

**RESOLUTION
ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

GROUNDWATER
NITRATE WORKGROUP
INITIATED BY



CHRISTOPHER NEWBERRY
DRAFTED BY

BOARD OF HEALTH AND
AND CONSERVATION
COMMITTEE
SUBMITTED BY

MARCH 16, 2020
DATE DRAFTED

Extending the Deadline for the Workgroup to Study the High Nitrates Levels
in Rock County's Groundwater

1 **WHEREAS**, the level of nitrates in Rock County's groundwater has increased over the past two decades
2 in private and public wells, with over 30% of the county wells exceeding the drinking water nitrate health
3 advisory of 10 mg/L; and,
4

5 **WHEREAS**, the County Board of Supervisors passed resolution 17-5A-282 during their May 11, 2017
6 County Board meeting establishing a workgroup composed of the following representatives, Public
7 Health, Land Conservation, Planning and Development, UW Extension, a representative from the
8 Agricultural Service Sector, two at large County Board members and one Farmer currently working with
9 a research project overseen by UW-Discovery Farms to commence research on nitrate reduction strategies
10 that are available; and,
11

12 **WHEREAS**, the County Board of Supervisors passed resolution 17-11D-412 during their
13 November 16, 2017 County Board meeting extending the deadline of the workgroup until
14 December 31, 2020; and,
15

16 **WHEREAS**, with the afore mentioned extension, the workgroup was to complete its tasks of compiling
17 existing well water nitrate data, evaluating nitrate sources, and researching groundwater nitrate reduction
18 initiatives and strategies being conducted in other parts of Wisconsin and the United States. After the
19 tasks were completed, the Workgroup was to make recommendations to the County Board regarding the
20 groundwater nitrate issues; and,
21

22 **WHEREAS**, after numerous meetings regarding the aforesaid tasks it was determined by the workgroup
23 that additional data from the pilot project and other locations within Rock County, are necessary to make
24 reasonable assessment of nitrate reduction strategies; and,
25

26 **WHEREAS**, the workgroup will not be able to meet the aforementioned deadline and requests the
27 County Board extend the existing deadline to December 31, 2025; and,
28

29 **WHEREAS**, the new deadline will allow the workgroup to continue developing, implementing,
30 monitoring and expand the small scale pilot projects to reduce nitrates in the groundwater through
31 implementation of Best Management Practices.
32

33 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Rock County Board of Supervisors in session this
34 13th day of August, 2020, approves the extension of the workgroup for the period of
35 December 2020 through December 2025 for the sole purpose of researching and developing
36 recommendations to decrease or reduce the rate of increase of nitrates entering Rock County's
37 Groundwater.

20-8A-056

Extending the Deadline for the Workgroup to Study the High Nitrates Levels in Rock County's Groundwater
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Respectfully submitted:

BOARD OF HEALTH

/s/ Louis Peer

Louis Peer, Chair

/s/ Dr. Donnie Winter

Dr. Connie Winter, DDS, Vice Chair

/s/ Doug Wilde

Doug Wilde

/s/ Shirley Williams

Shirley Williams

/s/ Danette Rynes

Danette Rynes

/s/ Eric Gresens

Eric Gresens, R. PH

/s/ Dr. Kaitlyn Meyers

Dr. Kaitlyn Meyers, DVM, MPH

Absent

Dr. Vijaya Somaraju, MD, MPH, FACP

/s/ Debra Kolste

Debra Kolste

LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

/s/ Richard Bostwick

Richard Bostwick, Chair

/s/ Alan Sweeney

Alan Sweeney, Vice Chair

/s/ Stephanie Aegerter

Stephanie Aegerter

/s/ Wes Davis

Wes Davis

/s/ Kaelyb Lokrantz

Kaelyb Lokrantz

/s/ Mike Mulligan

Mike Mulligan

/s/ James Quade

James Quade, USDA-FSA Representative

/s/ Jeremy Zajac

Jeremy Zajac

FISCAL NOTE:

Per County Board Rule IV-C, County Board Supervisors who are members of additional special, single purpose or ad hoc committees are eligible for per meeting allowances and mileage reimbursement. Citizen members of such committees shall be eligible for mileage reimbursement only.

/s/Sherry Oja

Sherry Oja
Finance Director

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

Recommended.

/s/Josh Smith

Josh Smith
County Administrator

LEGAL NOTE:

The County Board is authorized to take this action pursuant to §§ 59.01 & 59.51, Wis. Stats. Per County Board Rule IV-C., ad-hoc or single purpose board related committees may only be established with the approval of the County Board for specific purposes and term.

/s/ Richard Greenlee

Richard Greenlee
Corporation Counsel

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This resolution requests County Board approval to extend the deadline for the established Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup as per County Board Resolution 17-5A-282. The original deadline was set for December 31, 2017 and was extended in 2017 until December 31, 2020. The Land Conservation Committee and Board of Health along with the committees represented on the workgroup request the deadline be extended to December 31, 2025 to continue:

Obtaining necessary data from monitoring the groundwater at the nitrate reduction project located on the County farm and expand the project into other watersheds where data is required to make rational assessments;

The establishment of the Farmer Led Groundwater Group furthering the communication of BMPs to landowners throughout the county and whereby gaining additional data;

Develop a 9 Key Element Plan with the DNR to improve nitrate reduction strategies; and

Partnering with the NRCS to implement BMPs to reduce nitrates in groundwater through a newly acquired Source Water Protection Project in Turtle Creek watershed, along with a planned National Water Quality Initiative in the Southeast portion of the County and examining groundwater responses.

Continuation of the Workgroup will allow it to refine its recommendations of nitrate reduction in the County's groundwater aquifers.

The workgroup is currently meeting four to six times a year to review updates, appraise progress, and guide county departments on pending actions.