

DNR eDigest

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The Bureau of Education and Information's goal is to publish "The E-Digest" bi-weekly on paydays. The bureau will publish additional issues, as needed. Contact "E-Digest" editor Diane.Brinson@wisconsin.gov or at 608/266-5215 to submit stories, story ideas and photos that communicate internally the department's work, policies and issues that matter to DNR employees.

August 13, 2009

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Lower Wisconsin Riverway celebrates its 20th anniversary

By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region

"This bill creates the lower Wisconsin state riverway. The boundaries of the riverway are designated by the natural resources board. Within the boundaries, certain activities are regulated in order to preserve the scenic value of the lower Wisconsin river." From the Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau – 1989 Senate Bill 22



The scenic Lower Wisconsin State Riverway valley several miles west of Gotham on the Richland County side of the river.

WDNR Photo

About 100 persons turned out in Muscoda on a gorgeous Sunday afternoon in early August to celebrate the 20th

anniversary of the signing of legislation that created the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (LWSR) and Riverway Board.

Mark Cupp, Riverway Board executive director for the entire 20 years, told the gathering at the shelter in Muscoda's Victora Riverside Park, that "the protection and preservation of the scenic beauty and natural character of this special valley would not be possible without the cooperation of our partners, the many landowners and local residents who have participated in the success of the riverway."

Almost a decade of cooperation during the late 1970s and most of the entire 1980s among citizens, environmental groups, politicians and the DNR resulted in the passage of a law establishing the riverway and Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB). The law became effective on August 9, 1989.

The LWSR encompasses nearly 80,000 acres along the final 92 miles of the Wisconsin River. It begins below the last dam on the river at Prairie du Sac and extends to the confluence with the Mississippi River just south of Prairie du Chien.



Enjoying the afternoon's festivities are, (left to right): Becky Roth, wildlife biologist, Spring Green; Brian Hefty, supervisor, Wyalusing State Park; Steve Miller, director of the Bureau of Facilities and Lands; and Don Bates, CWD (chronic wasting disease) operations chief, Dodgeville.

WDNR Photo

The governor appointed the Riverway Board, made-up of one member from each of the six counties with land on the river and three at-large members who represent recreational user groups. The board is an independent state agency and "unique to government," noted Cupp.

The board administers a system of regulations designed to minimize the visual impact of activities when viewed from the Lower Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions.

Speakers in addition to Cupp included Brent Stadele, Muscoda village president; Bill Lundberg, LWSRB chair; **Steve Miller**, director, Bureau of Facilities and Lands; Dave Martin, former LWSRB member and state representative; Harold "Bud" Jordahl, professor emeritus, University of Wisconsin; **Jim Kurtz**, former director of the Bureau of Legal Services, now retired; Joe Tregoning, former state representative; state Senator Dale Schultz and state Representatives Steve Hilgenberg, Lee Nerison and Phil Garthwaite.

Footnote: *Greg Matthews is the South Central Region's public affairs manager.*

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DNR distributing federal Recovery Act funds

DNR is one of many Wisconsin state agencies involved in distributing American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, most coming via the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, according to **Barb Zellmer**, chief of the Management and Planning Section in the Office of Management and Budget. She added that the premise of the act is to stimulate local economies and create jobs. The federal government estimates that for every \$92,000 of ARRA funding spent, one new job will be created.

Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle created the Office of Recovery and Redevelopment to manage federal funds coming to the state by way of the act. Susan Crawford, former administrator of the DNR Division of Enforcement and Science, serves as deputy director of this office.

Taken from the ["Recovery.gov"](http://Recovery.gov) website: The "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act" is an unprecedented effort to jumpstart our economy, save and create millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century. With much at stake, the Act provides for unprecedented levels of transparency and accountability so that you will be able to know how, when, and where your tax dollars are being spent."

A Recovery Board will oversee measures within the act to "root out waste, inefficiency, and unnecessary spending." The public will be able to monitor the progress of the recovery and every dollar spent. This accountability is in place from the federal level down to the local public and private sectors.

Most of the money will be pushed out to companies, non-government organizations, educational institutions, state agencies and individuals.

