent of the DNR's budget for water-quality programs is currently spent on enforcing water laws. Policy recommendations:

- *Reallocate the DNR's budget to make room for increased enforcement of water quality laws.*
- *Refer more cases to the Department of Justice for enforcement.*

With our Briefing Books in hand, conservation, environmental, and sporting organizations and individuals state-wide are gearing up to educate and influence their legislators on the natural resource issues that matter most to Wisconsinites. Please join us in utilizing this essential tool in creating a cleaner, healthier, and more prosperous future for Wisconsin.

In addition to water issues, the Wisconsin Conservation Briefing Book covers specific issues in the areas of wildlife and habitat, economy, government accountability and enforcement, land use, conservation incentives, agriculture, and energy. To view a copy, please visit www.conservationvoters.org. For more information or to receive a free copy of the book, please contact the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters:

Phone • 608.850.4585

e-mail • info@conservationvoters.org

Small Dams Program Update

Helen Sarakinos, Small Dams Program Manager



*Franbrook Dam site on Dougherty Creek.
Photo: WIDNR*

Dam Removals in Wisconsin

Franbrook Dam was removed from Dougherty Creek in early January of 2003. Dougherty Creek is in the East Branch of the Pecatonica watershed in Green Co. The dam was owned by the University of Wisconsin Foundation which worked closely with regional DNR staff to remove the dam as part of a larger effort to restore the cold water stream system. At thirty one feet in height, the dam was a relative heavyweight structure for the tiny creek with half-a-square-mile drainage! The DNR anticipates many improvements, especially in the temperature regime of the stream. In the former impoundment, it was not uncommon to see temperatures rise 25°F on hot summer days, which can spell disaster for coldwater species downstream of the dam. The final price tag for removal was \$15,000, with DNR crews doing the earth-moving work.

If you would like more information on the removal, contact Bob Hansis, DNR Grant-Platte/Sugar Pecatonica Basin Supervisor: (608) 275-3304.

Following a close referendum on the issue in late 2002, the public works committee of the City of Waterloo has decided to remove the Ball Park Dam on the Maunsha River in Waterloo, Jefferson Co. While the

impoundment has been drained for over two years due to concerns about the safety of the dam, citizens have been bitterly divided over the fate of the dam and the pond behind, particularly because ownership of the lands beneath the impoundment has been difficult to determine. The City, in cooperation with riparian landowners, is now beginning to develop a restoration plan for the impoundment that will create a city park in the formerly submerged lands.

Update on the 'Boo

The ripple effect of the Baraboo River dam removals is still being felt. At the Badger Fly Fishers Spring Opener show in Madison, I met Paul Krueger, a Baraboo resident who was advertising his new business guiding smallmouth bass fishing trips on the Baraboo River. This makes it the second new business to open up and take advantage of a restored Baraboo River. *Boo Canoe*, a canoe rental shop, opened last summer in the old Linen Mill building. *For more information about guided fishing on the Baraboo River, contact Paul at (608) 355-4148.*

League of Conservation Voters Briefing Book Includes Dam Removal

As noted in our cover story, the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters is releasing their *Wisconsin Conservation Briefing Book* of policy recommendations to protect Wisconsin's natural resources. One of the sections is titled *Going with the Flow: Reconnecting Wisconsin's Rivers by Removing Small Dams* and, as the title implies, outlines recommended policy additions and changes needed to manage the growing dam infrastructure crisis in the state. The publication is being released this March.

DNR Dam Removal Fund to be Created

The DNR is in the process of creating chapter NR 336 to establish a small dam and abandoned dam grant program. This would create a fund of \$250,000 to be used for the removal of small dams and abandoned dams in Wisconsin. The grant would fund up to 50% of the eligible costs for a small dam removal (up to \$50,000) and 100% of eligible cost for the removal of abandoned dams. Public comment period ended in mid-January 2003. The River Alliance submitted comments generally supporting the creation of NR 336 with the conditions that the DNR define how projects will be prioritized and define what are included in "eligible costs". We will keep you updated as more information becomes available.

Acting Locally

SOUL Works for Sustainable Power Options

Lisa Goodman

Local Group Assistance - Northern Region

Tom Kreager's introduction to the proposed Arrowhead-Weston transmission line came in June 1999, when he found a WPS employee trespassing on his 40 acre property near Mosinee, scouting a potential route for "The Line." In his own words, Kreager had never been an activist before, but since then, he has become an articulate spokesman for his cause.

Tom, with spouse Marge Kreager, began what they originally called Project David, (think "David and Goliath") and they began pounding the pavement to connect with others who shared their concerns. They attended informational meetings around the state, and handed out flyers which offered facts, asked questions, and provided a PO Box for replies. Their networking resulted in a base of supporters from along the 250-mile length of the proposed Line. According to SOUL vice president Linda Ceylor, by November 1999, a number of smaller groups had merged, and northern Wisconsin-based SOUL (Save Our Unique Lands) was incorporated.

