



JERRY PETROWSKI

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

Senate Bill 252- Flood Risk Reduction Pilot Project

June 12, 2019

Good morning, members of the committee, and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on Senate Bill 252, which would provide needed funds to support a pilot program in Ashland County as they test natural flood reduction practices.

With heavy rainfall during the summer of 2018, many communities around the state experienced extensive damage amid historic floods. One of the areas hit hardest was in far northern Wisconsin where rising floodwaters damaged culverts and bridges, washed out roads, and caused an estimated \$88 million in damages.

While not all of this damage could have been avoided, improved stream and wetland conditions in the area could have played an important role in minimizing the impact. According to a 2018 study completed in Ashland County, there are a number of shovel-ready projects that could help to increase the natural flood storage capacity within the Marengo River Watershed, an area prone to flooding.

The natural infrastructure restoration practices are well-established in other states, but generally underutilized in Wisconsin. Demonstration projects of this sort are needed to show Wisconsin road crews, emergency service managers and resource professionals how and where they can increase natural flood storage capacity to protect vulnerable public infrastructure.

Senate Bill 252 would provide funds needed to support the design, implementation and evaluation of two to three demonstration projects to test natural flood reduction practices in Ashland County. The results of these projects would then be summarized and provided to the Legislature and to the Division of Emergency Management within the Department of Military Affairs to be used as templates and case studies as to how projects of these sorts can be further used around the state.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak on this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

29TH SENATE DISTRICT

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE
BETH MEYERS

Rep. Meyers Testimony for SB 252 in the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

Wednesday, June 12, 2019

10:00 AM

201 SE

Wisconsin State Capitol

Madison, WI

Senator Cowles and members of the committee, thank you for agreeing to hear this bill, and for giving me the opportunity to submit testimony on its behalf.

Senate Bill 252 was introduced in response to the historic flooding that the state of Wisconsin, including Northern Wisconsin, has recently experienced. The floods of June 2016 and August 2018 were extensive and they were deadly. Roads, culverts, bridges, railroad lines, and homes were damaged or even washed away by rising floodwaters. And more tragic than the physical damage—lives were lost.

We are all aware that natural disasters cannot be avoided, however there are proven ways to mitigate potential flood damage. Implementing natural infrastructure restoration projects increases the natural flood storage capacity of flood zones. Currently, there are natural infrastructure restoration practices that are well-established in other states, but generally underutilized in Wisconsin. Demonstration projects will show Wisconsin road crews, emergency service managers and resource professionals how and where they can increase natural flood storage capacity to protect vulnerable public infrastructure.

Senate Bill 252 would provide the much needed funds to support the design, implementation and evaluation of two to three demonstration projects to test natural flood reduction practices in Ashland County. The results of these projects would then be summarized and provided to the Legislature and to the Division of Emergency Management within the Dept. of Military Affairs.

I am hopeful that the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy will take into consideration the importance these demonstration projects will have not just for Northern Wisconsin but for the entire state as it relates to mitigating the damages associated with flooding.

Again, thank you for your consideration of this important proposal and I am hopeful that it will move swiftly through this Committee.



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Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy

2019 Senate Bill 252 *Flood Risk Reduction Pilot* *June 12, 2019*

Chairman Cowles and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on behalf of the Department of Natural Resources for informational purposes on Senate Bill 252, which provides funding for flood risk reduction pilot projects in Ashland County.

SB 252 provides \$150,000 during the 2019-21 biennium for DNR to, in turn, allocate to Ashland County to fund up to three projects that will test the effectiveness of wetland restoration flood risk mitigation practices.

Wetland restoration is an effective flood risk mitigation tactic and complements resilient infrastructure engineering practices as key elements of a comprehensive flood risk reduction strategy. Several other states are currently planning and evaluating wetland restoration practices as flood risk reduction measures.

