Central Sands Strategic Analysis **Public scoping comments received between January 22 and February 28, 2014** **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**
Susceptibility of groundwater in this area to contamination as well as balancing water use in light of the intimate connection between groundwater and surface waters are ongoing challenges for the communities that I have worked with in this area.
Need to preserve this precious water source and not allow the ridiculous volumes of water removed from it by high capacity wells annually.
We are in an area of Wood County which has a proposed CFO coming and I'm very concern about the fact the forest that border our home will be fields for potatoes production and an high capacity well within 400 yards of my home is a very much a concern about water quality.
Protection of the trout streams.
Too many high capacity wells in the region is drying up area lakes.
As a resident of Town of Saratoga (formerly of Hancock & Town of Rome, Nekoosa) we have become very aware of how groundwater withdrawal can affect private wells & surface water. The permeability & susceptibility of the central sands sets us apart for water quantity & quality issues. Also, as a stream flow monitor, I have observed differences in stream flows that are not natural occurrences when near irrigated crop fields.
Lakes and rivers seem to get whatever remains when agriculture is done claiming its water needs.
Concerned about water quality and quantity of area Lakes in area.
Loss of lake levels
We have been visiting and vacationing in this area(Wautoma/Marl Lake) for 30+ years, and in the past 7-8 years have noticed a sharp decline in the lake levels. Some areas have completely dried up! We also see more and more large irrigation wells in operation. They seem to be pulling a lot of water out for very inefficient irrigation methods.
My concern is regarding the water levels currently seen, and how they relate to those I have seen over the last 50+ years.
I have noticed dropping water levels in the 14 years I have lived in Western Waushara county, resulting in adverse issues.
Low lake levels
The draw-down rate in the aquifers does not appear to be recharging at a replacement rate. The heavy use of ag irrigation. The soil is sandy and does not hold water well, leading to intense irrigation. The degree of pollution being perpetrated by factory farms and ag fertilizers.
Very concerned that we have drawn too much water from these high capacity wells and legislation to correct this problem is long overdue.
I am concerned about the amount of water they are taking from the area. Lakes are low, even when we get average or above rainfall.
Lake and stream levels, concentration of high capacity wells, pollution of groundwater and surface waters, reduction of aquifer, CAFOs.
We are surrounded by farms with irrigation systems. We see these being run in the middle of the day which is very ineffective & wasteful. Sometimes the sprinklers are going even when it's raining. There seems to be no regulations regarding their use. We are concerned about our wells in addition to the lakes & rivers in our area.
There are farms that remove trees and grasses along edges, increasing the potential for erosion and soil loss, as well as reducing wildlife habitat. River and lake levels have been low. I see cows wading in a small creek.
Damage to water sources by CAFOS.

My concerns mainly are the over-pumping of our aquifer and your policy to all to allow irrigators to self-report water usage. I attended the meeting in Plover and listened intently to your jargon regarding the new model being created. Since when has hard science ever relied of self-reporting data?
Disappearing lakes and streams. Overuse by large and powerful agricultural interests. Even the high capacity wells will dry up with poorly regulated use so the agricultural users should be concerned.
Air, water, quality of life.
I have NO concerns.....I think the concerned residents are over reacting..
Surface H20 & ground H20 should be protected for all homeowners in the zone forever.
This is a place where there are a lot of mini farms were people are trying to grow their family in a rural setting. We need clean water clean air and the lakes that have been here for many years. We have invested our lives here to have a good life in this area. We have in Saratoga good water and there is enough of it for us to use for residential purposes. This area is established already to use as an area for people to raise a family not a factory farm operation. They should not be allowed to wreck our way of life for their profit.
We live less than two miles from the proposed Golden Sands dairy and live across the street from where they plan to dump their endless supply of animal's poop. We are concerned about our well water being contaminated, our health being affected by the proposed aerial spraying of manure and pesticides and contaminates in our water and in the air we will be breathing. Our quality of life will be greatly affected if we cannot use our well.
We have a place on Brekke Lake in the town of Scandinavia that has recently seen many high capacity wells being built for corn fields. We are very concerned how this will impact the lake. This is a seepage lake and thus the lake levels vary depending on water and snowfall.
I am concerned that high capacity wells are lowering the water table, draining lakes, and reducing stream flows.
Groundwater depletion.
