

**Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.**  
**Waters Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**September 21st, 2023**  
**Wood County River Block/Online**

**Attendees:** Ed Hernandez (Waushara); Joe Tomandl (Taylor); Denise Hilgart (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Dave Benson (Marquette); Reesa Evans (Member-at-Large); Amy Thorstenson (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Chris Hamerla (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Shane Wucherpfennig (Member-at-Large); Kendra Kundinger (Wood).

**CALL TO ORDER:** Tomandl called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS:** No introductions. All familiar.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The July 2023 Minutes were approved unanimously upon a motion that was made by Benson and seconded by Hernandez.

**NEW PROJECTS:** The 12 County Regional AIS Program, and a required resolution, is the only project. Since Wood County hired its own AIS Coordinator, the number of counties involved was amended from 13 counties to 12 counties. A motion was made by Wucherpfennig, which was seconded by Hernandez, to approve the amended project and send it to the full council. Motion carried unanimously.

**COUNTY AND STAFF UPDATES:**

**Hamerla/Thorstenson:** Work is being done for the planning of AIS contracts with counties for next year. AIS grants for this year are being wrapped up now that the field season has ended. Since Wood County has its own AIS employee, there will be one less county contract for next year. Hamerla said the AIS staff have done more educational events this year than in previous years. He will be attending the waterfowl convention this weekend. AIS staff participated in the Snapshot WI day. The event was covered by Channel 9 from Wausau. The CBCW season has also ended. The invasive flowering rush was found above Petenwell Lake, which is the farthest north it has been found. Colton Wolosek left his position at Golden Sands RC&D to take a position in the Adams County Land & Water Conservation Office. Hamerla reported that the boat that was purchased last year has been used for at least six projects this year. The WDNR has now added Golden Sands RC&D to its list of companies that conduct point intercept aquatic plant surveys.

**Adams:** Evans reported that the first round of private well testing was completed. Next year, additional towns will be added for testing. In the last year, the Tri-Lakes Management District received permits for at least two rounds of killing Canadian geese. Now there is a proposal to kill the deer in the area as well. Evans did a point intercept aquatic plant survey on Peppermill lake two years ago and found very little of the invasive Eurasian Watermilfoil. She recently took field samples from several points in the lake and found that all the samples were native milfoil. The Adams County Fire District hosted a three-day water rescue event for the volunteer firefighters in the county, which was led by specialists from Oklahoma.

**Marathon:** The Athens Fair is a big event in the county. This was its 119th year.

**Marquette:** Benson reported that the county is expanding its testing of private wells for nitrates. An e-waste collection effort was held last weekend; 39,700 pounds of such waste was

collected. The county got a grant from the WDNR that covered most of the costs. The company that took the waste also paid some funds to the county, so there was overall little cost to the county. Due to the drought, the third hay cropping was light. It is also expected that corn and soybean production will be substantially less than prior years, even if a farm is using irrigation.

**Taylor:** Tomandl reported that the county, like many Wisconsin counties, is having a very dry year. It started affecting the crops in the fields and streams have dried up in some areas. The county is continuing its popular private well testing program. About 100 private landowners participated this year. About half of them added testing for metals to the basic homeowner testing kit. A conservation tech was hired for the LWCD office and will start next week.

**Waushara:** Hernandez reported that a long-standing manure storage violation was finally settled. The landowner removed the storage facility instead of upgrading it to comply with the requirements. Some private landowners were chosen to be a part of a five-year study to see how nitrate levels may change. A drone is being used to review several no-wake lakes. His department has requested that the county use some of its pandemic funding to purchase a no-till drill for \$50,000.

**Wood** Wucherpennig reported that the LWCD wrapped up its private well testing, but will still be offering private well testing for nitrates if requested. The county is hoping to coordinate with the other counties in the multi-county groundwater organization, to develop a standard testing protocol that will provide statistics and develop plans to move forward with nitrate issues. Pandemic funds have been used recently, but these will not be available again, so alternative funding may be needed. Manure storage plans are required for farms having 1000 head, but those with less than 1000 have not been developing appropriate methods for safe storage. However, if such farms are found to be improperly storing manure, owners can be required to develop a plan. Funding for Stage 2 of the Mill Creek 9 Key Element Plan has been approved for \$600,000. There is an active producer-led group. An innovation grant has been applied for. The LWCD has requested that some of the county's pandemic funds be used for items like a drone, installation of reverse osmosis systems for wells high in nitrates, etc., but the county board has not responded.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Hernandez, which was seconded by Wucherpennig, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reesa Evans  
Recording Secretary