In Wisconsin, Ashland County has partnered with the Wisconsin Wetlands Association to apply to FEMA's Advance Assistance program for a grant to fund planning work for implementing the flood risk reduction projects funded by this bill and is collaborating with wetland science professionals from across the country to design and implement a science-based approach to this study. DNR is a project partner and has committed up to 160 hours of in-kind technical support.

If successful, the results of these projects could lead to a change in state agency and local government strategies and approaches for comprehensive flood risk reduction. Implementing such practices on a larger scale could lead to a reduction in costs to the State of Wisconsin associated with major flood restoration activities.

The department is pleased to share this information and looks forward to working with all partners.

Thank you for your time, and for the opportunity to provide written comments on SB 252.



*Wisconsin Wetlands Association Testimony on SB 252
Presented by Erin O'Brien, June 12, 2019*

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our testimony in support of SB 252. Wisconsin Wetlands Association is a statewide, non-profit organization. This year marks our 50th anniversary of working to improve understanding of wetland resources and encourage wetlands conservation.

We are grateful for the opportunity we had to work with Representative Steineke and Senator Petrowski on this proposal, and are very pleased that it enjoys the support of additional co-sponsors from both houses and both parties. We also wish to thank Senator Cowles for scheduling this bill for a hearing so quickly after referral.

SB 252 was born from recommendations WWA brought to the legislature last year on opportunities to promote wetlands as solutions to the state's large and growing water management problems.

Done right, restoring wetlands can help improve water quality, recharge groundwater, reduce groundwater withdrawals, and reduce flooding, but we see very little use of wetland restoration for water management in Wisconsin today. Practices that we know from decades of experience are common in other states, are not yet well established in Wisconsin.

There are many reasons for this, but perhaps the greatest barriers are that our hazard and resource managers don't have the expertise and don't know how effective and inexpensive it can be relative to other interventions. Demonstration projects are needed to prove the concept of wetlands as solutions and to show resource managers, land use decision makers, and even individual landowners, what it looks like.

My organization is engaged in several place-based projects where we're working collaboratively with local governments and other stakeholders to evaluate ways that wetland and stream restoration practices can help address local water management concerns. One example is our work with the Village of Plover and the Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers to integrate wetland and floodplain restoration into watershed scale groundwater management efforts.

Another is our flood hazards work in the Lake Superior Basin. We got involved there after touring the area looking at culvert washouts following the 2016 floods. In those visits, we observed degraded stream and wetland conditions upstream from every damaged site. Essentially, widespread erosion was draining wetlands, disconnecting streams from floodplains,

and sending the rain and snowmelt they were designed to hold straight downstream. We also discovered that the extent of this damage and how the loss of wetland storage contributed to flood damages was not well known. We secured a grant to document these observations and to encourage repairing these wetlands to reduce flooding.

This outreach led to a collaboration with Ashland County on a FEMA proposal to develop methods to assess the location and severity of degraded wetland storage and prioritize restoration projects to protect vulnerable infrastructure. Other project partners include the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, USGS, and Wisconsin DNR. Wisconsin Emergency Management has recommended the project for funding. If it moves forward, Ashland County will be Wisconsin's first community to include wetland restoration strategies in their Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The demonstration projects proposed in this bill, will prime the pump for plan implementation by helping the County work through the design and construction of flood risk reduction restoration practices. But what's learned from the both the FEMA assessment and the demonstration projects will be of great value to any Wisconsin community looking for additional cost-effective ways to reduce flood risks and damages.

Though the work conducted with this funding will focus on ways restoring wetlands and streams can help protect vulnerable transportation infrastructure, the restoration work itself will also benefit farmers and other landowners who are literally losing ground to gullies, headcuts, banks and bluff failures, and other erosive processes.

If this bill is enacted, WVA will support the project in a variety of ways, including helping Ashland County prioritize restoration sites among the many shovel-ready options, and advising on project design. We will also help ensure the sites fulfill their demonstration purpose by leading post-construction educational tours for hazard and resource managers, road crews, and others in a position to replicate the assessment and restoration methods in their communities. The flood hazards work we've done to date has already attracted statewide and national attention, suggesting interest in outcomes from these demonstration projects will also be high.

