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## DNR's John Lyons named Fisheries Biologist of the Year

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On Monday, October 18, Secretary Matt Frank presented **John Lyons**, DNR fisheries research scientist in the Bureau of Science Services, with the Midwestern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' "Fisheries Biologist of the Year Award." The association is comprised of the fish and wildlife agencies for 13 states and three Canadian provinces.



John Lyons addressed his colleagues at the DNR Science Operations Center following Secretary Matt Frank's presentation of the 2010 Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Fisheries Biologist of the Year award.

WDNR Photo

In her nomination, Lyons' supervisor, **Jen Hauxwell**, wrote of his contributions both academically and toward fisheries management and resource protection in Wisconsin. "Since joining the Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Research Program in 1996, Dr. John

Lyons has consistently served on behalf of fisheries resources by providing sound science upon which to make natural resource management decisions.”

As a researcher, Lyons was recognized for his commitment to conducting high-priority research, in addition to communicating and implementing the results of his work.

According to Hauxwell, he’s published more than [100 research publications](#), 47 as the first author. These numbers don’t account for his many popular articles and government technical reports.

“He serves a critical need for aquatic technical expertise for multiple divisions within our agency including the Fisheries Management, Watershed Management and Endangered Resources programs,” added Hauxwell.

Lyons writings are read by a variety of audiences, including academics, other researchers, decision-makers and the public. His findings contribute significantly to the formation of monitoring guidelines, as well as statewide best management practices on land that lessen negative impacts on aquatic systems.

To understand what fisheries and fishing mean to Lyons, read [“This champ knows fish,”](#) just posted in the October 18 **Journal/Sentinel Online**. During a friendly competition to catch (hook and line only) and release as many species as possible, he beat the rest of the field, hands down, with 50 species caught in one year.



John Lyons caught this smallmouth bass on the Menominee River in Marinette County.  
WDNR Photo

Lyons recently served as a leader among multiple stakeholders that included DNR, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the River Alliance and Alliant Energy to design, implement and evaluate fish passage facilities at the Prairie du Sac Dam on the Wisconsin River. The fish lift planned for the Prairie du Sac Dam will be the first attempt to provide upstream fish passage at a high-head dam on a large warmwater river anywhere in the Midwest. The group is also addressing the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Lyons also brings to the table “leadership in understanding the effects of emerging climate change impacts on Wisconsin’s coldwater fisheries statewide,” Hauxwell noted.

“We are so fortunate to have someone so gifted and so highly productive working on behalf of aquatic resources in the Midwest.”



## DNR's Dick Steffes receives American Greenways Award

By: The Conservation Fund news release

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*Honored for protecting state's natural resources into the future*

**Dick Steffes**, real estate director for the department, was one of four honorees to receive national recognition for outstanding achievement in greenways and open space preservation at the 21st annual [Kodak American Greenways Awards](#), presented at the National Geographic headquarters in Washington, D.C. on October 12.

"On behalf of the Kodak American Greenways Program, I am particularly pleased to present Dick Steffes with an award for his lifelong passion for land and water conservation and his significant achievements in protecting Wisconsin's natural and historical legacies in the best traditions of American conservation," said The Conservation Fund's president and CEO, Larry Selzer. "Through leaders like him, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has preserved resources that link past, present and future generations."



Larry Selzer, (left) president and CEO of The Conservation Fund and Charles Ruffing, (right) Kodak's director of Health, Safety, Environment and Sustainability joined Dick Steffes as he received the Kodak American Greenways Awards.

WDNR Photo

Over his 36-year career with DNR, Steffes has directed the acquisition of more than 750,000 additional acres of state parks, forests and wildlife habitat, reads the release. His leadership was essential to the success of numerous land acquisitions, such as the expansion of the Chippewa Flowage, the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage, the Mountain Bay State Trail, and the Straight Lake Wilderness State Park and Wildlife Area. These thousands of acres of land and hundreds of miles of trails, river and stream corridors, as well as lake frontage, provide countless opportunities for outdoor recreation for state residents and visitors alike.

### **Credits colleagues, citizens and elected officials**

"I greatly appreciate this award; it's an unexpected honor. But it truly is a reflection on Wisconsin, our values and what we do here, rather than an individual award," said Steffes.

"The state's success in land conservation and preservation starts with the historical and continuing conservation ethic of our citizens. That ethic is reflected with citizens', the Governor's and legislature's continued support of the Stewardship Fund. Armed with this

resource, DNR's biologists, managers and real estate staff work with willing sellers – often with people who love their land and want to know it will be preserved for the future. With an estimated nine billion people on our planet within 40 years, it makes sense to set aside some pristine areas for future generations to enjoy," said Steffes. The other recipients of the American Greenways Awards this year:

- [David Hartwell](#), president and founder of Minneapolis-based Bellcomb Technologies Incorporated and the driving force behind a citizen campaign to establish dedicated funding for land and water conservation in Minnesota, resulting in the passage of the Minnesota Clean Water, Land and Legacy constitutional amendment in 2008, which will provide more than \$6 billion for conservation in the state over the next 25 years;
- [Great Outdoors Colorado \(GOCO\)](#), unique, voter-approved program that has used nearly \$600 million in state lottery funds since 1994 to protect more than 800,000 acres of open space, including the creation and expansion of more than a thousand parks and the construction and restoration of nearly 80 miles of trails;
- [The High Line Park](#), a public park built atop an abandoned railroad viaduct elevated above the streets on the west side of Manhattan. Since the first section of the High Line opened in the spring of 2009, more than three million people have visited the park. When the next section of the High Line opens in the spring of 2011, the park will double in size, creating more public open space in one of the most densely populated cities in the world. The High Line is maintained and operated by Friends of the High Line, a non-profit conservancy, under a license agreement with the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation.

In addition, 19 local nonprofits and public agencies received grants to support local trail and open space projects. The grant recipients include:

- [Trees Atlanta](#), for the purchase of goats to manage the kudzu and other non-native invasive species along the Atlanta Belt Line, a more effective form of control that also cuts down the amount of chemicals used.
- [Passaic River Coalition](#), for the restoration of small historic sheds along the Highlands Meadow Trail, which serves both as an introduction to farm life at the beginning of the 20th century and a gateway into the rich natural area in the hills of the New Jersey highlands.
- [Esperanza Community Housing Organization](#), to build urban street-side gardens throughout downtown Los Angeles, creating ribbons of green and flowers throughout a community in which the natural environment is constructed primarily of steel and concrete.

"Kodak values and is pleased to support local community grassroots initiatives in preserving our nation's great outdoor heritage," said Charles Ruffing, Kodak's director of Health, Safety, Environment and Sustainability. "These local initiatives and individuals recognized in the Kodak American Greenways Awards are visible, valuable and never more vital."

### **The partnership behind the greenway awards**

Established in 1989 by Eastman Kodak Company, [National Geographic Society](#) and The Conservation Fund, the Kodak American Greenways Program honors leading individuals, organizations and corporations whose ingenuity and creativity have made a significant contribution to creating a national network of open space, trails and greenways.

"Greenways not only improve the nation's ecological health, these natural corridors provide vital opportunities for all Americans to get out, exercise and improve their physical health," said Gilbert M. Grosvenor, chairman of the National Geographic Society.

