

1. DNR enters the social media world, and hundreds already like us	2. New Southeast director Nitschke excited about working with region's staff
3. DNR educators take their act on the road to Rhinelander	4. Department PCs enter queue to migrate to Windows 7/Office 2010
5. Northern Region's Ellen Granquist passed away last week	6. Biersach named new director of Bureau of Watershed Management
7. DNR receives annual state Diversity Award	8. Keeping up on new invasive species information
9. Governor signed DNR-related bills as regular session ended	10. Health insurance enrollment and ERA program change under new law
11. Partners in Giving update: nearly \$41,000 in donations, so far	12. DNR wardens continue to strengthen bond and understanding with Hmong
13. Links of interest...don't miss them	14. Around the state...DNR employees shine
15. America's Great Outdoors projects include two proposed for Wisconsin	

[Secretary's Corner](#) | [Weekly News](#) | [News Releases](#) | [Outdoor Report](#)

DNR enters the social media world, and hundreds already like us

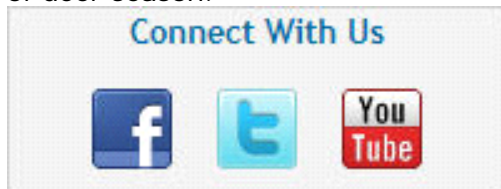
By: Laurel Steffes, Office of Communication

[Index](#) [Next](#) [Top](#) [Print](#)

It's been a great week since DNR launched its Facebook page!

Following quickly on the posting of our Facebook website, the department now also has a presence on Twitter and YouTube. You can access all from [DNR's Internet homepage](#). We're also in the process of adding a "splash" page to our website that will pop up when people log in for the first time each day.

Our first YouTube video features Secretary message [Cathy Stepp's](#) on the opening of deer season.



Look for these logos to connect to Facebook, Twitter and YouTube from DNR's homepage.

On November 15, the department announced its new Facebook page to the public in a news release ["DNR prepares for deer hunt with launch of Facebook, Twitter and website changes."](#)

More than 1,600 people "like" our Facebook site, and it's receiving a lot of chatter on Facebook in general.

Sec. Stepp's YouTube message is an example of how DNR's featured videos will be seasonal in nature. With the establishment of our YouTube channel, we'll share the many videos DNR programs have produced. We already have much content "in the can" that we can use on the page for the next several months. Videos will be on general interest subjects, like marking salmon fry, that fit time length parameters.

DNR's Facebook mission will be to attract conversations

The mission of DNR's Facebook page is to host a conversation about enjoying Wisconsin's outdoor recreation. Right now, with the 9-day deer season starting Saturday, November 19, we're inviting friends to share pictures and stories about hunting, late fall fishing and other outdoor fall fun.

The page is administrated by Trish Ossmann, public affairs manager (RPAM) in the Northeast Region; Ed Culhane, RPAM in the WCR; Paul Holtan, DNR News editor; and Bill Cosh, DNR spokesperson. These four people will post status updates, articles and links to the page, as well as respond to customer comments under the DNR Facebook account. Staff is encouraged to submit ideas for page posts to a special email account dnrfb@wisconsin.gov checked by these administrators.

DNR's call center will check in on the page periodically between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. seven days a week to identify page management needs and ensure observance of [DNR's house rules](#), using a model adopted by the Montana DNR.

There's guidance for DNR employees viewing Facebook

There have been several questions in the past week about the policy regarding looking at the DNR Facebook page during work time. Staff will be allowed to look at the DNR page during work hours, but not their personal pages. Before looking at the DNR page, you need to be logged out of your personal account. Once logged out, you can go to 'www.facebook.com/WIDNR' to see DNR's page.

Staff is asked not to comment or post on the Facebook page in a professional capacity. If you want to share a picture on the department's wall from your personal Facebook page off hours, that's GREAT, but DNR posts must come from the four administrators. This will ensure the communication on the page is consistent and customers aren't receiving multiple responses.

More social media to come to DNR

Many of you have asked about receiving training on how and when to use various social media tools. The Office of Communication (OC) is working on that and will keep you posted about upcoming sessions.

Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are DNR's first social media sites. There's more coming.

We plan to post an official agency Flickr site, soon. DNR will use Flickr to make photos and images available internally and externally. About 3,000 images from DNR's photo files already have been scanned, meta-tagged and are ready to post. In the coming weeks, the OC will reach out to other programs, such as Forestry, Parks, Endangered Resources and Wildlife that have scanned image files to move their images into Flickr. Flickr links soon will be on DNR's website in the Newsroom, on MyDNR and on Facebook.

This an exciting time! Social media will help us find new ways to connect with the people of the state and to make our customer service even better. We welcome your feedback.

Update your email signature block to include Facebook link

All employees should take a look at and update their signature blocks with the current DNR website address and a Facebook link. Here's how to do it.

To edit your signature in Microsoft Outlook:

- 1) From the MS Outlook Tools menu, choose Options...
- 2) From the Mail Format tab, click on the Signatures... button
- 3) To edit your current signature, click once on the name of the signature and click the Edit... button.
- 4) In the Signature Text edit box, make your changes
- 5) Verify that you've included the official DNR web address **dnr.wi.gov** (all lower case). Verify that you're using the official email domain name **@wisconsin.gov**.
- 6) Add a line at the bottom that reads: **Find us on Facebook:**

www.facebook.com/WIDNR.

For more information and an example, see ["IT Works Email Signature Example."](#)

Get answers to questions about DNR's move into social media

The Department Leadership Team and the OC have received questions about DNR's move to social media. Read ["Social media Q & A"](#) to get answers to questions you may have. The OC will update this document on a regular basis.

Footnote: *Laurel Steffes is director of the Office of Communication.*



New Southeast director Nitschke excited about working with region's staff

By: Marcus Smith, Southeast Region

[Index](#) [▲Prev](#) [▼Next](#) [▲Top](#) [Print](#)

"Can we check your ID?" That was the first question that greeted newly-appointed Southeast Region (SER) director **Eric Nitschke** during his meet-and-greet with his new colleagues on Thursday, October 13, at regional headquarters in Milwaukee.