We will do our work on this project with support from our members and other funders as part of both our Lake Superior Basin-focused work and our broader local government outreach program. We will not request, nor would we accept, any of the funding appropriated to Ashland County by this bill as the intended use of this budget request is to support project engineering and construction.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony and would be happy to answer any questions you have about the need for or benefits of the proposed demonstration.

Erin O'Brien, Policy Programs Director / erin.obrien@wisconsinwetlands.org, 608-250-9971



Making a case for wetlands

Examining the link between wetland loss and flood damage

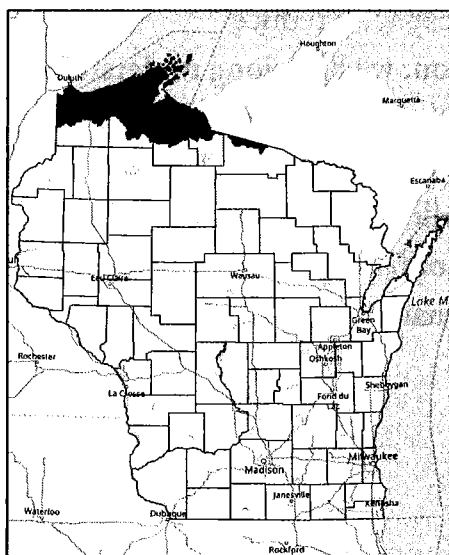
Can re-establishment of upstream wetlands and their water storage capacity reduce infrastructure damages like these? At Wisconsin Wetlands Association, we have long understood how the water storage capabilities of wetlands alleviate flooding problems. But limited awareness of how wetlands can protect infrastructure like this during heavy storms means communities aren't yet looking to wetlands as effective solutions to their water challenges. With a new case study, WWA hopes to change that. We examined how wetland loss contributed to damages, like the damage pictured here, during the large storm in northern Wisconsin in July 2016.

Between July 11 and 13, 2016, storms dropped a foot or more of rain across northern Wisconsin's Lake Superior Basin. Two people's lives were lost and more than \$35 million in damages were recorded: highways, culverts, and bridges washed out, and homes and businesses flooded. While storm-related damages are a common problem in the region, this storm was particularly severe.

At Wisconsin Wetlands Association (WWA), we have long understood that wetland loss and degradation can affect a landscape's ability to slow and capture floodwaters. But we had no clear, Wisconsin-based case studies to illustrate the consequences of wetland loss and why wetlands should be an important part of community planning and flood risk management.

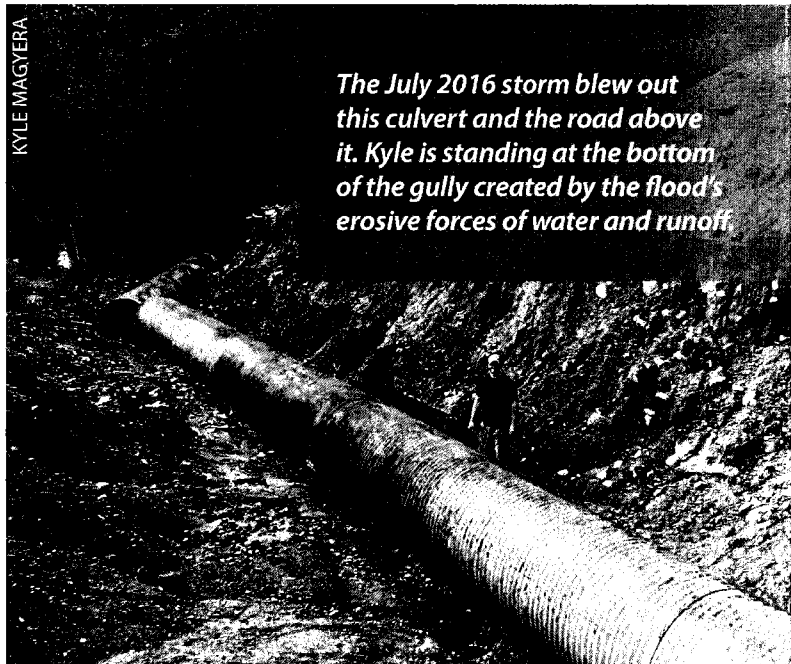
As tragic and damaging as the 2016 storm was, it also provided an opportunity to explore the relationship between wetlands and flood damages in the region. With support from the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, WWA Local Government Outreach Specialist Kyle Magyera coordinated an effort to examine how wetland loss and degradation likely contributed to infrastructure damages in the Lake Superior Basin following the storm.