State tapping into opportunities and meeting requirements

A team within the Office of Budget and Management consisting of Zellmer and budget and policy analysts **Paul Neumann**, working with the Water Division, and **Lance Potter**, working with the Air and Waste and Land divisions, is working with the Secretary's Office to provide overall management of Recovery Act funding issues and processes for the department. Team members are assisting the programs in taking advantage of opportunities for funding and addressing the requirements associated with the use of these funds. The department is charged with oversight, monitoring and reporting to assure that grantees meet all requirements of the Recovery Act. The ARRA requires that programs seeking funds explain their work; develop performance measures and reporting; and assure transparency.

"The act ramps up expectations for us to explain how our various systems and administrative procedures are used to assure accountability that every dollar received is being used to achieve the specific goals established," indicated Zellmer. Each of those systems and procedures have been documented in an Accountability Plan, which each agency receiving Recovery Act funds was required to develop and submit to the Office of Recovery and Redevelopment.

Programs are at different places in the process of applying for funds and documenting procedures for the use of those funds, as well as making decisions on specific projects that will be funded. ARRA funds have been announced for many programs. In some cases, they've completed the application process and are waiting for award of money. In other cases, application deadlines are still a ways off and the department is completing paperwork.

Where DNR-managed Recovery Act funds will be spent

As of August 1, the department has received, or been informed it will receive, more than \$150 million in Recovery Act funds to distribute and administer.

DNR-distributed recovery funds will help stimulate local economies and create jobs, while protecting human health and the environment. The two biggest recipients will be clean water initiatives and drinking water infrastructure. An ongoing process, water quality planning will receive additional funds from the act.

For each program, the department is required to file a bi-weekly report including:

- program description;
- brief status reports of past two weeks accomplishments and anticipated progress for next two weeks;
- update on progress toward meeting performance measures;
- milestones and deadlines.

Click on the links below to read these areas of each report.

The potential DNR program recipients:

- [Clean Water State Revolving Fund](#): Wisconsin's allocation of \$106 million as grants for municipal

“modifications, upgrades or new construction of wastewater treatment facilities or for urban storm water runoff projects, such as stormwater detention ponds, street sweepers (vacuum type), etc.” Gov. Doyle recently announced distribution of some of these funds to the Grand Chute/Menasha Sewerage District

- **WaterQuality Planning:** A section of the Clean Water Act sets aside “1% of each state’s Clean Water State Revolving Fund allotment for water quality planning. “ Wisconsin’s percentage comes to \$1.07 million, to be committed to “a broad range of water quality planning activities, including both nonpoint and point sources.”
- **Drinking Water State Revolving Fund:** Wisconsin received \$37 million in recovery funds for “public water systems to build, upgrade, or replace water supply infrastructure to protect public health and address federal and state safe drinking water requirements.”
- **Remediation and Redevelopment/LUST cleanup:** Wisconsin will distribute \$6.381 million towards the cleanup of sites contaminated by leaking underground storage tanks (LUST). DNR submitted the LUST Stimulus application for Wisconsin. Gov. Doyle recently announced the distribution of some of these funds to the City of Beaver Dam, the City of Milwaukee and the Village of Stetsonville.
- **Remediation and Redevelopment/Brownfields:** The department has applied for Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grants, which have yet to be awarded. The funds would help assess and clean up “old industrial and commercial sites for remediation. (Distribute) Competitive grants to local governments and non-profits, for cleanup. (Awarding) Loans to local governments are also an option.”
- **Remediation and Redevelopment/Brownfields:** In May 2008, Wisconsin received a \$2 million Revolving Loan Fund grant, to add to DNR’s existing Ready for Reuse Loan and Grant Program. The total allotment for brownfields programs funded nationwide in the recovery act was \$4 million, of which Wisconsin received half. On June 16, 2009, local governments and consultants received training via Live Meeting and at DNR locations around the state.

DNR taking on two new Clean Diesel programs

EPA has awarded the DNR Air Management Program \$1.73 million to award sub-grants to owners of diesel-powered commercial trucks; transit and school buses; construction, railroad, marine and airport equipment; stationary engines; etc., to put in place emission control measures within their fleets.

On July 9, EPA announced another award to the program in the amount of \$571,107 to install idle-reduction technology on diesel locomotives. Idle reduction devices also will reduce fuel consumption and emissions by 50-70%. Participating fleets include Wisconsin & Southern Railroad Co. and Canadian Pacific Railroad for 34 and 6 switch locomotives, respectively.

