

January 4, 2011

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Edited by Paul Holtan
Wisconsin DNR
PO Box 7921
Madison WI 53707-7921
(608) 267-7517
fax: (608) 264-6293
e-mail: holtap@dnr.state.wi.us
World Wide Web:
<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us>

Winter bald eagle watching events to held around the state

Eagle watching kicks off Jan. 14-15 in Prairie du Sac

MADISON – Sauk City and Prairie du Sac on the Wisconsin River will hold the 24th annual Bald Eagle Watching Days on Jan. 14-15, 2011, in partnership with event sponsor, the Alliant Energy Foundation. Cassville will hold its 17th annual Bald Eagle Days on Jan. 30-31 and Prairie du Chien will hold Bald Eagle Appreciation Day on Feb. 26.

Each winter, hundreds of bald eagles congregate along areas of the Wisconsin and Mississippi rivers where they feed on fish in the open water below dams. Wildlife officials say this is the largest concentration of wintering bald eagles in the lower 48 states, offering some of the best eagle viewing in the nation.

Volunteer spotters from the Ferry Bluff Eagle Council counted 115 eagles on Dec. 5, 2010.

Wisconsin currently has approximately 1,145 territorial pairs of eagles, according to surveys conducted by DNR wildlife biologists.

In 1971 Wisconsin banned the use of DDT after scientists determined eagle numbers were dropping as the birds, impacted by DDT, failed to reproduce because their eggshells were weak. The bald eagle was listed as both a state and federally endangered species.

A major milestone was reached in August 2007 when the bald eagles were removed from the Federal Endangered Species Act's endangered and threatened species list. Wisconsin's large and successful population played a significant role in that federal delisting.

The Endangered Resources tax check-off option found on Wisconsin state tax returns gives taxpayers the option of donating a portion of any tax refund toward the protection and management of endangered resources in Wisconsin.

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Wisconsin DNR News & Outdoor Report is issued each Tuesday to media outlets, conservation and environmental organizations, and county, state and federal agencies. It is not available to the general public by subscription. This information is available on the Wisconsin DNR World Wide Web site listed above. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in employment, programs, services and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. This document is available in alternative format upon request.

Many of the best eagle viewing destinations are featured in the Great Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trail guides available from the Department of Natural Resources.

Bald Eagle Watching Days at Sauk City-Prairie du Sac

The 24th Bald Eagle Watching Days will be held Friday evening and Saturday, Jan. 14 and 15. Events begin at 7 p.m. Friday with a live birds of prey show featuring hawks, eagles, owls and falcons put on by The Raptor Center from the University of Minnesota. Information is also available by calling 1-800-683-2453.

The raptor show will be repeated at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturday.

Also on Saturday, Wollersheim Winery, the event's Conservation Partner, will offer Eagle White Wine tasting throughout the day. And, at 12:30 p.m., Wildlife humorist David Stokes will do a show titled "Fun Animal Adaptations." DNR staff will run kids activities and give talks on eagles in Wisconsin and eagle conservation efforts. There will be eagle tours throughout the day led by Ferry Bluff Eagle Council members and DNR staff. A complete schedule of activities can be found on the Ferry Bluff Eagle Council Web site [exit DNR].

Open water below the dam on the Wisconsin River at Sauk City and Prairie du Sac is a customary winter gathering place for bald eagles. The Ferry Bluff Eagle Council maintains an overlook for viewing eagles, preserves habitat for eagles, conducts eagle programs, educates people on how to watch eagles yet maintain the bird's safety, creates educational material for schools and works with landowners to manage habitat. Council members also monitor night time eagle roosts during the winter.

Cassville Bald Eagle Days

The 17th Annual Bald Eagle Days Celebration will be held Jan. 30 and 31 in Cassville on the Mississippi River in Grant County. Every year hundreds of eagles spend the winter in the Cassville area where the birds can be seen along the village's waterfront.

Each day, from 8 a.m. to noon, knowledgeable volunteers from the Cassville area will assist birders in locating eagles at the Wildlife Observation Deck at Cassville's Riverside Park. Education programs will be held Saturday, January 31 beginning at 9 a.m. at the Cassville High School, 715 E Amelia St.

More information is available at Cassville's Bald Eagle Days [exit DNR].

Prairie du Chien Bald Eagle Appreciation Day Saturday, Feb 26

The City of Prairie du Chien will hold its annual Bald Eagle Appreciation Day from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 26, 2011. The event includes live bald eagle programs, various birding and nature exhibits and displays, birding experts on hand, outdoor viewing of bald eagles through spotting scopes, life-size bald eagle nest, activities for children.