With Secretary **Cathy Stepp** and executive assistant "**Gundy**" **Gunderson** looking on, the 35-year-old father of two was subjected to some good-natured teasing about his youthful appearance.



Southeast Region environmental analysis team leader Mike Thompson (right) chatted with new director Eric Nitschke during a get-together with regional staff. WDNR Photo

"I know he looks like he's 12," said Sec. Stepp, "but it was important to bring in someone who has some experience other than DNR. Most notably, with local government."

"We want to communicate with people in this part of the state that Eric is someone who not only can have empathy about some of the challenges they were facing, or the perceptions that they are struggling with about our agency, and that can actually have some sympathy with that."

The secretary expressed the belief that Nitschke has "some good ideas on how we can change some of the communication patterns and up our game when it comes to engaging different levels of government in what we do here at DNR."

Nitschke has a civil engineering degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and began his career with the consulting firm HNTB, before stints in the public sector with the City of New Berlin and most recently as city engineer and Department of Public Works director for the Village of Sussex.

"I'm very excited to be working with you," Nitschke told the gathering. "I've taken a great interest in what you do, and I have some thoughts and feelings on what we can accomplish together, and I'm very open and curious to learn more of your thoughts and feelings."

After answering more questions and brief individual chats with several staff members, Nitschke sat down to discuss the steps that lead him to his new position.

"I've always had a passion for the environment. I've known I wanted to be an engineer and work in some sort of natural resources capacity since the fifth grade," he said. "I've been very impressed with the staff here in my workings with the DNR. The other reason why I was very interested in this position is because I love a challenge."

Nitschke was asked to identify his priorities as regional director.

"It's a group of top priorities: Get out and be the face of the DNR for the region; and get in front of as many people as possible, as many groups as possible, and find out their concerns and bring that information back to our staff; and be able to be proactive in assisting businesses that have startups and expansions, as well as other types of permitting issues."

Nitschke said he believes in the importance of feedback from staff and using that feedback "to assist in coordination of working on projects with local communities, developers and interest groups."

The agency has been criticized by some sectors for being inconsistent or for failing to clarify what is required from a permit applicant on the front end. As someone with private sector and local government experience, Nitschke offered his views on the subject.

"That's something that's a legitimate criticism that I've heard and I've experienced. To DNR staff's credit, even in the experience I had, they rectified the situation and they dealt with it," he said. "That impressed me. Not only were staff at DNR willing to admit mistakes, but own up to them and make them whole. I think that's the measure of an individual and that's the measure of a department."

Nitschke is mindful of the fact that the agency must continue to build on its record of success in helping grow the state's economy. Creating jobs "is not something I can do alone," he said. "The staff here is doing that by daily, making the contact with whatever agency or organization they are working with," said the new regional director. "It's how they follow up and follow through with those organizations that's going to change impressions one project at a time."

Nitschke understands that job growth and protecting our natural resources and enhancing our environment are mutually supportive, and he intends to "get out and let people know we are listening to you and we are going to do something about it, but also listening to our staff to hear their concerns."

Nitschke concluded the discussion by stating, "I'm containing my excitement, but I'm just bouncing off the wall. I'm thrilled and very excited about the direction the department is going," he said.

"Let me leave you with this: I've had my eye on the DNR for a very long period of time and the direction they are heading from a third party standpoint was too enticing not to throw my hat in the ring and say 'I want to be a part of this.'"

Footnote: *Marcus Smith is the public affairs manager for the Southeast Region.*



DNR educators take their act on the road to Rhinelander

By: Andrew Savagian, Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment

[Index](#) [Prev](#) [Next](#) [Top](#) [Print](#)

Natural resource educators from throughout DNR hit the road in October, hosting their first regional Education Fair on October 25 at the department's Northern Region headquarters in Rhinelander.

The ad hoc Education Team sponsored the Education Fair. Created in 2010, the team enables DNR educators and other staff to collaborate on efforts to educate the public and department employees about the agency's many educational programs.

"DNR staff is just as excited to learn about different DNR programs and projects as our customers outside the agency," said Office of Communication section chief **J.D. Smith**. "This was our opportunity to go to a regional office and give staff the chance to see how other parts of our agency educate Wisconsin residents about our natural resources."



Bernie Williams, conservation biologist and invasives best management practices specialist in the Division of Forestry, talked with Northern Region employees about invasive earthworms and their impact on forests. WDNR Photo

The Education Fair was held over the lunch hour, and Northern Region employees learned about a variety of activities sponsored by DNR education programs, including Project Wild, recycling, brownfields redevelopment, and "Hook, Line & Thinker," to name a few. In the afternoon, educators offered concurrent training sessions on different programs.

The fair was modeled after the successful Earth Day fairs held in central office in April 2010 and 2011. The team hopes to host another fair at a different regional headquarters office in spring 2012.

Education Team members include: **Christal Campbell**, Bureau of Watershed Management; **Lindsay Haas**, Southeast Region Air Management; **Kirsten Held**, Division of Forestry; **Janet Hutchens**, Office of Communication; **Jon King**, South Central Law Enforcement; **Sherry Klosiewski**, Northern Region Parks and Recreation; **Carrie Morgan**, Office of Communication; **Elisabeth Olson**, Bureau of Waste and Materials Management; **Colleen Robinson Klug**, Division of Forestry;

Mary Kay Salwey, Bureau of Wildlife Management; **Jeff Schimpff**, Office of Energy; J.D. Smith; **Theresa Stabo**, Bureau of Fisheries Management; and **Jo Temte**, Office of the Great Lakes.

For more information about the DNR Education Team or how to get involved in future Education Fairs, email [Carrie Morgan](mailto:Carrie.Morgan).

Footnote: *Andrew Savagian is his bureau's outreach team leader and a member of the Education Team.*



Department PCs enter queue to migrate to Windows 7/Office 2010

[Index](#) [Prev](#) [Next](#) [Top](#) [Print](#)

On the evening of October 26, Bureau of Technology Services (BTS) staff computers began migration to Windows 7/Office 2010. Other Customer and Employee Services (CAES) Division information technology coordinators (ITCs) are following suit, putting their staffs' PCs in the migration queue. In total, 3,274 computers on the DNR network will move to the new operating system/office suite standard upon project completion.