The direct and indirect benefits from the use of these grant funds include:

- Reduced emissions will directly benefit “the health of equipment operators, passengers and people living or working in the equipment operation area.”
- Economic benefits will occur via “reduced fuel consumption, potential maintenance reduction, job retention and creation for vendors and manufacturers of the technologies; potential job retention for fleets that are saving dollars from fuel and maintenance; and reduced health care costs from lower emissions.”
- Long-term adoption of cleaner practices by participating fleets as they realize the benefits of their actions. These fleets will serve as examples of the benefits of emission reduction, potentially inspiring the managers of other fleets to take similar actions.

Learn more at [“ARRA Wisconsin Clean Diesel Grant Program.”](#)

In the weeks ahead

Over the coming weeks, work will continue on finalizing grant agreements to assure this money is available and put to good use on the ground as soon as possible, funding projects that will make a difference in the quality of the environment and providing a boost in jobs and the economy here in Wisconsin, said Zellmer. Updates will be provided as further steps are taken to make use of these funds, and as we pursue opportunities for additional Recovery Act funds.

Time as a “natural resources ambassador” summed up

By: Matt Groppi, DNR Bureau of Law Enforcement and U.S. Army Reserves

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources hired me as a recruit conservation warden at the end of 2007. Shortly after beginning training in January 2008, I learned that I would be deployed to Afghanistan later that year. This didn't come as that big of a surprise, because it had been about three years since my unit had returned from Mosul, Iraq.

I knew that the year of recruit warden training I'd had would be challenging by itself, but combined with trying to prepare for a year-long deployment to Afghanistan was a bit intimidating.

I belonged to the 330th Military Police (MP) Detachment and soon found out that my unit's main mission would be law enforcement operations on the biggest base in Afghanistan. I was relieved, because I knew that my DNR training would serve me well while on MP duty.

The part of my warden training that really opened my eyes had to do with community involvement or wardening. I was surprised at the diversity of projects that wardens were involved in and learned that the possibilities for collaborating with stakeholders in our communities are endless. I began to wonder what stakeholder collaborations would be possible in Afghanistan.

Brought natural resource management expertise to new job

From my previous deployment to Iraq, I knew that individuals with certain fields of expertise would have a chance to use their experiences when deployed. In my case, I hoped to use my background in natural resource management to do such work in Afghanistan. At graduation from our Wisconsin DNR law enforcement academy, I said that if given the chance, I would start a conservation law enforcement program with the Afghan government. I was half serious, but thought if I actually had the opportunity to do anything related to natural resources management, I would view it as a success.



Dressed in their warden association shirts, fellow reservists from Wisconsin displayed an illegal wolf pelt donated for training. (Left to right) specialist (SPC) Kao Moua, SPC Jeffrey Suprise, SPC Matthew Winarski, sergeant (SGT) Ryan Andrekus, SGT Matthew Reyes, SPC Adam Gitter, SPC Tyler Larsen, SGT Bret Mathewson and Matt Groppi (staff sergeant or SSG).

In September 2008, my unit was called to active duty and was sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi for training. Ironically, Camp Shelby was right outside of Hattiesburg, which is where former Green Bay Packer quarterback Brett Favre lives. For the month and a half we were there training, we were bombarded with questions about the Brett Favre situation.

While at Camp Shelby, I purchased an issue of **Time Magazine**. One of the articles in this issue covered environmental heroes, including the only female governor in Afghanistan, Habiba Sarabi. Gov. Sarabi was working to create the first Afghan National Park in the Band-e-Amir region of the Bamiyan Province. This region had six travertine lakes, which were colored a brilliant blue and had incredible tourism potential.

I immediately thought back to the training I had received on community involvement and the emphasis on collaborating with other stakeholders, as well as my pledge to do natural resource management work in Afghanistan. At that moment, I knew I had an opportunity to make a contribution beyond my military duties. I began to do more research and learned that the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) was involved with the creation of the first national park and other conservation projects in Afghanistan. I contacted the WCS program director, Dr. Peter Smallwood. I told Dr. Smallwood about my background, that I would be coming to Afghanistan, and I was interested in working with him. Dr. Smallwood was excited about the possibility of working together, so we stayed in touch while I was at Camp Shelby.

Conservation warden training applied to customs enforcement

I learned that my unit would be responsible for customs enforcement at Bagram and part of this involved making sure that any furs exported are in compliance with the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species or CITES. I also learned that WCS had trained the unit we were replacing on identification of Afghan endangered species. I was eager to meet Dr. Smallwood and at least collaborate with him on our customs inspection duties.