"With the help of companies like Kodak, the greenways network has linked city streets to parklands and other open spaces. The program still enjoys robust growth as we celebrate 21 years of cooperation."

The [Conservation Fund](#) is dedicated to advancing America's land and water legacy. With our partners, we conserve land, train leaders and invest in conservation at home. Since 1985, we have helped protect more than 6.5 million acres, sustaining wild havens, working lands and vibrant communities. We're a top-ranked conservation organization, effective and efficient.

"Winding through cities, parks and woods, and alongside rivers, lakes and abandoned rail lines, greenways are a vital part of any city's infrastructure. These pathways preserve wildlife habitat, enhance water quality and provide opportunities for close-to-home outdoor recreation and sustainable economic development," said Larry Selzer, president and CEO of The Conservation Fund. "I thank Kodak and National Geographic for their tremendous dedication to this program for 21 years, and I congratulate the outstanding recipients of this year's awards and grants. Together we are preserving lifelines that link neighborhoods, parks and people."



## Many contributed to successful waterfowl learn to hunt in Northeast Region

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**On September 17-18, the Green Bay Duck Hunters Association held their first ever Learn to Hunt Waterfowl clinic. The association recruited 10 kids ranging in age from 10 to 15 years old. Some participants had limited hunting experience, while others never had held a firearm.**



Warden Andy Lundin with hunter Alyssa Henninger, mentor Audrey Kuske and dog "Ruger" shared their hunting experience on the Bay of Green Bay.

WDNR Photo

**The kids spent the first night at the Brown County Sportsman's Club and were instructed by certified hunter education instructors Jack Van Sistine, Jeremy Van Sistine and Elmer Schills.**

**DNR wardens Andrew Lundin and Ben Trembl**, both stationed in Green Bay, attended and assisted as needed, including covering the legal requirements of the special hunt. To

further simulate the field experience, the wardens met with some of the groups in the field and checked others at their vehicles, explaining a warden contact/check, goose call-in requirements and other matters under their law enforcement purview.

The kids received classroom instruction and live firearm practice on the range, including shooting from a standing position, in a layout blind, from a boat (set up on inner tubes to simulate rocking), and from a chair.

On Saturday morning, the kids met with the mentors and headed to their designated spots. The hunt took place on the Bay of Green Bay, Little Tail, private property in Brown and Kewaunee counties, and Little Sturgeon Bay.

All the young hunters saw birds, and almost all got to shoot, with six killing birds. The harvest included 10 Blue Wing Teal, two Green Wing Teal, three Wood Ducks, one drake Mallard and four Canadian Geese.



Warden Ben Trembl with hunter Kieran Thomas and mentor Nate Smith, displayed a limit of teal.

WDNR Photo

At the conclusion of the evening, the kids received a large bag with decoys, Leatherman tools, knives, a lanyard and a flashlight. "Wings Over Wisconsin" stepped up and donated \$500 to cover the cost of the items. Gander Mountain in Green Bay also donated to the event.

The event ended at Coaches Corner in Ledgeview at noon on Saturday. Coaches Corner graciously donated food and soda to everyone involved. The kids' parents joined them for lunch, story time and presentation of certificates by Lundin and Trembl.

"The kids all had a great time and agreed to share this event with other friend," said warden Lundin. "A big 'thank you' goes out to the Green Bay Duck Hunters Association and its mentors, hunter education instructors, Brown County Sportsman's Club, Wings Over Wisconsin, Gander Mountain, Coaches Corner and other unknown donors who contributed to the event. Also 'thank you' to the landowners who allowed the hunts on their properties."



## Harmony in the Woods receives Diversity Award for second time

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**The State Council on Affirmative Action (SCAA) has awarded DNR the Council's 2010 Annual Diversity Award for its continued outreach efforts beyond the**

original design in the "Harmony in the Woods" initiative.

The SCAA established the Diversity Award in 2000 to recognize the achievements of outstanding affirmative action and equal employment opportunity practices among state agencies and University of Wisconsin system campuses.



Warden **Mark Pearce**, Plymouth, helped Hmong leader Cher Pao (center w/ orange cap) and two others during the August opening ceremony of the new Hmong American Sportsmen Club of Sheboygan.

WDNR Photo

Chief warden **Randy Stark**, Bureau of Enforcement, explained the philosophy behind "Harmony in the Woods:" "Enhancing the diversity and inclusiveness of the conservation community is very important work that will influence the success of conservation efforts in the future. Involving everyone is essential to achieving the ultimate goal of conservation - sustainable use of our valuable natural resources. In the end, it's all about everyone understanding the direct connection between sustainably conserving our natural resources and our health, the vitality of our economy, and our quality of life in Wisconsin."

The department received the award from the SCAA in 2008 for its initial outreach efforts towards the Hmong community via the "Harmony in the Woods" initiative. At that time, DNR had established several programs to facilitate communication with the Hmong communities of northwestern Wisconsin.

The SCAA felt that programs such as these demonstrate a commitment by the DNR to improving the state of diversity and equity for the growing diverse public served by the state.

DNR Office of Diversity director **Rudy Bentley** explained a key function of the award: "The State Council on Affirmative Action Annual Diversity Award is an important award because it provides state agencies with the opportunity to share with others the best practices that state government engages in to promote diversity."

DNR submitted its nomination for the 2010 Diversity Award to recognize the following employees and their projects:

- Special Deer Hunt for Disabled Hunters: Coordinator warden Ted Dremel, Waupaca. (12/17/09 "Digest") ["Young disabled hunters enjoy the out-of-doors at Hartman Creek"](#)

- Division of Land Helps Eagle Scout Assist Disabled Hunters: wildlife area supervisor **Don Bates**, Dodgeville, and DNR disability access coordinator **Andy Janicki**.(6/16/10 "Digest") "[Don Bates helps Eagle Scout help disabled hunters](#)"
- Spanish and Hmong Translations of Hunting Regulations: wildlife biologist and publications editor **Holly Robertson** and director **Tom Hauge**, both of the Bureau of Wildlife Management
- Central Office Raises Funds to help DNR Employee bring Donor to U.S.: **Jackie Frase**, program supervisor in Eau Claire; and **Lis Olson**, natural resources educator in the Bureau of Waste and Materials Management.
- Tribal Youth Initiatives Conservation Youth Corps, Northern Region with the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Ojibwe Indians: Chippewa Flowage manager **Neal Kephart** .(6/17/10 "Digest") "[Endowment gift helps Lac Courtes Oreille Youth Conservation Corps](#)"
- Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians Youth Mentoring Program: **Steve Petersen**, superintendent of the Northern Highlands American Legion State Forest, Woodruff.
- Bureau of Law Enforcement recruitment effort, which resulted in hiring three Hmong deputy warden water guards: Diversity outreach coordinator **Eileen Hocker**, training section chief **Darrel Waldera**, program assistant **Sherry Van Haren** and deputy warden water guard **Greg Stacey**



### Use new activity code for time spent on youth education

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**All staff can use up to eight hours of paid work time during a fiscal year for outdoor, conservation and environmental education efforts directed towards youth. Talk with your supervisor about the date(s) you want to use those hours and report your time using the new activity code DWVA.**

When you return from this work, complete the "[DNR Youth Outreach](#)" survey. Time reported on youth education and completed surveys will be monitored as a means of measuring the department's efforts toward meeting Secretary **Matt Frank's** statewide initiative on educational outreach. So, make good use of this opportunity and recording tool.