The basin's water management challenges date back to the late 1800s when land was first cleared and drained to make way for farms, homes, roads, and more. More than a century of land use changes, combined with erosion-prone soils, have



The Lake Superior Basin, shown here in blue, was hit heavily by the July 2016 storm and became the focus of our project.

KYLE MAGYERA



The July 2016 storm blew out this culvert and the road above it. Kyle is standing at the bottom of the gully created by the flood's erosive forces of water and runoff.

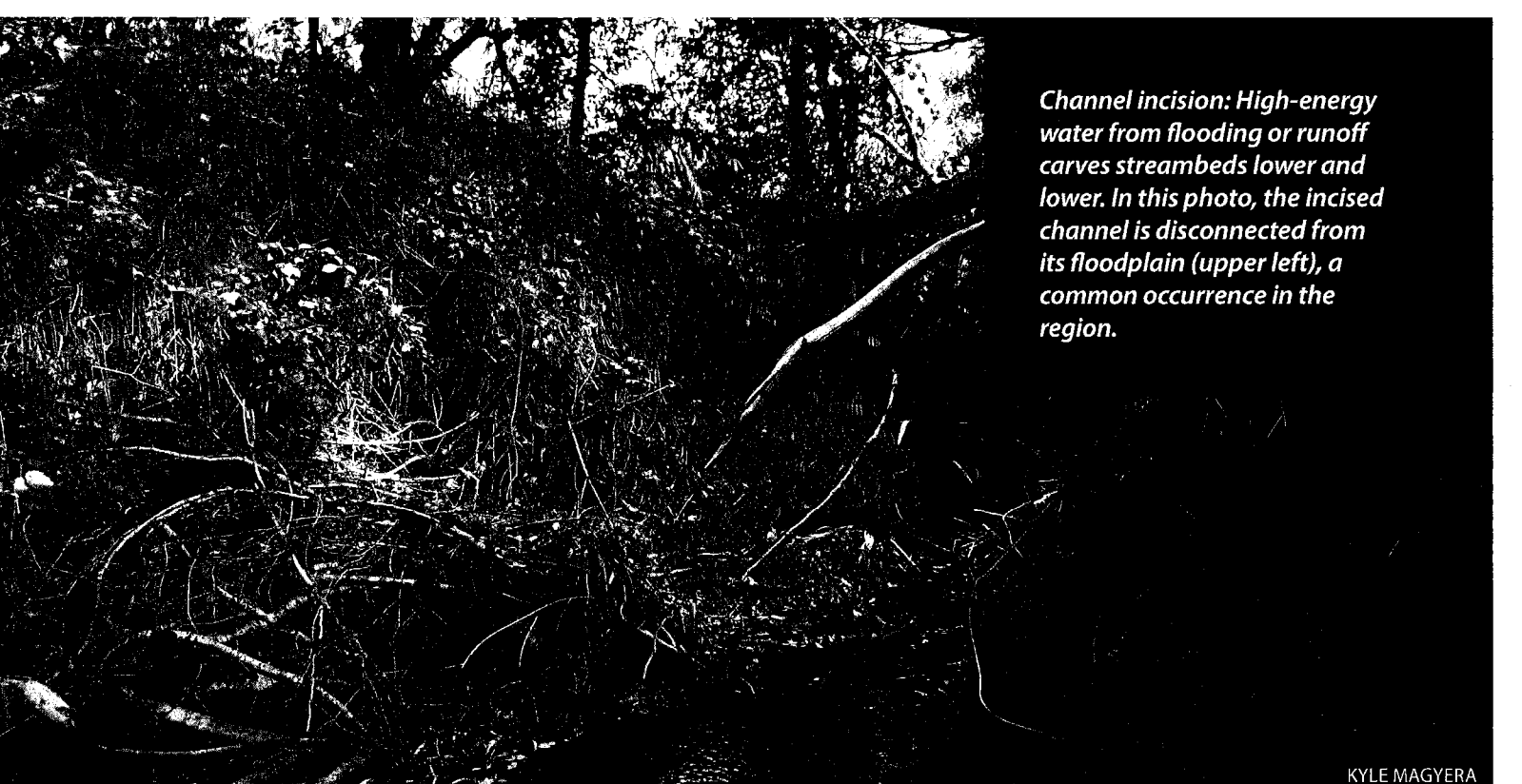
created a fragile landscape prone to flashy floods. To combat the rising flooding problem, regional resource managers have coordinated their watershed conservation activities under a strategy to “slow the flow” to address problems from rapid runoff (i.e. soil loss, erosion, and the delivery of sediment and nutrients to Lake Superior) by installing practices to slow the movement of water.

