

WAPA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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A. Update on Wisconsin's Primary Elections

The results of Wisconsin's September 12, 2006 primary elections have been certified by the State Elections Board, and candidates for the general election on November 7, 2006 are available for review. The Legislative Reference Bureau has published a convenient brief listing all of the candidates, their incumbent status, their party affiliations, their addresses and the offices they are seeking to fill, both at the state and federal level. This brief can be found at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lrb/pubs/wb/06wb14.pdf>

B. Study Committee on State Trails

The Study Committee on State Trails held a preliminary meeting on October 5, 2006. The agenda for this meeting consisted of general member introductions, distributed background materials and presentations by invited speakers on a number of general topics. Included in the background materials were a Memorandum on State Statutes and Administrative Rules Related to Trails, prepared by the Legislative Council, a publication on Funding for Wisconsin Trails, prepared by the Department of Natural Resources, a spreadsheet of Wisconsin State Trails, the 2005-2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, prepared by the Department of Natural Resources, and other documents on the economic impact of tourism in Wisconsin. Presentations were made by by Brigit Brown, State Trails Coordinator, Bureau of Parks and Recreation, and Larry Freidig, Financial Assistance Specialist, Bureau of Community Financial Assistance at the Department of Natural resources. All of these documents, including the minutes of the meeting and audio files, are available at: http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/3_COMMITTEES/special%20COMMITTEES/2006/TRAIL/index.htm

The next State Trails Study Committee meeting will incorporate a public hearing and will be held in Merrill, Wisconsin on November 10, 2006. The agenda for this meeting will focus on public testimony regarding current state trail use policy and committee discussion of potential modifications to state trail use policy.

C. Study Committee on Great Lakes Water Resources Compact

The Great Lakes Water Resources Compact Study Committee met for the second time on October 4, 2006. As in their first meeting, the Committee continued to solicit information on state law regarding water withdrawals and diversions, and the duties of states party to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact. The Committee also received and reviewed information on the flexibility of party states in implementing the Water Resources Compact, various authorities for new or increased withdrawals and diversions from the Great Lakes, and factual findings on regional groundwater modeling for southeastern Wisconsin. Advocating for the withdrawal of Lake Michigan surface water, the Waukesha Water Utility presented a position statement arguing that such a withdrawal is authorized under the proposed Annex 2001 Agreement.

The Committee also heard from two hydrogeologists regarding the proposed withdrawals, and continued to discuss options available to those parties seeking to withdraw or divert water from the Great Lakes Basin. All of the documents considered by the Committee, including the minutes of the meeting and audio files, are available at: http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/3_COMMITTEES/special%20COMMITTEES/2006/GLAKE/index.htm

The next Great Lakes Water Resources Compact Study Committee meeting will be held at the State Capitol on November 13, 2006. The agenda for this meeting includes presentations on the Great Lakes hydrology and water conservation and efficiency programs, and will involve discussions on water resource inventory, registry of withdrawals and diversions, baseline volume determination, and alternates and advisors to the Governor, as Wisconsin's member of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Council.

D. Update on Other Study Committees

Some of the other Study Committees that WAPA members have expressed an interest in include the following:

- **Disaster Preparedness Planning**
- **Navigability and Draining Ditches**
- **Nuclear Power**
- **Placement of Sex Offenders**
- **Review of State School Aid Formula**

All of the Committees listed above have met at least once since their formation at the end of the regular session, except for the Study Committee on Navigability and Drainage Ditches. This Committee is scheduled to meet for the first time at the State Capitol on November 16, 2006. The agenda for its initial meeting will include organizational matters, introduction of Committee members, presentations by the Department of Natural Resources and affected landowners regarding determination of navigability, and a discussion of Committee assignment.

The agendas, meeting minutes, documents and audio files for the other Study Committees can be reviewed at the Legislative Council's 2006 Study Committee Website: http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/3_COMMITTEES/special%20COMMITTEES/2006/2006_special_committees.htm This website also provides the scope of study for each Committee, notices of future Committee meetings and the proposed agendas for same.

E. Economic Outlook Report

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue released its quarterly economic outlook report last month. This report provides general information on the national, state and local (metropolitan) economic trends and discusses the outlook for same. The report contains insight that may be of use or interest to planners. A copy of the report can be viewed at: <http://www.dor.state.wi.us/ra/0608/0608okma.pdf>