I have a private well. I just had my water tested, and my nitrates level is high. There is way too much farm irrigation in this area. Who will provide me water when my well runs dry or is undrinkable?
That there is an opportunity to assess cumulative impacts for new uses of groundwater to insure protection of surface and groundwater resources; particularly negative effects on water levels.
Due to the high permeability of the course sandy soil, the wonderful aquifer that we currently use and enjoy is quite vulnerable to pollution from pesticides, chemical fertilizers, manure, poor septic systems, and other causes. Also the sandy soil does not hold water, so the forests in many areas are dependent on the ground water being readily available and any long term lowering of the water table will negatively impact the forests. We saw some of that during the drought of 2012.
Ensuring that future generations of farmers have the same opportunities that current generations do -- not depleting groundwater resources. Allocating water fairly between potentially competing users. Concern that owners of shallow wells are having to dig newer, deeper wells at their own expense because of the proliferation of high-capacity wells. The nexus between water quantity and water quality -- concern that growing numbers of wells in the central sands are testing high for nitrates because water levels are going down.
Concerned that job creation and economics are not considered a number one priority.

The depletion of stream flow and the reduction in lake levels causes undeniable hardship to lake and stream property owners and to trout stream and water, lake anglers, sailors, boaters, swimmers, and other recreational users of our public waterways. Research over the past 20 years indicates that some of this water level variation is due to natural causes - it would occur whether there were high capacity wells of other water withdrawals in the watersheds of affected water bodies. However, it is clear that at least some, and perhaps a substantial portion in some watersheds, of this reduction in water levels is due to industrial and municipal groundwater withdrawals. To the extent that human use of groundwater is causing harm to public rights in navigable waters, Wisconsin DNR has and must assert authority under the Public Trust Doctrine to legally require remedies such as water conservation and reduced agricultural use. Industry and municipalities must make sacrifices to correct this problem, land use regulations may need to require better stormwater infiltration.
In addition to high capacity irrigation withdrawals, my family is also concerned about the groundwater quality. Many rural private wells within my area (Portage County) have increasing levels of nitrates. Some neighbors have nitrate levels in exceedence of 60 mg/l and they no longer feel they can use the water for drinking or cooking and need to use bottled water.
The lakes and streams staying filled and not filled in with silt.
Overall, I am concerned about the sustainability of the current water levels of streams, rivers, lakes and shallow wells. I am also concerned about the water quality due to contaminants. A third concern would be the overall property values (i.e. reduction) due to possible low water levels or contamination of lakes & rivers and residential wells which would negatively affect the tax base for municipalities of varying sizes. I am fearful that any action to reduce the strain on the Central Sands may come too late/after the fact and be irreversible.
My concerns are that irrigation of vegetable crops has been going on for over 60 years. The economical impact of the vegetable farms is huge to the economy of the state, and the region is probably the highest producing vegetable area in the country. Emotions are driving this issue, when I think mother nature is controlling 90 percent of this problem. Faulty models are also being used as science when 50 years of pumping disputes them. Winters are returning back to normal, and more snow cover is on the ground. The true facts are not out there, when we know a quarter section of potatoes will use less water than a quarter section of oak trees, and will charge the aquifer a lot faster than the oak forest will. Let’s get all the facts out, and not just what the green people want to hear.
I want to make sure that my ability to grow agricultural crops in the central sands is not impaired by unnecessary regulation. I rely on the abundant groundwater aquifer and any limits on its use would have a large negative impact on my ability to produce food successfully and profitably.
Sandy soil require more irrigation to sustain a healthy crop, irrigation is essential early and often.
Rapid infiltration in sandy soils means more contamination of drinking water and wildlife habitat by surface chemicals and nutrients.
It seems like no certain water user group thinks that they could be part of this vast problem.
Very concerned about water shortage & contamination. We live in the area of the proposed CAFO.