I found out that the New Zealand military was responsible for the Bamiyan Province, where the proposed national park is located. I was glad to see that when I arrived here there was a group of New Zealand soldiers on the base. I figured that my best chance of getting to the park would be through them.

After a couple weeks in Bagram, I contacted a New Zealand lieutenant colonel. He told me he was willing to stay in touch with me, because he viewed what I was proposing as a unique opportunity.

Giving back through reconstruction began with school supplies

There was a lot of back-and-forth between my chain of command and the New Zealand Army, making it seem doubtful that my plans would come to fruition. Should I be stuck on base for my entire tour, I wanted to be able to contribute more in some fashion.

As fate would have it, I wrote a speeding ticket one evening to a soldier who worked for the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). When I went to deliver the ticket to the soldier's chain of command, I talked with the commander about the PRT's work and discovered that they work quite a bit with the local schools. With school supplies at the top of the list of their needs, I responded to the many emails from home asking if I needed anything by telling them that instead they could send school supplies.

Rick Peters, who I did my warden internship with in 2006, got the Wisconsin Warden Association involved in gathering school supplies and other items. **Jim Jung**, secretary of the Warden Association, thought it was a good idea and the two began the process of collecting items and shipping the donations.



Matt Groppi thanked staff sergeant Bridget Kaufman from the Parwan Provisional Reconstruction Team for her help distributing school supplies from Wisconsin.

While in training at Camp Shelby, we learned that many of the insurgents selected for suicide missions against Afghan or coalition forces are uneducated or have been brain-washed by their leaders. I felt that any support of the educational system would have beneficial impact on the stability of the country. It became clear that a pen and a notebook can make a big difference to a student whose classroom is outdoors. When others on base saw the impact these donations were making, they began receiving similar items, as well as clothes and toys. It was rewarding to see others get involved. I'm confident that this mission of collaboration and rebuilding will continue when my unit leaves. The possibilities are endless when collaborating with others.

Community involvement presentation to support tourism

After four months, I received approval for a trip to the Bamiyan Province, where I would meet with those promoting tourism in the province. Not only was there a national park, but there also was the site where the Taliban had destroyed two large statues of Buddha.

After developing a presentation on community involvement, I was ready to go. Unfortunately, the mission was canceled at the last minute because of personnel shortages. In addition, those from the New Zealand Army were due to rotate out. It seemed as if I would have to start from square one with the next group.

In the meantime, although my unit still hadn't received the fur ID training offered by the WCS, we began working at customs. My first objective was to plan that training, which was popular among members of my unit. Dr. Smallwood eventually instructed us on the endangered species in Afghanistan, the different habitats and ecosystems, CITES and applicable U.S. laws governing the trade of endangered species. After the training, I further researched and prepared our unit's policy on fur inspections.

In May 2008, when I returned to Afghanistan from 2-weeks leave back home, I met the New Zealand replacements. They were eager to have me travel to the Bamiyan Province and assist with conservation projects. I first traveled to the province in May and met with members of the Agha Khan Development Network and the director of the Bamiyan Tourism Office. I delivered a presentation on involving stakeholders in their projects and the benefits derived. In turn, I learned about their natural resources projects. It was amazing to meet with people who come from completely different backgrounds, but have the same passion for conservation. I also was able to attend a meeting held by Gov. Habiba Sarabi.

Return trip to province to witness park dedication

About a month later, I returned to the Bamiyan Province, where I attended the dedication of the first national park. It was incredible to actually be there, after all the waiting.

During the ceremony, I met with more people concerned with conservation in Afghanistan. There were many dignitaries present for the ceremony including the U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Karl Eikenberry and Gov. Sarabi.

The most interesting part of that trip, however, was meeting the park rangers for the first park. I could easily identify them by their brown uniforms. We discovered that we share similar duties and issues. They deal with litter, vandalism, drinking, as well as illegal hunting and fishing, just as wardens do back in Wisconsin.

I'll carry once-in-a-lifetime experience home with me

Many of the experiences of this deployment will directly benefit me when I return to Wisconsin and my field training. Many of the law enforcement issues I'll encounter at home are similar to those faced by my Afghan counterparts. My work in customs will give me a good grasp of international regulations governing wildlife trade.

Coordinating the donations of school supplies has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I hope that everyone who assisted with this effort knows that their contribution will make a difference in the life of someone and, hopefully, lead to a more stable country that has experienced decades of constant war.

