



**Walworth County  
Land Conservation Committee Meeting  
Monday, November 17, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.**

**Walworth County Government Center  
County Board Room 114  
Elkhorn, WI 53121**

Land Use and Resource  
Management Department

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***Nancy Russell – Chair    Charlene Staples - Vice Chair    Daniel Kilkenny - Supervisor  
William Leedle – USDA/FSA Representative    Rosemary Badame – Citizen Member***

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***(Posted in Compliance with Sec. 19.84 Wis. Stats.)***

***It is possible that a quorum of the County Board or a committee of the County Board could be in attendance.***

**AGENDA**

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Approval of the Agenda Pg. 1
4. Approval of Minutes from October 20, 2014 LCC Meeting Pg. 2-3
5. Public Comment
6. Discussion/Possible Action – Resolution authorizing signatory for Walworth County Land Conservation Division Pg. 4-5
7. Discussion/Possible Action – Wisconsin Water Star Program – Fay Amerson Pg. 6-8
8. Next meeting date: Monday, December 15, 2014, 2:00 p.m.
9. Adjournment

**Submitted by: Michael P. Cotter, Director, Land Use and Resource Management Department,  
Louise Olson, Deputy Director, Land Conservation Committee Designee**

Posted: November 13, 2014

**DRAFT**

**Walworth County Board of Supervisors  
October 20, 2014 Land Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes  
Walworth County Government Center, County Board Room 114  
100 W. Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy Russell at 2:04 p.m.

Roll call was conducted. Members present included Chair Nancy Russell, Vice Chair Charlene Staples, Supervisor Dan Kilkenny, Citizen Member Rosemary Badame and USDA/FSA Representative William Leedle. A quorum was declared.

**Others in Attendance:**

County Staff: Deputy Director of LURM Louise Olson; Fay Amerson, Urban Conservation Specialist; David Bretl, County Administrator; Michael Cotter, Deputy Corporation Counsel/Director of LURM  
Members of the public: C. Lars Olson

**On motion by Vice Chair Staples, seconded by Citizen Member Badame, the agenda was approved with no withdrawals.**

**On motion by Supervisor Staples, seconded by Supervisor Kilkenny, the September 15, 2014 minutes were approved by voice vote.**

**Public Comment** – None.

**New Business**

- Discussion/Possible Action – 2013 Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Annual Progress Report – Louise Olson

Deputy Director Louise Olson distributed the report from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).

- Discussion/Possible Action – RCPP Program for Walworth County and Letter of Support – Louise Olson

The purpose of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is to address primary resource concerns of water quality and soil health in the Upper Mississippi River Basin. This is a cooperative partnership program led by the Missouri Department of Agriculture between Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin. The federal government administers the program, and approval of funding assistance is contingent upon meeting USDA standards and specifications. Walworth County's share for RCPP eligible landowners and farmers is \$48,596 per year from 2015-2019. Olson added that this is not a compliance enforcement project. **Supervisor Kilkenny made a motion to support the letter of commitment from Walworth County to participate in the RCPP. The motion was seconded by Citizen Member Badame and it carried 5-0.**

- Discussion/Possible Action – DATCP Report October 2014 – Louise Olson
- Olson said the Committee members will receive the report via email or regular mail and noted that the County's Land and Water Resource Management Plan is due in 2015. The Committee will receive options for a 10 year plan or a 5 year renewal. This plan will report what is accomplished and it earmarks any funds coming in to Walworth County not just for staffing but for implementation of conservation practices. The animal waste storage ordinance will also be looked at by the Department of Agriculture in 2015 to be sure it is in compliance with all the rules and regulations. No action is required at this time but it should be noted on calendars.

- Discussion/Possible Action – Land Conservation staff funding – Louise Olson  
The Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association report states that funding for conservation staff is reduced in DATCP’s budget and urges support to restore full funding for state aid to county departments. A copy of LCC’s budget/financial plan was included in the meeting packet.

- Discussion/Possible Action – Wildlife Abatement Contractual Agreement for 2015 FY & Crop prices – Louise Olson  
The county has an agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for wildlife abatement to reimburse landowners for deer, geese and bear damage to crops. The USDA is responsible for measuring and estimating crop damage by wildlife. Olson referred to the pricing in the proposal, noting that the committee can accept the USDA pricing, the October 2013 pricing or an average of both. The pricing is then fixed at the rate chosen for one year. The County receives \$250 from the DNR to coordinate the program. **Supervisor Kilkenny made a motion to approve the Wildlife Abatement contract with the average crop pricing of the 2013 fall and present USDA prices. The motion was seconded by Citizen Member Badame and it carried 5-0.**

- Discussion/Possible Action – Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance – Chapter 26, Article VI – Review of Determination per Statute sec. 68.11- Fay Amerson  
Urban Manager Fay Amerson reported that the ordinance reevaluation followed a request to review a departmental decision concerning a pit in Walworth County. Because the decision review process is relatively new territory, Amerson requested input from the DNR. The DNR reviewed the issues and made very few recommendations, except that Chapter 68 of the Wisconsin Statutes concerning appeals to decisions must be followed. Amerson recommended that the County request the DNR to provide guidance on any appeals it receives, as per NR 135 of the Administrative Code. The DNR suggested that the word “may” be inserted on Line 16 rather than “shall” concerning requesting an opinion of the DNR in a dispute. Amerson also noted that on Lines 17 and 18 the second reference to “the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources” should be deleted. **Supervisor Kilkenny made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Staples, to approve the Ordinance with the second reference to “the Wisconsin Department of Revenue” on Lines 17 and 18 removed. The motion carried 5-0.**

**Confirmation of Next Meeting**

Monday, November 17, 2014; 2:00 p.m.