Large agricultural businesses and CAFOs are pumping groundwater at such high volumes that the water cannot possibly be replenished by nature. Residential wells in this area are relatively shallow (25-30 ft.) and can easily be run dry or become contaminated with nitrates and other chemicals from pesticides and manure. The soil in the Central Sands area is extremely porous and cannot filter large amounts of contaminants before they reach the groundwater. Evidence of this can be seen in Plover and Waupaca, amongst others, where nitrate levels force residents to install reverse-osmosis systems so they can drink their water. Not all residents can afford these systems or new, expensive drilled wells. Even if they purchase bottled water to drink, if there are nitrates and other contaminants in the water they bathe in, the skin can absorb those chemicals, causing illness and/or disease. Many bodies of water, such as lakes and streams, are the main source of attraction to purchase homes and attract tourists to the area. If these lakes and streams dry up or become contaminated, tourism and real estate values will decrease. This will cause a domino effect; businesses will leave the area, causing job loss, causing loss of residency, causing loss of tax dollars, causing new businesses to seek other areas to put up shop, and eventually will have a detrimental impact on the entire Central Sands area if the cumulative effect of high capacity wells is not studied. It is VERY IMPORTANT that the CUMULATIVE EFFECTS of high capacity wells are considered...the Central Sands area cannot keep allowing more high cap wells without eventual detriment to the aquifer. The Saratoga area has excellent quality drinking water, trout streams, and hundreds of acres of forest for wildlife, recreation, and natural beauty. The residents who live in Saratoga chose to live there for these reasons. If the groundwater and recreational beauty is gone, there is no reason for residents to stay.
I am concerned about the large number of high capacity wells in and being proposed by the ag industry.
Surface water and wetland resources, groundwater resources and climate are concerns of mine.
Concerned in the drop in elevation of lakes in the area due to the cumulative effect of the high capacity wells.
HI-Cap wells are being drilled in this area at an alarming rate. The central sands area is in great danger with the proposed CAFO and the Golf Complex in Rome, dozens more of these Hi-Cap wells will be drilled. The environment cannot provide the amount of water these corporations will require. The surrounding lakes, streams and families will run out of water.
1. Enough ground water to support the trout streams and lakes in northern Adams County and south Wood County. 2. Land use; specifically a mega-dairy and the resultant manure being spread on the porous soils of northern Adams and south Wood County. The assault on ground water and its long term effect on concern #1. 3.The effects on the ground water and water table of the residents of Saratoga and Town of Rome.
Land Cover and Use: Concern for utilizing misc properties intertwined in a residential and vacation area. What was developed as a natural and majestic setting has the potential of becoming an agricultural wasteland for a specific purpose without the regard of neighbors and visitors. Groundwater resources: The area around 7 mi creek has already be greatly diminished by High Cap well for domestic drinking water, do not want to see 10 and 14 mi creeks to follow suit. Water levels in 10 mi creek have already been affected by upland cranberry operations. At one time, 10 Mile creek was a class A trout stream, the upland cranberry operations have decimated this creek as a trout stream, further activity will drastically demise what is left.
As a lake dweller, preservation of water quality and quantity in the lakes and streams in our area is important. Existing waterways need to be protected from overpumping of groundwater.
I am concerned about the groundwater resources in the area, as well as surface waters and wetlands. We have owned property on Lake Camelot, Town of Rome, since 1988, and over the years, we have seen a drastic decline in the quality and quantity of lake water. Understandably, agriculture is important to our economy, but the increase in water use for irrigation and cranberry bogs is severely limiting the amount and quality of water flowing into Lakes Camelot, Sherwood and Arrowhead. Farm run off and growers' various fertilizing agents enter the water supply, destroying our water quality. The lakes get so low and full of algae by mid-July that they are nearly unusable. Residents complain about water from their faucets being tainted and foul smelling. There is already an abuse of water resources in the area without compounding it by putting additional stresses on the supply.
Groundwater flows, specifically what effect high capacity wells have on streams and lake levels in the area.
Lower water lake levels on Huron Lake in the town of Oasis, Waushara Co.

I am interested in learning what options might exist to maintain the surface waters in the area at their public rights stages or comfortable levels to local citizens while maintaining the continued investment in agricultural and other commercial uses of water in the area.
I am Chairperson of the Big Roche-A-Cri Lake Board in Adams County and have 3 main concerns in regards to natural resources. First of all is the decimation of our trees. The Ag community is buying up the woodlands and clear cutting to grow crops, with no controls in place here in Adams County. In our small town of Preston, this past year we have lost around 1000 acres of forest due to clear cutting. I have talked with the P&Z department but no ordinances or controls have been put in place. I am on the Preston town Board and am looking to see if any towns have an ordinance that is working (we are on County zoning) to see if we could attempt to control this. The second natural resource is water and the 2 issues with water are: quantity and quality of water. My opinion is that central pivot irrigation is drawing soooooooo much water from the aquifer that eventually our creek, springs, and lake will be affected. Currently there is clear cutting of about 500 acres just across the street from our lake. This land will be irrigated and again eventually will have some effect on our lake. Fertilizers could leach into the aquifer raising the nitrate and phosphorus levels which we currently fight from upstream. The conversations that George Kraft is leading in Madison is a step in the right direction but the DNR needs to step up and protect both our forests and waters.