Though regional resource managers understand that wetland loss accelerates runoff, few communities have invested in locally-led wetland restoration projects to address flood risks. Our project highlights the need and opportunities for implementing wetland restoration practices as part of resource managers’ “slow the flow” strategy.

In a healthy watershed, wetlands protect against “flashy” water pulses by managing water across the landscape. For example, “isolated” wetlands in upper watersheds reduce runoff by capturing, storing, and allowing for infiltration of snowmelt and rainwater, while floodplain wetlands downstream capture and store water that overflows stream or riverbanks before slowly returning the water to the channel.

But the wetland landscape in Wisconsin's Lake Superior Basin is far from intact.

We launched our project expecting to find a strong relationship between upstream wetland losses and damage to downstream culverts, roads, and bridges, and we planned to produce maps to illustrate this relationship using existing data sets.



Channel incision: High-energy water from flooding or runoff carves streambeds lower and lower. In this photo, the incised channel is disconnected from its floodplain (upper left), a common occurrence in the region.

KYLE MAGYERA

We learned that wetland loss and degradation in portions of the basin was far more widespread than the data suggest. Wetlands were being fully or partially drained when erosive runoff carved channels through them. Runoff is also carving streambeds deeper, incising them, and disconnecting streams from their adjacent wetland floodplains, effectively draining the floodplain wetlands. But you wouldn't know it from looking at the existing wetlands maps.

We found that these and other types of erosion-induced wetland drainage were common across our study area, including adjacent to and upstream of most of the damaged infrastructure we examined.

Our findings are worrisome. The capacity of our wetland landscape to help manage, store, and slow the flow of water is more degraded than we originally thought and it's getting worse all the time. As wetland storage decreases, the energy of the water flow increases, causing even more erosion downstream. It's a strong negative feedback loop that renders the natural and built environments of the area less capable of handling rain and snowmelt with each passing storm.