### Lake Tomah advocates celebrate arrival of game fish

By: Ed Culhane, West Central Region

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A years-long project to restore Lake Tomah to its former glory is nearing the finish line. A crew from DNR stocked the newly-recovered lake with 5,700 largemouth bass, on Wednesday, October 6.





Fisheries biologist **Lee Goehring**, transported the bass from a rearing pond at Black River Falls. They went straight from the tanker into the lake. "Basically, fish don't like to be handled," he said.

WDNR Photo

"I've never been so happy in my life to have fish," said Trudy Peterson, a lake resident who was among the first group of citizens who formed a lake committee eight years ago. "We're just thrilled."

When they first started talking to the DNR, and learning about their options, the lake was in dire condition. Invasive carp had destroyed the aquatic vegetation. The water was turbid with muddy sediments. There were no game fish.

"It was really dirty and carp infested, and no one was fishing anymore, and we were worried about the skiers because it was a dirty lake," Peterson said.

Joe McDaniel was a leader back then. He saw the lake group go through some tough times before they were able to muster up public and political support.

DNR watershed expert **Patrick "Buzz" Sorge**, Eau Claire, who helped the city obtain grants for the project, credited McDaniel for sticking with it and generating the social will to take on such a dramatic project.

Years of planning led to the day, one year ago, when DNR arrived at the lake with a team of fisheries scientists, and with the assistance of helicopter pilot Rene "Sparky" Stimart, treated the entire water body with rotenone, an organic chemical that killed all the fish in the lake without harming birds, mammals or amphibians.

Thousands of stunted carp floated to the surface and then sank in the cold water, never to be seen again.

"We had \$5,000 set aside for fish removal, but we didn't need it," Peterson said.

The lake, an impoundment of the Lemonweir River, was lowered by several feet to aid in the treatment and to allow vegetation to take root in the exposed shallows. Tree tops were dropped into the water to create habitat. The city committed to dredging out the sediment basin at the mouth of the Lemonweir. Monroe County brought in tons of rock to stabilize small islands, create offshore reefs for habitat, and attenuate the erosive action of waves and boat wakes.

The lake gradually was refilled this year, and with habitat work largely complete, the results are already remarkable. Water clarity has improved from three to four inches, to three to four feet.

### **Public and DNR delighted with return of fishery**

"I think it's fantastic," said Tomah mayor John Rusch. "The lake condition before was horrendous."



With Lake Tomah in the background, fisheries biologist Jordan Weeks answered questions from a reporter with WQOW-TV channel 18, in Eau Claire.

WDNR Photo

When DNR shocked the lake this past spring, not a single carp was found. What they did find when they returned in September, said DNR fisheries biologist and team leader **Jordan Weeks**, La Crosse, was hundreds of bluegills, crappies and some fathead minnows, likely the result of amateur stocking.

"I think some local citizens did their own stocking, which is illegal," Weeks said. This is a major league bad idea, Weeks said. Either the fish or the water used to transport them could be carrying a disease or invasive species too small to see. Or, non-native species, like a white crappie or a green sunfish, could be mistakenly transferred. "It could ruin the entire project," Weeks said. "There's a reason we have a law that says you can't stock fish."

For now, things appear to be OK and the panfish, with a lake full of food and no mature predators, will multiply and grow rapidly. By next summer, the bluegills will be pushing six inches and the bass 10 inches. The DNR will return to stock northern pike. The idea is to create a predator-dominated fishery that will make it difficult for carp to establish a new foothold.

By the fourth or fifth summer, the fishery will be mature and this urban gem of a lake will once again be a treasured resource.



This largemouth bass fingerling, temporarily displayed in a portable viewing box, was among 5,700 bass stocked in Lake Tomah.

WDNR Photo

McDaniel pointed to the aquatic plants waving in the shallows. There weren't any plants growing anywhere in the water last year, he said. He remembers when the lake was rich with bluegills and crappies and bass. In the winter, there'd be dozens of fishing shanties on the ice.

In just a few years, he said, the lake he fell in love with will be back again. "It will be just like it was before," said McDaniel. "It will be a fish paradise."

**Footnote:** *Ed Culhane is the public affairs manager for the West Central Region.*



## **"Partners in Giving" an opportunity to give back to the community**

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**"One of the many reasons I feel privileged to work for the DNR is that I get the chance to work with a community of people who want to make a difference. The 'Partners in Giving' campaign is about taking personal responsibility for creating a broader community that fosters safety, responsibility and sustainability. It's also about a type of generosity that stems from the genuine desire to make a difference."**

**Those words are from the chair of the 2010 "Partners in Giving" campaign, Division of Land administrator Laurie Osterndorf.** Kicked off recently, the effort seeks donations from central office and South Central Region employees. Creative approaches to raising funds are encouraged.

With completion of the first week of the 2010 "Partners in Giving" campaign, donations by 52 employees total \$16,318.



Homemade canned goods and food baskets are popular items to bid on during the Bureau of Finance silent auction.

WDNR Photo

As in the past, a weekly drawing of a donation form will mean some lucky employee will go home with prizes donated by their co-workers. Among the prizes this year are:

- Parks trail pass
- Parks vehicle admission sticker
- Starbucks gift card
- Lindor Truffles
- Alterra Coffee - Holiday Blend
- Vouchers for 4 tickets to UW Women's basketball
- Gander Mountain gift card

- Set of Janet Flynn note cards and poster
- Notepad
- Handcrafted pearl earrings
- Fall wreath
- Hand-made surprise gift from administration
- Bottle of Wollersheim wine
- Box of Gail Ambrosius chocolates (Gail left the DNR and opened her own chocolate shop in Madison)

Winners for the first week of the campaign are:

- **Lloyd Eagan**, South Central Region: Starbucks Gift Card
- **Dick Steffes**, Bureau of Facilities and Lands: Gander Mountain Gift Card

If you're interested in donating a prize or two to the central office drawings, email [Diane Greisinger](#) or give her a call at (608)264-8529.

The "[Partners in Giving](#)" combined campaign of Dane County website is being updated on an ongoing basis, so you're encouraged to check it frequently for new information.

### **Publicize and report on your program's/region's fundraisers**

"Partners in Giving" is the State Employees Combined Campaign (SECC) effort for state employees who work in Dane County. There's also a Milwaukee County SECC and a statewide SECC for all other state employees.

DNR employees outside of Dane and Milwaukee counties received their pledge forms in the mail. There are department coordinators for the statewide campaign at offices throughout the state.

In the past, central office and regional staffs have organized fun fundraisers to supplement individual SECC donations. Among the successful opportunities to have a blast and contribute have been games, a natural resources ID quiz, pizza sales, book and bake sales, a raffle for a football autographed by UW-Wisconsin head football coach Brett Bielema, central office chili cook-off, bike/walk challenges and many more.