Effect on surface and groundwater as it relates to wetland resources.
My concerns are that our water table is lowering and we are losing wildlife habitat and also affecting our drinking water.
Falling water tables with lower steam flows and lake that are drying up i.e. Pickeral in SE Portage Co.
Have many concerns, but especially water quantity and quality. Other concerns such as activities that will introduce intense nutrient loading, runoff potential of such loading, pathogen/antibiotic/hormone leaching to groundwater.
Concerned that resources that are or have never been a quality resource will be used to eliminate all productive use of that resource and destroy the local economy. Lakes with a history of low levels prior to any irrigated farming are still deemed to be impaired at each drought. Also creeks that were formed in spring runoff events through erosion are not prized yet unsustainable as the flow is now regulated through roads and culverts so it senecese the creek.
I am concerned that what once was a plentiful amount of recreational water will be sucked dry by over-irrigation and unwise irrigation practices. Lakes and streams that we once took for granted are quickly becoming mud holes and trickles of water unfit for aquatic habitation.
The amount of irrigation systems that are approved and put in each year. Forests are being destroyed for crop lands with irrigation systems.
The increasing use of and installing of high capacity wells. Also the loss of more windrows and forests to crop land.
That all current uses, including trees, plantations, homes, production ag, fallow, lakes be described and related.
I'm concerned about weak high capacity well withdrawal regulations having detrimental consequences for surface and ground water quantity and quality. I'm also concerned about inappropriate agricultural land uses in the region (extensive mono cropping of water-intensive crops, irrigation, erosion and wind-blown dust issues).
Groundwater drawdown from the proliferation of high capacity wells, and their impact on groundwater levels and lakes and streams.
Nitrates in groundwater, unregulated groundwater pumping for irrigation, reactive measures regarding nutrient management rather than proactive measures. Proposed underground pipelines to delivery liquid manure to center pivots.

The density of high capacity wells seems unsustainable in the long term. Surface waters appear to be impacted. Much of the Central Sands are predicted to suffer more drought as climate change progresses, necessitating more careful use of this critical resource. The sandy soils allow pollutants to quickly reach groundwater, impacting our drinking water. Laws do not adequately protect groundwater quantity or quality. The flat, open landscape is also prone to wind erosion, and drifting soil particles end up in surface waters, adding phosphorus. Wind erosion is not widely recognized as a problem here, but it can easily be addressed with windbreaks, permanent pasture, cover crops, and conservation tillage methods. We need more of that!
My concerns are for the safety of the water quality and quantity of our local lakes, disruption of natural habitats, eradication of local endangered species such as Kriklands Warblers, Karner Blue Butterfly and slender glass lizard, lowering of local lake and streams levels, and possible depletion of air quality.
The rapid expansion of high capacity irrigation wells is leading to a reduction in stream and lake levels in the area. Such reduction in water levels adversely impacts water quality, the plants and animals that depend on the resource, the public's ability to use the resource for recreation and may adversely impact values of shore line property owners and subsequently local units of government.
I own a home on Huron Lake. We purchased this in 1988. Since 1999, we have experienced a steady decline in the water level on our lake. We are currently down approximately 10 vertical feet of depth since 1999. Paralleling the decline has been a dramatic increase in the number of Hi-Cap wells in the immediate vicinity of the lake. Without some relief, our ability to use the lake for recreational and aesthetic purposes will continue to diminish. Further, our property value is negatively impacted due to the loss of water and uncertainty as to the future condition of the lake.
When I was growing up in Portage County in the 1950's & 60's the groundwater was considered to be inexhaustible. With rivers and lakes going dry we now know that is not the case. Something needs to be done soon to balance the needs of maintaining a healthy and vibrant environment with the ever growing demand for groundwater. It is our natural resources that makes this area a wonderful place to live, recreate and raise families. Water in Wisconsin is held in trust for all citizens and must be protected from over consumption.
My concern is our groundwater. Will we have to dig deeper wells because our groundwater if all being pumped. We cannot afford to do so like the rich consumers of the groundwater can.