**Adjournment**

**On motion by Supervisor Kilkenny, second by Citizen Member Badame, the meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.**

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Submitted by Becky Bechtel, Administrative Clerk. Meeting minutes are not considered final until approved by the committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting.



**Policy and Fiscal Note**  
**Resolution No. xx - 12/14**

**I. Title:** Supporting a change to the “Authorized Representative” signatory for the Administration of Grant Programs on behalf of the Walworth County Land Use and Resource Management Department.

**II. Purpose and Policy Impact Statement:** This Resolution authorizes the Land Use Resource Management Director, Deputy Director, or Land Conservation Committee Chairperson to act as the county representative for the administration of grant programs.

**III. Budget and Fiscal Impact:** No additional funds are needed for appointment of the authorized representative for grant processing. This shall have zero impact on the county tax levy.

**IV. Referred to the following standing committees for consideration and date of referral:**

Committee: Land Conservation Committee                      Meeting Date: November 17, 2014

Vote:                      5-0

County Board Meeting Date: December 9, 2014

Policy and fiscal note has been reviewed and approved as an accurate statement of the probable policy and fiscal impacts associated with passage of the attached resolution.

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David A. Bretl    Date  
County Administrator/Corporation Counsel

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Nicole Andersen    Date  
Deputy County Administrator - Finance



## **MEMO**

Date: November 7, 2014

To: Walworth County Land Conservation Committee  
Michael Cotter, Director, LURM  
Louise Olson, Deputy Director, LURM

From: Fay U. Amerson, Urban Programs Specialist  
Walworth County Land Conservation Division

RE: **Wisconsin Water Star Program - Walworth County Earns A Silver Star!**

The Walworth County Land Conservation Division submitted an Application for consideration and designation as a Water Star Community. This program recognizes communities for their exemplary efforts to protect surface waters and ground water. A fact sheet on the Wisconsin Water Star Community Program is attached to this memo. The Wisconsin Water Star Community Program maintains a Website with additional information, ([www.waterstarwisconsin.org](http://www.waterstarwisconsin.org))

The Wisconsin Water Star Community application process is lengthy and covers actions related to surface waters, ground water, recreation and education. Completion of the application required the input of the Walworth County Public Works Department, the Walworth County Public Health Department, the Walworth County University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Service, the Geneva Lakes Environmental Agency and the Mukwonago River Partnership. Documenting and recording the efforts, programs and actions conducted by each of these departments and organizations resulted in Walworth County earning the designation as a Silver Water Star Community.

I respectfully request the Walworth County Land Conservation Committee accept this award.

## Water Star Sponsors

- ✓ Rock River Coalition
- ✓ Town and Country RC&D
- ✓ UW Cooperative Extension
- ✓ Dane County
- ✓ MSA Professional Services
- ✓ UW-Extension Environmental Resources Center
- ✓ Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- ✓ Natural Resources Consulting, Inc.
- ✓ Ruckert-Mielke
- ✓ Wisconsin Public Service Commission



## Become a Sponsor

- Be a member of the Water Star Steering Committee in good standing, or
- Provide \$500 of in-kind or cash support.

Sponsors will be named in media releases, will be invited to assist with designation ceremonies and will be invited to all events, webinars, and programs. Additionally, the sponsor's name, logo and link will be posted on the Water Star Home Page.

## Be a Water Star Endorser

Sign on as an endorser to the program on the Water Star Website. Your name will be added to the website's endorser list and may be used in publicity efforts.

Anyone can endorse whether an individual, municipality, organization or business.

For More Information

[www.waterstarwisconsin.org](http://www.waterstarwisconsin.org)

or call Suzanne Wade, UW-Extension Rock River Basin Educator and Water Star Coordinator at 920-674-8972 or by email to [waterstar@rockrivercoalition.org](mailto:waterstar@rockrivercoalition.org)



*Guiding, inspiring and recognizing municipalities for exemplary efforts in:*

- **Surface Water**
- **Groundwater**
- **Recreation**

Register your municipality and find out if you are a:

- ★ **GOLD** Water Star Community
- ★ **SILVER** Water Star Community
- ★ **BRONZE** Water Star Community

[www.waterstarwisconsin.org](http://www.waterstarwisconsin.org)



## The Water Star Community Program

Wisconsin is blessed with abundant waters. Our lakes, streams and wetlands play a key role in our residents' quality of life and the health of our economy, yet regulations to protect these resources often meet only minimum water quality standards. More must be done to ensure that future generations can continue to enjoy the state's water resources for drinking and as places to swim and fish.