BTS ITC, and Windows 7 Team member, Kathie Koch, walked through the Windows 7 migration procedures during her bureau's move to validate the accuracy of the procedures and help assure that all will go smoothly for other programs

The migration team held an all-day Windows 7 summit in Madison for technical staff on November 7. The team showcased the deployment methodology for ITCs and regional information management specialists (RIMS), discussing the deployment protocol and the impacts on each team's work schedule.

While a large amount of this project will be implemented through automated processes, a fair share of the work will be manual. RIMS and ITCs will complete the manual processes. Each team member will communicate with their program staff as they schedule their migration.

Users will be getting involved as well. When your device is scheduled for migration, you'll receive a request to perform either a manual or an automated backup of your data on your PC/laptop/tablet.

The migration includes a built-in process to back-up and restore data on the hard drive; however, the migration team wants staff to understand the importance of backing up their data. This is a good time to introduce/reintroduce that process.

It will be essential on the day of your migration that you NOT log on to your computer, until you receive word from your ITC or RIMS that the migration to your computer has been completed. They'll advise you in advance when your device is scheduled for migration.

You can go to ["Windows 7 and Office 2010 Training Materials"](#) and click on the links in the "Location and Comments" column to begin online training.

A helpdesk is up and running to specifically handle all of your Windows 7/Office 2010 related questions and problems. The phone number for the DNR Windows 7 helpdesk is (608) 266-3694.



Northern Region's Ellen Granquist passed away last week

[Index](#) [Prev](#) [Next](#) [Top](#) [Print](#)

Ellen Granquist, 61, stormwater intake specialist and air management program assistant in the Superior office passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday, November 8.

"Ellen served the people of Wisconsin for 23 years in customer service, air management and stormwater," said Nancy Larson, water quality field supervisor. "She was always a calm and kind member of our Superior office team, and we will miss her very much.

"Ellen handled all of the intake for stormwater permits in Northern Region, managed the database, and answered questions from the public. She was a valuable member of the northern stormwater team and held the 'institutional knowledge' of the northern program."

Ellen is survived by her husband Ted and son Neill, both of Superior. Condolences may be sent to Ted Granquist at 6626 Ogden Ave., Superior, Wis 54880.

The memorial service for Ellen will be Saturday, November 19 at 2 pm at the [Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses](#), located at 7815 Tower Ave. in Superior.

Ellen's colleagues are collecting donations for her husband. Send donations to Nancy Larson, 2501 Golf Course Rd., Ashland WI 54806.



Biersach named new director of Bureau of Watershed Management

◆ [Index](#) ▲ [Prev](#) ▼ [Next](#) ▲ [Top](#) 🖨 [Print](#)

Division of Water administrator Ken Johnson has named long-time Water Division employee **Pam Biersach** director of the Bureau of Watershed Management.

With fifteen years of direct program experience in such areas as waterways and wetlands, dam safety, and shoreland and floodplain zoning, she brings a vast array of experience to the new position.

Having the opportunity during the last five years to also earn management and project experience in other programs such as Runoff Management and Drinking and Groundwater, Biersach became known as the "watershed expert" in the South Central Region.



Pam Biersach and her husband Dave attended a family event with sons Brendan, age 4, and Cameron, age 2. The family lives in Belleville and every day the boys ask "when is Santa coming."

WDNR Photo

"Pam is a 'can-do' kind of person with lots of energy and enthusiasm," said Johnson. I think you'll find she is well suited for the position, and I'm sure you'll find her an

asset to the division.”

Biersach will direct three sections in the new bureau: Dam Safety, Runoff and Waterway Protection.

“Every day I learn something new from my colleagues and am in awe of the incredible talent at DNR,” said Biersach. “That’s why it’s hard to find the words to express how honored and humbled I am by this opportunity to lead the Watershed Bureau, especially during this time of change for our agency, our division and ourselves.”

Biersach spoke of changes that may leave employees “wondering about the future as agents of environmental management and as people.”

She pledged to work hard with her bureau and the Water Management team to help her staff and the department through the changes by providing opportunities for everyone to speak openly, be heard, and have the chance to contribute to the success of their individual programs and the division.

“We are a team. My door is open for anyone at anytime, and I look forward to working with each and every one of you,” she said.



DNR receives annual state Diversity Award

[◆ Index](#) [▲ Prev](#) [▼ Next](#) [▲ Top](#) [Print](#)

The State Council on Affirmative Action (SCAA) has awarded DNR the Council’s 2011 Annual Program Achievement Diversity Award for its comprehensive recruitment initiative designed to increase the percentages of females, minorities and veterans in the DNR workforce.

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.

The Wisconsin State Council on Affirmative Action and the Wisconsin Office of State Employment Relations/Division of Affirmative Action sponsor the Diversity Award.



Eileen Hocker, Bureau of Law Enforcement, holds the Annual Program Achievement Diversity Award presented to DNR on November 10. Others from DNR who joined her for the photo shoot were (left to right) LeVon McAllister, Management Information Section chief, Bureau of Technology Services; chief warden Randy Stark; Julie Sauer, administrator of the Division of Customer and Employee Services; Bureau of Human Resources

director Carrie Mickelson; and DeLaina Siltman of DNR's Office of Diversity Affairs.

WDNR Photo

This isn't the first time that DNR has received recognition for its efforts on behalf of diversity. DNR was honored in 2008, in part, for establishing several programs to facilitate communication with the Hmong communities of Wisconsin.

In 2010, DNR received the highest honor of diversity recognition for its continued outreach efforts beyond the original design in the Harmony in the Woods initiative.

DNR had expanded the program to include people with disabilities; Spanish and Hmong translations of hunting regulations; establishment of a Conservation Youth Corps with the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Ojibwa Indians; and a summer internship program with the Lac du Flambeau youths. Read about this honor in ["Harmony in the Woods receives Diversity Award for second time."](#)

DNR recognized this year for participation in Annual Summer Intern Program

In 2010, DNR participated for the first time in the annual summer intern program, which targets women, racial ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities. Read about it in the December 16, 2010 "Digest" story ["Supervisors: TOPjobs will bring interns to DNR next summer"](#) and in the August 11, 2011 story ["DNR again supports jobs opportunity program."](#)

The Bureau of Watershed Management hired one of the 2010 interns into a permanent position.