You can help your fundraising efforts by publicizing them in advance in the "Digest." Then, let the rest of the agency know what you've accomplished by sending your results to "Digest" editor [Diane Brinson](#).

### **South Central Region's annual challenge brings in dollars for charities**

South Central Region (SCR) soon will wrap up its annual Bike/Walk-to-work Challenge with donations to "Partners in Giving" and other charities. In the past, donations have gone to the Second Harvest Food Bank and charities of the donors' choice. According to challenge organizer **Hank Kuehling**, hydrogeologist at Nevin, a few SCR contributors have continued with donations to Second Harvest, but a majority of the challenge-generated contribution dollars have gone to the "Partners-in-Giving."

In addition to SCR's Bike/Walk-to-work Challenge, members of the SCR Regional Management Team donate prizes each week for a drawing to promote the "Partner's in Giving Campaign."

### **Bureau of Finance's annual silent auction fundraiser brings frenzied bidding**

On Wednesday, November 17, the Bureau of Finance will hold its ninth annual "Partners in Giving" silent auction in room 213 of GEF 2. Throughout the day, employees will bid some several times-to take home their personal treasure(s).

"The event is a great way to have fun and learn about your co-workers' talents and generosity. The 2009 "Partners in Giving" auction netted \$1,067, with bids on 93 separate donated items. "Bureau staff is positive that they can do even better this year," said Voigt.

At this time, the search is on for items to auction. To help inspire donations, following are some from the last few years. There's no limit to your imagination, if you'd like to add to the list for this year.

- variety of baked goods
- movie night kit (movie/popcorn/snacks)
- coffee basket (with mugs, coffee, towels, napkins)
- carvings and framed prints
- Starbucks gift card
- handmade jewelry and other accessories
- George Foreman grill
- hand-knit hat and scarf set
- dining gift certificates and dinner basket
- Avon basket
- hand-crocheted kitchen towels
- homemade soap
- mystery bags

Auction items can be goods to take home the day of auction, or items to be delivered later. Finance will post a list of auction items and guidelines by the GEF 2 elevators by November 16, so you can plan your bidding strategy.

If you have any questions or would like to donate auction items or services, email [Sherri Voigt](mailto:Sherri.Voigt) or call her at (608)267-9818. She's already seen a nice collection of items without even asking, and hopes to have a full room for the auction.

### **DNR has history of generous giving**

Secretary **Matt Frank** recently encouraged employees to give as in the past. Last year, 33% of DNR employees in Dane County contributed \$103,914 to the campaign.

"DNR was awarded the highest per capita participation for large state agencies in 2009, despite the fact that times are tough and DNR employees have had to make sacrifices. Last year's impressive and award-winning effort demonstrates the generosity and compassion of our staff. Let's challenge ourselves to do even better this year," said Sec. Frank.



### **Upcoming events offer fun and education**

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**Editor's Note:** I occasionally receive notices from properties and programs about upcoming events that could be of interest to "Digest" readers. Following are two such events. Help me make this new "MyDNR Digest" feature a place to find fun, interesting and educational happenings that you'd like to share with others. Send your announcements to me, [Diane Brinson](mailto:Diane.Brinson) for posting in the "Digest" on payday Thursdays.

- **Event:** Halloween Haunted Hay Ride

**Date & Time:** Friday, October 22 and Saturday, October 23; 6:30-9:30 p. m.

**Location:** [MacKenzie Environmental Education Center, Poynette](#)

**Admission/registration:** \$5 adults, \$3 kids

**Activities:** Hay ride with monsters, ghosts and more! Campfire and snacks too!

**Registration:** None

- **Event:** Make Your Own Snowshoes Workshop

**Date & Time:** Friday-Sunday, December 3-5

**Location:** [Trees for Tomorrow](#), 519 Sheridan Street East, Eagle River

**Admission/registration:** The fee for this workshop, which includes instruction, materials, lodging and meals, is \$250

**Activities:** Learn to weave a pair of snowshoes or rocking chair the traditional way.

**Registration:** Contact Trees For Tomorrow directly at (715)479-6456. [Online registration](#) also is available.

- **Event:** [Innovations Symposium](#) EPA's water, air, waste and policy groups have been involved in planning, along with folks from several states, including Wisconsin. Exceptional opportunity to network with EPA and other states and learn about regulatory and voluntary innovations to protect human health and the environment, at relatively low cost.

**Date & Time:** Monday-Thursday, November 1-4

**Location:** Monona Terrace in Madison

**Admission/registration:** See website [Innovations Symposium](#)

**Activities:** Workshops

**Registration:** See website [Innovations Symposium](#)



## **Badger Trail connects stretch between Madison and Illinois trail**

By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region

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The final six-mile stretch of the Badger State Trail was officially opened during a ceremony recently held in Fitchburg. The \$1.2 million paved section completes the DNR-developed and maintained 40-mile recreational trail that runs from Madison to the state line, where it connects with Illinois' Jane Addams Trail.



South Central Region director Lloyd Eagan and her husband Patrick were among the first cyclists to peddle the 6.1 mile newly-opened stretch of the Badger State Trail.

WDNR Photo

Representatives from the City of Fitchburg and about 50 others joined Secretary **Matt Frank** during the grand opening, at which time he pointed out that "it's the easiest thing to do in the world, to bike."

"As I said to folks here today, whether somebody is four years old or they are 90 years old, anybody in Wisconsin can come out on a day and use these bike trails."

The Badger Trail, also part of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, has 40 trestle bridges and a 1,200-foot-long curved tunnel (3.5 miles south of Belleville) along its route through farmland, woods, rolling hills, scenic meadows, remnant prairies, ravines and glacial topography.

The Badger Trail also provides connections to the Capitol City Trail and the Glacial Drumlin Trail.

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



## Around the state...DNR employees shine

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### ***Central office success story***

- Natural resources educator **Carrie Morgan**, Office of Communication, recently received an "interesting response" to the online "[Tell us what you think](#)" survey on DNR's [Environmental Education for Kids-EEK!](#) website. According to Morgan, "Occasionally I get surveys from some pretty far-off places." This particular survey was from a nine-year-old student living in Gurgaon Haryana, a city in India. The student indicated that they had visited the site "too many times to remember;" that they use EEK! for "help with homework and school projects;" and that "it's a superb site our teacher Rachna Chawla maam told us about."