SOUL's Mission Statement

SOUL...is a grassroots organization whose mission is to promote efficient and orderly management of power, based on the needs of Wisconsin, while protecting the natural, social and economic environments and citizens of Wisconsin.

Ceylor, a resident of Kennan, in Price County, provided further background on the history of the Line. The 250-mile long Arrowhead-Weston Line would transport energy from NE Minnesota to Weston, just east of Wausau. Initially proposed by Minnesota Power and Wisconsin Power and Light in about 1994, further study was denied.

Later, in the hot summer of 1997, with all nuclear facilities in Wisconsin and Illinois off-line, a lightning strike hit on the King-Eau Claire line, nearly causing a blackout. Though this incident was later determined to be caused by human error, it helped re-open the door for discussions of the Line.

Kreager says the Line is "intended to be a super-highway for deregulation...It has very little to do with

the people of Wisconsin or providing for the needs of Wisconsin"

According to Ceylor, the Line would facilitate the transfer of energy from Manitoba Hydro, and coal-fired power plants in North Dakota through Wisconsin. If constructed, a secondary purpose of the transmission line would be to facilitate generation facilities located on "inexpensive" property in northern Wisconsin, with more area for development of facilities, with possibly less building restriction than found in more urbanized areas.

Putting SOUL's work within a larger context, Kreager explains, "We're trying to get folks to envision the future of energy in Wisconsin." One dream, he says, is forming a coalition of "responsible energy" groups. He adds, "There's a lot to be gained by working for change, versus fighting it."

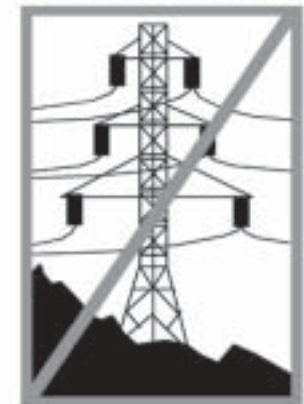
When asked about the future of SOUL after the Line issue has been decided, Kreager states, "we'll want to keep promoting what we feel makes more sense for the future, "distributed generation," which relies on smaller power sources that are cleaner, better for the environment and for jobs in the state." According to Kreager, distributed generation systems put the supply where the electricity is needed, often via wind turbines and photovoltaic panels. This replaces large generation plants with a series of smaller ones. "We'll be working to present those kinds of concepts and educate people." Kreager also notes that large power plants are more susceptible to outages, and possibly to terrorism.

"Like a lot of issues, until it hits close to home...you don't have any attachment to it," says Kreager. Citing another, less visible consequence related to this project, Ceylor explains the Pimicikamak Cree, of Northern Manitoba, have had their way of life turned upside down by Manitoba Hydro dam projects. Wisconsin's Environmental Decade has produced a video documentary about Manitoba Hydro, entitled Deadly Power.

In its short existence, SOUL has accomplished much. Ceylor highlights some of their accomplishments to date:

- Currently, eleven counties where construction is proposed have passed a resolution against the line. More than 100 towns and organizations have resolutions in place.

S.O.U.L.



Save Our Unique Lands

- In 2000, with the Pimicikamak Cree Nation (PCN) of Manitoba, SOUL sponsored a Rivers Awareness Tour across northern Wisconsin, involving a speaking and paddling tour and potluck gatherings to draw awareness to the plight of the PCN and the sited crossing of more than 60 northern rivers in the Arrowhead-Weston EIS.
- SOUL has presented workshops at Midwest Renewable Energy Associations Annual Energy Fairs.
- Held the first ever Citizens Energy Conference in 2001, and are looking forward to the second one, this November, 2003.

When asked how citizens can help make a difference in this issue, Kreager encourages people to attend the Namekagon River Gathering in May (see page 5), and to write to Governor Doyle to express concerns about construction of the line in order to help raise his awareness and increase his concern about this project. Says Kreager, "There are other options besides just what the utilities present."

To learn more about SOUL, visit:
<http://www.angelfire.com/wi/wakeupwisc/home.html>

or contact

Tom Kreager, projectd@dwave.net
SOUL Inc.
PO Box 11
Mosinee, WI 54455

To receive US Mail, or email action alerts, at no cost, contact Kreager, or the SOUL web site. SOUL Newsletter subscriptions are \$20 annually.

Know Your River: *The Namekagon*

Randall P. Schwalbach

Know Your River is a new feature for Wisconsin Rivers. Join us every issue as we get to know many of the wonderful rivers Wisconsin has to offer. Maybe your river will be next!

