



**GROUNDWATER NITRATE WORK GROUP
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 1, 2020 @ 8:00 A.M
CALL: 1-312-626-6799
MEETING ID: 848 7254 3373**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84872543373?pwd=bWxKODBDajRINTFFUGFKZFpsaXV1dz09>

Meeting ID: 848 7254 3373

Passcode: 907185

One tap mobile

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Join by Skype for Business

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If you are interested in providing public comments on items on this agenda, you must submit your comments by noon on Friday August 28, 2020. To submit a public comment use the following email: baker@co.rock.wi.us.

Join from a telephone:

- On your phone, dial the phone number provided above
- Enter the meeting ID number when prompted, using your dial-pad.
- Please note that long-distance charges may apply. This is not a toll-free number.

- Supervisors: Please identify yourself by name
- **Please mute your phone when you are not speaking to minimize background noises**
- We are new at holding meetings this way, so please be patient

Instructions for the hearing impaired –

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/207279736-Getting-started-with-closed-captioning>

**GROUNDWATER NITRATE WORK GROUP
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 1, 2020 @ 8:00 am**

AGENDA

1. Call Meeting to Order.
2. Approval of Agenda.
3. Approval of Minutes – June 23, 2020 Meeting.
4. Communications and Announcements.
5. Well Sampling - Update.
6. Status of 9KE Plan Development.
7. Producer Led Watershed Group Development - Update.
8. **Action Item.** Approval of Letter of Support for creation of “Farmers on the Rock” Producer Led Watershed Group
9. **Action Item.** Recommendation to the Land Conservation Committee: Approval of Memorandum of Understanding with “Farmers on the Rock” Producer Led Watershed Group for grant application and program administration
10. Next Meeting Date, Time, and Location.
11. Adjourn.

The County of Rock will provide reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities. Please contact us at 608-757-5510 or e-mail countyadmin@co.rock.wi.us at least 48 hours prior to a public meeting to discuss any accommodations that may be necessary.

G:/soil/office/groundwater/GW_09012020_ag



**GROUNDWATER NITRATE WORK GROUP
TUESDAY JUNE 23, 2020 @ 7:30PM
ZOOM MEETING**

Minutes

1. **Call Meeting to Order.** Chair Sweeney called the meeting to order at 7:42 pm.
Members present: Wes Davis, Pat Mullooly, Tom Sweeney, Rick Wietersen, Dave Rebout, Lou Peer, Nick Baker, Rich Bostwick, Al Sweeney, and Rick Richard.
Members Excused: Colin Byrnes and Chris Murphy
Others present: Andrew Baker, Dave Gundlach, and Chris Newberry
2. **Approval of Agenda.** Wes Davis moved the agenda as presented, seconded by Rich Bostwick. **Motion Carried.**
3. **Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2020 meeting.** Rich Bostwick moved the minutes for the March 16, 2020 meeting as presented, seconded by Nick Baker. **Motion Carried.**
4. **Communications, Announcements.** Tom Sweeney indicated that this was his last workgroup meeting and he is retired after June 26th. Al Sweeney and Rich Bostwick both congratulated Tom Sweeney and thanked him for his 21 years of service to the County. Wes Davis informed the workgroup that Al Sweeney was elected to the Wisconsin County's Associations Agriculture, Environment, and Land Use Committee.
5. **Monitoring Well Sampling Updates/County Wide Trends.** Rick Wietersen presented updated graphs for the monitoring wells sampling being conducted at the County Farm and the non-community wells in the study area. Wietersen noted the groundwater level in the observation wells were high but steady. Wietersen also noted the groundwater flow was high. The graphs also showed the amount of nitrate in the wells had dropped. Wietersen noted again that the lower levels of nitrate could be from dilution from more water being in the aquifer.
6. **Resolution Extending the Deadline for the Workgroup to Study the High Nitrates in Rock County's Groundwater.** Chris Newberry asked the committee to send a resolution to the Land Conservation Committee and the Board of Health to extend the deadline from December 31, 2020 to December 31, 2025. This resolution will allow the workgroup to study nitrates in the groundwater. Chris Newberry indicated that more data is needed before the workgroup could make recommendations to the county board. Rich Bostwick moved the resolution to extend the deadline as presented, seconded by Al Sweeney. **Motion Carried.**
7. **Status of 9KE Plan.** Chris Newberry gave an update to the timetable of the plan. Newberry indicated that stream inventory was completed and is currently inventorying livestock and facilities. Tom Sweeney reaffirmed that the data collected will help with prioritizing conservation practices and areas within the watersheds.
8. **UW Discovery Farms Partnership**