Having lived in the town of Big Flats for almost 20 years, I have witnessed the relentless march of big agriculture. I have seen thousands of acres of pine plantation and oak and jack pine forests razed and converted to highly-intensive agricultural uses. My biggest concern is the Roche-a-Cri River which is still a functioning trout stream but I have seen signs of stress as agriculture expands. The stream should be protected BEFORE it degrades to a point where it would need to be restored.
Increased number of wells for crop farming is reducing the water levels.
My concerns in the central sands are focused around quantity of groundwater used for irrigation and its impact on surface water resources as well as adjacent wells. I also have concerns of NO3 contamination of groundwater resources.
Groundwater quantity and quality, balanced with economic impact. Lake/groundwaters are lower, especially from their record heights in the recent past. Lake usage is a significant component of the tourism industry in Waushara County. Few of the lakes currently affected most by low groundwater levels are major tourist destinations. The Central Sands area is one of the largest vegetable producing areas of the country. Vegetable production accounts for 10% to 20% of the jobs in Waushara County and is a major industry. Vegetable production is dependent on plants receiving enough, but not too much water. Irrigation allows plants to receive enough water. The Central Sands drains well, so vegetables do not receive not too much water. Irrigation uses groundwater.
Unregulated pumping is causing the drawdown of our county lakes located on the west side of our county.
Per the public right doctrine, water resources belong to everyone. In the last several years agriculture has been using an ever increasing amount of this resource with the result that lakes and streams are being drained.

Strategic planning for the Central Sands cannot be effectively implemented without completion of a transient numerical groundwater model of the entire region. This needs to made the highest priority for any strategic planning. This modeling would allow for a complete understanding of the relationship of existing and future groundwater pumping to the specific impacts to the water resources in the region (streams, lakes, and wetlands). The Little Plover modeling proposed by the WDNR is a wasted opportunity to begin the modeling of the entire region that is necessary. I have provided WDNR (Dan Helsel) detailed analysis of the modeling requirements for the region.
There are many threats to the overall natural resources such as overuse, misuse, and competing interests. I am specifically concerned about the proliferation of newly permitted CAFOs in recent years and the significant increase the number and use of high capacity wells, along with industrial agricultural's impact in general. These point to unsustainable ground water withdrawals as evidenced by the dewatering of several lakes and streams in the Central Sands. These also threaten the quality of our water as evidenced by the ever increasing number of wells that test positive for nitrate levels about the standard threshold of 10mg/L. Finally, the amount of runoff to our surface waters, specifically phosphorous, that threaten water quality every year.
Groundwater depletion and impact on private wells and surface waters. Groundwater quality relating to nitrates. Wind erosion.
My concerns are regarding groundwater use and availability as well as non-point source pollution. DNR must develop an equitable system for groundwater use that ensures all users, agriculture and riparian, will have a sustainable source. Furthermore non-point pollution efforts must again become a primary focus.
For the past 60 years the DNR, State Representatives, Senators, and Congress have bent over backwards to work with the growers in this area to grow crops. The installation of irrigation systems have grown from 30 or so of these systems in the 1960's to nearly 4,000 today in the central sands are now taking control of the ground and surface waters in this area. Several lakes have gone dry since 1997 and still the DNR and State government issues more permits for irrigation systems and are now approving permits for CAFO's to be constructed in this same area. It is obvious these irrigation systems and now the CAFO's will use even more of the ground and surface water. We need to protect these Lakes, Rivers and Streams. The central sands plain area needs to be designated as a groundwater management area to protect our water.
Sustainability of water given no regulation on drawing from aquifer by deep wells. Dumping of manure into sand country with no research on how it affects the water we drink from private or public wells.
lowering of water table and destruction of historic tree fence lines and farmstead buildings and houses to facilitate large (er) spigot irrigated fields.
I believe that there is a finite amount of water available for this region. The economy of this region will be severely affected if the water resources are depleted. While agriculture is a big part of the region’s economy the tourist industry in regards to quality lakes and streams would be drastically affected if the water resources are depleted to cause unrepairable harm to them. You can't keep putting unlimited straws (irrigation systems) into the aquifer without causing irreparable damage to the ecosystem. In the South Central US the Ogallala Aquifer one of the world’s largest was drawn down by over harvest of the waters there. Now the Federal Gov't controls the irrigation systems and land use in a multi-state area due to the lack of restraint on the farmers and their irrigation systems. Maybe it's time for the Feds to step in here and stop the depletion of the aquifer here.
