

# DCEC Newsletter



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## Winter 2005

**Environmental News  
for Door County**

*Make a Legacy Bequest to DCEC see page 7 for details!. See page 6 for Membership Information!*

## **Negotiators Reach Deal on Great Lakes Water** **Governors & Premiers Expected to Sign on Dec 15**

After four years of talks, negotiators have reached a deal aimed at preventing outsiders from raiding Great Lakes water and encouraging more efficient use of the coveted resource within the basin. The agreement was motivated largely by justified fears that southwest states will try tapping into the lakes, which hold 90% of the country's fresh water, as the population shifts and political influence grows.

The final version has been submitted to the governors and Canadian premiers, who are expected to sign it during a meeting December 13th at the Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee. State legislators and Congress later will be asked to approve a binding compact carrying out the agreement. Because the states cannot make treaties with foreign governments, they produced a separate non-binding agreement with the provinces.

"There were many difficult issues that required compromise, but a consensus has been reached," according to David Naftzger, director of the Council of Great Lakes Governors.

The agreement would outlaw most new or increased diversions of water—including groundwater, inland lakes and rivers as well as the Great Lakes—from the basin. Exceptions could be made for communities and counties straddling the basin's boundary, if they cannot meet their needs from other sources or through water conservation. Such diversions would only be for public water supplies. Excess water would have to be returned to the basin.

This means that Waukesha County communities would be allowed to hook up to Lake Michigan water, but would also be required to return a like amount of wastewater back to the Lake basin. Returning the wastewater would cost communities millions of dollars and might be prohibitively expensive for water users. Waukesha has an excessive

radium problem and has considered "blending" good water to bring the radium down to acceptable levels.

Cheryl Mendoza, manager of the Alliance for the Great Lakes water conservation programs indicated that, "I feel the communities that want a water diversion will have to show they can't meet their needs through conservation, and I think Waukesha has a long way to go with on-the-ground water conservation".

**We in DCEC support the Alliance in the demands that used water needs to be returned to the basin and that water conservation needs to be utilized to the maximum.**

The Canadians are concerned that the agreement would ban large-scale diversions from the lakes, but would permit withdrawals by the bottled-water industry and other purposes.

The complex deal would allow for projects that withdraw up to 19 million liters of water a day at the discretion of the jurisdiction. Many Canadian officials feel the deal would severely weaken Canadian sovereignty over the lakes (indicating that Ontario and Quebec are outnumbered by the eight Great Lakes states), and the basin should be regulated by the International Joint Commission, in which the United States and Canada are equally represented. Another Canadian viewpoint is that it is preferable to deal with the issue at the state-provincial level because the Great Lakes **governors have a greater interest in protecting the Great Lakes** than the U.S. Federal Government.

The agreement must still be passed by legislatures in the eight states and provinces before it is sent to Congress for ratification after it is signed by all of the premiers and governors on December 13th.



DCEC Incorporated in 1971 under the laws of Wisconsin as a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation

# DCEC Backs Lawsuit for Cleaner Door County Water & Air!

## Supporting Clean Wisconsin and The Sierra Club Against WPSC

As reported in our earlier newsletter, DCEC is supporting Clean Wisconsin's and the national Sierra Club's litigation to force Wisconsin Public Service Corporation to follow the regulations of the federal government in controlling emissions from the Pulliam Plant in Green Bay. This facility has been out of compliance for every quarter since 1999 and **we want that changed**. We have joined forces with these two groups to ensure it will happen.

DCEC is also anticipating joining the lawsuit as a full co-litigant.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency issued the nation's first-ever limits on mercury (specifically) from power plants in March, ordering utilities to cut emissions by 21 percent within 5 years. These goals fell far short of what national environmental and health groups demanded, as being an inadequate response to the health threat that is facing people all over our country.

Two groups of national regulators, the *State and Territorial Air Pollution Program Administration* and the *Association of Local Air Pollution Control Officials* have indicated that technology exists for faster and deeper cuts in emissions. Under their plan, **states** would require 80 percent reductions by 2008 and as much as 95 percent by 2012.

Industry officials opposed to stricter rules say the technology to reduce mercury isn't yet reliable, and imposing harsh regulations will only drive up electricity bills that are already climbing because of the higher oil and natural gas prices. It has been estimated that these changed regulations might add \$1 a month to the average homeowner electric bill. (A cheap price to pay for healthy minds and healthy children, so why are we waiting?)

Scientists have long linked the polluting factors of the



*Coal-fired power plants, like this one in Alabama, pollute the air with over 48 tons of mercury every year nationwide!*

heavy metal mercury to neurological and developmental problems in young children. Coal-fired generating plants, the largest unregulated source in the country, emit about 48 tons of mercury a year nationwide. Some of the mercury settles to the ground near power plants, but can also drift thousands of miles downwind, eventually settling in lakes and streams.

