

**Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.**  
**Waters Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**March 21st, 2024**  
**Hancock Agricultural Research Station/Online**

**Attendees:** Joe Tomandl (Taylor); Reesa Evans (Member-at-Large); Chris Hamerla (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Andrew Senderhauf (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Bill Leichtnam (Wood); Amy Thorstenson (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Amanda Gurklis (Golden Sands RC&D); Brian Haase (Waupaca); Dave Benson (Marquette); Todd Morris (Green Lake).

**CALL TO ORDER:** Tomandl called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS:** Everyone introduced themselves.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion was made by Benson, which was seconded by Leichtnam, to approve the January 2024 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**NEW PROJECTS:** None.

**COUNTY AND STAFF UPDATES:**

**Gurklis:** She taught 17 AIS lessons and 15 groundwater lessons this school year. There are still 4 more AIS lessons and 18 groundwater lessons to complete. There is a waiting list for both class types. Portage County has a Water Appreciation Day Event scheduled for May 17th. The Waupaca Conservation Field Day is scheduled for September 27th.

**Hamerla:** He recently revised county reports for services rendered to include the classes Gurklis was teaching. About 150 people attended a reptile day that was held recently in Rothschild. Requests for contracted services have been high this year, with 11 contracts already scheduled. A third AIS Coordinator was hired and will start near the end of April.

**Senderhauf:** He is contacting member counties to set up the field season schedule. He and Hamerla will be collecting purple loosestrife plants soon for biocontrol. There are several new contracted services.

**Thorstenson:** She is hiring CBCW interns for the summer season for four lakes.

**Adams:** Evans reported that the LWCD office is now down to two employees, a Water Resource Specialist and the County Conservationist. It is unclear how soon this situation will change. The county made several hundred acres into a county forest and was one of the last counties in the state to have a county forest. There have been several fires due to the weather conditions, including one that destroyed a restaurant on Friendship Lake.

**Green Lake:** Morris reported that the GLRI and TRM grants were received and will fund several practices like cover crops, buffer plantings, and stream bank restoration. A second round of private well-testing, using ARPA money, is ongoing. A 3000-foot breakwater on Puckaway Lake was completed. Concerns about the use of wakeboard boats on Green Lake were expressed, but it appears there is no way to enforce any ordinance addressing those concerns.

**Marquette:** Benson reported that the tree sale is ongoing. A criminal investigation about the removal of a virgin black walnut forest is in progress. Private well-testing is also occurring.

**Taylor:** Tomandl reported that the county tree sale is ongoing. Someone wants to buy carbon credits for the next 40 years, offering about \$2.3 million to the county. Test borings are being done in the Yellow River area for gold, silver, etc. A rare earth element was also recently found.

**Waupaca:** Haase reported that an ordinance, limiting the use of wakeboard boats, was proposed. There was a state hearing on the effects of such boats recently. A proposed digester has been the source of much debate. Waupaca County is working on writing its 4th 9-Key Element Plan.

**Wood:** Leichtnam reported that the Wisconsin Legislature has adjourned until January 2025. This means that Senate Bill 58, covering the Nitrate Concentration and Well Compensation Grant, was not passed. He announced that the Wood County Citizens Water Group panel presentation titled "The Future of Clean Drinking Water in the Central Sands" was held on March 18th, at the McMillan Library in Wisconsin Rapids. There were four panelists. The session lasted over 2 hours. A question-and-answer period was also held. About 125 people attended in person and about 20 or so attended virtually. The Wood County LWCD is now fully staffed. Preparation for the 2024 field season is ongoing.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Leichtnam, which was seconded by Benson, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reesa Evans  
Recording Secretary