How Does One Get to Know a River?

Some people say they know a river once they paddle it in a canoe or kayak from headwaters to mouth. If you did this on the Namekagon River in northwestern Wisconsin, you'd travel 90 miles of river, pass through four Wisconsin counties, and most likely camp at several of the sites the National Parks Service has provided. But you'd still only know a little about it. How do you get to know a river?

I never really feel I know a river until I've been down it in flood and in rock-garden stage, seen it in rain and shine, danced on top of it with ski and snowshoe, eaten of its fish and fowl, sat beside campfires along it, and left part of my soul with it when I left. Then I know something about a river. But even then, a river is hard to know. Hard to understand. But easy to love.

Lots of people love the Namekagon. Most of the river is accessible by the beginning canoeist. There are only a few rapids, mostly near the Stinnett Bridge. The spring is the best season for the river, for the novice, because the river covers the rocks.

One of the more well-known champions of the Namekagon River is former Governor-Senator Gaylord Nelson, who at age 86 works full time as a counselor to the Wilderness Society in Washington DC. Nelson learned to value the Namekagon River as a young man, a Boy Scout, when he canoed, camped, and fished smallmouth bass on it and the St. Croix River.

Years later, Nelson remembered his personal relationship with the Namekagon, and under his leadership, the Namekagon-St. Croix System was named the first Wild and Scenic River in America east of the Mississippi. This followed the watershed Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968. This act has preserved, in a natural condition, a nation-wide system of free-flowing rivers of high scenic and recreational value. Waterways classified as *scenic*, such as major sections of the St. Croix and Namekagon, needed to be free of dams and appear from the water to be largely undeveloped.

In that sense, the Namekagon was an unusual choice for Wild and Scenic designation, since it had 5 dams



The Namekagon River, 2003. Photo Lisa Goodman

and moderately developed banks. But no matter, people who *knew the river*, like Nelson, saw the beauty and integrity remaining.

In a recent interview that Superior Broadcast Network aired on northern radio station WOJB, Nelson said the value of the river couldn't really be explained to people who don't understand. "If you got to explain why a beautiful natural river, unimproved by the activities of mankind ought to be saved, if you have to explain that the listener wouldn't understand that."

The Namekagon River's human history goes back at least to the centuries when Dakota and Ojibwe people lived and fought each other in this food-rich region. When the European fur trappers arrived, the Ojibwe allied with the French, obtaining guns, which allowed them to drive the Dakota Sioux out of their *Hokoka* – home. *Namekagon* is an Ojibwe word that means sturgeon.

This is a River We All Should Know

You could know all this about a river, though, but some of my environmentalist friends would still say you don't know much about it. They're right, of course. Knowing a river means knowing the people who love it, the legislators who have the power to save it, and the people who would destroy it. Suffice to say, the Namekagon's history still hangs in the balance with the pending American Transmission Company (ATC)

power line slated to cross the Namekagon. The National Park Service is in a position to deny ATC permission to cross the river, which could kill the project. The question that remains is whether or not the National Park service will deny permission.

One with her fingers crossed is Sandy Lyon, who lives on the river, near Springbrook. Right now, Lyon reports, the river is covered in ice and snow. A patch of open water every now and again peeks through to let you see the great river move underneath. "But, in the spring when the river cleans itself there are no others in the state that carry the dignified beauty of the slow moving Namekagon," said Lyon.

Lyon notes, "After the river's designation as Wild and Scenic the homes that had been along the river were gradually bought and removed. The wild shore was allowed to return. Huge white pines and birch stand stately on the steep mossy banks. Bears come down to the water's edge to fish and drink. Wild rice still grows in places on the river, especially at the Pahquahwong, an old Ojibwe ricing spot near Seeley, north of Hayward. Eagles and blue heron skirt the banks and fly over to bless the respectful canoeist with their grace. And the river flows clean and quiet."

Randy Schwalbach, an outdoor writer and naturalist from central Wisconsin has paddled most of the state's rivers.

Tributaries

Updates, News and Information

An Angler's Salute: Dale Druckery

We were pleased to meet Dale Druckery at last November's Rivers 2002 conference. A Shawano County resident and member of the Wolf Basin Partnership, Druckery has long been involved in local river conservation work. One of his latest river conservation efforts was the generous offer of a challenge grant to the River Alliance of Wisconsin and its members. Thanks to Dale's generous support, our winter appeal netted nearly \$12,000 to support our River Works initiative. As we head into 2003, the Year of Water in Wisconsin, our thanks go out to Dale for helping continue to make our work possible!

