

**Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.**  
**Waters Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**March 16th, 2023**  
**Wood County River Block/Online**

**Attendees:** Al Rosenthal (Marquette); Ed Hernandez (Waushara); Bill Leichtnam (Wood); Amy Thorstenson (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Shane Wucherpennig (Member-at-Large); Chris Hamerla (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Joe Tomandl (Taylor); Kendra Kunding (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Todd Morris (Green Lake); Reesa Evans (Member-at-Large); Diane Hanson (Marathon); Gary Beastrom (Member-at-Large).

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS:** No introductions.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion was made by Rosenthal, which was seconded by Wucherpennig, to approve the January 2023 Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**NEW PROJECTS:** N/A

**COUNTY AND STAFF UPDATES:**

**Hamerla:** Hiring for the Clean Boats, Clean Waters interns has started. If Golden Sands RC&D doesn't find enough appropriate applicants, the positions may have to be reposted. The AIS team has been participating in several outreach events. The reimbursement request for the 2022 AIS was submitted to the WI DNR for review and possible payment. The team is working on plans for the upcoming season. The Purple Loosestrife collection season will be starting soon. They were part of a pet surrender event in Schmeekle Reserve recently. This was an event for surrendering smaller pets like birds, rabbits, rats/mice, snakes, turtles, etc. Another one is planned for June in Rothschild. Monroe County is working with Jackson County on AIS issues. Currently, Jackson County does not have an active AIS program. The AIS team is also working with the UW-Madison Agricultural Station in Stratford.

**Kunding:** She has been meeting with various counties like Clark, Wood, and Waupaca about AIS work that can be offered. She reminded the Committee that Burzynski is available for AIS and groundwater lessons for the next school year.

**Adams:** Evans reported that the Adams County LWCD has been going through some reorganization in the last couple of years and has also become part of the Planning & Zoning Department. The Friendship Lake District will be repeating its popular "Ducks over the Dam" fundraising this May, with money from the event going towards paying off its newly-acquired aquatic plant harvester. The Tri-Lake Management District is hosting a "state of the lake" event on June 10th. Ice on the lakes is already out in some areas.

**Green Lake:** Morris reported that Big Green Lake is starting work with a TRM grant for three years to update management. A 3,000-foot breakwater project is starting on Lake Puckaway. It is hoped that this will help deepen the lake, since it is currently only about six feet deep. Heavy aquatic plant growth was experienced last year, which was likely connected with the shallow water. Groundwater testing has been done on 260 wells, but the county is hoping to add about 150 additional wells per year for more testing. The prior well testing has helped identify some nitrate "hot spots."

**Marathon:** Beastro and Hanson are forming a work group to address PFAS issues, using a grant from the Environmental Water Fund. Private well-water testing is likely to be part of the plan. The LWCD is updating the groundwater plan. Work is ongoing with the Big Eau Pleine Watershed and private landowners to reduce phosphorus loading. Actions from the TRM grant for the Fenwood Sub-Watershed will be part of the work. The county recently received funds for some water testing.

**Taylor:** Tomandl reported that one focus has been nutrient management plans, so producer classes that allow a farmer to write his or her own nutrient management plan have been held. The county is wrapping up another year of private well-testing, which has been going on for about 15 years. Water testing is starting on several lakes soon.

**Waushara:** Hernandez reported that the Waushara LWCD is working with the Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance and is planning on adding a number of soil/water specialists, including some in the LWCD office by late summer or early fall. His office applied for a grant to make and distribute new lakefront owner packets, but the grant was not awarded. Some ARPA funds have been used to fund installation of reverse osmosis systems for about 25 landowners, whose private wells showed high nitrate and/or chloride levels. Five years of testing have helped identify some "hot spots." His office has been contacted by several nearby counties about starting a program.

**Wood:** Leichtnam reported that there is a meeting next Monday with Representative Katrina Shankland to develop a plan for meeting with Wisconsin legislators on April 25th. On April 6th, the 6-county groundwater consortium will be sponsoring a public presentation (from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at 480 Underwood Avenue in Montello). The results of a three year study about nitrates and PFAs in Central Sands groundwater will be discussed, as well as plans for addressing the issues. Attendance online will be available for those who cannot attend in person.

Wucherpennig reported that the Wood County LWCD wrapped up five years of private well testing for nitrates. Wucherpennig submitted a report of the results to the governing committee and the county board. The office is still offering some private well testing and education. Next steps need to be planned. It will be applying for new funding to continue the 9 Key Element plan, including asking for a TRM grant and DATCP soil/water funds. It was noticed that the former 9 Key Element plan activities resulted in a significant increase in conservation practices, like cover crops and conservation tillage. Several landowners on Nepco Lake are interested in forming a lake district and are especially concerned about the heavy aquatic plant growth that they believe interferes substantially with safe use of the lake.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Leichtnam, which was seconded by Hernandez, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reesa Evans  
Recording Secretary