I am very concerned that the high capacity wells will deplete or lower the ground water at a faster rate than natural rain and snow can replenish the moisture.
Lowering water table.
Surface water and Wetland resources; Groundwater resources.
Loss of lake water levels in our lakes have and will continue to decrease fishing, hunting, boating, swimming, camping, etc.; loss of tax revenue from property no longer considered water front; loss of vacation money being spent in our area; wells going dry, etc., etc.

I have been on Marl Lake since 1944, Marl lake at that time had what we called a 20year cycle. In 1953 I got married & my wife stood on a rock close to the high water mark, I have not seen it that high since. Now that rock she stood on is about 85 feet to the water's edge. (I am on the east end of the lake.) In the spring the lake is up some, but as soon as the growers start their pumps the lake drops. The potato growers say there is an enormous amount of water down there, If so why don't they drill 350 ft down to get it. The new fish hachery drained the wells, what makes you think the Veg growers aren't.
Surface water and wetland resources and groundwater resources.
My main concern is the growing use of deep wells for irrigation use.
Effect of high cap wells on lake and stream levels.
Do high cap wells affect lake and stream levels.
Both surface water/wetland resources and groundwater resources.
Though we have property in Eastern Waushara County, just a bit East of Central Sands(?), Pearl Lake is purely a run-off lake. We rely on precipitation to keep our lake filled. If the aquifers near Pearl Lake are drained, then Pearl Lake will suffer, especially during drought conditions. Since Pearl Lake is primarily a second home lake, the value of properties would substantially decline. Since the lake properties provide approximately 70% of Leon Township's tax dollars, any significant decrease in their value would adversely affect everyone in the township.
My concern is with the increasing development for agriculture in the central sands area, the increasing use of the groundwater resource and its impact on existing residents and surface waters. I am also concerned with irrigated agriculture and possible contaminants reaching the groundwater.
There needs to be a correlation between the quantity of water recharged and the amount pumped. No individual has the right to more water than is recharged on the land they own. This includes Municipalities and businesses. Sustainability!
Groundwater extraction must be managed. The only way to manage extraction is to establish and set limits.
Groundwater issues exacerbated by high capacity wells, contamination of the water from CAFOs, current lack of specific criteria/limits to meet the increased use of high capacity wells draining watershed, disposal of animal waste from huge farms that address current CAFOs operations. Currently standards are lax, are allowing higher and higher levels of chemical limits in our water rather than setting careful, safe limits and restrictions that address alarming rise of nitrates, phosphorous, etc. being added to ground and water for all of us in the central sands. Number of high capacity wells needs to be set for an area, standards need to be written to reflect problems so that safe limits are set and enforced, not allowed to just be a moving target that keeps being adjusted to allow CAFOs to dump increasing amounts of animal waste even when previous limits are exceeded or number of high capacity wells are excess. Dairy businesses and large agricultural businesses are supported by WI legislature and the rest of us that live in the area and love the waters and want to preserve it have no clout.
I have no concerns regarding the use of natural resources - excluding water use.
First and foremost is my supply of drinking water. When the fields are being irrigated, my water pressure goes down on my well. Next huge concern is the ground water level. I don't want the ground water affected because I live here to use the streams and lakes. We use them for recreation and some of my Property Management business depends on house rentals on Sunset Lake of Portage county.
The over use of the High Capacity Wells, depleting the ground water reserves and drying up or lowering of Lakes and streams in the area. Wetland areas that used to hold waterfowl and fur bearing animals are disappearing in these areas.
I am concerned that the rapid expansion of deep water wells for agricultural irrigation use will have negative consequences on water levels in our lakes and streams. We are aware that some lakes in our area of the state (Waushara County) are already experiencing historic low levels. We believe that the Wisconsin DNR should study this situation and, if study warrants, should be given regulatory authority over deep water well users. We believe that currently this type of usage is unregulated.

The lake levels in our lakes continue to decline. Agriculture high cap wells are on the rise. If nothing is done to assess the cumulative impact of these wells, more and more lakes will dry up as has Long Lake.
My biggest concern is allowing people who have the wrong information or else no knowledge dictating how we use our resources, especially the water. At this time, the whole issue is pitting the towns people against farmers.