DNR also was recognized this year for efforts to increase the department's visibility in the state's minority communities. For example, DNR conservation wardens assisted in a Sheboygan County effort that led to the establishment of the Hmong American Sportsmen's Club in 2010.

DNR involved in additional activities to foster diversity

A joint effort of South Central Region and Southeast Region Fisheries Management teams educated approximately 3,500 fourth and fifth graders over a two-day period about Wisconsin's aquatic resources. This effort included:

- The Wisconsin Outdoor Youth Expo, which pulled students from all over the state to participate in hands-on education events linked to fishing, wildlife, camping, heritage, trails, BB guns, archery and many other outdoor activities.
- A fishing camp that proved to be one of the most popular destinations at the expo. Trout Unlimited and Muskies Inc. brought several volunteers to help the students tie flies and cast with fly rods.
- The Casting Area, where the students received instruction on how to accurately and safely cast a rod and attempt to hit a target, fished for floating plastic fish replicas in the oversized inflatable pool, and observed the Aquarium.
 - Perhaps the most popular station at the expo was the Fish Filleting and Cooking area. DNR fisheries technicians used their skills with a fillet knife to demonstrate the inner workings of a fish and how to take a fish from field to feast.

Southeast warden exposes metropolitan area dwellers to the outdoors

The Archery for Inner-City Milwaukee Kids Event, which Southeast Region conservation warden **Gervis Myles** managed, has as its goal getting the entire Milwaukee inner-city community interested and involved in natural resources issues,

including enjoying outdoor recreation. Among his outreach efforts:

- Worked with Milwaukee-area schools to introduce archery to more than 700 students.
- Converted available DNR conference rooms in Milwaukee into archery ranges for an afternoon, when 60 middle school students wanted to give archery a try but didn't have an adequate space.
- Was key in helping 32 individuals earn their archery instructor credentials in recent years, so they can expose even more children to the sport. On March 5, the Wisconsin Bowhunters Association named Myles their Warden of the Year for 2011.
- Organized a Learn to Hunt Pheasant outing for several Milwaukee teenage youth at the DNR's McKenzie Center in Poynette, at which time he talked with Milwaukee youth about natural resources careers.



Keeping up on new invasive species information

By: Chrystal Schreck, Bureau of Science Services

[Index](#) [▲Prev](#) [▼Next](#) [▲Top](#) [Print](#)

Spreading the word can more effectively slow the spread of invasive species

Whether you issue permits, conduct field surveys, or work with volunteers, you may need to be aware of invasive species issues. Invasive species management crosses division and bureau lines within DNR and includes many partners around the state.



Giant hogweed, a prohibited invasive plant in Wisconsin has been found in Waupaca, Manitowoc and Iron counties. There's still a good chance to eradicate it, though. If you see giant hogweed, send email 'invasive.species@wi.gov'. Photo by Terry English, U.S. Department of Agriculture

To help keep everyone better informed, the department's Invasive Species Team has designed a new intranet resource to serve as a portal to connect all DNR staff to the most relevant resources for consistent management and messaging.

Visit this new ["Invasive Species Management"](#) Intranet resource. You also can get to this webpage by starting at the ["Science Services"](#) Intranet page and clicking on "Invasive Species-NR 40" under the "Our DNR Customers and Partners" section.

One of our goals is to connect staff to existing resources from one easy location. If you have invasive species information on your own Intranet or public Internet page, let us know, so that we can include your resources. You also can provide a link to the new invasives Intranet page from your own program website.

Beyond sharing information to managing invasives

Another goal of this effort is to identify existing invasive species management needs, and then consider possible resources to meet those needs.

For example, your program may need additional information on how to control certain species. Perhaps you need educational materials to share with specific audiences. If you need a resource, it's possible that others within the department could benefit from it as well. Email me, [Chrystal Schreck](#) or call me at (608)264-8590, with suggestions for additional resources you'd like to see on the "Invasive Species Management" page. We'd appreciate your feedback.

Footnote: *Chrystal Schreck is an educator on invasive species in the Bureau of Science Services.*



Governor signed DNR-related bills as regular session ended

By: Paul Heinen, Office of the Secretary

[Index](#) [Prev](#) [Next](#) [Top](#) [Print](#)

The Legislature's regular session has moved into recess until January 17, 2012. The special session called in September continues, and legislative leaders can call members back to take up bills when they're ready for debate.

Governor Scott Walker has signed these DNR-related bills into law:

- **SB 75** now is **Wisconsin Act 50**. Senator Terry Moulton authored the bill, which bans DNR's use of Earn-A-Buck.
- **SB 228** has become **Wisconsin Act 51**. Also authored by Moulton, this bill allows unloaded and uncased guns in vehicles.

Check out the ["2011 Bill Tracker"](#) for a full review of the status of legislation impacting DNR programs.

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



Health insurance enrollment and ERA program change under new law

By: Department of Employee Trust Funds

[Index](#) [Prev](#) [Next](#) [Top](#) [Print](#)

Check out changes under new Wisconsin Act 49

2011 Wisconsin Act 49, signed into law on November 4, 2011, now aligns state tax law with federal tax law with regard to medical expenses for non-tax-dependent adult children. This means that the value of health insurance coverage for non-tax-dependent adult children, also known as "imputed income," will no longer be calculated for Wisconsin tax purposes.

It also means that medical expenses incurred by your eligible non-tax-dependent adult children may now be reimbursed through the Employee Reimbursement Accounts (ERA) program. Adult children, whether or not a tax-dependent, are eligible for coverage until the end of the month in which they turn 26. The adult child's

spouse and/or dependents are not eligible.

Note: Act 49 does not change the existing imputed income calculation related to health insurance coverage for the non-tax-dependent domestic partners and/or their children, nor does it make them eligible for ERA participation.

