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Department completes project to bring electricity to more campsites

By: Melissa Vanlanduyt, Bureau of Parks and Recreation



A roll-up camper takes advantage of the electrical service available at Peninsula State Park. DNR Photo by Kelli Bruns

Over the course of the last 18 months, the Wisconsin State Park System completed campsite electrification projects at 18 properties including Kohler-Andrae, Big Foot Beach, Roche-A-Cri, Interstate, Devil's Lake, Peninsula, Wildcat Mountain, Yellowstone Lake, Kettle Moraine State Forest-Southern Unit, Kettle Moraine State Forest-Northern Unit, Rocky Arbor, Lake Kegonsa, Blue Mound, Richard Bong, Buckhorn, High Cliff, Point Beach and Hartman Creek. Electrical service was upgraded to 20/30/50 amp receptacles at 285 campsites, which eliminated all 15 amp service connectors within the park system. This project also added new 20/30/50 amp receptacle service to 192 campsites in state parks and southern forests.

The various projects were budgeted at \$1.85 million and ended up costing \$1.77 million for a savings of approximately \$86,000. Work at all 477 sites was completed and sites were open for reservation by July 1, the project deadline. Over 85 percent of sites were reservable and open to visitors by the project goal of May 24, the beginning of the Memorial Day weekend.

Staff teams at the above mentioned properties worked tirelessly to complete these projects over the last several months. Several employees at each property including visitor services assistants (VSAs), law enforcement, maintenance and managers were involved in all aspects of the project, working together to ensure success. They were involved from the beginning during project development, to the end of site restoration. Staff met with contractors on a regular basis and monitored project progress. They also spent a significant amount of time ensuring that visitors were safe, well informed and happy during the planning and construction process.



This RV plugged into one of the electrical pedestals available at Peninsula State Park this summer. DNR Photo by Kelli Bruns

There also were several employees involved behind the scenes making significant contributions to these projects, including land engineers **Ron Daggett**, **Randy Douglas** and **Chris Rehlinger**; parks central office staff **Dave Benish** and **Joe Warren**; and Department of Administration staff Dean Whitley, Butch Boettcher and Mik O'Connor. Thanks to the dedication of these people over the 18 months of the project, it was done on time and under budget, and it was a complete success.

Footnote: *Melissa Vanlanduyt is a capital development specialist.*

Summer monitoring team collects samples for national/statewide stream study

By: Mike Miller and Julia Riley, Bureau of Water Quality

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A monitoring team from the Bureau of Water Quality is sampling stream sites across the state from July through September 2013 as part of U.S. EPA's "[National Rivers and Streams Assessment](#)" (NRSA). The study will use data from randomly-selected sampling sites to help characterize the condition of all flowing waters in the United States.



(Left to right) Mike Miller, Nick Ostrowski, Ben Balika, April Marcangeli and Camille Bruhn prepared sampling equipment. DNR Photo Similar to a political poll, a relatively small number of random samples can be used to characterize a much larger population. Each of the 1,800 nationwide random sites will be sampled once to collect data on physical habitat, water chemistry, enterococci, periphyton, macroinvertebrate, fish population and fish tissue mercury using EPA protocols.

The Water Quality monitoring team will sample a total of 25 NRSA wadeable stream sites in Wisconsin. Staff also will sample an additional 25 randomly-selected stream sites to develop a statistically-valid characterization of the state's entire wadeable stream population. In addition to the NRSA sampling parameters, with support from EPA Region 5, streambed sediment samples from all 50 WI sites will be analyzed for nutrients, metals, pesticides, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

Nested within the EPA's NRSA study, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is conducting an intensified survey of NRSA stream sites in 2013 that are located within the Temperate Plains Ecoregion (a.k.a. the Corn Belt), which includes most of Iowa, Illinois, Missouri and parts of South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky and southeastern Wisconsin. The USGS's Midwest Water Quality Assessment is comprised of 200 random and targeted (hand-picked) wadeable stream sites. Six USGS Temperate Plains Ecoregion sites are located in Wisconsin (See map. The southeast and western regions each contain a smaller region.)