### ***Northeast Region success stories***

- The time has come for me to retire. Today, September 30, will be my last day at the desk. I am approaching my 32nd year of permanent service with the Department of Natural Resources. Through the years I've had the great pleasure of working with many wonderful people. I thank the many for their leadership, guidance and support. To those who have gone before me and those working for the sustainable needs of the State, I wish you well. Thank you. *With regards, John Blayney, retired forester-ranger, Pembine*

- **Sue Swanson** (forestry team supervisor) and **RJ Wickham** (forester)(both in Wautoma): I wanted to thank both of you for all the work and input in putting together the joint Society of American Foresters/Wisconsin Timber Professionals Organization meeting. All went well. I think it was well received and a success with both the loggers and the foresters in attendance. I hope the participants came away with a better understanding of annosum and the value in treating for it. I'm interested (in) hearing any comments you received from the group. *Dave Stoiber, consulting forester*

- I want to "officially" express my thoughts to you about what a FANTASTIC lead worker **Tracy Salisbury** (forestry specialist, Green Bay) is. I credit her for assisting in the transformation of myself and my career. I began working for the DNR 5 years ago as the NER Urban Forestry Coordinator Assistant, an LTE position. Tracy's excellent communication skills helped me understand the Urban

Forestry Program, its mission and all the internal and external partnerships involved. She has always encouraged me to accept new challenges and pursue my interests. Because of this, I've been able to learn more about myself and improve upon my strengths during my time with the Department. Her friendship and encouragement have meant a lot to me over the years, especially in my pursuit of the SER Urban Forestry Coordinator position...which I secured. The Division is truly fortunate to have Tracy working for us. New LTE hires will be in excellent hands with her as their lead worker. **Olivia Witthun**, forestry specialist, Milwaukee

- Thanks to **Ron Jones** (forestry area supervisor, Appleton), **Frank Kirschling** (forester, Appleton), and **Eric Roers** (forester, Shawano) (and **Kay Brockman – Mederas**, wildlife biologist & **James Robaidek**, wildlife technician, both in Shawano) for pulling together site information to pass out for our site visits and leading the discussions on site for the Managing Bottom-Land Forests Workshop.

Thanks to Ron Jones for getting us started and leading in the overall BH discussion at our gathering point. I am glad we could tap Ron's experience one more time before he rides off to the land of every-day-is-Saturday. (I will take credit for the great weather...Ha!). **Tom Nigus**, wildlife management area supervisor, Wautoma

- CONGRATULATIONS TO **Ron Bruch** (fisheries team supervisor, Oshkosh) who has been elected President of the North American Sturgeon Conservation Society, an international professional sturgeon organization dedicated to facilitating sound sturgeon management, research, and rehabilitation in the US and Canada. Bruch is also one of the founding members of the World Sturgeon Conservation Society, chartered out of Hamburg, Germany, serving on the WSCS Board since its founding in 2003. KSO

- Over the past week or so, I have received a number of complaints regarding the water quality of various streams along the Lakeshore. Being unfamiliar with a number of these streams, I requested input from various staff in the Lakeshore Basin. I would like to send a special thank you to **Steve Hogler** (fisheries biologist, Mishicot) for not only providing me with history and background related to these streams, but also for taking a few days to go out and do some stream monitoring to see if there was a water quality concern. Being 9 months pregnant and due any day, this is just something I wasn't able to do and REALLY appreciate all of his help! *Amy S. Callis*

- **Mark Stanek** (wastewater engineer, Oshkosh), **Casey Jones** (wastewater specialist, Oshkosh), **Crystal Schiefelbein** (water regulation and zoning specialist, Oshkosh), **Anne Van Grinsven** (environmental enforcement unit coordinator, Green Bay): I just want to take a moment to thank you for the extra time and effort you put into covering for me while I was working in Green Bay (as acting Water Leader). It allowed me to focus on water leader activities without worrying if any issues were going unaddressed in the basin. Thank you for your support. **Rob McLennan**, basin supervisor, Oshkosh

- A big thank you goes out to **Mike Baumgartner** (fish propagation technician, Kewaunee), **Jason Kohls** (fisheries technician, Kewaunee), **Neal Rosenberg** (field operations team supervisor, Crivitz), **John Nelson** (field operations team supervisor, Oshkosh), **Scott Hansen** (fisheries biologist, Sturgeon Bay), **Steve Hogler** (fisheries biologist, Mishicot), **Jake Seifert** (laborer, fin clipping, Wild Rose), **Ben Heimbach** (fisheries technician, Wild Rose), **Paul Peeters** (fisheries team supervisor, Sturgeon Bay), **Faith Murray** (financial specialist, Green Bay), **KaYeng Vue** (warden, Green Bay), **Steve Kaufman** (forester, Wausaukee) and **anyone I have missed** for all of your help with the Besadny Fisheries Facility Open House on Saturday, Oct. 9. The open house was a great success, with an estimated 3,000 people visiting the facilities. The open house would not have been as successful without all of your help and hard work throughout the day. I heard many great compliments from visitors regarding the DNR staff's knowledge and positive attitude. Thank you so much. We



couldn't have done it without you! **Katie Boseo**, *Besadny Fisheries Facility naturalist*

- On September 30, "TripAdvisor®," the world's largest travel site announced the top ten fall foliage destinations in the U.S., according to a TripAdvisor survey of more than 2,300 travelers. Peninsula State Park ranked #7: "Whether travelers are up for hiking, biking, or relaxing on a beach, nearby Peninsula State Park has it all. Spanning nearly 4,000 acres, travelers will be sure to get their fill of stunning foliage. One TripAdvisor traveler said, 'It's a great park you HAVE to visit if you are in Door County.' Peak foliage-viewing is from late September through November."

This honor along with almost perfect fall weather and the local Pumpkin Patch event might help explain why we had such huge crowds this past Saturday (10/9/10). Staff reported that we actually had a long waiting line to ascend the tower which was packed to overflowing for much of the afternoon. The Eagle Bluff Lighthouse staff reported that they had an overflowing parking lot all afternoon. This lot was still filled to overflowing when I arrived over a half hour after the Lighthouse closed for the afternoon.

Our staff and volunteers also had a very successful Spooktacular Hike that was held this past Saturday night! **Gene Tiser**, *acting superintendent, Peninsula State Park*

#### **Northern Region success stories**

- Please thank **Lynn (Wright)**, fisheries technician at the Art Oehmcke Fish Hatchery) for doing such a super job with the hatchery tour for my Nicolet College students. In particular, she gave a good overview of management applications of the new genetics work being done. I was particularly interested in this. Best wishes for the rest of your work at the hatchery this fall. Thanks again! *Roger D.*

- Some NOR (Northern Region) staff were complimented for the assistance provided to eradicate a several-acre marijuana growing operation in a rural area near Lac Courte Oreilles that was raided by law enforcement officers in early August: "I wanted to write at this time to thank you for the invaluable assistance provided by several DNR employees." **Kim Lemke** (forester ranger, Hayward) helped law enforcement officers by providing detailed maps prior to the eradication efforts along with arranging for a bulldozer and other equipment that were extremely useful during the eradication. **Don Hoeft** (forestry technician, Winter) was complimented for the long hours he put in on a weekend as well as his bulldozer operation skills. **Randy Sobralski** (forestry technician, Hayward) was complimented for his assistance in finishing the bulldozing work of the grow site. The assistance from the DNR saved the law enforcement officers hundreds of hours of labor, and removed the crop in the most efficient way possible. Thanks again for all your help." *John Vaudreuil, United States Attorney*

- A citizen with a sense of humor complimented **Amie Egstad**, conservation warden, Bayfield. Amy met this couple at the Bark Bay Slough while they were on vacation at a cabin in Herbster: I really appreciate your assistance with this matter. Parts of the vacation were not good parts. Car repair: \$675; loss of phone, stereo, computer, etc. due to power surge: \$1800; new ATV: \$5800; meeting nice Amie Egstad: Priceless *Joie P.*

Egstad was checking state land and the couple came in with two ATVs. They had just bought one of the ATVs in Minnesota to go with their other Wisconsin-registered ATV, but couldn't go anywhere to register it because their car had broken down. They also couldn't do it online because they had a power surge that blew out everything electronic at their cabin. Egstad told them to get the ATV registered once they got back home and to let her know. She received an email stating that meeting her was priceless.

