

Wisconsin Watersheds: Planning for Tomorrow



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This brochure is available in PDF format at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/watersheds/>



Wisconsin's Watershed Planning Network

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) works with many partners. Planning commissions, county conservationists, municipalities, lake and river groups, and individual citizens are critical stewards of our water.

WDNR is reframing its watershed planning to reflect the interactive nature of watershed work to move us toward a truly shared vision for *Wisconsin's Waters*. In creating the *Wisconsin Watershed Planning Network*, we hope to promote your watershed work and encourage collaboration on research, planning, and projects. The *Network* provides electronic access to interconnected databases for watershed planning information and activities.



Whether you are developing watershed plans, smart growth plans, or other resource strategies, the *Network* is a centralized place to share and research data and planning efforts.

Log on today at <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/watersheds/network/> to learn more about:

- monitoring stations and results
- wetlands and restoration work
- water classifications and condition
- lakes, rivers, and runoff management grants
- projects and actions in your watershed ...
.... and much more

For more information on WDNR's *Wisconsin Watershed Planning Network*:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/watersheds/planning/>

Resource Vision and Goals

Watershed plans contain a long-term vision and goals for the resource over a five to ten year period, although some may plan for 20 to 50 years. Plans describe goals for water quality, riparian areas, aquatic plant management, fisheries, and recreation. The current and potential use of the resource is considered in setting long-term goals for protection, management, and restoration.

Ecological Landscape classifications can be used in assessing the possible condition of the resource and setting realistic restoration goals and activities for the watershed. The classifications have unique combinations of physical and biological characteristics that make up the ecosystem, such as climate, geology, soils, water, or vegetation. Understanding the ecological potential of your watershed and your individual waters can help you identify sustainable, *attainable* watershed goals.

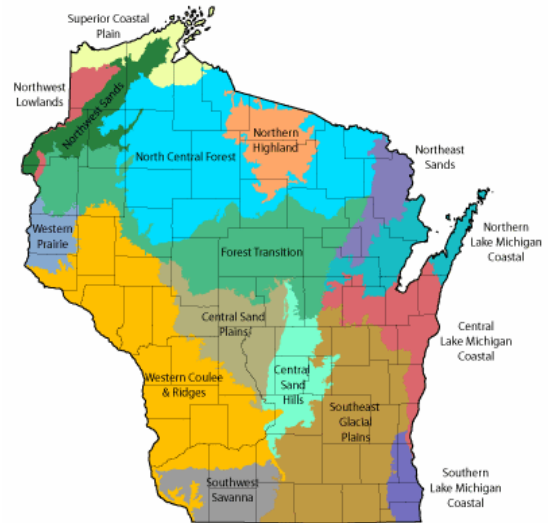
For more information on resource vision and goals, ecological landscapes, and WI's Ecological Priorities Tool:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/landscapes/>

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/watersheds/planning/vision.htm>

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/wwap/explore/tool.asp>

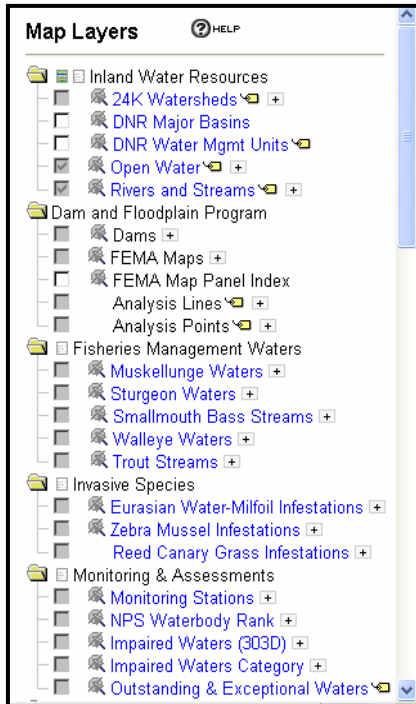
Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin



Inventory and Assessment

Developing an inventory and assessment involves compiling existing information and collecting new data on aquatic and terrestrial resources. Your inventory can be used to establish baseline conditions, address particular environmental concerns, and evaluate the potential of the resource.

A resource inventory usually includes: A description of physical characteristics; current and historical water quality; analysis of current and historical uses; current and attainable potential uses; types of shoreland vegetation; fish communities, species, and management activities; wildlife populations; endangered or threatened species; aquatic invasive species concerns; and cultural, social, and ecological pressures.