The Temperate Plains Ecoregion is the major contributor of pollutants to the Mississippi River and Gulf of Mexico. U.S. EPA and state crews will sample the Temperate Plains sites' habitat and biology will be sampled by. USGS staff will sample water chemistry 12 times over the course of the summer to better quantify sediment, nutrient, pesticide, and pathogen concentrations and loadings.



(Left to right) Peggy Donnelly (EPA quality assurance officer) and DNR's Ben Balika and Nick Ostrowski collected macroinvertebrate and periphyton samples. DNR Photo

Understanding nutrient loadings to the Mississippi River is essential for identifying factors leading to the development of the Gulf Hypoxia or "dead zone" in the Gulf of Mexico. The hypoxic zones that develop in the Gulf with low to no oxygen are caused by excessive nutrient loadings from agriculture and other human activities. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration forecast models are predicting a large, record-setting hypoxic zone this summer. See ["NOAA, partners predict possible record-setting dead zone for Gulf of Mexico."](#)

Mike Miller in the Bureau of Water Quality's Monitoring Section is the principal investigator, and the field crew is comprised of **Camille Bruhn** (crew leader), **April Marcangeli**, **Nick Ostroski** and **Ben Balika**. In 2014, the department plans to sample 27 boatable rivers' sites for the NRSA, and perhaps 50 sites total for a statewide characterization of boatable rivers.

Footnote: *Mike Miller is a stream ecologist and Julia Riley is a water resources management specialist.*

Take a closer look into LifeMatters Employee Assistance Program services

By: Erin Gordon, Office of Communication

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Most employees are familiar with DNR's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which just marked 30 years of helping department employees cope with personal problems that may be affecting their job performance. Many may not be as familiar, however, with the relatively recent switch to a new external provider, LifeMatters, or aware of the complete range of free services provided.

LifeMatters EAP is responsible for providing counseling and work-life services, referral to local resources and reliable professional care to all State of Wisconsin employees, including LTEs. LifeMatters offers a 24/7/365 live-access

phone number, including full coverage on weekends and evenings. Counseling services offered over the phone or face-to-face include help for problems ranging from stress, depression and personal needs to family concerns or alcohol and drug addiction.

The [LifeMatters](#) website contains helpful information regarding emotional wellbeing and health; relationships; workplace services; and financial and legal resources. LifeMatters provides all of these services at no cost to employees and their family members, defined as anyone living in their household as well as dependent children living away from home, i.e. at college or serving in the military. Family members can use LifeMatters without the knowledge of employees.

Despite a new approach for a longstanding program, **Jeff Carroll**, EAP manager for DNR, explains that EAP continues to provide everything it has for the past 30 years, but even better now that LifeMatters is our provider. A change for DNR employees is that, for the most part, Carroll no longer directly assists employees and their families. Instead, he focuses on managing the LifeMatters contract, prevention, wellness, training and supervisory consultations. He remains the first point-of-contact if an employee files a Threat Incident Report, and coordinates those investigations.

LifeMatters offers a wealth of resources for employees and their family members

According to Carroll, all employees can benefit from LifeMatters. "With the stress and workload levels that all employees are under, which seem to increase as the years go by, it's really an advantage to have a service like this," says Carroll. "Employees and their families have the opportunity to talk in the privacy of an affiliated counselor's office in their geographic area, or on a confidential phone call with LifeMatters counselors in Waukesha". "LifeMatters offers a wonderful benefit for state employees. Not only can employees call at any time of the day or week, but all calls are answered by a licensed counselor with a Master's Degree, which is an enhancement in skill level over the state's prior provider. Ninety-one percent of the LifeMatters' team of counselors is a Certified Employee Assistance Professional, C.E.A.P. being the national professional 'gold standard' of the industry." LifeMatters counselors and affiliated therapists must follow the same federal and state confidentiality regulations and laws that all professional therapists or mental health care providers follow. Any contact with LifeMatters is confidential and DNR receives no individualized identifiable information. When an employee/family member calls 1-800-634-6433, counselors work immediately to problem-solve with them about issues that interfere with their work performance and/or home life.

LifeMatters' counselors are able to refer any employee/family member to one of 1,800 affiliated licensed therapists throughout Wisconsin. Through this referral, employees and family members are able to receive five free counseling sessions, including couples counseling, which is difficult to get from most health insurance plans and is a highly-used service.