- Compliment for **Ben Bergey** (property supervisor, Copper Falls State Park), **Michelle Carlisle** (wildlife biologist, Balsam Lake), **Rhonda Kenyon** (real estate specialist, Cumberland), **Steve Bade**

(real estate specialist, Ashland), **Tim Miller** (regional parks manager, Ladysmith), **Jean Rygiel** (regional parks manager, Eau Claire), **Mike Zeckmeister** (regional wildlife manager, Spooner) **Jeff Pennucci** (real estate specialist, Rhinelander): Congrats. **John G. (Gozdziwski)**, director, Northern Region) called a few minutes ago to tell us the NRB (Natural Resources Board) has approved acquisition of the Stilin parcel for NCT and the Elkin parcel for the Western Prairie HRA (habitat restoration area). The Board was in strong support of both acquisitions, and all your local efforts to provide information/tours were critical in getting these parcels approved. Michelle (Carlisle), NRB member Dave Clausen (on the record) thanked you for the thorough tour of the Elkin parcel and complimented your work with key partners to accomplish land protection goals in the HRA project. In a similar fashion (off the NRB record, but just as appreciative) NRB members Jane Wiley and Jonathan Ela, the Secretary and **Laurie (Ross)**, staff assistant to the NRB) have all expressed great appreciation for the time and effort of local staff to tour the Stilin opportunity and explain the importance to North Country Trail and Copper Falls SP. You all have put considerable extra effort into these key acquisitions and neither of them would have happened without your hard work at local levels. John (and I) send a big "Thanks and Congrats" to each of you...you are doing a great job and these acquisitions will provide long term, significant benefits for resource protection and public recreation.

**Bill Smith**, Northern Region land leader

- Compliment for **Madison and NOR staff from multiple programs**: Congratulations everyone. Your hard work and dedication to the resources of the Flambeau River State Forest have resulted in a great master plan that was approved on Wednesday by the Natural Resources Board on a 7-0 vote. You deserve much congratulation, and I personally want to thank each and every one of you for all of your work and desire to stay on task and come up with a great product that will protect and sustainably manage the Flambeau River State Forest for the next 15 years. GREAT JOB!! **Tom Duke**, regional forestry supervisor

### **South Central Region success story**

- On Thursday, October 14, there is a meeting to debrief on the recent experience with flooding and the dikes (Lewiston, Caledonia and Blackhawk "Levees") near Portage. The Wisconsin River crested at Portage at 20.66 feet, an all time record. Due to the heroic efforts of the DNR Incident Command Team and multiple DNR work crews the dikes held. **Brian Hefty**, property manager; **John Nielson**, incident commander; **Aaron Young**, assistant incident commander; and **Greg Matthews**, public information officer played key leadership roles in this event. They were assisted by more than 80 DNR staff throughout the course of the incident. Staff and supervisors that participated included law enforcement, SCR safety coordinator, forestry staff, wildlife staff, dam safety engineers and regional managers. Our staff did incredible work in a very dangerous situation. The local officials were very appreciative of our effort and so were many local residents. Meeting participants will evaluate what worked well and what could be improved upon. We also need to start planning for the long term future management of the dikes. **Lloyd Eagan**, director of the South Central Region

### **Southeast Region success story**

- Congratulations to **Jerry Jarmuz** (environmental engineering specialist, Waukesha) and **Jackie Fratrack** (water resources engineer, Waukesha) for being nominated for the "Person of the Year" by peers in the Wastewater program. The peers offered these comments in their nominations: "Jerry exhibits such a high level of professionalism in his work. His extensive experience in wastewater and stormwater show in the quality of work he does. Jerry sees helping others as an integral part of his job. Whether it be helping industries understand requirements, helping wastewater treatment operators or other staff, Jerry demonstrates over and over again that people are important."

"Jackie has the admirable ability to both work hard and have fun. She is highly intelligent and can efficiently produce comprehensive work products while smiling and keeping her sense of humor. She works hard and seems to gracefully do the work of several people. She always makes the right environmental decisions.

"Jackie is an amazing person. She is smart, funny, down-to-earth, dedicated, helpful and an all-around-good person. The DNR is lucky to have such a talented employee that cares about her job and her coworkers. Jackie is a top-notch water resources engineer that leads by example."

### ***West Central Region success story***

- During q and a (question & answer) after my speech at the League of Municipalities, yesterday, the Mayor of Tomah made it a point to thank the DNR for all the great work on Lake Tomah. He did this in front of a group of 200-300 mayors and other municipal leaders from across the state. I thanked him for the comment and also thanked Tomah and all the involved partners who came together to work with us to make it happen.

When I was in Tomah this week Rep. Radcliffe also expressed his appreciation for the DNR's work at Lake Tomah. Please pass it on to our staff. I appreciate the great work our staff has done on the lake, and it is appreciated locally as well. *Secretary **Matt Frank***



## **Team of scientists test water quality using orbiting satellites**

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Upstate Freshwater Institute researcher from Syracuse New York lowered light measurement instruments into Lake Michigan from aboard the DNR research vessel Gaylord Nelson

WDNR Photo

**On September 16-19, a collaborative water quality research team that included DNR research staff met in Sturgeon Bay to collect field data on Green Bay and Lake Michigan. Their goal was to characterize the light of the surface waters across a wide range of water quality conditions and compare these physical measurements with the same measurements taken by satellites deployed by NASA and the European Space Agency.**

**Among team members were DNR research scientist Steve Greb**, Bureau of Science Services; and **Brandon Bastar**, Bureau of Fisheries Management research vessel boat captain, Sturgeon Bay. Also on board were Colleen Mouw, from the University of Wisconsin-Madison; Dave O'Donnell and Chris Strait from the Upstate Freshwater Institute in Syracuse, NY; and Zhongping Lee of NASA's Stennis Space Center.

Their objective was to time measurements to coincide with the fly-over times of the MODIS and MERIS medium resolution sensors, now orbiting the earth.

Today, many water quality monitoring programs are deficient. Across the country, they lack the technical, institutional, financial resources and infrastructure to conduct proper water quality assessments on a long-term basis.



Members of the collaborative research team (from left to right) were Zhongping Lee, NASA Stennis Space Center; Dave O'Donnell and Chris Strait, Upstate Freshwater Institute; DNR's Steve Greb and Brandon Bastar; and Colleen Mouw, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

WDNR Photo

Remote sensing technology is an emerging capability that can greatly bolster traditional methods. Even though the field is relatively new, especially in addressing optically complex waters such as those found in Green Bay, satellite remote sensing offers a promising alternative for scientists and managers to use for assessment of a large number of water bodies in an economical and timely fashion.

Greb coordinated this effort. Dr. Lee, who is considered one of the world's foremost authorities on the use of satellites for water quality measurements, was impressed by the natural resource beauty and hospitality of the people of Wisconsin on his first visit. He declared the field activity a complete success and thanked the DNR for its support.