a. Letter of Support Chris Newberry asked the committee to support the UW Discovery Farms in a DNR grant that they are submitting. Chris Newberry indicated the grant would be used to build, install, and monitor lysimeters to study groundwater nitrates in high nitrate areas in Wisconsin. Tom Sweeney indicated UW Discovery Farms would like to place them in Rock, Portage, and Calumet counties. Sweeney indicated the results could help this committee in creating nitrate reduction recommendations. Rich Bostwick moved to send a letter of support to UW Discovery Farms as presented, seconded by Al Sweeney. **Motion Carried.**

b. Use a Portion of the Groundwater Nitrate Fund Balance to Conduct Groundwater Water Sampling. Chris Newberry asked the committee to use some of the groundwater nitrate funds to sample the UW Discovery Farms lysimeters for UW Discovery Farms, to possibly increase the number of lysimeters installed by the UW Discovery Farms in the county. The request was moved to be tabled by Rick Richard and second by Pat Mullooly from insufficient data on costs. **Motion carried.**

9. **NR 151 Technical Advisory Committee Update.** Tom Sweeney updated the committee on the DNR's TAC. Sweeney informed the committee that the TAC is in the process of developing criteria for determining sensitive areas. Sensitive areas are areas throughout the state that have high nitrates in the groundwater and conservation practices should be put place to lower the nitrates. Sweeney insured the committee that he will still be a part of the TAC even into retirement. He will submit a report a monthly report to the workgroup until the TAC mission is completed.
10. **Producer Led Watershed Group Development - Update.** Chris Newberry informed the committee that he has been in contact with Rachel Rushman/DATCP. Rushman had indicated that DATCP will hopefully release new paperwork for the creation of producer led watershed groups on July 1st. Newberry is waiting for the DATCP information before setting another producer led watershed group meeting.
11. **Next Meeting Date, Time, and Location.** Date and time were set for August 10th at 8:00am. Place is to be determined by Covid-19 restrictions.
12. **Adjourn.** Rich Bostwick moved to adjourn the June 23, 2020 meeting of the Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup at 8:24 pm, seconded by Pat Mullooly. **Motion Carried.**

Respectively Submitted,

Chris Newberry
Senior Conservation Specialist

Minutes are not official until adopted by the Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup.

G:/soil/office/groundwater nitrate/2020/GW06232020MI



Rock County Land Conservation Department

440 N US Hwy 14

Janesville, WI 53546-9708

Phone: (608) 754 - 6617

July 29, 2020

To whom it may concern:

This letter is to support the creation of the Farmers on the Rock, a producer led watershed group and a Memorandum of Understanding with the group. The purpose of the Farmers on the Rock is to reduce nitrate loading in groundwater and surface waters from agriculture in Rock County. Rock County Land Conservation Department, in partnership with the Rock County Public Health Department has identified numerous areas within the County of Rock where nitrate well tests results have shown an increasing trend of elevated nitrate levels above the Preventative Action Limit of 2mg/l and Enforcement Standard of 10mg/l. As a result of the observations and data collected, Rock County developed a Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup, composed of respected leaders from multi-agencies, agricultural producers, and agricultural industries, to provide assist with numerous objectives regarding upward trends of nitrates found in groundwater and well water. One objective was the establishment of a groundwater nitrate pilot project on the County Farm which includes the establishment of three observation wells and implementation of best management practices on the aforementioned farm. Another objective is the establishment of a producer led watershed effort to assist with the efforts of reducing nitrates entering the groundwater system. A third objective is to create partnerships with agencies and the agricultural community, to establish BMPs to reduce nitrate in groundwater, and to educate the community to launch the BMPs.

We are eager for the establishment of the Farmers on the Rock. The assistance of peer to peer education and implementation of conservation practices will assist the county in meeting one of their objectives in reducing the nitrate concentration in the groundwater.

Rock County will commit to contribute staff time, fringe benefits and travel costs needed to assist Farmers on the Rock in implementing conservation practices, managing funds, communication, planning and attending educational events and other resources. Rock County will provide assistance through various Conservation Specialists along with assistance from the UW Extension staff for the Information and Education efforts.