But we also found hope. We found abundant opportunities in the basin to "slow the flow" and reduce flood risks and damages through simple

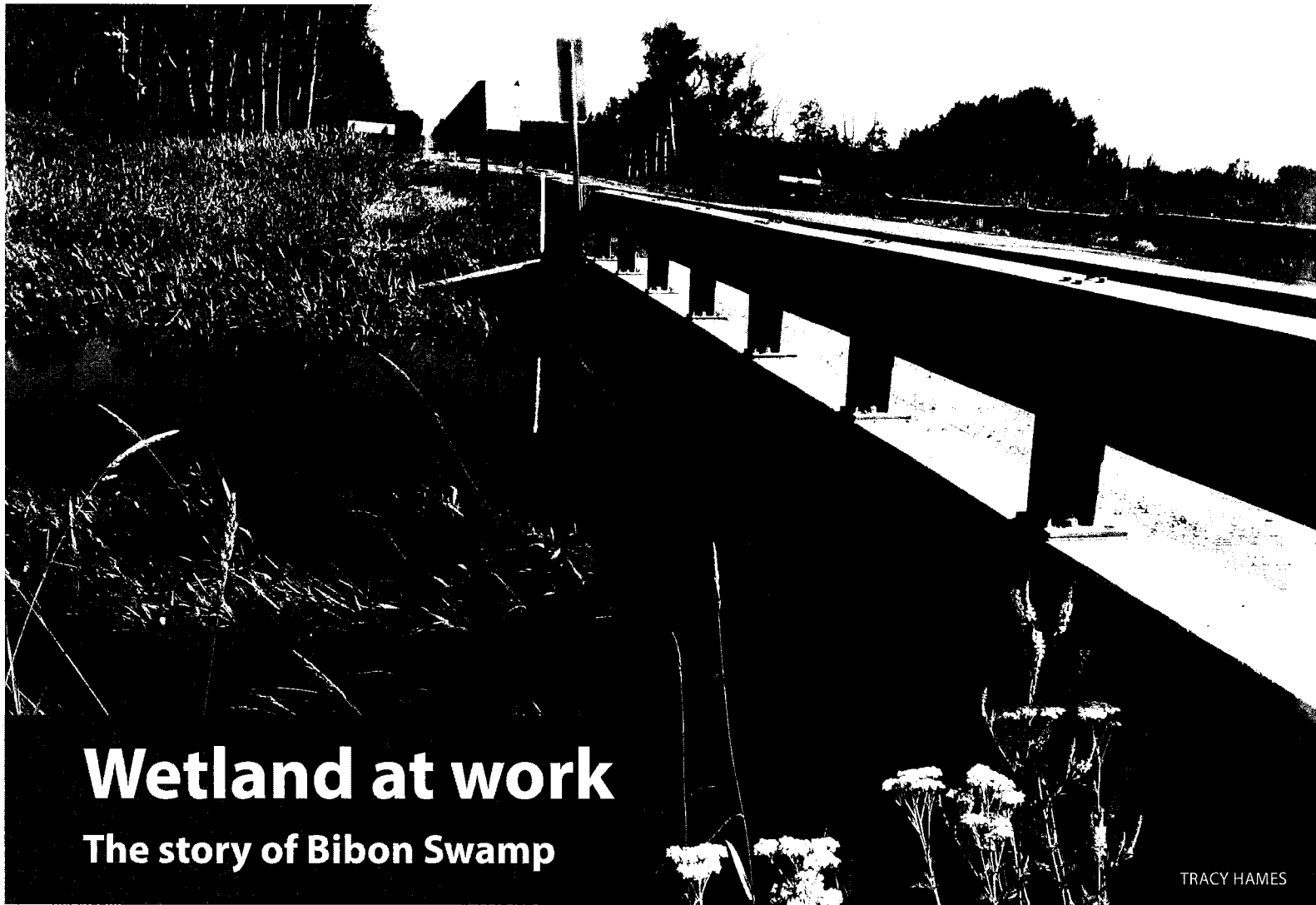
practices to restore healthy wetland and stream hydrology.

The next steps for our project include promoting our findings to increase local understanding of the extent and consequences of the erosion-induced wetland drainage we discovered. We will also be working with interested communities and landowners to install and evaluate wetland and stream restoration practices upstream of vulnerable infrastructure.

