

# 2014 WATER SUCCESS STORY

## Bureau of Water Quality



### Employee Training Program Fosters Collaboration

By Julia Riley, Wisconsin DNR

#### Training Geared for New Employees

A 2014 training program for new employees in the Bureaus of Water Quality, Watershed Management and the Office of the Great Lakes brought staff together to foster collaboration and team-building. Many proposed projects submitted to the DNR for approval require the coordination of input from staff in various programs to ensure state laws are met. Employees attending the 2014 Cross-Program Training met new staff in other water regulatory programs and learned how they collect data, review projects, evaluate proposed management practices and decide when coordination with other programs is needed. The Bureau of Water Quality hosted two trainings.



*DNR staff learn about stream restoration, fish shocking techniques and fish identification at Spring Coulee Creek. Photo by Julia Riley.*

#### Water Resources Program Overview

The Water Resources program held their cross-program training in La Crosse on May 13-14, 2014. Classroom overviews of water quality data collection, [water conditions and assessment](#), [Total Maximum Daily Load \(TMDL\) development for impaired waters](#), [surface water grants](#), [watershed restoration projects](#), [aquatic invasive species control](#), [aquatic plant management](#), Mississippi River monitoring, [nutrient reduction initiatives](#), and cross-program issues were presented.

Staff toured various sites to learn more about the wide range of activities Water Resources staff perform. Biologist Kurt Rasmussen discussed fish and wildlife studies in the La Crosse River Marsh area.

Biologists Mark Hazuga and Kurt Rasmussen, and Water Evaluation Section Chief, Brian Weigel, demonstrated the use of fish shocking equipment in Spring Coulee Creek and the restoration efforts in [Coon Valley](#) – the first Watershed restoration project in the United States.

Staff toured the [Mississippi River Lock and Dam #8](#) near Genoa, WI, to understand the economic importance of maintaining transportation on the river and long-term dredging management issues. The dam was constructed and is operated by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Biologist Shawn Giblin demonstrated water quality sampling techniques. Biologist Andy Bartels and Fisheries Technicians Kraig Hoff and John Kalas demonstrated boom shocker electrofishing and fish identification in the La Crosse River.

# Employee Training (continued)

## Wastewater Program Overview

The Wastewater Program held its cross-program training in Green Bay on June 17-18, 2014. Presenters provided classroom-style overviews of the [wastewater permit program](#), pollutants in wastewater and the reason for controlling the amount of [phosphorus](#) in wastewater discharges, wastewater treatment processes, landspreading, biosolids digestion, pretreatment of wastewater, emerging issues in wastewater treatment, and cross-program issues.

Wastewater Engineer, Mark Corbett, coordinated staff tours of the Appleton/Outagamie County biosolids composting site, the Heart of the Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant, and Integrys Fox Energy to learn more about different approaches to recycling and reuse of biosolids and treated wastewater effluent.

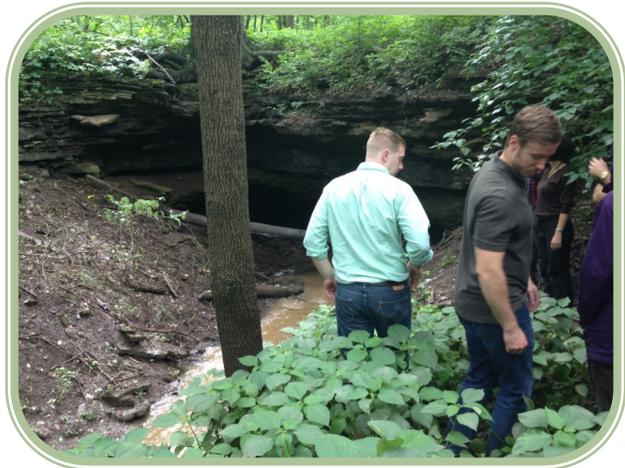
Wastewater Engineer, Gary Kincaid, coordinated a tour of the Fox River Remediation Site, a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment facility for handling/treating river sediments contaminated with PCBs. Participants viewed where the dredged sediment enters the facility, the wastewater treatment process



*Training participants tour the Fox River Remediation Site that is treating river sediments contaminated with Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). DNR photo.*

for the wastewater (liquids), and the pressing, storage, and removal of the sludge (solids).

Staff also toured the Agropur Cheese factory and visited an example of the Karst geology of the region. Karst geology is an area of limestone terrain characterized by sinks, ravines and underground streams. This type of geology is found in the Niagara Escarpment, a prominent rock ridge stretching nearly 1,000 miles in an arc across the Great Lakes region. Manure, septage and other wastes applied to land containing karst geology can flow through the porous spaces in the bedrock and contaminate groundwater with bacteria and other pollutants.



*Training participants watch a small intermittent stream disappear in a cave to flow underground in this example of karst geology. Photo by Julia Riley.*

## Attendees Validate Training Benefits

Training attendees noted it was very beneficial to meet employees from service centers across the state and build relationships with staff in other program areas. Program evaluation survey responses also validated that the training helped new staff understand the complexities of watershed management/protection projects and the benefits of collaboration to ensure consistent approaches. Approximately 40 new staff participated in the training program.

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