Eating seafood caught in mercury-tainted waters exposes people. As a result, 45 states nationwide have issued warnings to residents—especially pregnant women and young children—to avoid eating certain fish caught in their local waters.

Every Wisconsin inland lake, every stream and river, including Lake Michigan, is under advisory for fish consumption and the cause is directly scientifically linked to power plant emissions as the source. Consumption advisories will continue indefinitely until the polluters are brought under control and mercury diminished to safe levels.

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## Invasive Species Book Now Available

*Invasive Plants of the Upper Midwest—An Illustrated Guide to Their Identification and Control*, is an unusually fine book for people working with invasive plant species. Winner of the Wisconsin Council on Invasive Species 2005 *Invader Crusade Award* and written by Elizabeth J Czarapata (1950-2003), it's an informative, colorful, comprehensive guide to invasive species currently endangering native habitats in Wisconsin and here in Door County.

Invasive plants:

- Crowd native plants out of existence
- Decrease biological diversity
- Degrade wildlife habitat and food sources
- Diminish timber production
- Overtake pasturelands
- Alter the aesthetic quality of native natural areas
- Hinder recreation

- Decrease property value
- Drain billions of dollars annually from the global economy

This splendid 352 page, 8 1/2 x 11 book includes more than 250 color photos that will help anyone identify the problem and herbaceous plants (including aquatic invaders). The text also details plant identification, methods of control, and suggestions for related ecological restoration and community education efforts. The cost is reasonable at \$26.95 in paper and \$60.00 in cloth (plus shipping.) To order call 773-702-7000 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. or order by mail at:

**Customer Service Department  
University of Wisconsin Press  
c/o Chicago Distribution Center  
11030 S. Langley Ave.  
Chicago, Ill. 60628**

# DCEC Endorses New State Energy Policy

DCEC has officially taken a firm stand in support of the proposed recommendations of the State Task Force on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Sources. We have the option of continuing our present habits and policies with the result of more pollution, higher fuel prices and likely energy shortages, OR we can reverse this trend by adopting practices that result in a sustainable energy reserve for the future based on clean and locally-produced power.

This is a unique opportunity for Wisconsin residents and businesses to react to the proposed concepts in the Task Force report. We support these sound new ideas that meet the energy challenges that lie ahead for future generations. In addition, these recommendations will create new jobs, keep energy dollars here in Wisconsin, and increase income for farmers with added tax revenues for their communities, resulting in stronger economic health for the entire State.

We support these concepts from the State task force:

- Encourage the production of bio-fuels and promotion of wind generation across the State.
- Increase state government's use of renewable power to 20% by 2010.
- Mandate renewable energy content of all electricity sold in Wisconsin to be 6 % by 2010.
- Implement a state sales tax exemption for renewable energy systems that are customer owned such as wind turbines, solar panels, farm waste bio-digesters and solar water-heating systems.
- Make some major changes to state building codes to promote energy conservation.
- Secure more extensive funding for the state's Focus on Energy program.

Legislation will be introduced later this fall to establish the task force recommendations as law. State Senator Robert Cowles and State Representative Phil Montgomery will be introducing this legislation in a bipartisan effort to change state policy. We urge our local and state legislators to support this legislation building a more secure energy future for our state and nation.

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## Update on Community Wind by Karen Wison

*Is the wind on our energy horizon?* We have an excellent "wind resource" in Door County. Given that the wind itself is free, and the fact that generating electricity from the wind is a profitable and rapidly growing business throughout the world—what would it take for Door County to make use of its wind resource for the benefit of our environment and our economy?

There is a dedicated group of people in Door County who have spent hundreds of hours in the last many months exploring these questions, and they're not finished yet. "Door County Community Wind" is researching all the issues involved in siting and financing wind turbines. DCCW's mission statement is "To enrich the Door County environment with community owned wind."

DCCW is the outgrowth of a series of three public informational programs in 2005, presented by DCEC's Renewable Energy Task Force, known as RETF. The programs gave an overview of utility-scale wind generation, and presented results of research by RETF about Door County's total electrical energy demand. The concept is that the large sums spent on electrical energy should **stay in the County as profits for our own citizens** instead of being sent out of the area and out of state. If local investors own wind turbines that sell power to the utilities, and local landowners earn leasing fees for hosting the turbines on their property, it would be a terrific boost to our economy—to say nothing of providing pollution-free electricity in a County that lives on its reputation as a clean, green tourist destination.

The ideas and issues involved were well received by each audience. Since then, DCCW has continued to research the many issues involved, including zoning, esthetics and financing. A primary goal is to make sure that a wind project in Door County will be grass-roots based and acceptable to the community.