The main event location is the Prairie du Chien Regional Tourism Center/AmericInn Lodge & Suites, 211 South Main. More information is available on the Prairie du Chien chamber of commerce website [<http://www.prairieduchien.org/visitors/eagles.htm>].

FOR MORE INFORMATION: on bald eagles in Wisconsin contact Rich Staffen - (608) 266-4340; on Sauk-Prairie Eagle Watching Days - 1-800-683-2453; on Cassville Bald Eagle Days - (608) 725-5855; on Prairie du Chien Bald Eagle Appreciation Day – Prairie du Chien Area Chamber of Commerce 800-732-1673

Comments sought on draft study of health effects of silica in outdoor air

MADISON -- The public has an opportunity to review and comment on a draft study by state air quality officials on the possible health effects of exposure to silica in the outdoor air.

Silica is a compound made up of silicon and oxygen atoms and can be both naturally occurring and man-made. It is present in the environment in both crystalline and amorphous forms; only the crystalline form is of concern as an air pollutant. Ambient sources of silica include mining and rock crushing, construction, foundries, glass manufacturing, abrasive blasting, or other uses of sand and quartz.

“While health officials generally do not consider ambient exposures to silica, a known carcinogen, to pose a health risk to the general public, data from some states shows emissions from some industrial facilities could result in levels of concern for people living near the sources,” said Jeff Meyers, an environmental toxicologist with the Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Air Management.

The study focuses on exposure to silica in the outdoor air. DNR has the responsibility and authority only to manage outdoor, or ambient, air quality and not indoor air quality.

The draft study is available for review on the air management pages of the DNR website. [<http://dnr.wi.gov/air/pdf/DraftForPublicComment-SilicaStudyStatusReport.pdf>].

After reviewing the study, individuals can go to an online questionnaire [<http://doa.wi.gov/dnrsurveys/TakeSurvey.aspx?PageNumber=1&SurveyID=558>] to submit comments on the draft. Supporting data, studies or other relevant information can be submitted via e-mail or post to: Jeff Myers, Wisconsin DNR – AM/7, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921 or send them by e-mail to [jeff.myers@wisconsin.gov].

Submissions will be accepted until 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 18.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: John Melby, 608-264-8884

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OUTDOORS CALENDAR

*Indicates date remains the same each year, except some permit deadlines may be extended one day if they fall on a Sunday or Federal Holiday.

January 9

- Late archery deer season closes.
- CWD management zone holiday firearm deer hunt closes.

January 25

- Winter crow season opens, through March 20.

January 31

- Squirrel season closes.*
- Ruffed grouse seasons closes in zone A (northern zone).*

February 12

- Lake Winnebago Sturgeon Spearing Season opens. Season runs for 16 days (Feb. 27) or until the harvest level is reached. Season hours are 6:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. daily. The season will close after one day if one of the harvest caps is reached. Sturgeon must be registered by 1:30 p.m. the day they are harvested. There are separate, annual spearing seasons for Lake Winnebago and for the system's upriver lakes of Butte des Mort, Winneconne and Poygan. Spearers who wanted to participate in the Upriver Lakes season had to submit an application by Aug. 1. Licenses for the upcoming season must have been purchased by Oct. 31 of the previous year.

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February 15

- Coyote trapping season closes.*
- Raccoon trapping and hunting seasons closes.*
- Red and gray fox gun and trapping seasons close.*

February 20

- Ice fishing shelters must be removed from Wisconsin-Iowa boundary waters.*

February 27

- Lake Winnebago Sturgeon Spearing Season closes unless season closes early due to harvest caps being reached.

February 28

- Cottontail rabbit season closes in northern and southern zones.*
- Mink trapping season closes in the northern, southern and Mississippi zones.

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DNR Public Hearings and Meetings

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodations, including the provision of informational material in an alternative format, will be provided for qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. Please call the contact person listed for the meeting or hearing with specific information on your request at least 10 days before the date of the scheduled hearing.