I think the most important "take away" from the missions to the Bamiyan Province is being able to show others another side to their region. I've heard from numerous people shocked to see images of a breathtaking landscape, when so often the country is portrayed as a desolate, lifeless desert. The sight of the national park and historic

sites humanizes the conflict and the region, just a little more. It's not merely a far-off place with nothing to offer, but instead a beautiful place with real people who, in addition to the war, face the same issues when it comes to natural resources conservation.

Footnote: *Beginning on May 7, 2009, Matt Groppi has served as a "natural resources ambassador" to Afghanistan. He has since written three additional "journal entries" for the "DNR Digest." DNR employees learned from these stories how their colleague was contributing to the rebuilding of war torn Afghanistan, which has held the attention of the American people following 9/11.*



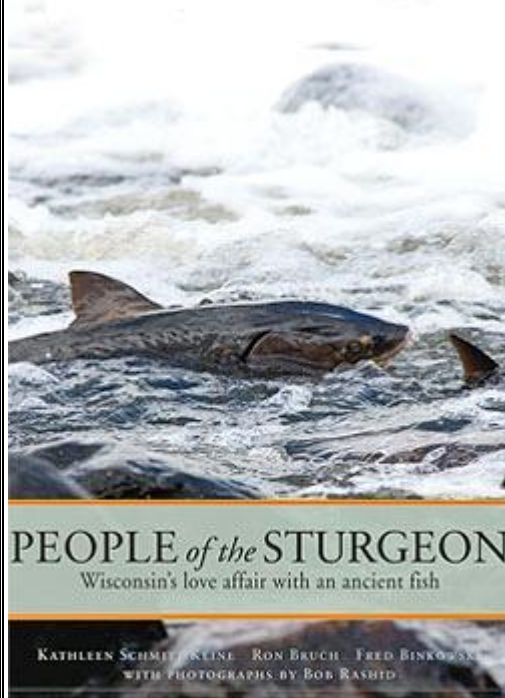
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New book tells of love affair with the ancient sturgeon

By: Ron Bruch, Northeast Region Fisheries Management

"In the early days, before Wendt's was a restaurant, people used to bring their sturgeon right into the bar. 'They would bring them right in here and flop them on the floor with all their excitement and start telling their stories', said Linda Wendt, current owner of Wendt's on the Lake." Excerpt from the fish tale "A Family Affair"



Cover of the new **People of the Sturgeon** book.

Careful management of and a "love affair" with the ancient sturgeon has staved off the fish's demise. You now can read our new history book on the cultures surrounding the Winnebago lake sturgeon history in the newly-published **People of the Sturgeon, Wisconsin's Love Affair with an Ancient Fish**.

Wisconsin is recognized as a world leader in sturgeon management. This book tells the history behind this reputation in a factual, but warm and engaging way. It's a great read that gives me goosebumps every time I go through it.

The book chronicles the history of sturgeon harvest, management, enforcement, and most importantly, the people that have revered this fish for centuries here in Wisconsin. The 292 pages are filled with over 100 beautiful color and historic images, along with a few good fish tales and other first-hand accounts from sturgeon spearmen, biologists, game wardens, poachers and Native Americans about their experiences with this grand fish.

The production of the book was a joint effort involving the DNR, Wisconsin Sea Grant, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Great Lakes WATER Institute and Sturgeon for Tomorrow. Sturgeon for Tomorrow donated \$25,000 to help underwrite publication costs, and its members conducted many of the dozens of interviews to gather the data that are the heart of this book. Proceeds also will support the Winnebago lake sturgeon management program.

People of the Sturgeon is available in major book stores or you can purchase it online at Amazon.com. Read about the history of the cultures surrounding lake sturgeon in Wisconsin's Lake Winnebago region, as told by a fascinating collection of photos, artifacts and a few good fish tales.

Footnote: *Ron Bruch supervises the Upper Fox-Wolf Fisheries Work Unit.*



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Legislature continues hearing schedule

By: Paul Heinen, Office of the Secretary

Over the past few weeks, the Legislature has been holding hearings. Check below for an update on legislation of concern to you. For a complete status report on Senate and Assembly bills introduced in fiscal years 2009-2011, go to the "[2009 Bill Tracker](#)."