There are important facts for people to know. Wisconsin is sending an enormous amount of money out of the state to pay for energy. In 2003, energy purchases from outside the state added up to an \$8 billion deficit. For 2005, the deficit is projected to be \$15 billion. The economic advantages of keeping that money in the state are profound. By proceeding with a local wind development project, Door County could economically help itself and our state. It would gain recognition for leadership in developing *community-based* wind power—and gain desirable publicity for tourism.

From an environmental perspective, the benefits are even more important. Every ton of fossil fuel that is burned emits extremely damaging pollutants to the environment. So, coal is by far the main and most polluting fuel for power plants in Wisconsin. (In addition, 60% of its cost is in transportation, with its accompanying pollution.)

If you want to get involved in the ongoing work of DCCW (on a committee, as an investor, or as a landowner) contact David Enigl at 920-868-2196 after 7 p.m., or email Don Pardonner at [donpardonner@dcwis.com](mailto:donpardonner@dcwis.com)

# Groundwater Levels Threatened

## Runoff Water Not Adequately Recharging Our Aquifer

Go ahead! Ask any of the well drilling operators about the groundwater (aquifer) decline in Door County. They will tell you that it varies, but in most locations the groundwater level has been dropping at a rate of 2-3 feet per year. You will say, that's not a lot, what's the big deal! BUT this continuous lowering of our groundwater level has remained constant and in all probability will continue to increase with each new well especially with the proliferation of impervious surfaces. Impervious surfaces, such as blacktop, concrete or other non-porous material used for parking lots, driveways, streets, highways, etc., prevent surface water from soaking through the filtering topsoil. That same surface water then drains to gutters or road ditches and eventually into the closest water body, remaining as surface water. Aquifer recharge depends in part on surface water returning through the filtration process, back to the groundwater deposit to be used as future consumable water.

How can we prevent this from happening? Very easily, we can **demand** that new municipal, industrial and commercial parking lots utilize porous paving material. Even to the extent of using pavers (individual paving blocks) for surfacing low-traffic parking lots. Homeowners can do the same by making the necessary investment to modify existing driveways, or design new construction to use porous pavement, and eliminating paving entirely if it isn't really necessary.

Once the groundwater reaches a low level that is below the usual re-charge strata, the natural flow may be reversed and the aquifer will be supplied from other than natural underground flows. This means that your well water may then be coming from an area that has a direct conduit in the fractured dolostone allowing pollutants to enter. This is a genuine concern here in Door County, with problems occurring in the past and many more problems will be evident and magnified if the aquifer drops continue. High volume wells seemingly necessary

for large operations need to be carefully scrutinized *before* permits are granted and with **responsibility clauses** written into and a permanent part of the permit. This responsibility will lead to more careful utilization of the existing water resource.

Keeping roof downspout runoff from exiting directly to street gutters, by slowing the process with a rain garden, is a new and innovative way of creating a new visual asset to your property. A side benefit is slowing the water before it enters storm sewers and ultimately some of that roof runoff water is going to be absorbed by your rain garden and grassy area, feeding back to the

aquifer. Any vegetative cover rather than impervious surface will be extremely beneficial. Rain gardens, rain barrels and ponds are great in the rural countryside too as retention facilities and aesthetic features to enhance your property.

While rain gardens are relatively new to our area, we have local people with the expertise to help you plan your rain garden or pond and install one for you if your situation warrants. **Marilyn Hansotia** of Ellison Bay, 920-854-9360 has considerable experience with raingarden planning and design, and a new business has been started by **Paul and Justine Mancheski** of rural Forestville to design, create and maintain raingardens and ponds for water retention and aesthetic benefits. Their company, **Waterscape Design, Ilc.** will provide homeowners with "Ecologically balanced and naturally functioning ponds and water features." They can be contacted at 920-856-6595 or [pondbugs@doorpi.net](mailto:pondbugs@doorpi.net). A colorful "how to" manual for homeowners with raingarden plans and information is available from DCEC or from your local UW Extension office.

Through serious combined efforts by homeowners, developers, farm operators, and municipal planning and construction, we can diminish the ongoing threat to our limited aquifer supplies and create a sustainable and high quality groundwater supply for the future. Let's all help conserve water and protect our groundwater supply through good management of this great resource!





# Do You Love Door County???

Then help us protect it... please.