Health insurance enrollment opportunity for eligible adult children

The recent enactment of 2011 Wisconsin Act 49 eliminates the requirement to have the value of health insurance coverage for non-tax-dependent adult children, also known as "imputed income," included in an employee's gross income for state income tax purposes. With this change, state tax code aligns with federal tax code. Imputed income is still required for coverage of non-tax-dependent domestic partners and/or their children.

Subscribers may now submit a paper application to their employer to enroll adult children for Group Health Insurance coverage that they previously excluded in order to avoid imputed income. Adult children are eligible for coverage through the end of the month in which they turn age 26. An extended It's Your Choice period is available to enroll these eligible adult children only through December 31, 2011. However, in order to ensure timely receipt of ID cards for your child, we recommend that you add your dependent(s) as soon as possible. Any adult child eligible for benefits who was not previously listed on an application for coverage will be provided coverage effective January 1, 2012.

The change in tax code applies to taxable years beginning on January 1, 2011. For questions regarding the tax and reporting implications of Act 49, please consult your tax advisor.

Employee Reimbursement Account (ERA) changes

Because of the law change, you may change your 2012 ERA medical expense account election to include expenses that may be incurred in 2012 by your eligible adult child. If you wish to amend your ERA election, submit a new ERA enrollment form [ERA enrollment form](#) and mark the enrollment form as "supersede."

Send the amended form to Roger Severson, Fringe Benefits Management Company/Wageworks, 113 S. Main Street, Suite 200, Lodi, WI 53555; FAX: 608-592-2030; e-mail roger.severson@wageworks.com; phone: (608)592-2020. **All amended ERA enrollment forms must be received by November 30, 2011.**

The law change is retroactive to January 1, 2011, so if you have eligible medical expenses that were incurred by your non-tax-dependent eligible adult child in 2011, you may submit claims in order to receive reimbursement from your 2011 medical expense account. You may not change your 2011 ERA election amounts.



Partners in Giving update: nearly \$41,000 in donations, so far

[Index](#) [Prev](#) [Next](#) [Top](#) [Print](#)

Silent auction brings in record bids

It was a good week to be named "Laurie," as **Laurie Fike**, Bureau of Wildlife Management, and **Laurie Ross**, Office of the Secretary, were chosen as the winners in week four's Partners in Giving Campaign drawing. They were among 36 new donors pledging \$12,480.

Going into week five on November 14, 143 DNR employees have committed to a total of nearly \$41,000 to their charities of choice. This year's campaign includes more

than 450 organizations.

Fike selected a handmade fishing pole, and Ross chose a state park sticker for this winter. In the previous, week three drawing, **Barb Swenson**, Bureau of Air Management, chose the \$25 gift certificate to Starbucks. **Cindy Hoffland**, Bureau of Facilities and Land, chose the Lindor Assorted Chocolate Truffles.

If you've misplaced your pledge form, you have two options to make a donation:

- Email Partners in Giving chair [Julie Sauer](#) or call her at 266-2241, and she'll see that a new form is sent to you.
- Go online to the "[Partners in Giving](#)" website to make a donation by credit card.

2011 silent auction nets highest contributions, yet

Organizer **Sherri Voigt**, Bureau of Finance, reported that the November 16 silent auction in the central office brought in a record \$1,145 in donations for Partners in Giving.

Voigt credited "the creativity and generosity of DNR employees" for the success of the tenth annual auction.



DNR wardens continue to strengthen bond and understanding with Hmong

[Index](#) [▲Prev](#) [▼Next](#) [▲Top](#) [Print](#)

DNR staffed a booth at the 2011 Hmong New Year celebration on November 12-13 on the UW-Eau Claire campus, talking with nearly 370 visitors to the occasion.



Ka Yeng Vue, deputy warden/water guard in Green Bay, used his Hmong language skills to speak with and assist many of the older visitors with their questions. WDNR Photo

The theme of the DNR booth was promoting the wise and safe use of natural resources, recruitment of Hmong individuals interested in a job as a conservation warden, and education about preventing the spread of invasive species.



Conservation warden Scott Thiede (far right) spoke with many children, including five young men interested in becoming wardens. Thiede will schedule ride-alongs for them, so they can observe wardens at work. WDNR Photo

Working at the DNR booth were Justin Wershofen, West Central Region water guard and deputy warden; Ka Yeng Vue, Northeast Region water guard and deputy warden; conservation warden Scott Thiede; and warden supervisor Jeremy Peery.

" People of different cultures and backgrounds learned from each other, developed trust and understanding, and took away a desire to work together to accomplish similar goals," said Thiede.



Links of interest...don't miss them

[Index](#) [Prev](#) [Next](#) [Top](#) [Print](#)

- **Title:** "New firearm rules take effect on opening day of gun deer hunt"

Description: Tim Lawhern, DNR Division of Enforcement and Science administrator summed up the new rules in this November 8 news release: "Unless otherwise prohibited, you can carry a long gun, uncased and unloaded, in or on a motor vehicle in Wisconsin at any time." If you're a hunter, or just interested in the subject, you'll want to take a look at this news release and the frequently asked questions, with answers, at this link.

Link: ["New firearm rules take effect on opening day of gun deer hunt"](#)

- **Titles:** "Self inflicted incidents"

Description: We can be our own worst enemies when it comes to accidents while hunting. These public service announcements warn viewers to be careful, for their own safety and that of other hunters.

Links: ["Self inflicted incidents" TV spot](#)

- **Title:** "Roundtable Discussion: Governor Scott Walker and Dr. James Kroll, Deer Trustee"

Description: On November 9, Gov. Scott Walker and James Kroll, Wisconsin's Deer Trustee, held a roundtable discussion at the North Bristol Sportsman's Club and talked about the issues of hunting in Wisconsin and what the future holds for deer hunters in the state. Secretary **Cathy Stepp**, Division of Land administrator **Kurt Thiede** and others from DNR joined the discussion.

Link: ["Roundtable Discussion: Governor Scott Walker and Dr. James Kroll, Deer](#)

[Trustee](#)

- **Title:** "News/Talk 1130 WISN interview with James Kroll"

Description: On November 14, radio talk show host Jay Weber of News/Talk 1130 in Milwaukee conducted an interview with James Kroll about the work he's doing on deer management for Wisconsin.