With heavy storms and rain predicted to increase across much of the region, efforts like this one are more imperative than ever for helping communities understand how healthy wetland landscapes make them more resilient to floods.

For more details on project goals, methods, findings, and next steps visit bit.ly/stormcasestudy





Wetland at work

The story of Bibon Swamp

TRACY HAMES

Amidst the devastation following the July 2016 storm in northern Wisconsin is a story of hope and wetlands at work embodied by Bibon Swamp, located in the upper portion of the White River watershed.

Considered “the best of what’s left,” Bibon Swamp is Bayfield County’s largest wetland complex. This Wetland Gem® is valuable not only because of its tremendous size but also because of its roadlessness (no roads bisect its core) making it a rare example of how a relatively undisturbed wetland landscape helps manage water in severe storms.

During the storm, Bibon Swamp soaked up more than 10 billion gallons of water. The waters of the White River that spread out across this 10,000-acre wetland rose nearly six feet at the flood’s peak, nearly touching the underside of the bridge pictured above (which usually arcs at least six feet above the swamp).

Instead of rushing downstream, storm runoff was absorbed by the swamp and slowly released over the following week. Locals speculate that, without the swamp, the floodwaters could have led to the failure of a hydroelectric dam located a just few miles downstream from the swamp, and communities downstream would have faced catastrophic damage had the dam failed.



Wisconsin Association for Floodplain,
Stormwater, & Coastal Management

Wisconsin Association for Floodplain, Stormwater and Coastal Management

WAFSCM's Mission and Purpose:

Wisconsin Association for Floodplain, Stormwater, and Coastal Management (WAFSCM) is the Wisconsin chapter for the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM).

The Wisconsin Association for Floodplain, Stormwater, and Coastal Management promotes the common interest in floodplain, stormwater, and coastal management to enhance cooperation between the various related private, local, regional, state, and federal agencies; and encourages and ensures effective, new and innovative approaches to managing the state's floodplain, stormwater, and coastal systems. Done right, approaches can reduce flood losses, support sustainable communities and economies and enhance natural ecosystem functions to benefit society

The organization was formed in 2000 and currently has over 200 members from all over the state of Wisconsin including the public, private and regulatory sectors.

WAFSCM Mission Statement

1. Promote public awareness of effective floodplain, stormwater, and coastal management;
2. Promote the professional status of individuals involved in floodplain, stormwater, and coastal management and secure all benefits resulting there from;
3. Promote liaison between individuals concerned with proper floodplain, stormwater, and coastal management and encourage the exchange of ideas;
4. Keep individuals concerned with proper floodplain, stormwater, and coastal management well informed through educational and professional seminars and provide a method for dissemination of information, both general and technical;
5. Inform concerned individuals of pending floodplain, stormwater, and coastal management legislation and other related floodplain, stormwater, and coastal management matters; and
6. Study and support legislation pertinent and necessary to the effective implementation of floodplain, stormwater, and coastal management matters.

State Issues

1. Awareness and education for Flood Risk Management
2. Working with Local Municipalities to reduce flooding impacts
3. Coastal Issues on Lake Michigan and Lake Superior (Primarily Bluff Erosion)
4. Funding for State and County Emergency Management (Matching Funds)
5. Funding for Floodplain Mapping—this is critical to Wisconsin communities

Please do not hesitate to call me if you have follow up questions or concerns.

David Fowler Legislative Chairperson WAFSCM

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy

FROM: Daniel Bahr, Government Affairs Associate

DATE: June 12, 2019

SUBJECT: Support for Senate Bill 252: Support funding for flood risk reduction demonstration projects

The Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) supports Senate Bill 252, a bill relating to flood risk reduction pilot projects and making an appropriation. WCA is pleased that Ashland County is being granted the ability and funding to conduct pilot projects with the goal of replacing wetlands, controlling erosion, reducing nonpoint source pollution, and agricultural runoff.