I support the Door County Environmental Council, working to preserve our heritage of natural resources.  
Please enlist me as one of the following: (check enclosed)

<i>Individual Member</i>	\$25	<i>Sustaining Member</i>	\$50-\$99
<i>Family Membership</i>	\$35	<i>Donor</i>	from \$100
		<i>Student/limited Income</i>	\$15

Renewal? \_\_\_\_\_ New Member? \_\_\_\_\_ Door County Voter? yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Winter Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address and or Fax number \_\_\_\_\_

Please name your Door County Municipality (town, village or city) \_\_\_\_\_

All donations are tax deductible to the extent to the law provides.  
DCEC is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization.  
We supply receipts that meet IRS requirements for your gift of \$250 or more.  
Thank you for being part of DCEC!

mail to: Door County Environmental Council, Inc. P.O. Box 114, Fish Creek, WI 54212  
for more information, call DCEC at 743-6003 email dcec@itol.com

Please contact DCEC if you are interested in volunteering for the Board or special projects.

**Visit** DCEC on the Internet!  
[www.dcec.us](http://www.dcec.us) or  
[doorcountycompass.com/dcec/](http://doorcountycompass.com/dcec/)

**Read** the DCEC Column in the *Door Peninsula Voice* (free at many locations.)

Governor James Doyle Room 115E State Capitol Madison WI 53702	Representative Gary Bies PO Box 8952 Madison WI 53708	US Senate Washington DC 20510
Senator Alan Lasee PO Box 7882 Madison WI 53707	WI Senators Russ Feinbold & Herbert Kohl, write them at:	WI Representative Mark Green US House of Representatives Washington DC 20515

## DCEC People

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Ray Kostiuik  
Fish Creek

**Outreach Coordinator**  
Ralph Valatka\*  
Sturgeon Bay

\* Newsletter Editor

# Thank you, Carol Sills, Outgoing President!

## New Officers Elected at September Meeting—Eileen Andera Is New President

A sincere thank you from the Board of Directors and membership to outgoing president, **Carol Sills**, who finished two terms as president of DCEC in October.

Carol began her assignment in 2001 and was instrumental in supporting the new position of Outreach Coordinator to expand the role of the council in resource protection throughout the County.

Under her leadership, the Cost of Community Services study was completed, and the Stephen John “Homeowners Wastewater Manual” was made available to citizen/property owners to clarify options for wastewater management..

In thanking Carol for her years of service, Executive Director, Jerry Viste stated, “ We are fortunate to have people such as Carol who give so freely of their time to ensure that this organization continues with the resource preservation mandate set

in place by the founders”.

Carol will continue to serve the organization as a member of the Board of Directors.

**Eileen Andera** was unanimously elected as DCEC’s new president. Eileen is from Sturgeon Bay, where she has been active in city and town government issues for many years.

She also served DCEC very effectively as co-secretary for several terms and has been extremely dedicated to the resource protection efforts of the Council. Eileen will be an asset as president and leader for these important days of constantly challenging issues.

Other Board members re-elected are 1st Vice President - **Jon Fritz Renner**, 2nd Vice President - **Phyllis Ingwersen**, Treasurer - **Bernice Shumway**, Secretaries - **Carol Farwell and Sarah Stuart**.

These officers all serve two year terms and give tireless time and effort in support of DCEC.



## Leave A Legacy to DCEC!

Many individuals and families are making plans to support volunteer organizations such as DCEC when they legalize their estate and asset transfers at this time of year.

We have on-going programs such as our **Annual Essay Contest** that could be underwritten by a legacy, or supportive grant, to ensure your funding would receive wide recognition in our community.

**The DCEC Endowment Fund**, established in 1985, is a growing secure account to ensure the long-range functions of your organization.

Either of these funding opportunities would be a perfect show of support for the environmental protection of our county now and far into the future.

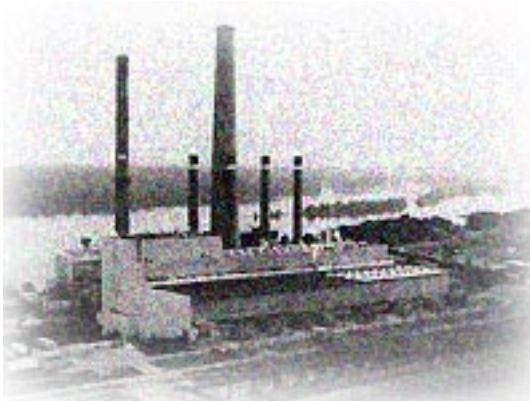
The fight for Door County’s Environment **starts today, every day!**



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***DCEC Backs Lawsuit to Bring  
WPSC Power Plant Into Com-  
pliance! (See page two.)***



*The Officers, Board and  
Staff of the Door County  
Environmental Council  
wish to thank you for  
your generosity over the  
years and wish you the  
Happiest of Holidays and  
a Wonderful 2006!*

***...and, after you read this newsletter, please pass it along to a friend.***