In addition to their team of counselors, LifeMatters' has a wide variety of educational materials that can be found on their website. These materials, which include general and factual information, articles, assessments and FAQs, can be accessed anonymously, at no cost, by any employee/family member. Currently, there are 10 archived webinars that can be viewed at any time online. Employees/family can also find financial and legal information, including a free 30 minute consult with an attorney and free financial consultations.

Scott Webb, the State of Wisconsin account executive for LifeMatters, believes that all employees can benefit from

being familiar with LifeMatters' services and website. According to Webb, by accessing the information on the site, employees may find questions they didn't know they had and the resources available can be a tremendous help. Webb is working to support DNR's mission by fostering employee productivity. "Our mission is to promote work place and individual health, safety and productivity. EAP rests on the premise that employees who are healthy, getting their needs met and are dealing with their personal issues can come to work focused and productive," explains Webb. "We are trying to protect the company's human capital; we try to give them all the tools they need to be in the best position possible to be productive."

LifeMatters is an Empathia business, born and raised in Waukesha and is proud to serve over 38,000 Wisconsin employees and their families. "We really want to try to be as proactive as we can, let (agencies) know we're not just a vendor; we're a partner," says Webb. "We want to be a business partner to help you in your quest to be productive in your business and have healthy, safe and productive employees. That is our mantra."

The ultimate goal of EAP and LifeMatters is to continue ensuring support and help for all employees; be a point of contact for them and their families; and intervene in any problems affecting performance as soon as possible. "We all have personal problems at one time or another," says Carroll. "It's a normal part of life."

"LifeMatters is a really humane way to respond to the real life problems of people and prevent those problems from getting worse," said Webb. "It's a way of caring for people that work at DNR."

Here's how to get started with LifeMatters

- For more information on LifeMatters EAP, visit "[LifeMatters](#)" website and enter the password "SOWI" to access resources, educational information and self-service options.
- Check into the "[Upcoming WorkLife Balance Webinars](#)" website and use the password "SOWI" to log in.
- To speak to someone at LifeMatters, call 800-634-6433.
- Employees can find archived webcasts on a wide variety of work and personal topics on DNR's "[EAP Video Catalog](#)."

If you have any questions about LifeMatters EAP, call them at 1-800-634-6433 or contact Jeff Carroll at 608-266-2133.

Footnote: *Erin Gordon is a communication specialist.*

Wisconsin to receive research funds for Upper Midwest and Great Lakes

By: Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative news release

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The Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) is investing \$957,024 in funding this year to support four ongoing and five new stake-holder driven research projects targeting broad-scale natural resources issues across the upper Midwest and Great Lakes landscape.

"As members of the LCC community, state and federal natural resources agencies, along with private and non-profit partners are working side-by-side to address the most challenging stressors impacting our natural resources today," said Becky Humphries, LCC co-chair and Director of Ducks Unlimited, Inc.'s Great Lakes/Atlantic Region. "Climate change, habitat fragmentation, shifts in land-use – these are all big-ticket challenges that take our collective efforts to effectively address as a conservation community."

The following two Wisconsin existing research projects received a portion of \$440,155 in additional funding from the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes LCC this year:

- DNR and University of Wisconsin researchers “Regional Risk Assessment for Climate Vulnerable Terrestrial Species.” Scientists and natural resource managers are identifying “...priority terrestrial wildlife species that may be especially vulnerable to impacts of climate change.”
- Optimizing Connectivity in the Great Lakes Basin to Restore Native Fish Migrations While Controlling Invasive Species--University of Wisconsin Center for Limnology.

This year, LCC partners identified waterfowl conservation, climate and socio-economic impacts to fish habitat, State Wildlife Action Plan coordination, science communication, and stakeholder values to be among the top shared priority areas for science research.

“It’s critical that we pool our collective resources moving forward to ensure the most effective on-the-ground conservation and management,” said Dave Scott, LCC co-chair and assistant regional director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Midwest Region. “Landscape conservation means building shared objectives for conservation to achieve the best results across a broad geographic area, and basing those objectives on the best science available.”

