

State of Wisconsin
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
101 S. Webster Street
Box 7921
Madison WI 53707-7921

Scott Walker, Governor
Cathy Stepp, Secretary
Telephone 608-266-2621
FAX 608-267-3579
TTY Access via relay - 711



September 11, 2015

Jeff Renk, Senate Chief Clerk
Wisconsin State Capitol, B20 SE
Madison, WI 53707

Patrick E. Fuller, Assembly Chief Clerk
17 W. Main Street, Room 401
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Messrs. Renk and Fuller:

The Department of Natural Resources is pleased to provide you with a copy of our annual Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA) report. In fulfillment of Section 1.11 (2)(j) of the state statutes, this document provides information on the WEPA environmental analysis efforts completed by the Department in fiscal year 2015.

Questions about the report can be directed to me at 608-266-0426, or at 608-316-0999.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'James D. Pardee'.

James D. Pardee
Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act Coordinator
DNR Bureau of Environmental Analysis and Sustainability

JDP/jdp
enclosures

cc: Dave Siebert – OB/7

**ANNUAL REPORT OF WEPA ACTIVITIES
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
FY 2015**

September 11, 2015

WEPA Overview

Signed into law in 1972, the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA) requires the DNR and other state agencies to consider the environmental effects of their actions to the extent possible under their other statutory authorities. It also establishes the principle that broad citizen participation should be part of environmental decision-making.

The DNR WEPA procedures are established in Chapter NR 150 of the Administrative Code.

NR 150 Revision

The Department completed a major revision of Chapter NR 150, Wis. Adm. Code, as of April 1, 2014. The last major revision to this administrative code was in 1987. The rule change was needed to make the Department's WEPA compliance more effective, meaningful and consistent with WEPA and s. 1.11, Stats. The rule emphasizes the analysis of broad issues and policies, reduces process and paperwork requirements for many individual project actions, and provides clear procedures for public involvement.

Following promulgation of the revised NR 150, the Department identified concerns about how the revised code affected the administrative rule making process. The need for clarifying language changes concerning the review required for certain actions in the revised code were also identified. The Department clarified the revised rule through two emergency rule packages in the past fiscal year. A new permanent rule was approved by the Natural Resources Board in August 2015.

DNR WEPA Activity Completed in FY 2015

All WEPA documents produced by the Department are available at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/EIA/archiveDate.html>

In FY 2015, the Department completed environmental analysis documents for the following four projects:

- Woodboro Lakes Wildlife Area ATV/UTV Trail Plan.
- Rapide Croche Boat Transfer and Aquatic Invasive Species Cleansing Station.

- Okauchee Lake Public Boat Access Renovations.
- Lower Genesee Lake Public Access Site Relocation

In FY 2015, the Department also completed environmental impact statements for the following four projects:

- High Capacity Wells- Fort McCoy Water Supply System.
- Introduction and Stocking of Landlocked Salmon into Big Green Lake.
- Columbia County shooting range at Mud Lake Wildlife Area (amendment to Columbia County Planning Group master plan).
- City of Waukesha Proposed Great Lakes Diversion (Draft EIS issued June 2015).

In addition, the Department cooperated with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin on the following WEPA documents.

- Environmental impact statement regarding the ATC/XCEL Badger-Coulee transmission line.
- Environmental impact statement regarding the ATC North Appleton – Morgan transmission line.
- Environmental assessment regarding the ATC Branch River transmission line.
- Environmental assessment regarding the Xcel Dovre Sands gas pipeline.
- Environmental assessment regarding the WE Germantown-Mequon gas pipeline.
- Environmental assessment regarding the Xcel Eau Claire gas reinforcement project.