Hearings

January 18 - Pursuant to §§ 285.11(5) and (6) and 285.23(2), Wis. Stats., and ch. NR 401, Wis. Adm. Code, the Department of Natural Resources will hold a public hearing at 11 a.m. in Room 713 of the State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), 101 South Webster St., **Madison**. on draft technical support document which contains three area designation options for the primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard for nitrogen dioxide. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency strengthened the primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) on January 22, 2010 (75 FR 6474). A new 1-hour NO₂ standard was set at a level of 100 parts per billion (ppb). Section 107(d)(1)(A) of the Clean Air Act (CAA) requires states to provide area attainment / nonattainment designation recommendations based on the 2010 NO₂ NAAQS. In accordance with s. NR 285.23, Wis. Stats., "Identification of nonattainment areas," the DNR has developed a draft technical support document based on the 2010 NO₂ NAAQS. The following three NO₂ area designation options have been developed for public comment and input prior to submitting the document for the Governor's consideration: Option # 1: Unclassifiable for all Wisconsin counties. Option # 2: Unclassifiable for the Madison-Baraboo Combined Statistical Area (CSA) (Columbia, Dane, Iowa and Sauk Counties), the Milwaukee-Racine-Waukesha CSA (Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Washington and Waukesha Counties), the Chicago-Naperville-Michigan City CSA (Kenosha County), the Minneapolis-St. Paul-St. Cloud CSA (Pierce and St. Croix Counties) and attainment for the remaining Wisconsin counties. Option # 3: Attainment for all Wisconsin counties. The U.S. EPA is requiring that additional ambient air quality monitoring be installed in metropolitan areas by January 1, 2013, including Madison and Milwaukee. Counties classified as unclassifiable would be reclassified to attainment or nonattainment once three years of complete ambient air monitoring data is available to support the reclassification. The purpose of this public hearing is to solicit comments on the draft technical support document, specifically the three area designation options. All public comments received will be addressed and a final version of the document will be used to support the governor's designation recommendations to the U.S. EPA for the 2010 NO₂ NAAQS. A copy of the draft technical support document is available on the air management pages of the DNR website [<http://dnr.wi.gov/air>]. For more information or a copy of the draft documents contact Joseph Hoch Bureau of Air Management (608) 264-8861. Written comments on the draft technical support document may be submitted to Joseph Hoch, DNR Bureau of Air Management, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707 no later than January 28, 2011. Comments may be submitted electronically to joseph.hoch@wisconsin.gov. Written comments will have the same weight and effect as oral statements presented at the hearing.

January 19 - Pursuant to § 283.49, Wis. Stats., a public hearing on the proposed issuance of Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) Permit No. WI0064696-01 for New Chester Dairy, LLC, will be held at 1 p.m., Community Center, 639 Mason Street, **Grand Marsh**. Discharge is to Campbell and Risk Creek of the Lower Wisconsin River Basin in Adams County. New Chester Dairy, located at SE 1/4, Section 8, T16N, R7E, Town of New Chester, Adams County, is a proposed new dairy facility owned and operated by Milk Source Holdings, Inc. The proposed dairy would house 4,300 milking and dry cows and 250 steers for a total of 6,270 animal units. All farm buildings would be located just west of 5th Avenue over a total site disturbance area of 117 acres of existing cropland. Of the 117 acres, approximately 39 acres at the southeast corner of the site will be used as a one-time construction-fill borrow source, after which the site will be reclaimed. All animals will be housed under roof. Construction of the proposed facility is scheduled to begin in March/April 2011. New Chester Dairy anticipates populating the facility with livestock by August/September 2011. The applicant owns and operates three other permitted concentrated animal feeding operations in Wisconsin: Tidy View Dairy (Outagamie County), Omro Dairy (Winnebago County), and Rosendale Dairy (Fond du Lac County). An environmental analysis associated with the Wisconsin Pollution Discharge

Elimination System (WPDES) permitting and approval actions for the proposed New Chester Dairy is available for public comment. More information, including a copy of the proposed permit, is available for downloading at the WPDES Public Notices web page [<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/ww/drafts/pubnot.htm>]; or contact Terence Kafka, DNR, 5301 Rib Mountain Drive, Wausau, WI 54401, (715) 355-1363, Terence.Kafka@Wisconsin.gov

January 20 - The Division of Hearings and Appeals will initiate a telephone status conference at 10 a.m., in the matter of the petition for review of construction permit No. 02-RV-032-R2 and operation permit no. 405031990-P20 issued to Wisconsin Public Service Corporation for the Pulliam Facility. For information contact the Division of Hearings and Appeals at (608) 266-7709.