The following new research proposals received \$516,869 in funding from the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes LCC this year:

- Assessment of Waterfowl Habitat Restoration as an Adaptive Mechanism for Water Sustainability in the Grand Kankakee River Watershed—University of Notre Dame Researchers with the University of Notre Dame.
- Toward Outcome-oriented Forest Conservation: Building Capacity and Momentum for Collaborative Management in the Northwoods--The Nature Conservancy.
- Integrated Models for Estimating Influences of Climate Change on Waterfowl Populations, Waterfowl Habitat, and Hunter Opportunity and Demographics--Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
- Delayed and reduced migration of waterfowl to traditional wintering areas has ecological, cultural and economic implications--Researchers with Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
- Facilitating the Effectiveness of State Wildlife Action Plans at Multiple Scales in the Upper Midwest Great Lakes LCC--Michigan Natural Features Inventory Researchers with the Michigan Natural Features Inventory.
- Assessing Threats to the Recovery of Imperiled Freshwater Mussels: Improving the Use of the Mussel Threats Geospatial Database and Investigating Water Quality Limiting Factors--U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Identifying Regional Priority Areas for Focusing Conservation Actions in Streams and Grasslands--Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

In addition to Wisconsin’s project, the following existing research projects received additional funding:

- Bridging Conservation Science and Management: Establishing a Great Lakes Information Management and Delivery System--The Nature Conservancy.
- Developing Fish Trophic Interaction Indicators of Climate Change for the Great Lakes--US Geological Survey, Great Lakes Science Center.
- Predicting Climate Change Effects on Riverine Aquatic Insects Using Museum Data and Niche Modeling - Illinois Natural History Survey.

You can read the full post for each project on the [“Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation](#)

[Cooperative \(LCC\)" website.](#)

"It's your DNR" comes alive through partnerships

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Hunting for Sustainability: Course for novice hunters now enrolling at Madison College

People who like to eat good food while supporting the environment and learning something about their state can register for a "Hunting for Sustainability" course being offered this fall.

"Natural resources conservation, sustainability and hunting naturally fit hand in hand," said **Keith Warnke**, DNR's hunting and shooting sports coordinator, who created the course. Since its launch in 2012, the course has grown in popularity and Warnke expects that more sections will be added.

"Hunting is an integral part of the fabric of Wisconsin life and a great source for locally-produced food," Warnke said.



Keith Warnke and a student from last year's class who familiarized himself with a non-functional firearm and practiced safe muzzle control so he'd be competent and safe when using the real thing. DNR Photo

The department, in partnership with Madison College, is offering at least two continuing education courses that aim to show how hunting plays into conservation and healthy living. Students will learn hunting skills, ethics, tools and techniques from experienced hunters. Students also may have the opportunity to participate in a mentored-deer or mentored-pheasant hunting experience.

Be a healthy eater and learn from experienced hunters

Warnke said the course's objective is to reach adults who've never had a chance to hunt to experience one of the state's oldest traditions. "There are barriers in knowledge and equipment needed to get started if you weren't raised a hunter. This course is an opportunity for adults to get started with guidance from experienced hunters."

The program is the result of a few pilot efforts--also known as Learn to Hunt events--aimed at recruiting adult

hunters. Learn to Hunt events have proven popular with kids and, in particular, with the children of hunters. "But when we offered them to adults, interest went through the roof," said Warnke.

"In particular, young adults have jumped at the opportunity. So we realize there is a demand to learn to hunt and last year offered this course to 20 people. This year we're expanding and hope to have even more courses coming soon."

Telephone registration is available through Madison College at 608-246-6210. The Madison College [fall 2013 course schedule](#) (class on page 14) is available on the Madison College website.

Park and business council team up to offer a wild happening

Peninsula State Park and the Ephraim Business Council are sponsoring "[Wild Wings, Wild Things](#)" featuring Chris Cold, wildlife technician in Ladysmith, this Friday July 26. If you're in the area, you might want to check out Cold's presentation and learn about the wildlife on hand (pun intended).