## Foresters advice: Get help with your timber sale

By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region

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*"A good timber harvest is no accident"*

"I have some loggers in my woods and I don't like what they are doing! They are taking trees that I don't want them to take."

For DNR foresters, this type of call from a panicked landowner is often the first sign of a timber sale gone wrong. The caller is disturbed by what is happening on his or her property and after a bit of questioning, the forester finds that the property owner has signed a contract with the logger allowing them to do exactly what they're doing.



A logger bucks logs to their longest length. "Bucking" is the process of cutting a felled and delimbed tree into logs. This can be a complicated process because logs destined for plywood, lumber and pulp each have their own price and specifications for length, diameter and defects. Source: Wikipedia

WDNR Photo

That's why it's so important to do research before signing a contract and conducting a timber harvest on your property, cautioned **Joel Green**, DNR forestry technician for Columbia and Sauk counties.

"Once a contract is signed, there is usually no cheap or easy way to stop the timber harvest. Often cooperation and goodwill are the only way to change the outcome," noted Green

#### **A DNR forester or private consulting forester can be big help**

Green strongly emphasizes that landowners should contact their local DNR forester or a private consulting forester to gather information and advice before signing on the dotted line.

A timber harvest is a complex interaction of ecology, forest operations, business, law, taxes, marketing and negotiations. It has both short- and long-term consequences for the land and the landowner.

"A private forester can even act as your agent to assure that you get the results that you want. One call may save you from a costly mistake that takes years to repair," said Green.

"A timber harvest will affect your woods for a long time. Most of us have one harvest on our property in our lifetime."

Numerous studies have shown that landowners who work with a forester in planning a timber harvest report greater satisfaction, greater revenue from the sale of timber, and healthier and more valuable forests following harvest.

#### **Harvest plan is good for the landowner and sustainability of the forest**

The shortest time period for trees to reach maturity is decades and with some hardwoods, while there may be some intermediate harvests, individual trees could live for 100 years or more. These older trees are often the most valuable and can be

removed when they are economically worth the most, but they must first provide seed for regeneration.

"Those trees that are tall, straight and free of defects are those that you want to reproduce. The genetic makeup of these trees is the most desirable, and if they are given a chance to reproduce, then the next generation has the potential to be as valuable as the current one," according to Green.

"Most loggers are good stewards of our natural resources," he emphasized, "but there are also "some loggers who exploit the woods. It is the latter that cause problems." Green says in all cases you or your agent should check a logger's references and look at examples of previous logging jobs. This allows you to get an idea what your woods could look like after harvest.

"Prior planning and discussion (with the logger) can greatly increase your satisfaction with a timber harvest and that's why you should get any important points down in a written timber sale contract so that your wishes are enforced," said Green.

"It is also important to note that Wisconsin law requires that a cutting notice be filed with the county clerk at least 14 days prior to harvest. For lands entered into the Managed Forest Law, it is required that a separate cutting notice be filed with the DNR forester at least 30 days prior to harvest."

### **Types and costs of harvests can vary**

There are several types of harvests and getting bids from several loggers is the best way to ensure that you get a fair price for your timber. It's important to note that loggers usually specialize their harvest operation for certain forest products.



A forwarder carries felled logs clear of the ground from the stump to a roadside landing.

Source: Wikipedia

WDNR Photo

"Different equipment and techniques can greatly change the results and profit of a timber harvest. It can be complex and a forester can help you understand your best options," said Green.

There are several things landowners should consider including areas that may be more sensitive to activity such as near your home, recreational trails, springs or waterways.

"Any logger you employ should be familiar with best management practices concerning operating near bodies of water."

According to this forestry technician, one of the most important goals for any timber harvest is to maintain a stand that is able to regenerate and be better than the stand it replaces. This allows the landowner to keep the residual timber value as an investment. "In this time of low interest rates, timber may provide a greater return than cash investments," said Green. "There is always a demand for quality timber, but sacrificing your potential sustainable yield of quality timber for quick profit can devalue your property and leave you with an ugly scar on the landscape. A good timber harvest is no accident."

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



### **Under new federal health care law adult child information not needed**

By: Betty McWilliams, Bureau of Human Resources

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#### *Coverage of adult children automatically continues*

Subscribers no longer are required to complete and return an annual questionnaire to assure that their adult child's coverage continues into the following year. Under the new federal "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act," if an adult child less than 27 years of age (26 years if married) currently is insured, or has been determined by your health plan to be disabled, coverage for the child will remain in place for the next year.

The federal law expands the eligibility criteria for adult children effective January 1, 2011.

The Department of Employee Trust Funds' (ETF) "[Important Information Regarding Adult Children's Eligibility For 2011 Health Insurance](#)" explains the revised eligibility criteria for adult children. ETF also provides information about the tax consequences of insuring an adult child and steps subscribers must take in order to add or remove their adult child's coverage.

Participating health plans mailed this document to their subscribers prior to the "It's Your Choice" enrollment period, along with information about other changes in their health plans for 2011.

**Important Note:** You must notify your [regional payroll and benefits specialist](#) or me, [Betty McWilliams](#) within 60 days of your child's loss of eligibility or the child won't be eligible to receive an offer for COBRA continuation coverage.

**Footnote:** *Betty McWilliams is a payroll and benefits specialist in the Bureau of Human Resources.*



### **Removal of invasive plants headed toward conservancy and Madison lake**

By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region

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A group of hardworking folks recently pitched in to remove invasive water hyacinth and water lettuce, both floating plants, from two ponds and an adjacent marsh in Middleton before they could threaten a nearby conservancy and Lake Mendota.



A canoe hauled a boom out to help collect invasive water hyacinth and water lettuce plants.

WDNR Photo

[Water hyacinth \(\*Eichhornia crassipes\*\)](#) is a planta non grata in much of the world where it often jams rivers and lakes with uncounted thousands of tons of floating matter. A “healthy” acre of water hyacinth can weigh up to 200 tons. In the U.S., the plant is present throughout the southeast, as well as in California and Washington state, according to the University of Florida’s Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants.

No less a threat, [water lettuce \(\*Pistia stratiotes\*\)](#) commonly forms large, dense mats of infestation which prevent boating, fishing and other lake and river uses. Experts disagree whether it is native to the U.S., according to the University of Florida, but “it definitely is not native to Wisconsin,” points out **Sue Graham**, South Central Region water resources management specialist based at Fitchburg.

Last month, Graham brought the problem of local infestation in Dane County’s City of Middleton to the attention of Penni Klein, the city’s Public Lands Department director and to Alice Thompson, of Thompson & Associates Wetlands Services, South Milwaukee, an environmental consulting firm working on wetlands restoration.

Thompson’s company often works on projects for the City of Middleton and while doing so was “horrified at the level of invasion by both southern plants” in two city ponds, encompassing 1.9 and 1.6 acres, respectively.

No wonder she was concerned, given that the two plants are found in the literature in “The World’s Worst Weeds: Distribution and Biology,” published by the University of Hawaii press, Honolulu.

The smaller pond outflows in the Pheasant Branch Conservancy marsh, which eventually grades into a stream flowing into Lake Mendota, the 9,842-acre jewel of Dane County’s Yahara Chain-of-Lakes. Some plants already had been transported downstream into the marsh. The conservancy is a natural area containing a marsh with open water, springs, prairies, meadows, lowland forest and wooded hills which harbor a wide variety of plant and animal habitats, some of which are threatened or endangered.