I am most concerned about groundwater resources and wetlands. High capacity wells are draining water in lakes, streams, and wetlands. Water is not an unlimited resource; there have to be some limits on how much is used. What happens when it's gone?
Groundwater is used extensively in the Central Sands. It provides life and livelihood for all of our residents. It requires management through detail assessment of the largest users - agriculture and municipalities. Extraction of groundwater by these 2 users must be monitored and regulated. Wells are going dry in the Town of Hull (Portage Co.) and lakes and rivers are drying up. Soil erosion is extensive in the sand plain. Windbreaks need to be planted and maintained. Again, agriculture has failed to voluntarily do this and the soils have been depleted.
The recent extreme increase in the amount of ground water being removed through high capacity wells is both unreasonable and unfair. It favors agriculture interests over all other citizens. I fear that by the time the DNR and elected officials finally get beyond study and do something to significantly reverse this practice that the damage done will be irreversible.
People need food to survive and farmers need water to produce food.
Groundwater.
High capacity wells impacting groundwater and surface water quantity. Agricultural chemical and manure application impacting groundwater quality.
The resource I am most concerned with is groundwater. I believe that a very small group of people are trying to stop groundwater pumping by using a stream as the poster child for the region. I don't believe that there is adequate science to determine the status of the groundwater at this time. I think that there are knee-jerk reactions occurring that are making the government act to keep some members of the public happy. I hope that actual science and not speculation is used to determine the status of groundwater use now and in the future.
Our concerns are water quality for homeowners and lakes.
I have concerns about the number of high capacity wells being approved and the impact on water resources. I am also concerned about contamination of water from runoff of fertilizers and chemicals.
All of these issues are of concern.
Dropping lake and stream levels, pesticide use-agriculture and lawn/city.
I am concerned about the quality and quantity of water in the Central Sands. I do not want to see it abused by any one company coming in and using more than their fair share of water and polluting it so that others cannot have good water.
Currently lakes, streams, and the central sands aquifer are being depleted as a result of the pumping of high capacity wells. Soils are primarily sand, this means that they are not able to filter and prevent pollution from agricultural fields. Climate change is also having an impact on the region. However, not in the way being pitched by agriculture. Annual rainfall in the region has been higher than normal for the last few years, yet surface water volumes and flows continue to fall.
Pumpkin Seed Lake has almost completely disappeared since the summer of 1997. We are hoping that the cranes will once again raise their young on our Ice-Age-Kettle this spring. The last year we had water was 2011.
My main concern is the volume of water being removed from the aquifer by CAFOs and the amount of water that is being contaminated by the spreading of animal waste. The water that is used by vegetable growers that are producing food for human consumption does not have nearly the impact that large animal factories do. They do have issues with the nitrogen fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides but they are seasonal and many vegetable growers are working with programs to scale back on the use of many toxins. The CAFOs depend on the corn that is HEAVILY irrigated and depend on massive water consumption all year long.

The natural resources support many small business to include hotels, B&Bs, boat sales, fishing guides, local restaurants, hunting and fishing, vacation rentals, local businesses, nature centers, garden centers etc. These businesses are further supported by larger Wisconsin business: 3 Major bike manufactures, Evinrude Outboard Motors, Harley Davidson, and everything that happens at the Dells. The production of potatoes and vegetables are important, food for people, very important, but needs to be done at a level that can truly be sustained without comprising other business and residential activities. CAFO's have a heavy environmental footprint especially on the porous soils in the Central Sands, if we are to have them they need to pay their way. To put a risk the many small economic impacts that add up to major economic drivers to benefit a few large farms and CAFO owners is an injustice. The DNR needs to protect and restore the environment not issue permits that allow for the further degrading of the natural system. Decisions need to be based on science not politics. Legislators should not be presenting bills that limit the authority or ability for the DNR to do its' job.
Loss of surface water, streams and lakes and wetlands.
Groundwater pumping exceeds groundwater recharge in some areas. This results in levels in lakes and wetlands dropping, and stream flows decreasing or ceasing altogether.
The unique feature of the Central Sands is the fragile topsoil. Increasing organic matter in the soil is the most important characteristic that could be added to this soil to make it more stable. The current use of this land for vegetable production does not increase organic matter content of these soils.
I am especially concerned about the impact of high capacity wells on ground and surface waters in the Central Sands area.