Around the state...DNR employees shine

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Central office success story

- "Tom (Joestgen), Thank you for meeting with **Maureen Ferry** and **Julia Riley** from the Bureau of Water Quality to discuss safety needs for the Aquatic Invasive Species monitoring program volunteers. You were extremely helpful in identifying safety requirements for our citizen volunteers and staff. Your willingness to purchase "red bags" containing a clipboard, safety orientation/overview checklist, gloves, eye protection and first aid kits for our AIS staff that coordinate volunteers really demonstrates your commitment to safety. We also appreciate your innovative approach to unique safety issues by supporting a trial project of purchasing high visibility swim wear for our AIS staff to enhance visibility/under water tracking of staff while snorkeling.

"Thank you so much for stepping forward so quickly with your assistance to help provide a safer work environment for our staff and volunteers during this summer's monitoring season." **Susan L. Sylvester**, *director, Bureau of Water Quality*

- "Hi **Bill (Cosh)**, I wanted to let you know that we had an excellent experience working with **Ben Pierson** on the [Wingshooting logo and flyer](#). He was fast, ultra responsive (sent me a version on a Sunday), and created superbly designed graphics of professional quality. I hope we get to utilize his talents in the future. Tim Lizotte, area wildlife supervisor

South Central Region success story

- To **Deb Rohrbeck**, information systems supervisor:

"Thank you again Chris:

"Deb, I just wanted you to know that **Chris Mattson**, regional information manager (RIM) out here in Fitchburg, time and time again has helped me times too numerous to count since I have been out at the Fitchburg Service Center. As you know, Chris is a long-time DNR employee.

"Chris just today helped me fix a critical problem that I have had for the last two days concerning Adobe Professional. Chris is always professional and easy to work with.

"Chris is very low key and modest which I in particular like. He does not talk down to people while he is helping you. Chris is diligent and is quite busy every day.

"Chris, you would be easy to take for granted; but I truly appreciate the excellent work that you do. Chris, I don't want to embarrass you but I think that you are an unsung hero.

"Thanks again, Chris! Keep up the great work! If I may be so bold as to say it, we at the Fitchburg Service Center depend on you! Sincerely, **John Condron**, Greater South Central Region Audit and Quality Assurance chemist, Fitchburg Service Center

• To **David Holmes**, warden supervisor: "Hello, Dave. I just wanted you to know that **Paul Nadolski** did an impressive job at the MacKenzie outdoor skills day on Saturday, July 13th. He assisted me in the air gun trailer and really saved the day.

The line of "shooters" formed at 9:00 am and did not let up until just after 2:00 pm. Paul sensed that my stress level was rising and jumped right in. He remained highly professional and patient throughout the day. He even stayed to help dismantle the trailer knowing that he was headed somewhere afterward to assist with boating detail.

"Most shooters had never shot anything previously and many were very young. (4-5 years old and maybe younger) They all had a great time and several returned more than once to shoot the guns. The event had the highest attendance ever and was an overwhelming success.

"I am very thankful that Paul was able to assist." *Derek Duane, retired, MacKenzie Environmental Education Center manager*

"Paul thanks for the good work. It has not gone unnoticed!

"Great job!" *David Holmes, conservation warden supervisor*

Statewide success story

"**Eric (Lobner)**: Regretfully I will not be able to make this final DTR meeting. I want to take a minute to let you know how impressed I am with this whole process. Getting a chance to have input in our deer seasons is a rare and special privilege and to do it with the full cooperation of the DNR staff is something I would have never expected.

The cooperation and eagerness to have us work with them has been quite commendable. I am also very impressed with all of the extra organizational effort that had to be put forward to make the already huge task of implementing the DTR a success. The work that **Scott (Roepke)**, **Jeff (Pritzl)** and **others** have done to make our ideas a workable plan needs to be noted as well.

"I have been keeping the members of the Wisconsin Traditional Archers informed on the process as they are very interested in it. We have been well represented with four members attending the DTR meetings and appreciate the opportunity.

"I look forward to following the progress of all of the recommendations and thank you again for the opportunity to be a part of it." Sincerely, *Greg Szalewski, president, Wisconsin Traditional Archers*

Follow-up from Division of Land Administrator **Kurt Thiede**: "Great work folks!"

From Executive Assistant **Scott Gunderson**: "I second that. Thanks for your great work on this!"

Dane County's first case of human West Nile virus reported for this year

By: Department of Health Services news release, July 22, 2013

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Increased number of dead birds found with the virus.