Two years ago, Guerdon Coombs, a volunteer and past president of the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy, identified some of these plants in the area, but didn’t find them last year.

“I would never have gone to look at these ponds in 2010 if Guerdon hadn’t reported



finding them in 2008 and notified the UW Herbarium," noted Graham. Thompson helped organize City of Middleton and Dane County employees, Oak Hill Correctional Center workers, her consulting firm and Graham to remove the water hyacinth and water lettuce from the two ponds and nearby marsh. Volunteers from the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy and others, including Coombs, also provided the critical amount of labor needed to complete the task.

Dane County supplied a conveyor and by using a boom to collect the plants, "a process that was extremely laborious," about 20 people working four days removed a couple hundred tons of invasive plants to the local compost site, said Graham.

"Neither of these plant species is expected to overwinter here, but we were concerned that with the strong groundwater discharge to these ponds and in the Pheasant Branch marsh downstream, that seeds might be able to overwinter and create a long-term problem."



Volunteers raked the invasive plants onto a conveyor belt for transport to a compost site. WDNR Photo

"During the project, many plants were carefully examined and we didn't find any mature seeds. There will be educational efforts this fall, especially in the local neighborhood, because it's likely the plants were deliberately placed in the ponds and then multiplied." Removal work was partially funded by the city, along with an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Rapid Detection and Response grant from DNR.

"Quick action, with the help of the AIS grant, to remove plants before they spread can effectively nip exotic infestations in the bud, saving time and money in the long run," explained Graham.

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



## Links of interest...don't miss them

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### Newsletters

**Title:** "Outdoors Unlimited Online"

• **Description:** Published by the Outdoor Writers' Association, an international, professional association of outdoor communicators, outdoor companies and outdoor industry service providers. The online newsletter contains Member News, Outdoor Market listings and Craft (writing) Improvement articles. A couple of examples from the most recent posting: "Wildlife editor ties history with the present," "How to talk to the camera," and "Filling the niche with a new magazine."

- **Link:** ["Outdoors Unlimited Online"](#)

**Title:** "Partners in Giving"

• **Description:** The website of "The State, University and UWHC Combined Campaign of Dane County," provides information on campaign news, kickoff events, participating charities and much more. This website is updated on an ongoing basis.

- **Links:** ["Partners in Giving"](#) and ["Partners in Giving Video"](#)

### ***Commentary***

**Title:** "Janet Battista: Disasters remind us to thank DNR"

• **Description:** Former DNR employee Janet Battista (Division of Air and Waste hydrogeologist, South Central Region, 1989 to 2006), credits DNR employees, environmental regulators and legislators for their work on behalf of Wisconsin's environment.

- **Link:** ["Janet Battista: Disasters remind us to thank DNR"](#)

### ***Tips for communicating***

**Title:** "MissPronouncer.com"

• **Description:** A pronunciation guide for everything Wisconsin

- **Link:** ["MissPronouncer.com"](#)

**Title:** "yousendit"

• **Description:** "Makes sending and receiving large files super-fast and easy."

- **Link:** ["yousendit"](#)

**Title:** "Grammar Girl"

• **Description:** A category of "Quick and Dirty Tricks: Helping you do things better" including "Writing & Education," "Money," "Career & Work" and more.

- **Link:** ["Grammar Girl"](#)

### ***State of Wisconsin sites***

**Title:** "Wisconsin Surplus and Online Auction"

• **Description:** Online bidding for surplus items of the State of Wisconsin, as well as Wisconsin cities, counties and municipalities.

- **Link:** ["Wisconsin Surplus and Online Auction"](#)



## **Lake Belleville project aims to restore fishery**

By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region

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Work has begun on a lake rehabilitation project in the Village of Belleville that was many years in the making and aims to restore both the aquatic environment and fishery of Lake Belleville.

By a combination of dredging and watershed diversion, Belleville, with the help of more than \$441,000 in DNR matching monies, is seeking to restore the approximately 40-acre lake after decades of pollution, swarming carp, choking algae and mud.



Megan Phillips, Dave Marshall and Kurt Welke net from the east channel of the former Belleville Millpond

WDNR Photo

Plans call for constructing a berm to separate the lake from the Sugar River with the earthen structure also serving as a recreational trail, connecting this Dane County village of more than 1,900 residents to lake and river.

The berm will divert river flow west of the lake along with the sediment and pollutants that originate from a 172-square-mile agricultural and urban watershed.

“An estimated 99 percent of the phosphorus and sediment will eventually bypass the lake, an important factor for sustaining the lake for decades to come,” said one of the project’s environmental consultants and former DNR employee, **Dave Marshall**.

The dam which created Lake Belleview (the former Belleville Millpond), will remain in place, but groundwater seepage will be the method of refilling and maintaining the “new” lake.

Right now, the lake is drained prior to dredging and removing accumulated sediment from the lake bottom. After refilling, the lake will be stocked with fish.

“We hope that Belleview will ultimately mimic a natural river floodplain lake that harbors many native fish, including largemouth bass and bluegill,” noted Marshall.

To that end, a group composed of Marshall; another environmental consultant and former DNR employee, **Dick Wedepohl**; Megan Phillips, executive director of the Upper Sugar River Watershed Association; and DNR fishery biologist **Kurt Welke**, Fitchburg, recently surveyed the lake’s east channel to determine if young common carp had migrated into the channel that’s sustained by plentiful groundwater.

“Even after sources of sediment and pollutants are diverted around the lake, common carp will be a concern since their behavior destroys habitat, clouds the water and drives out native fish. The berm should prevent migration from the river, but some carp may have found refuge in backwater areas and our plan was to find out,” explained Marshall.

#### **Survey brings hope for successful restoration**

The group sought to use a small electro-shocker to temporarily stun the fish for inventory. Unfortunately, after decades of sedimentation, it was impossible to use the shocker in four to five feet of soft muck. Instead, the group used dip nets near shore, and to their surprise, no carp were found.



Wisconsin native big-mouth buffalo will populate the fishery of Lake Belleville.

WDNR Photo

The survey provides "two points of hope," said fishery biologist Welke. "First, the channel did not harbor any carp and would not provide a refuge for unwanted pests as the project proceeds."

"Second, we did find big-mouth buffalo, a native fish associated with larger Mississippi River tributaries and this speaks well to expectations that the new lake can and may host a diverse and healthy fish community."

Welke said that water inflow from the east channel may serve as an important nursery grounds once restoration efforts to re-establish the lake's vegetated edge and marsh habitats are completed. "Yes, the fish were small, but a small spark may help rekindle a healthy revival."

The project calls for enhancing several acres of wetland, and more will be recreated by re-distributing the lake sediment and creating conditions conducive to wetland plants.

Trees, grasses and other plants will be established by planting and seeding.

"Vegetative response will be monitored closely during and after the project to make sure the right plants get established and invasive, aquatic nuisance plants are prevented from being established," said DNR Sugar River basin supervisor **Bob Hansis**, Fitchburg. "It's going to be fun to be part of it. We can't wait to see the final product."

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



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