Link: ["News/Talk 1130 WISN interview with James Kroll"](#)

- **Title:** "Deer hunting season"

Description: Northeast Region wildlife supervisor **Jeff Pritzl**, joined CW 14 Focus host Robert Hornacek on October 23 to talk about several major issues surrounding the gun deer season. There are three segments of the show, totaling about 20 minutes. Click on the "Deer hunting season" link, under the lead story.

Link: ["Deerhunting season"](#)

- **Title:** "Effort to reduce haze pollution on federal properties won't impact Wisconsin"

Description: The United States District Court in the District of Columbia has mandated that states create plans to reduce haze-producing pollutants impacting more than 40 federal forests, parks and wilderness areas. Although Rainbow Lake in the Chequamegon-Nicolet Forest is a Class 1 wilderness area, it's one of two areas in the country not impacted by haze pollution. The Boundry Waters Canoe Area is the closest federal recreational area included under this mandate.

Link: ["Effort to reduce haze pollution on federal properties won't impact Wisconsin"](#)

- **Title:** "Little things, big problems"

Description: The National Park Service, in partnership with the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, has released a series of five-minute YouTube videos discussing the impact of invasive species on people and communities, and what the public can do to prevent their spread. Go here to learn more about the emerald ash borer, spotted knapweed, invasive plants in parks and aquatic invaders.

Link: ["Little things, big problems"](#)

- **Title:** "Cathy Stepp Q & A on Wisconsin Reporter"

Description: On October 31, DNR Secretary **Cathy Stepp** gave an interview to the ["Wisconsin Reporter."](#) "Wisconsin Reporter" subsequently posted this video on their YouTube page.

Link: ["Cathy Stepp Q & A on Wisconsin Reporter"](#)



Around the state...DNR employees shine

[Index](#) [Prev](#) [Next](#) [Top](#) [Print](#)

Central office success stories

- To **Paul Yeung**, Bureau of Air Management: "Thank you very much for your time and effort, and that of the other participating WDNR staff, in addressing FCPC's Class I concerns in what was a very complicated issue. I look forward to working with you in the future and to continuing the honest and supportive working relationship that has been established between the WDNR and FCPC."
Natalene Cummings, Air Program director, Forest County Potawatomi Community
- To the **Waste and Materials Management Program**: "I wanted to say how I

am continually impressed by the way DNR keeps moving ahead with recycling despite all the punches thrown from slim budgets and staff shortages. The Recycling News publication is really top notch and a great resource. Even though I don't dabble in recycling professionally anymore, it is still very interesting to read and stay updated with the bits of information contained in this publication. Occasionally, like during natural disasters, we have some cross-over of services between local health departments and DNR. It is really handy to have this publication so we can stay current and refer some of our contacts at local health and schools." *Jess Maloney, Wisconsin Department of Health Services*

- A letter was sent to **Ed Lynch, Bob Grefe, Andy Stewart** and **Phil Fauble** in the bureaus of Waste and Materials Management and Air Management, with a copy to EPA: "I wanted to thank you and others at the DNR for supporting our efforts. We will certainly keep you apprised as we work on this very important issue. Our next step will be to follow up with the USEPA staff in Washington, DC that we met with in April and then schedule a meeting with Region V staff.

"Again, thank you for the letter and continuing support from those in the DNR's very successful beneficial use program. Your program has been widely recognized at the Federal level as a success and Kathleen Standen even suggested to the staff in Michigan that they may want to use it as a model for their program." *Liz Stueck-Mullane, Manager-Land Quality, We Energies*

- To Bureau of Air Management's **Jeff Myers**: "On August 4, Jeff Myers shared information about the EPA National Air Toxics Assessment 2005 results for Wisconsin, Milwaukee County and for the Silver Spring Neighborhood. I represent The Westlawn Partnership for a Healthier Environment, an EPA CARE (Community Action for a Renewed Environment) community. We work as partners to address environmental health issues in the Westlawn community in Milwaukee. Hospital and ER admission rates for asthma are some of the highest the state. The information that Jeff shared with us provided the community with insight as to how we as a community can join together to improve health. We very much appreciate Jeff's work. He makes the science of "modeling" understandable. It is also great to work with people such as Jeff across state agencies. Again, thank you and the DNR for the work you do!" *Betty Koepsel, MSN, RN Project Coordinator, The Westlawn Partnership for a Healthier Environment, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee College of Nursing*

Northeast Region success stories

- A "Big 'Thank You' to everyone who was able to free up some time from your busy fall schedules to come help us **mark timber on the Marinette County Forest** this year. The Marinette County Forestry Department and the Wausaukee ranger station deeply appreciate the assistance. I hope everyone enjoyed themselves as we had fairly decent weather (other than a "gentle breeze" one day) and a variety of hardwood stands to work in. As it turned out we marked 6 different timber sales over 6 days for a total of about 650 acres on the Marinette County Forest this year. We may have a few small sessions with local folks to finish off one hardwood sale in Middle Inlet and there are a number of other marking jobs that could benefit from a group of interested markers this fall and winter. I would also like to thank Marinette County Forestry for providing all the

fixings for our two big lunch days. Again thanks for all of the help and we hope to see you again next fall!" *Sincerely, Joe Schwantes, forester, Wausaukee*

- To **Bruce Urben** (Air and Waste Program): "Thank you for participating on the Regulatory Issues panel for the Manufacturing First Expo and Conference. You gave valuable information and it is evident that the state is really working at how to make the process smoother for manufacturers." *Ann Franz*

- To **Greg Moeller** (Drinking Water and Groundwater): "I wanted to tell you that I thought you did a nice job at the meeting tonight. Your panel did a good job of covering all of the information that is important in understanding what is going on. I found it to be very informative. It is unfortunate that some people had to be negative and unappreciative of all you are doing to try to get to the bottom of the problem. So I just wanted to let you know that you should hang in there and I appreciate all of your hard work." *Thanks, Jodi Prien*