Recent hearings

- The Assembly Natural Resources Committee on July 28, held a hearing on **AB 138** (introduced by Rep. Spencer Black), which will return to the Natural Resources Board the power to appoint the DNR secretary. No vote was taken.
- The Senate Natural Resources Committee will hear **SB 113** (introduced by Sen. Robert Wirch), which is identical to Rep. Black's bill, on August 13.
- Assembly Natural Resources Committee, during the week of July 20, heard the Mercury Products Ban Bill, **AB 299** (introduced by Rep. Chris Danou).
- During that week, the Assembly Natural Resources and the Senate Environment committees held a joint hearing on groundwater. The committees heard invited testimony on possible next steps in the regulation of Wisconsin's groundwater. Follow up discussions will occur in the coming weeks.
- The Assembly Natural Resources Committee recently received testimony on the 2009 DNR Fish and Game rules.

Recently introduced bills

The Legislative Council on non-motorized trail use introduced three bills during the week of August 10:

- **SB 264** changes the laws on trespass for snowmobiles
- **SB 265** creates a new trail maintenance fund
- **SB 266** creates a new Non-motorized Recreation and Transportation Trails Council.
- Sen. Jim Holperin and Rep. Ann Hraychuck introduced identical bills, **SB 254** and **AB 371** respectively, to change some of the Bear Hunting Licenses and hunting requirements.
- Rep. Scott Gunderson introduced **AB 370**, which makes changes to the recently amended Stewardship program.

Footnote: *Paul Heinen is a policy initiative advisor for the Secretary's Office.*



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A rookie learns the bear facts

By: Ed Culhane, West Central Region

The call came in at 1 p.m. on Thursday, July 30. There was a bear in the city of Eau Claire. Police were on the scene.

I asked area wildlife supervisor **John Dunn** if I could tag along and then collected my bear hunting gear – a camera bag, two cell phones and a laptop with an air card.



During several hours and various tactics, Ed Culhane was able to “capture” the bear as it ambled through the brush, trying to evade WCR staff blocking its way.

WDNR Photo

We spotted a squad on McIntyre Ave., just south of Melby Road on the city’s north side. To the west was a Department of Motor Vehicle building. A few employees were on the sidewalk with cameras and cell phones. Others peered through windows. To the east was a small home, surrounded by an acre of dense brush and small trees.

And there was the bear, ambling around a pickup truck parked outside a manufacturing facility just south of the wood lot. I took four quick photographs. The bear looked at us and then casually disappeared into the brush. I approached bystanders, identified myself as DNR and told them not to call anyone to come to the scene. I asked them to move along so we wouldn’t attract a crowd. They more or less complied.

One month earlier, a warden and two patrol officers had to shoot a larger black bear in La Crosse. The bear in La Crosse became a public safety threat when it was cornered by a crowd of onlookers and grew agitated.

Here we were dealing with a yearling bear, a male that weighed between 150-175 pounds. John’s plan was to keep this bear in the wood lot, and out of trouble, until after dark. That was eight hours away.

We had several advantages in the effort. It was a weekday. It was in a part of town, mixed residential and commercial, where people didn’t tend to gather. And, when the bear was in the thick brush, there wasn’t much to see.

For a while, the patrol officer watched the west side of the lot while John guarded the east. I was busy on the phone. A TV camera crew had arrived. I called the station editor and asked him not to air the story at 5 p.m. when there still would be hours of daylight to go. He said that wasn’t possible. We compromised. In return for my photos, he agreed to be vague about the location.

John was talking to me. The patrol officer’s shift had ended and there was no replacement. John had called for wildlife technician **Brian Markowski**, Eau Claire, but he hadn’t arrived, yet. He then asked me to go and watch the west side. I stood over there, all alone, for quite a while. In the meantime, the bear was on the move, mostly trying to leave on John’s side, but I couldn’t see that.

Brian arrived and took the west station. I moved to the previously unguarded north end. The south was covered by the windowless wall of a manufacturing plant. The bear tried to leave by the northeast corner. John confronted it. The bear was getting annoyed. It stood on its hind legs, grabbed a small tree and shook it until leaves were flying. It woofed and “popped its jaws,” taking bites out of the air. At one point it “bluff charged” John.



Area wildlife supervisor John Dunn in a standoff with the bear, which attempted to scare this human away by shaking a stick (tree) at him.

WDNR Photo

This was meant to frighten us, John explained.

“It’s very effective,” I observed.