Intergenerational Unity Day

April 8, 2003 at the Concourse Hotel in downtown Madison

The focus of this year's event will be on the four important issues of affordable housing, health care for all, clean water and campaign finance reform. *Contact Wisconsin Intergenerational Network for more information www.wi-win.org 608-224-0606*

WIN is a statewide network of organizations and individuals who believe that interaction and cooperation among generations contribute to the health and well being of individuals and society.

Welcome Catherine Neiswender! Our Newest River Alliance Board Member

As our newest appointed Board member, Catherine currently works for University of Wisconsin-Extension as the Regional Water Quality Liaison for state Extension Water Quality programs. Prior to this position, Catherine joined the UW-Extension team in 1998 as Basin Educator in the Fox-Wolf River Basin in Northeast Wisconsin. Also, Catherine has been a volunteer member of the Local Group Assistance Program Advisory Team for over a year.

Catherine's love of the outdoors, and consequently her desire to work to protect natural resources, started as a young child with visits to the local forest preserve with her Dad. She loves outdoor silent sports including backpacking, mountain biking, skiing and ice-skating.

Canoecopia, Paddlers' Rendezvous

River Alliance Kicks Off Annual Raffle
March 14-16, 2003

A true sign of spring...*Canoecopia and Paddlers' Rendezvous* are almost here! The River Alliance of Wisconsin will again be displaying a booth and kicking off its annual raffle at these two events. Come and visit us at either location to get first crack at winning an Old Town touring kayak from Johnson Outdoors, angling gear, and many other prizes totaling over \$2,000!

Canoecopia is "the world's largest paddlesport exposition," and is held at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison.

Paddlers' Rendezvous at Carl and John's Paddlin' on the mighty Yahara River in Madison kicks the season off March 14th - 16th with an open house, clinics, and demos.



Catherine (l) receives her 2002 River Champion Award from Board Vice-Chair Rebecca Power (r). Photo -Staff.

Organizational Members

*Thanks for all of your support!
This issue, we proudly list all of our member organizations!*

American Rivers
Bad River Watershed Association
Badger Fly Fishers
BECWA - Watershed Coordinator
Citizens for Waterfront Revitalization
Door County Environmental Council
ECCOLA
Florence Co Lakes and Rivers Association
Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance
Friends of Lake Wingra
Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers
Friends of Rowan Creek
Friends of Scenic Lodi Valley, Inc.
Friends of the Branch River
Friends of the Brule River and Forest
Friends of the Jump River
Friends of the Prairie River
Gathering Waters Conservancy
Georgia River Network
Golden Sands Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.
Iola Boy Scouts (Adopt a Stream Program)
Izaak Walton League - Bill Cook Chapter
Izaak Walton League - WI Division
Izaak Walton League - Manitowoc
Izaak Walton League - Whitnall
Kenosha & Racine Land Trust
Kinnickinnic River Land Trust
McGill School of Environment, Montreal
Mississippi River Basin Alliance
Natural Heritage Land Trust
Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust
Ozaukee Washington Land Trust
Plover River Alliance
Rivers Council of Minnesota
Rock River Canoe Association
Root - Pike Watershed Initiative Network
Rusk County Waters Alliance
Sand County Foundation
Save Our Wild Salmon
Sierra Club - River Touring Section
Sierra Club - Mississippi River
Sisters of St. Mary
St Louis River Citizens Action Committee
Sustainable Racine
Trout Unlimited - Elliot Donnelly
Trout Unlimited - Frank Hornberg Chapter
Trout Unlimited - Green Bay Chapter
Trout Unlimited - Harry and Laura Nohr Chapter
Trout Unlimited - Lakeshore Chapter
Trout Unlimited - Marinette County
Trout Unlimited - Northwoods
Trout Unlimited - Oakbrook Chapter
Trout Unlimited - Shaw - Paca
Trout Unlimited - Green Bay Chapter
Upper Sugar River Watershed Assoc
Urban Ecology Center
Valley Stewardship Network
Washburn Co. Lakes and Rivers Assoc
WI Woodland Owners Association
Wisconsin Association of Lakes
Wisconsin Citizen Action
WISPIRG

Thanks, all, for your continuing support!

Thank You!

We are truly indebted to our individual, business and organizational members. Without their contributions, we would not be able to fight so strongly for Wisconsin's rivers!

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Dr. Barry E. Booth
Dale Druckery
Thomas Miller
Glenn Reinl & Sara Krebsbach

River Keepers

\$250 - \$499

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Rita Hayen
Donna and Chuck Poat
Tom Richardson & Barbara Eychaner
Ed Streeter
Elizabeth Toledo & Jeffrey Lynn

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The Many Facets of Todd Amb

River Alliance Executive Director 1998-2003

This collage explores the many facets of Todd Amb, from his charismatic speaking persona and technological acumen to his paddling prowess and musical ambitions. We wish Todd the best of luck in his new endeavors. *Read the whole story on page #2.*