- Dear Secretary **Stepp**, I serve as Town Chair for the Town of Lyndon in Sheboygan County. On a few occasions I've had to consult with the DNR on some issues. My contact has been **Christine Lilek**. Chris has been of tremendous help to me. Our phone conversations have given me quick answers to my questions. Chris has also provided other research sources (disposal companies etc.) that have proved helpful. I have also worked with Christine and Annette Weissbach on our family's challenged site in the Village of Adell. I was treated courteously and my attorney Steve Castner and Tom Sweet, Moraine Environmental, were given a clear path as to how to proceed to satisfy the DNR requirements. Because of this, all work was done in a timely and cost effective manner. Compliments to your staff for the jobs well done. Working effectively and respectfully with people is why I choose to work in town government. Obviously, your staff adopts the same philosophy. *Best regards, Kris Hughe, Town Chair, Town of Lyndon, Sheboygan County*

- To warden **Dave Algrem** (Wautoma): "I want to thank you for all the work you put into the hunt. Claude was grinning from ear to ear when he showed the pheasant to my wife Theresa. To say the least he had a great time! I did too! The format you used for the hunt was right on. The introduction, background on the bird, practice firing the guns and pointers on safety, the hunt, and the conclusion are right on from an educational stand point. This kind of program is what is needed to get kids and adults hooked on hunting. You know as well as anyone today's kids do not have the same lifestyle as we had, video games, sports-weekend, TV, and family life take its toll. Thank you again for all you and the mentors did." *Keep up the good work, Charlie Cleereman*

- To wardens **Kyle Kosin** (Campbellsport) and **Alan Erickson** (Fond du Lac): Just a note to let you know I appreciate how you handled yourself today. My son Bo knew better than that and deserves a fine. I had a long talk with him about why there are rules and how if you get game from illegal methods it really takes away from the sport and is not fair to anyone or the game. He did tell me that you were very professional and even asked him about the land and our neighbors on how it was going. I wished I knew that they were going on that side as I would have stopped it, but sometimes (a) life lesson must be learned the hard way and hopefully then never repeated. Some if it was too many young guys together and

then the "Getting" becomes more important than the taught hunting ethics. Again, I know you guys don't get near enough praise for what you do, but wanted to let you know I like your style of teaching the right way as much as enforcing with younger hunters. Please share my thoughts with the other warden." *Respectfully,*
Scot Galligan

Northern Region success stories

- **Editor's note:** This is a thank you for work done by Remediation and Redevelopment's **Chris Saari, John Robinson** and **Phil Richard** to expedite a review for closing out a cleanup project at a contaminated property in Park Falls.

"Our Environmental Manager, Kristin Palecek expressed to me how much your assistance in obtaining final case closure for the MacGregor Litho property was valued. If final closure had been delayed, our financiers would not have allowed us to close on the property. The property is the site of the future Flambeau River BioFuels Inc. oxygen plant and gasifier building. Although there are still some other significant project hurdles to get over to move this project forward, delaying this property acquisition would have created a preventable obstacle. Thank you for your help. We appreciate it." *Bob Byrne, president, Flambeau River BioFuels, Inc.*

- "Just a note to thank you for the great service my husband had regarding a boat license we needed. My 90-year-old father was 'having a good day' and wanted to use the old boat. Dawn Bayer, customer service representative, helped Ron get the license squared away and we were able to use it over the weekend! It sometimes seems we've lost faith in government services, but she proved us wrong! Thank you again for the great service! God Bless!" *Patti and Ron Palmer*

- "Yesterday, I was very fortunate to work with **Mary Singsime**, DNR customer service representative, in Park Falls, WI, on my Vessel Registration Application. Mary is a model customer service rep for all other DNR employees to emulate. Mary listened patiently to my problem, worked out a proposed solution, and then Mary acted immediately to solve my problem. Mary is top 10% performer, I am sure, because of her customer-sensitive attitude, calm demeanor and superior knowledge of DNR rules & procedures. DNR should celebrate having Mary Singsime on-board." *Tim Keane*

- Compliment for **Jane Malischke**, financial assistant specialist: "As always, it was productive meeting with you. We obviously have some issues to solve, hopefully with the help of the township. The association is intent on maintaining Spider as a clean, healthy, and safe lake for access to the public and the residents. I always leave your office knowing more than before I came, not always true elsewhere. Thank you." *John Kuntz*

- "I am sending this email to yourself and copying others up the ladder to commend and recognize one of your staff. The subject employee is conservation warden **Jill Schartner**. My 10-year-old daughter Olivia and I just returned from our field training day as part of the Learn To Hunt Bear program (August). Simply put, it was 'Awesome,' and an experience that my daughter and I greatly appreciate and will always remember. Jill was a great instructor in leading this training day. She was very professional, civil and knew when to play the humorous side at times to keep some tense topics light, yet meaningful. Her organization skills also showed, having to coordinate all the mentors, the hunters,

wildlife biologist and local businesses including a taxidermy shop, shooting range, people to provide bait, etc. She was very caring in recognizing all those others that help her in pulling this off as well as very courteous in making sure that she introduced herself to every person at the event. It was all pulled together and bundled and delivered in one package very seamlessly...I can't describe how appreciative we are of Jill and her team's efforts for making this day such a success and the state for having these programs in place. THANK YOU!" *Craig Wendt*

- "By all accounts, the six counties audited this year (Barron, Burnett, Iron, Rusk, Sawyer and Washburn) were all well prepared and had field stops that validated the good work that is being done on those forests. I was particularly pleased we did so well given we were being audited under the revised SFI and FSC standards for the first time. Many thanks to County & DNR staff in those counties for the good work. It will lessen our certification workload for the upcoming year. Thought I'd bump this along and put in a couple good words for **Ryan Magana**, regional ecologist; **Kevin Morgan**, wildlife biologist; and **Nancy Christel**, wildlife biologist. They all contributed significantly to the success we had on our recent County Forest Certification audit (August). Their participation added markedly to the cross-program cooperation exhibited during the audit and sent a very positive message to the auditors. Many thanks." *Jeff Barkley, DNR county forest specialist*

- Compliment for **William Roberts**, water supply specialist: "I appreciate your help. You did an excellent job of giving me all the information that I need. There are not many people who have the knack for finding information so efficiently and doing it in a very professional way. I enjoyed our conversation. Thank you very much." *Sharon*