John chased the bear up a small tree, allowing him to send Brian for a tranquilizer gun, a bear cage and the immobilizing chemical from a vet. The bear snarled and woofed, and then it started breaking off branches, some two inches in diameter.

The bear was attracting attention, again. A truck driver braked to watch the action. I encouraged him to move on so as not to make life harder for us. Another onlooker had a cell phone. I once again asked the onlooker to move along so we wouldn’t attract a crowd.

John tried to keep the bear in the tree, but after an hour, it came sliding and crashing down and ran into the brush. Now, there were just the two of us to watch the woods. I’d take the west and we’d communicate by cell phone. The first call came within minutes. “He’s going north,” John said.

So I ran, getting there just as the bear emerged from tall grass. I positioned myself in front of the bear, just 20 feet away, and raised my arms. It stopped and stared at me. Attempting a normal tone of voice, I spoke to the bear: “Hey dude, you don’t want to go this way.” My heart was racing. This was exciting!

It turned and ambled back into the grass, stopping to scratch itself. It seemed to be pretending it didn’t want to go north after all; that I was a non-factor in its life. But, when it got into the thick brush, it quickly moved to another possible way out, only to be blocked by John.

A storm cloud dumped heavy rain on us for 20 minutes. Brian returned with the cage on a trailer and the tranquilizer gun.

Time after time, I ran in front of the bear, often with no one else in sight. This went on for hours. At some point I realized I had never made a decision to confront this bear. It came about as circumstances unfolded. I was just part of a small DNR team that was in the field trying to get a job done.

I knew I had been given a great gift. Through unusual circumstances, I had been able to spend hours in close contact with this black bear, watching it move, watching the ways it interacted with us. Here is a top predator that easily could kill or maim any of us. There would be no defense. But, I saw that John didn’t fear it. Neither did Brian. And after a time, neither did I.

For all its strength, the black bear is a shy and secretive creature, almost timid, and if it doesn’t have a compelling reason to attack you--as when a sow is protecting her cubs--there's little to fear. Still, it would be stupid to be careless around bears.

At one point, a guy watching from a car told me I was too close to the bear. He said he was a hunter and would

never get that close.

“Aren’t you afraid of bears?” he yelled.

Slowly it grew dark. Finally, at 9:30 p.m., when we could barely see it, John told me to move south of the bear. He and Brian moved to the side. The bear wasted no time escaping to the north. We followed it for five blocks till it disappeared into a wooded area that would lead it down to the Chippewa River.

At 4:30 a.m., a homeowner spotted the bear next to the river. Across the river was undeveloped forest. It wasn’t seen again.

Footnote: *Ed Culhane is the communication specialist for the West Central Region, located in Eau Claire.*



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Natural Resources magazine celebrates summer in Wisconsin

By: Karen Ecklund, Bureau of Education and Information

- Meet a new bird.
- Coming of age at the county fair.
- What do you know about coonhounds?

The **Wisconsin Natural Resources** [magazine's August issue](#) celebrates summer, on page after page. Don't miss out on these warming stories:



Cover of the August 2009 Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine

Bright, sporty and gone in a flash Summer tanagers are colorful vagrants that occasionally drift in for a warm weather visit.

No fair! Retired DNR information officer Dave Crehore has compiled family stories of growing up in Wisconsin into a book, **Sweet and Sour Pie**. This issue of the magazine carries one of his tales "No fair!" that brings back memories of when contests, summer love and the midway were big deals at the county fair.

A little night music: Magazine staff writer Kathy Kahler introduces readers to the fine points of competitive, evening coonhunts, where the object is to track and tree raccoons in a timed event.

Meat eaters with roots and leaves: A biologist from UW-Whitewater shares her enthusiasm for Wisconsin's carnivorous plants, explaining how plants that live in icy-cold bogs adapt strange strategies to meet their

nutritional needs.

Wisconsin' land cover through the eyes of 19th century surveyors: A special insert and poster combine the technologies of satellite imaging with the old-fashioned techniques of 19th century surveyors to show how the Wisconsin landscape has changed over the last 150 years.

Romp on the river: Hop aboard a pontoon boat and join nearly 200 kids netting fish, digging for mussels and wiggling their toes in the sand on a Mississippi River Adventure Day.



Silver carp try to escape passing boats by leaping out of the water.