State and local health officials announced today that the first human case of West Nile virus (WNV) was diagnosed in a Dane County resident. Health officials are reminding people to protect themselves against mosquito bites. This is the first case of human WNV illness reported in the state during 2013. During 2012, 57 Wisconsin residents developed symptomatic WNV infection, and five of these reported cases occurred among Dane County residents. As part of the surveillance effort, residents are encouraged to report sick or dead crows, blue jays and ravens to the Dead Bird Hotline at 1-800-433-1610.

Officials also confirmed that statewide 10 dead birds have tested positive for WNV so far this season. The birds were found in nine counties: Chippewa, Dunn, Fond du Lac, Jefferson, Oneida, Rock, Vilas, Washington and Wood. Infected birds serve as an early warning by indicating that WNV is present in an area, underscoring the need for residents to protect themselves against mosquito bites.

The likelihood of contracting WNV infection is low and most people infected with the virus won't have symptoms. Those who do become ill may develop a fever, headache, rash, muscle and joint aches, nausea, vomiting and fatigue that can last a few days. Symptoms may begin three to 15 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. In rare cases, WNV can cause severe disease including encephalitis and meningitis. Severe symptoms include high fever, muscle weakness, stiff neck, disorientation, mental confusion, tremors, convulsions, paralysis and coma. Older adults and people with compromised immune systems are at an increased risk of severe disease caused by the virus.

There is no specific treatment for WNV infection other than to treat its symptoms. If you think you have WNV infection, contact your healthcare provider.

WNV is spread to people through the bite of an infected mosquito and isn't transmitted person to person. Although few mosquitoes actually carry the virus, it is important to take steps to minimize your exposure during mosquito season:

- Limit time spent outside at dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active.
- Apply insect repellent to clothing as well as exposed skin because mosquitoes may bite through clothing.
- Make sure window and door screens are in good repair to prevent mosquito entry.
- Properly dispose of items that hold water, such as tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or discarded tires to prevent mosquito breeding. Turn over wheelbarrows, wading pools, boats and canoes when not in use.
- Clean roof gutters and downspouts for proper drainage.
- Change the water in birdbaths and outdoor pet dishes at least every three days.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas, and hot tubs; drain water from pool covers.
- Trim tall grass, weeds and vines because mosquitoes use these areas to rest during hot daylight hours.
- Landscape to prevent water from pooling in low-lying areas.

The Department of Health Services and Public Health—Madison and Dane County will continue surveillance activities for West Nile virus in dead birds until October.

For more information regarding West Nile virus in Wisconsin, visit the Department of Health Services "[West Nile virus](#)" website.

For WNV information in Dane County, call Public Health—Madison and Dane County at 608-266-4821.

Attorney general will host 2013 public records and open meetings seminars

By: Office of the Attorney General news release, July 24, 2013

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Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen invites the public and government officials to “save the date” to attend upcoming Department of Justice seminars on the public records and open meetings laws. Registration will open on September 3.

Online registration will be on the [Department of Justice](#) website. Pre-registration is required, and it’s recommended that anyone who is interested in the free seminars with assistant attorneys general register early because space will be limited.

Save the date for the following Public Records and Open Meetings Laws seminars:

- **October 11, 2013:** 9 a.m. to noon, American Family Training Center Auditorium, [Building A, 6000 American Family Drive](#), Madison
- **October 29, 2013:** 9 a.m. to noon, Waukesha County Technical College [Richard T. Anderson Education Center](#), 800 Main Street, Pewaukee

Webinar presentation on Public Records Law and Open Meetings Law offered in two parts:

- **October 31, 2013:** Open Meetings Law 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.; Public Records Law 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Each 90-minute webinar session will be followed by a question and answer period. A webinar is an interactive audio-visual presentation viewed live over the Internet from the participant’s personal computer.

Registration information for the seminars and more information about how to connect to the webinar will follow as the program dates approach. Anyone with questions about attending a seminar should email [Connie Anderson](#) or call her at 608-266-3952. You also can print a [“Save the Date” flyer](#).