- Compliment for **Judy Meierotto, Darlene Hausdorf, Kris Foley and Carrie Bean** (along with **Renee Kerska, Allen Blizel, Christopher Kratcha**): "I wanted to express my sincere appreciation for your assistance yesterday staffing the front counters to allow Customer Service staff the ability to attend our Customer Service Statewide meeting. It is important to our staff to be able to get the training they need and the face to face communication with other Customer Service staff members. Thank You Very Much!!!" *Barry Gilbeck, DNR customer service and licensing supervisor*

- Compliment for conservation warden **Dave Oginski**: "I really appreciated, as did Judy, the support you provided through-out the day as we helped walk-in customers. We know that you're very busy w/LE issues yet you took the time to work with us which resulted in great customer service. A true team effort...THANK YOU!!" *John Gozdziwski, Northern Region director*

South Central Region success story

- Warden **Dave Horzewski's** supervisor **Dave Holmes** received a [thank you note](#) from a man that Horzewski helped change a tire earlier this month. Holmes added his own compliment: "Dave I received a nice thank you card from Henry Laufenberg the gentleman that you helped change a tire after the shoot earlier in November. You certainly went above and beyond in this instance. I also spoke to Henry on the phone. Henry was very happy with his interaction with you and I

wanted to convey his thanks to you and share the card and letter that he sent to me.”

Southeast Region success story

“I want to express my sincere appreciation for the work done by **Jim Delwiche** in reviewing public health issues regarding the Waste Management – Brookfield Landfill as it relates to a proposed residential development in the immediate area. Over a period of five years, Jim worked well with City of Brookfield staff, elected officials and members of our Landfill Moratorium Committee on these important matters. His expertise and professionalism were most helpful.” *Steven V. Ponto, Mayor, City of Brookfield*



America’s Great Outdoors projects include two proposed for Wisconsin

By: U.S. Department of Interior news release

[Index](#) [Prev](#) [Top](#) [Print](#)

Two projects in every state will promote outdoor recreation, conservation.

Just days before the release of a 50-state [“The Great Outdoors Report”](#) outlining some of the country’s most promising ways to reconnect Americans to the natural world, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar recently highlighted two Wisconsin projects.

Establishing the proposed Lake Michigan Trail as a National Water Trail and expanding the Ice Age Trail, both properties at least partially in Wisconsin, are among 100 projects nationwide that will be highlighted in the report as part of President Obama’s America’s Great Outdoors (AGO) [initiative](#) to establish a 21st century conservation and recreation agenda and reconnect Americans to the outdoors.

The report represents what states believe are among the best investments in the nation to support a healthy, active population, conserve wildlife and working lands, and create travel, tourism and outdoor-recreation jobs across the country.

Salazar and other senior Interior officials met with the 50 governors, including Gov. Scott Walker, and stakeholders to solicit ideas on how to best implement AGO in their states. These projects were identified for their potential to conserve important lands and build recreation opportunities and economic growth for the surrounding communities, as well as private landowners, local- and tribal-elected officials, community organizations and outdoor-recreation and conservation stakeholders.

“Under the America’s Great Outdoors initiative, we are listening to the people of Wisconsin and communities across America and working with them on locally-based projects that will conserve the beauty and health of our land and water and open up more opportunities for people to enjoy them,” Salazar said. “My staff and I have been asking each governor for the most promising projects to support in their states, and we will do all we can to help move them forward.”

Salazar highlighted the two Wisconsin projects in the report:

- **Lake Michigan Trail:** DNR is working with the National Park Service, other federal agencies, and the Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission to develop a new, 450-mile water trail along the Lake Michigan shoreline. This trail will become the state’s second longest and will increase public access to the trail and along the shoreline.

A campaign, to start in 2012, will engage local communities and private affiliates to

help acquire land for and build the new trail. The four states bordering Lake Michigan are also working to expand on the National Recreation Trail designatio that exists on a portion of the lake. The partnership would support "AGO priorities by enhancing recreational access and opportunities and engaging citizens in conservation and the great outdoors.

- **Ice Age Trail:** The variety of recreational options within a one-hour drive of Madison make the Baraboo Hills/Devil's Lake area a hub for outdoor activity that serves more than 1.7 million visitors a year. The area combines unique geologic features, diverse fauna, prehistoric effigy mounds, historic Civilian Conservation Corps buildings, and spectacular scenery.

The Baraboo Hills, long recognized as ecologically unique and valuable, host many preserves, state natural areas, and two state parks. The National Park Service designated the southern range of the Baraboo Hills as a National Natural Landmark in 1980. Various organizations, including the University of Wisconsin, Baraboo Range Preservation Association, and **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources** have formed a strong conservation partnership and protected thousands of acres through acquisitions and easements.

One such partnership is the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, a collaboration among the National Park Service, state of Wisconsin, and Ice Age Trail Alliance working together on trail management and development.

One of only 11 national scenic trails in the United States, the Ice Age Trail stretches for 1,200 miles across Wisconsin. State and local partners are working to connect trail segments through strategic conservation easements. This project supports several AGO goals, including large landscape conservation, preservation of natural and culturally significant areas, and support for creative public-private partnerships.

The report includes potential actions by the Department of Interior and its bureaus to support the projects identified. In Wisconsin, for example, the agency could provide technical and financial assistance for site development, signage, and land and easement acquisition needed for public access to the Lake Michigan Water Trail. The agency also could expand the Ice Age Trail through strategic conservation easements.

The key Department of the Interior bureaus, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will direct available resources and personnel to make these projects a reality.

"The America's Great Outdoors initiative turns the conventional wisdom about the federal government's role in conservation on its head," Salazar said. "Rather than dictate policies or conservation strategies from Washington, it supports grassroots, locally driven initiatives."

Check out the map of the ["Great Outdoors Highlighted Projects"](#) already announced.



Produced by: Department of Natural Resources, Office of Communication

Legal notices and disclaimers: [Website Legal Information](#)

For More information: Contact [Diane Brinson](#) - Digest Editor, Phone: (608) 266-5215

Document Date: Wednesday, December 14, 2011 at 9:11:52 AM