

WALCE-ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT YEAR 2007

Andy Johnson, Chairman

The purpose of the Administration Committee is to take action on proposed legislation, administrative rules or other policies that may impact the administration and implementation of county conservation programs through Land and Water Resource Management Plans.

The Administrative Committee has been active in the following topics:

- 1) **County Staffing Survey:** The Committee completed the 2007 survey of all counties to determine current staffing levels for local conservation initiatives. The intent of this WALCE survey is to communicate the changing capacity of county staff to deliver local and state programming. The report's findings will provide context to program delivery needs as nutrient management planning grows as a state and county priority. The need for more local staff will be discussed in the preparations for the next state budget by associations, conservation organizations, and state agencies. Future tracking of staffing levels will shift to agencies as part of the annual report.
- 2) **State Budget:** The committee continues to work with the Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) and Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association (WLWCA) to advocate for stable and adequate funding sources to counties for local and state conservation programming. A "Plan of Action for 2008" has been developed by WALCE and WLWCA to identify common lobbying interests and activities.
- 3) **NR 151, 153 and ATCP 50 Code Revisions:** WALCE continues to participate in advisory committees to revise these administrative codes. These discussions will impact technical definitions, cost-share distribution, and LWRM Planning efforts. These codes are the cornerstones of the nonpoint pollution program.
- 4) **Working Lands Initiative (WLI):** Although the 2008-09 state budget did not provide funding support for the WLI, the initiative will likely continue to be a priority effort. DATCP staff is developing strategies for implementation of WLI recommendations, including a revision of the Farmland Preservation Program (FPP). Details must be developed for funding, updating FPP plans, and providing assistance to local communities for planning and zoning.
- 5) **LWCB Non-point Program Evaluation:** WALCE requested that the LWCB evaluate the nonpoint program (initiated in 2002). The intent of the evaluation was to:
 - Assess statewide implementation of agricultural state performance standards and prohibitions.
 - Assess the impact of implementation of the performance standards and prohibitions to state water quality objectives.
 - Develop recommendations to improve the state and local delivery system.

The request for the evaluation was dropped in 2007.

- 6) **DATCP allocation plan for the SEG funds:** Funding for nutrient management planning was greatly enhanced with the recent state budget allocations. Many agriculture groups, conservation groups and professional associations were instrumental in the budget success. WALCE will continue to discuss local annual allocations, staffing needs, tracking needs, and “successful” nutrient management plan implementation.
- 7) **Appointments to the State Information and Education Committee for Performance Standards:** Four WALCE representatives have been appointed to this committee which is responsible for the development of educational materials and training opportunities to landowners, local staffs, and agricultural organizations that support the implementation of the agricultural performance standards and prohibitions.
- 8) **2008 Work Plan Proposal:**
 - a. Land and Water Conservation Board – Comment on role
 - b. 2010-11 State Budget: Staffing/Program Funding
 - c. Energy Initiatives (sustainability, carbon crediting, biofuels, climate change)
 - d. “The Wisconsin Way”
 - e. Invasive Species
 - f. Rule Revisions/Water Quality Standards (NR 151/153 and ATCP 50)
 - g. Working Lands Initiative
 - h. CREP
 - i. Nutrient Management Implementation: Tracking, Monitoring, and Success