We sincerely hope to be able to work together starting later in 2020, work that we are confident will be incredibly significant to our county and state.

Sincerely,

Richard Bostwick
Chair, Rock County Land Conservation Committee

Alan Sweeney
Chair, Rock County Groundwater Workgroup

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE ROCK COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT
AND
THE FARMERS ON THE ROCK**

BACKGROUND

To improve water quality, the Wisconsin, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) will provide grants to producer led groups that implement non-point source pollution abatement activities.

PURPOSE

This **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** establishes a partnership between Rock County Land Conservation Department (Collaborating Entity) and Farmers on the Rock (Group) as required under s. 93.59, Stats., and Ch. ATCP 52 Wis. Adm. Code for this Producer Led Watershed Protection Grant. This MOU identifies the roles and responsibilities of the collaborating entity and the Group related to implementation of the producer led watershed protection grant.

MISSION

The Collaborating Entity and the Group enter into this MOU to work collaboratively on a producer led water quality protection project in the Lower Rock River watershed to achieve improved water quality.

The Group and Collaborating Entity agree as follows:

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Collaborating Entity and the Group will work collaboratively to improve soil and water quality within the Lower Rock River watershed, located in south central Wisconsin. The watershed's resource concerns involve high Nitrate concentrations in the groundwater, excess nitrate, phosphorus, and sediment loading in the Rock River and its tributaries. The primary objectives of grant implementation are to improve groundwater quality by lowering nitrate concentrations through improving soil structure, the implementation of conservation practices, and by providing outreach and education to producers, landowners, and the community. Other goals of grant implementation are to reduce nitrate, phosphorus, and sediment load in surface waters, increase awareness of conservation benefits, improve farm productivity and reduce nitrate and other nutrient runoff from farm fields.

The Collaborating Entity and the group are each responsible for its own expenses related to this MOU except as otherwise provided herein.

The Collaborating Entity role will be to provide nutrient management training and planning assistance to farmers as well as provide information to farmers on available DATCP programs such as conservation engineering, nutrient management training and Farm Center assistance. Farmers of the Rock will lead the efforts of the project by reaching out to farmers, providing incentive payments to try innovative conservation practices and involve other partners to leverage efforts.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Farmers of the Rock will be responsible for;
Forming a governing body and organizational structure to lead and guide the Group.
Create member requirements/qualifications and recruit members.
Establish goals/purpose.
Plan meetings and conservation events/field days.
Develop conservation practices that are cost-shared through the Group.
Submit DATCP reimbursement forms for dispersal of funds.
Track conservation efforts according to DATCP's tracking system.
Share information and research.
Develop and maintain the Groups website.
Communicate functions with the Collaborating Entity, local community, and media outlets.

Rock County Land Conservation Department will be responsible for;
Assist in planning meetings and conservation events/field days.
Establish an account and hold the Farmers of the Rock funds until asked to distribute them by the Group.
Assist the group with filing DATCP paperwork.
Assist with the communication within the Group, local community, and media outlets.

The official contacts listed below will coordinate the activities of each organization in carrying out this MOU will be as follows:

Rock County Land Conservation Department: Chris Newberry, Senior Conservation Specialist. (608) 754-6617.

Farmers of the Rock:-Co-President: John Doe, Farmer. Name of Farm. (608) XXX-XXXX.
Farmers of the Rock:-Co-President John Doe, Farmer. Name of Farm. (608) XXX-XXXX.
Farmers of the Rock:-Co-President John Doe, Farmer. Name of Farm. (608) XXX-XXXX. More?

SHARING OF GRANT FUNDS

The allocation of grant and donated funds will be solely used by the Farmers of the Rock.

TERM OF UNDERSTANDING

Unless terminated earlier as provided below, the term of this MOU is for a period of 3 years from the execution of the MOU and may be extended upon written mutual agreement. It shall be reviewed annually to ensure that it is fulfilling its purpose and to make any necessary revisions.

TERMINATION

Either party may request termination by giving 60 days written notice to the other party.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Farmers of the Rock

Rock County Land Conservation Department

BY _____

BY _____

Name of authorized signatory, title

**Chris Newberry, Senior Conservation Specialist,
Official Grant Contact**

DATE _____

DATE _____

Rock County Land Conservation Committee

BY _____

Rich Bostwick, Chair

DATE _____