Photo by Chris Olds, US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Containing the threat: The magazine shares dramatic photos of another invasive species, the silver carp, that's made the jump into Wisconsin waters along the Mississippi. The article covers how DNR staff and volunteers are deployed to work with boaters, anglers and communities. This story explains why, in some cases, it makes sense to contain the spread of invasives and that vigilant monitoring and prevention on other waters are key strategies.

Footnote: *Karen Ecklund is the circulation, promotions and production manager with the **Wisconsin Natural Resources** magazine.*



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Governor Doyle and Secretary Frank visit oldest state park

By: Julie Fox, Interstate State Park

On July 24, Secretary **Matt Frank**, Tourism Secretary Kelli Trumble, State Representative Ann Hraychuck, members of the media and others joined Governor Jim Doyle on a tour of western Wisconsin, which included a visit to Interstate Park.



Governor Jim Doyle, Secretary Matt Frank and educator Julie Fox joined a group of W.I.S.E. children participating in activities that teach them about the natural resources of Interstate Park.

WDNR Photo

At the Ice Age Interpretive Center, Gov. Doyle and Secretary Frank met a group of W.I.S.E. children, the

Wisconsin Interstate Scout Explorers. These area children are participating in a summer program as part of the DNR "Get Outdoors! Wisconsin" initiative, which Frank supports. Hiking, nature journaling and nature play are primary components of the weekly program, which I lead on Friday mornings in July and August. The governor's group also toured the Pothole Trail, which is the western terminus of the National Scenic Ice Age Trail. On the half-mile hike, I interpreted the bedrock and glacial geology of the Dalles of the St. Croix River, as well as some of the human history of the park including copper mining, logging and the establishment of Interstate Park in 1900.



During their hike, natural resources educator Julie Fox showed Gov. Doyle and Sec. Frank a photo of a log jam that took place in the Dalles of the St. Croix River in 1886.

WDNR Photo

The group enjoyed spectacular views of the river gorge and viewed glacial potholes along the trail. Park manager **Kurt Dreger** spoke about invasive species management in this portion of the Dalles of the St. Croix River State Natural Area.

I've been an educator at Interstate Park since 1988. For nearly 30 years, the park has provided year-round interpretive services to hundreds of thousands of visitors, enhancing their appreciation of the scenic beauty and unique geology of Wisconsin's oldest state park.

Footnote: *Julie Fox is a natural resources educator at Interstate State Park.*



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DNR contributes to Farm Technology Days again this year

By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region

DNR employees from the South Central Region and the central office in the forestry, law enforcement, wildlife, watershed management, and waste and material management programs staffed exhibits and booths at the annual Farm Technology Days in mid July. The event previously was known as Farm Progress Days.



Jefferson and Rock counties forester Mary Ann Buenzow, Janesville; and Wilson Nursery assistant manager Roger Bohringer (far left), Boscobel, staffed the Division of Forestry's display in the agency's tent at Farm Technology Days 2009.

WDNR Photo

The Crave Brothers LLC hosted the annual show held just outside of Waterloo in Dodge County. Over 80,000 persons visited the three-day event on the state-of-the-art farm, home to 1,100 milking Holstein cows and 1,600 acres of corn, soybeans and alfalfa.

A steady stream of visitors passed through the department's 40 x 60 foot pole tent, which featured forestry, law enforcement and wildlife exhibits, equipment and DNR staff.

Agency representatives also were busy answering many questions related to groundwater, water resources management and recycling at their booths set up in the UW-Extension's Progress Pavilion Tent.

Footnote: *Greg Matthews is the South Central Region's public affairs manager.*



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Kirtland's Warbler caught on Foundation video

By: Jeffrey Potter, Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin

The Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin and the Department of Natural Resources are among the partners leading the state's Kirtland's Warbler project. Conservation biologist **Kim Grveles**, Bureau of Endangered Resources; Foundation-funded field monitors; and the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Joel Trick have joined together to track the return to the state of this federally-endangered bird.



Wisconsin placed the Kirtland Warbler in the category of Special Concern. Photo by Dennis Malueg

In June, Foundation staff and conservation biologist **Nick Anich** documented on video the discovery of a new, unbanded male warbler. It was an exciting find and another success story in the effort to protect and restore endangered species in Wisconsin.

The Foundation has posted a short video, which includes the first footage ever shot of this rare bird in Wisconsin, on the "[Natural Resources Foundation](#)" website. Just follow the link under "Kirtland's Web Video."

Footnote: *Jeffrey Potter is the communications director for the Natural Resources Foundation.*



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