January 21 - Pursuant to §§ 227.16 and 227.17, Wis. Stats., the Department of Natural Resources, will hold a public hearing on proposed revisions to chs. NR 400, 405, and 407, Wis. Adm. Code, in permanent rule Order AM-17-10, relating to major source permit thresholds for sources of greenhouse gas emissions at 10 a.m. in Room G09 of the State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), 101 South Webster St., **Madison**. The proposed revisions relate to issues for State Implementation Plan approvability, and the State Implementation Plan developed under S 285.11(6), Wis. Stats., will be revised. Pursuant to § 227.24 (4), Wis. Stats., the department will, on the same date and at the same time and location, hold a public hearing on identical revisions in emergency rule Order AM-48-10(E), adopted by the Natural Resources Board on Dec. 8, 2010 and which was published and became effective on Dec. 15, 2010. On April 1, 2010, US EPA promulgated the first standard for regulating motor vehicle gases contributing to climate change, i.e., greenhouse gases or GHG. Because of the way the Clean Air Act (CAA) is structured, once GHG emissions from motor vehicles are subject to regulation, stationary sources become regulated for these gases. Without further action by EPA, this standard has the unintended affect of subjecting literally tens of thousands of sources across the country to some of the most complex air permit and emission control regulations. In order to mitigate this unintended effect, EPA promulgated on June 3, 2010 (75 FR 31514), an additional "tailoring" rule that limits the number of sources subject to the permit and emission control regulations. Under current state statutes and administrative code, Wisconsin sources will become subject to permit and emission control requirements on Jan. 2, 2010. However, Wisconsin sources will not benefit from the tailoring rule limiting applicability under air permit and emission control regulations until revisions can be made to Wisconsin administrative code. This order proposes to revise the administrative code to make it consistent with the new federal rule. Specifically, this proposal will define the greenhouse gases subject to regulation, establish greenhouse gas emission thresholds, that if exceeded, will trigger permitting and emission control requirements, and establish global warming potential factors which are used to calculate individual greenhouse gas emissions on an equivalent and comparable basis. The emergency order, proposed rule and supporting documents, including the fiscal estimate, may be viewed and downloaded from the Administrative Rules System Web site which can be accessed through the link provided on the Proposed Air Pollution Control Rules Calendar [<http://dnr.wi.gov/air/rules/calendar.htm>]. More information or a copy of the proposed rule and supporting documents, including the fiscal estimate, may be obtained by contacting Robert Eckdale, DNR Bureau of Air Management (AM/7), PO Box 7921, Madison, WI, 53707, or by calling 608-266-2856.

Meetings

January 5 - A subgroup of members from the Glass Workgroup will meet with DNR staff at 1 p.m., in room 513, of the State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), 101 S. Webster St., **Madison**. The meeting topic will be DNR regulation of glass recycling. For more information contact: Dan Fields at 608-266-5334.

January 7 - The DNR deer committee will meet at 1 p.m. in room 608 of the State Natural Resources Building (GEF2), 101 S. Webster St., Madison. The committee will be discussing various agenda topics including CWD updates, deer research updates, preliminary Deer Hunter Wildlife Survey results, March deer meeting planning, and winter severity monitoring. For more information, please contact Jason Fleener at (608) 261-7589.

January 11 - An open-house public informational meeting on a plan to improve water quality in Lake St. Croix, the final 25 miles of the nationally designated, wild and scenic St. Croix River, will begin at 6 p.m., at Hudson City Hall 505 3rd St., **Hudson**. The meeting is jointly hosted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. A draft TMDL report will be presented and explained beginning at 6:30 p.m. This stands for "total maximum daily load," a scientific determination of how much of any given pollutant a water body can absorb while still meeting water quality standards for aquatic life and human recreation. Because Lake St. Croix can no longer meet these standards, it was placed on the federal list of impaired waters in 2008, requiring the states to take action. The primary problem is excessive levels of phosphorus and other nutrients that enter the river as runoff from agricultural fields and barnyards and from urban stormwater and wastewater discharges. Phosphorus fuels blue-green algae blooms which can be toxic to animals and humans, causing respiratory ailments, watery eyes and rashes. Excessive phosphorus and algae blooms can lower dissolved oxygen levels in the river, harm aquatic life and cause fish kills. For information contact Bob Masnado at 608-267-7662.

January 14 - The Governor's Council on Invasive Species will meet at 12:30 p.m. in Room G09 of the State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), 101 South Webster St., **Madison**. The Council's agenda includes new staff updates, committee reports, new website and outreach plans, update from the Joint MN/WI conference, new BMPs, updates on invasive critters and NR 40, US Corp of Engineers Feasibility Study, Great Lakes early Detection Network, Nature Conservancy NY State Invasives Strategic Plan, Council next steps and action plan. For more information contact Diane Greisinger at 608-264-8529



Department of Natural Resources – CE/6
PO Box 7921 Madison WI 53707-7921

