

CITIZENS (WOOD COUNTY) GROUNDWATER GROUP MEETING

DATE: Monday, February 15, 2021
TIME: 2:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Teleconference via WebEx

Present: Caleb Armstrong, Ray Bossert, Rhonda Carrell, Bill Clendenning, Scott Custer, Bruce Dimick, Nancy Eggleston, Gordon Gottbeheit, Tamas Houlihan, Ben Jeffrey, Kim Keech, Klayton Kree, Bill Leichtnam, Dan Matthews, Cecile Stelzer-Johnson, Nancy Turyk, Allison Werner, Ken Winters, Shane Wucherpfennig and Tim Wuebben.

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chair Bill Leichtnam called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

2. **Public Comment:** None.

3. **Correspondence/Updates/Handouts/Reports:**

Bill Leichtnam shared the following at the meeting:

- A. Neonicotinoids – Shane Wucherpfennig shared that he had a conversation with John Eron. John Eron gave a presentation about 6 years ago and brought neonicotinoid awareness to Friends of Mill Creek. The Land & Water Conservation Department has been working with local farmers the last 6 years to educate the public and farmers on the impacts of using neonicotinoids. Farmers in the Mill Creek Watershed Council has been tuned into farming practices to get away from those chemicals with those neonicotinoids in them. That is why part of the cost share stuff that they focus on pollinating plantings and pollinator pledge with the schools on pollinators which is a kickoff of those original presentations. Neonicotinoids are a class of insecticides chemically related to nicotine and seeds are coated with this product which can get into drinking water. Shane Wucherpfennig shared neonicotinoids kills honey bees and pollinators. Many farmers have gone away from seeds coated with the product. Bill Clendenning would like information sent to the Clean Green Action.

Motion by Bill Clendenning to share information on Neonicotinoids to the Renewable & Sustainable Committee for review. Second by Bruce Dimick. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Neonicotinoids makes the entire plant toxic including the leaves, pollen and nectar. Neonicotinoid is meant as an inoculation tool and an immediate insect control.

Farmers do better with pollinators if they could spray later in the evening. Honey bees are out during the day and go back home to the nest late at night which would make it easier on the bees. Tamas Houlihan shared the problem spraying at night is for the aerial applicators because it is not safe spraying at night. Aerial pesticide applicators are part of DriftWatch. DriftWatch registry tool is meant to help pesticide applicators and specialty crop growers communicate more effectively to promote awareness to help prevent and manage drift effects.

Shane Wucherpfennig mentioned that the Wood County Land & Water Conservation Department has a Mike Mcquire Drone Video that explains how drones spot treat crop fields. Website link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1THlg7WvwjREx22YYaOoX0SoRry7laNC/view?usp=sharing>

- B. Bill Clendenning commented that the Towns Association has encouraged the Wood County Highway Department to use less salt on roads in order to protect water.
- C. Rolling Hills Dairy Farm LLC CAFO Court Case – Wisconsin Department of Justice has reached a settlement which was approved by the Kewaunee County Circuit Court on January 29, 2021. The agreement requires Rolling Hills Dairy to construct a permanent runoff controls in the feed storage area at its facility to provide a greater protection against runoff into the East Twin River in Kewaunee County. The settlement requires Rolling Hills Dairy Farm LLC to pay a settlement in the amount of \$144,000 in forfeitures, surcharges, court costs and attorney fees. Wisconsin Republicans in late 2018 approved a new requirement that the Department of Justice submit settlements to the state

legislature for approval. Wisconsin Department of Justice said that a settlement was reached before civil action was commenced and therefore not subject to the law.

- D. Wisconsin Department of Justice for three other court cases totaling \$37,000:
- Outagamie County case against a dairy farm for manure runoff. Defendants disputed the charges but took various compliance steps.
 - Wood County case against a dairy farm for manure runoff. Defendants disputed the violations but agreed to settle.
 - Chippewa County case over destroying and filling a high quality wetland without a permit. An excavating company has reached a settlement with the Department of Justice but not the property owner.
- E. "Lake Tides" newsletter – Nancy Turyk shared that UW Extension program has a free quarterly email newsletter for people interested in Wisconsin Lakes and surface water. Website link: <https://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/UWEXLakes/Pages/resources/newsletter/default.aspx>
- F. Wisconsin Water Week will be March 8-12 to be held virtually. Cost is \$20 per day. Monday is titled "Water Cycles" presentations in the morning. Interactive sessions in the afternoon. Local groups are asked to share an online local event on Friday, March 12th. 14-Mile Creek Watershed and Tri-Lakes will be presenting on Friday. For more info: <https://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/UWEXLakes/Pages/programs/convention/default.aspx>
- G. River Alliance sent out a press release statewide congratulating Wood County, Portage County and Marquette County on the Clean Water referendum question on the April 6th ballot.
Website Link: <https://voteforcleanwater.com/>
Email Updates: https://secure.everyaction.com/5vqdb7bieo4efi8_8sfqg2
Short Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ffyh2rs?emci=249c8fec-ae6c-eb11-9889-00155d43c992&emdi=400cc971-b96c-eb11-9889-00155d43c992&ceid=7116805>

4. **Action Items:**

A. Next Steps

What are those next steps? What more can we do?

Bill Clendenning suggested that the Resource Conservation & Development Council should join water groups.

B. Protecting our ground & surface water with or without legislative support

Wood County Board of Supervisors are voting on a resolution on Tuesday, February 16th "to support efforts of four statewide organizations to introduce 'clean water' measures legislatively this term." The legislative efforts, if successful, would lead to long-term economic and quality of life benefits to the residents of the county. The four statewide organization groups are Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association, Clean Wisconsin, The Dairy Business Association and The Nature Conservancy. The goal of the four organizations would be to manage runoff, support farms that meet water quality standards and permit only those agribusinesses that meet the standard, help farmers grow foods with fewer negative environmental impact, encourage innovative farming practices and recognize that on sensitive soils that farming practices must change to protect water resources.

WOOD COUNTY RESOLUTION #21-2-7 passed 16-3.

5. **Roundtable**

- A. Tamas Houlihan – Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association received a Wisconsin Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant to help protect the Little Plover River and Wisconsin River.
- B. Rhonda Carrell – Are there any updates on the MOU?
- C. Bill Clendenning – The last telephone meeting on the MOU was held mid-December.
- D. Ken Winters – UW Madison has installed 15 test wells downstream from fields in Juneau County.
- E. Nancy Eggleston – The next telephone meeting on the MOU is early March.

- F. Bill Leichtnam – Congratulations to Nancy Eggleston who is retiring on March 12th after 30 years of service.
 - G. Cecile Stelzer Johnson – A number of wells to be tested in the Town of Grant.
6. **Announcements of members / visitors (upcoming parallel events / meetings)** Upcoming meetings and events were mentioned throughout the meeting.
 7. **Future Speakers:** Bill Leichtnam is looking for potential speakers for upcoming meetings.
March – Matt Krueger, Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association
 8. **Agenda Items for next meeting**
Agenda items should be submitted to Bill Leichtnam.
 9. **Next Meeting** Monday, March 15th, 2:00 p.m. (VIRTUAL)
 10. **Adjourn Groundwater Group Meeting** Chair Bill Leichtnam adjourned @ 3:12 p.m.

Notes by Kim Keech, Planning & Zoning Office