

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Public invited to share priorities for water quality standards

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Public survey available until August 7

MADISON - Where should state environmental officials focus efforts to protect surface water quality in Wisconsin over the next three years?

State officials are seeking public input on 22 water quality standard topics for Wisconsin lakes and rivers related to the protection of public health, recreation, fish and other aquatic communities.

This process, which occurs every three years, is called the triennial standards review. The topics under consideration address things such as levels of pollutants, algae and nutrients as well as guidance for implementing water quality criteria.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is proposing to revise some existing standards because of new information on certain contaminants and to reflect changes in federal or state regulations. Also under consideration is the development of standards for certain emerging contaminants that may need to be monitored and controlled to protect people and the environment.

Any actual changes to standards must be approved by the Natural Resources Board, the Wisconsin Legislature and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

There are many potential standards-related topics that may benefit from a review under this process. However, due to limited resources, not all of the changes can be addressed at the same time. To help prioritize which standards and policies should receive attention first, DNR is asking for input from the public.

Stakeholders are invited to comment on the standards-related topic priorities through August 7, 2014 through an online survey tool. The goal of the survey is to determine which surface water quality standards and policies the public most strongly wants to see reviewed or developed in the next three years. The Public Ranking Survey and topic descriptions are available by searching the DNR website dnr.wi.gov for "[triennial standards review](#)."

After the survey, DNR will use the public priorities and DNR's internal rankings to prepare a final list of topics for 2015-2017 as required under the Clean Water Act. The DNR will use that final priority list to plan its work over the ensuing three years and each topic will be addressed as resources allow.

A public hearing will be held on July 30, 2014 from 10 to 11 a.m. This hearing is for citizens to comment on or ask questions about the process and the topics presented. Anyone who would like to participate is invited to join online through a webinar using the link posted on the DNR website, or in person at the State Natural Resources Building, 101 S. Webster St., Madison, in Room 313 after signing in at the visitor's desk.

Questions or comments on the triennial standards review process should be directed to Ashley Beranek by calling 608-267-9603, e-mailing ashley.beranek@wisconsin.gov, or mailing to Wisconsin DNR WT/3, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Ashley Beranek (608) 267-9603; Brian Weigel (608) 266-9277

The Official Internet site for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

101 S. Webster Street . PO Box 7921 . Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7921 . 608.266.2621