Water Star is designed to honor municipalities who do outstanding work to provide their communities with safe and abundant groundwater; lakes and streams protected from polluted runoff; maintain and enhance desirable aquatic habitats; and provide appropriate recreational opportunities for their citizenry.



## Why Become a Water Star Community?

First, to be publicly recognized for your good work through designation ceremonies and local and state-wide media releases.

Second, to promote your community as a responsible unit of government and a good place for people to live and businesses to locate and thrive.

Water Star Communities will receive:

- A certificate proclaiming them a Water Star Community.
- One entrance sign for their community with more available for a fee.
- Electronic files of the logo and other promotional materials for their website and for print materials.
- A listing as a Water Star Community on the Water Star website.
- Guidance on how to improve their ratings and move up the Water Star rankings.



Starting on the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, Water Star will celebrate the work that top municipalities of all sizes do to protect and improve their water resources.

Meeting today's groundwater and surface water needs is a tremendous challenge. Many communities have engaged in thoughtful planning, have committed significant resources and have worked through tough decision-making processes to accomplish this.

Water Star believes municipalities who meet these challenges should be thanked and celebrated.



## Who Can Become a Water Star Community?

Water Star is designed for all types of municipalities including cities, villages, counties and towns.

We recognize that larger villages, cities and towns may have an easier time meeting the requirements to be designated a Water Star. The Water Star Steering Committee is interested in working with smaller and more rural municipalities to make this program work well for them.

## Minimum Requirements

- The municipality cannot be in default of any permits, or have a history of being in default of its stormwater, wastewater or public water supply permits.
- It cannot have a history of land use decisions that conflict with its own groundwater or surface water protection goals.
- A Water Star Community must write at least one success story highlighting its accomplishments prior to recertification.

Water Star Certification must be renewed every three years.

## Recognizing the Differences in Wisconsin Municipalities

Every municipality is different. Municipal groundwater might be abundant, scarce or have natural or human-generated contaminants. One municipality might have an abundance of surface water resources and another limited. Counties don't run wastewater treatment plants and some cities don't have public water utilities.

Water Star recognizes these differences. The online application form will allow each municipality to only answer questions that apply to its situation and the final score is based on a percentage of possible points.

If a municipality has a unique issue or has worked in an unusual way to protect its natural resources, it will be able to add this action and might qualify for a score adjustment.



## The Importance to Wisconsin of Water Star

Many facets add up to make a community a Water Star. The three basic components of the Water Star Program and why they're important to Wisconsin are:



### Surface Water

**Quality:** Many Wisconsin lakes, rivers and streams suffer from degraded water quality. Reducing polluted runoff is critical to halting the decline of water quality and in protecting high-quality waters. Additionally, keeping pollutants out of water is cheaper and better than trying to remove it later. Clean surface waters play a key role in human health, recreation and local economies;

making municipalities better places for people to live and businesses to succeed.

**Quantity:** Historically, only 4% of rain water ran off into lakes, streams and rivers. Now, in urban areas, more than 35-80% runs off with great speed and force greatly impacting our aquatic environments. Even in rural areas water runs off much quicker than it did in the past due to ditching and tiling.

**Habitat:** Drained wetlands, straightened streams, concrete drainage ways, sedimentation, dredging and the removal of shoreline vegetation and in-water woody debris have severely degraded fish and wildlife habitat throughout Wisconsin.

### Groundwater

**Quality:** Human-generated and natural contaminants impact drinking water in many areas of Wisconsin. Actions can be taken to protect drinking water quality, and where the contamination is naturally occurring, to protect the consumers of that water.

**Quantity:** Wisconsin is a water-rich state, but in some areas there is a shortage of groundwater either due to excess pumping or due to naturally low water bearing rock. When shortages occurs, human use must be adjusted to safeguard streams, wetlands or springs.



### Recreation

A healthy community provides recreational opportunities for its citizenry while protecting the natural resources that people enjoy and desire.



## How to Apply

Starting April 22, 2010, a municipality can register and begin the application process.

Since the application covers all aspects of municipal government, we've set up the application so different people can fill in different parts of the survey. Thus the public works, planning or parks director can complete their portion of the application when it's convenient for them.

The application is expected to take about 2.5 hours to complete in total.

Once completed, the municipality will receive a preliminary computer-generated rating. The computer will notify the Water Star Coordinator who will ensure that the application meets the minimum requirements and will contact the municipality to inform them of the final results.

If the applicant meets Gold Water Star standards, a random audit of the actions will be performed to ensure that the application truly meets this standard.

A Water Star Designation Ceremony will be scheduled with a Water Star Sponsor presenting the Water Star Certificate and the aluminum entry sign to the new Water Star Community.

## Actions Ranked and Prioritized

Water Star is composed of more than 130 actions, many with sub-actions, organized under municipal department headings such as public land management or drinking water utilities. Each action or sub-action is given a rating of Critical, Important or Enhancement depending on how directly it impacts the resource.

Each action is also given a point scale depending on the amount of time and resources required to implement the action.

The municipality will answer questions with a *yes*, *do not do* or *not applicable*. There is generally a sliding scale for yes answers allowing credit for moving toward full completion of the action.