Exotic lone star tick making a home in Wisconsin

By: University of Wisconsin-Madison news release, July 22, 2013

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It's shaping up as a summer like no other for ticks across Wisconsin - including the strongest contingent yet of a bloodsucker new to the state. The lone star tick, an interloper from the south, has appeared in at least half a dozen Wisconsin counties, according to University of Wisconsin-Madison entomology professor Susan Paskewitz.

"The signs are telling me that they are close to established if not already established in the southern part of the state," said Paskewitz, who has spent much of the summer surveying tick populations around Wisconsin. "I took one off my daughter recently. My staff picked up two working at the UW Arboretum, and I picked one up in Price County, which is surprisingly far north."



Lone star tick

Named for the identifying single white splotch on the back of female lone star ticks, *Amblyomma americanum* has a large range from Texas in the southwest to Maine in the northeast. It hasn't been considered a Wisconsin resident, but that may change.

"It's important as a public health issue," Paskewitz said. "Doctors should know that we are finding *Amblyomma* adults and nymphs - which are more of a concern, because they are so small - around the state."

Lone star tick bites can transmit bacteria that cause conditions such as human monocytic ehrlichiosis, a potentially debilitating and dangerous disease characterized by fever, muscle aches and fatigue.

"There is also a more rare reaction to *Amblyomma* in which a bite makes some people develop an allergy to red meat," Paskewitz says. "That would probably bother a lot of people in Wisconsin."

The issue with the more common ehrlichiosis is that its symptoms are not necessarily uncommon, even in other tick-borne infections such as Lyme disease. That makes identification and tracking of specific tick species important.

"Some of these things, you get sick with them and tests come back negative because we aren't even looking for that type of infection," Paskewitz said. "The better the information we have about where these ticks are and in what number, the more informed people and their doctors will be."

Paskewitz is asking anyone who encounters a lone star tick to send her lab a photo or the actual arachnid.

"If you can get a picture or the actual lone star tick, we could use the specimens and locations where they were found," she said. "Just drop the tick in a sealed plastic bag and freeze it or heat it up on your dashboard in the sun." Instructions for identification and submission are available at Paskewitz' ["Wisconsin Ticks and Tick-borne Diseases"](#) website.

Lone star ticks may be more aggressive than most of the roughly 15 tick species in Wisconsin. "They'll crawl right after you," Paskewitz said, "They don't wait for you to come to them." But they are not any more dangerous.

The much smaller and more common deer tick remains more likely to pass on an infection to people enjoying Wisconsin's outdoors. And the deer tick is really enjoying the summer of 2013.

"I've never seen this many deer ticks," said Paskewitz, who conducts surveys by dragging meter-square swatches of white fabric for short distances through woods, lawns and prairies. "I'm picking up 30 of them at a time on drags all over the state.

It's showing up [in] urban parks in Madison, where we have not seen many before."

Pants and light-colored socks are a good start for anyone who will spend much time in shadier, cooler areas outdoors. Ticks, especially the lone star tick, are not fond of hot, sunny areas. And repellent is not a bad idea. "Sprays with DEET will repel them, and permethrin will kill them," said Paskewitz, who treats her clothing with permethrin. "I'm not going to be out in the woods without that stuff. Getting some of these bacteria that use ticks as vectors can mean a lot of down time, or worse."

Links of interest...don't miss them

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Title & link: ["2013 Bill Tracker"](#)

Description: This document provides the status of DNR-related bills as they wind their way through the legislative process.

DNR internal program newsletters

To better keep you updated on the work and happenings of the various department programs, this standing feature brings you their internal newsletters.

Note to newsletter editors: Each issue of the "Digest" will include links to program newsletters. Be sure to submit new issues of your newsletter to "MyDNR Digest" Editor [Diane Brinson](#) for posting.

- ["Water Division Update July 2013"](#)
- ["SER Tales & Trails"](#) (Southeast Region's newsletter)
- ["AWaRe" Division of Air, Waste and Remediation & Redevelopment](#) bi-monthly newsletter
- ["Landscapes"](#) (Division of Land)

["Land Division Newsletters"](#) (archives)

- ["Just in CAES"](#)
- ["The ForesTREEporter"](#)
- ["WDNR Wildlifer"](#)

[Bureau of Wildlife Management publications](#), including "Wildlifer" archives