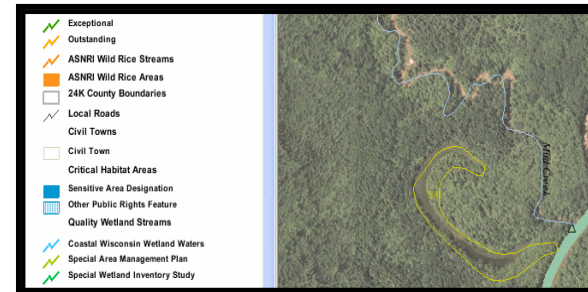
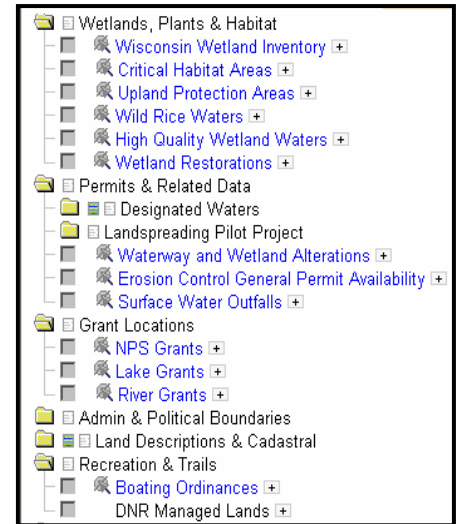
The WDNR's Surface Water Data Viewer (SWDV) is an interactive webmapping tool. The SWDV displays data from the State's monitoring and assessment databases that can be used for watershed planning at local, regional, or State levels.

The Map Layers shown on pages 4-5 are examples of the GIS-linked data now available for use. The interactivity of the SWDV allows you to investigate datasets to see details behind each spatial feature.

A watershed's aquatic systems can be analyzed within the context of land use, soils and the terrestrial resources in which they interact - forests, prairies, wetlands, etc. Effective plans outline baseline conditions from existing data on ambient water chemistry, habitat, and biological conditions for

the resource and evaluate both existing and potential conditions of the resource.

The SWDV contains a variety of mapping tools for users to create customized maps of selected cultural, resource, administrative, land, and environmental features. Digital air photo or topographic map layers can also be added.



To access the Surface Water Data Viewer and data:

http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/data_viewer.htm

<http://dnrmaps.wisconsin.gov/imf/imf.jsp?site=SurfaceWaterViewer>

http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/watersheds/planning/internet_gisdata.htm

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/watersheds/planning/inventory.htm>

Strategies and Recommendations

Information collected in the resource inventory is analyzed to assess the condition of the resource and identify problems, impairments, or threats. Existing conditions are often compared to similar resources in the area, expected or predicted conditions using computer models, or historical conditions. Meaningful goals, recommendations, and strategies should be developed for each part of the plan.

Examples of recommended goals are:

- Prevent introduction of aquatic invasive species
- Protect and restore current natural shorelines
- Raise oxygen levels to prevent winter fish kills
- Reduce in-lake phosphorus levels to a target level
- Reduce number of beach closings



For more information on recommendations and strategies:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/watersheds/planning/recommendations.htm>

Implementation

Successful watershed plans identify how the plan will be executed, including who, what, when, why, and how.

The plan usually includes:

- A broad, long-term vision
- Short-term (1-3 years) actions with specific objectives to address problems and goals
- Sources of funding available
- A schedule and time line for implementing the recommendations
- Roles and responsibilities of partners
- Administrative contacts
- Legal framework and authority to carry-out recommendations
- Information and education efforts



<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/watersheds/planning/implementation.htm>

Evaluation

Evaluating the fruits of your labor is perhaps one of the most daunting tasks, yet this can also be quite gratifying! If you have developed measurable goals and tracked your work along the way, evaluating the end result through monitoring, surveys, and resource assessments can be completed.

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/watersheds/planning/evaluation.htm>

For more information on Watershed Planning see:

USEPA: Introduction to Watershed Planning:

<http://www.epa.gov/watertrain/planning/>

Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters:

http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/watershed_handbook

Planning for Recreation Use on Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexlakes/publications/>

Understanding Lake Data:

<http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/water/fhp/lakes/under/>

State of the Basin Reports:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/gmu/stateofbasin.html>

Wisconsin Water Quality Planning Programs:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/glwsp/>

Center for Watershed Protection:

http://www.cwp.org/watershed_planning.htm

Aquatic Plant Management in Wisconsin:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexlakes/ecology>

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