The proposed project will help test and measure flood management strategies, provide critical information regarding the cost and flood risk reduction benefits of wetland, stream and floodplain restoration practices. We believe the funding and investment into Ashland County will lead to future benefits for many other counties around the state, in the very same areas of environmental study.

WCA supports the projects that will be funded by this proposal and will give the legislature and counties a better understanding of good practices in floodplain and wetland management. We are also pleased to be partnering with the Wisconsin Wetlands Association in this effort. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information, contact Dan Bahr at WCA at 608-663-7188 or email at bahr@wicounties.org



June 11, 2019

Honorable Senator Cowles, Chair
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy

Re: Senate Bill 252 – Flood risk reduction pilot project

Dear Senator Cowles and Members of the Committee:

As a member of Wisconsin's Green Fire (WGF) and a resident of Ashland County, I write to express my appreciation to the sponsors of Senate Bill 252 for this investment in green infrastructure approaches to flood reduction. Prior to my retirement from the Department of Natural Resources, I worked on several initiatives to reduce runoff in the Lake Superior basin. The demonstration projects that would be funded pursuant to SB 252 would build on a long history of partnerships among local residents, watershed organizations, and government at the local, tribal, state, and federal levels. This investment by state government would be timely and much appreciated.

Throughout Wisconsin, we are experiencing devastating flooding that strains our communities and finances. Statewide, wetland protection and rehabilitation of natural drainage patterns are important tools for local communities to enhance resilience to flooding. WGF appreciates the provision in SB 252 calling for DNR recommendations for how existing state policies or funding streams could be adapted to create incentives to protect and restore natural infrastructure and reduce floods, to be reported to the Legislature and Division of Emergency Management. The only concern about the Bill as written, is the requirement for Ashland County to submit a report summarizing results of the demonstration projects no later than June 30, 2021. A longer time frame is generally required to adequately evaluate performance of a restoration project, sometimes from 5 to 10 years after a project is complete. However, it is reasonable for the County to submit a progress report on the status of demonstration project plans and installation by June 30, 2021.

Thank you for your consideration

Nancy J Larson
NLarson@wgreenfire.org

Wisconsin's Green Fire is a statewide organization dedicated to supporting our conservation legacy by promoting science-based management of natural resources. Our members include career natural resource professionals and scientists from a variety of disciplines throughout Wisconsin.



Ashland County Land and Water Conservation Department
315 Sanborn Ave., Suite 100
Ashland, WI 54806-1014

email: maryjo.gingras@co.ashland.wi.us

Phone: (715) 682-7187

To: Wisconsin Legislature

From: MaryJo Gingras – Ashland County Conservationist

Subject: SB 252 - Support funding for flood risk reduction demonstration projects

Date: June 11, 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to offer written testimony on SB 252. I am writing on behalf of Ashland County and the Land and Water Conservation Department located in northern Wisconsin on beautiful Lake Superior.

The Ashland County Land and Water Conservation Department works with private landowners, towns, municipalities, and the general public on soil erosion control and water quality projects. We focus on reducing nonpoint source pollution and agricultural runoff to maintain high quality water resources in Ashland County and the greater Lake Superior.

We are very happy that this bill is supported by a long list of co-sponsors from both houses and both parties. SB 252 stemmed from recommendations brought forth by the Wisconsin Wetlands Association to the legislature last year after two main happenings:

- 1) they completed a study titled *Making a Case for Wetlands* which examined the need for natural flood reduction demonstration projects, and
- 2) they met in the Marengo River watershed in Ashland County with landowners and resources managers to investigate opportunities to promote wetlands as solutions to the region's intensified precipitation events and flooding challenges.

There is no one in Wisconsin that is not aware of, or impacted by, the precipitation and flooding events of the past few years. We are all aware of the increase in these events and their likelihood in the future.

In 1961 the National Weather Service developed estimates of precipitation intensity to help guide the engineering and design of water resource infrastructure. These estimates were revised in 2013 and published by NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The 2013 results indicated that the likelihood of a 24-hour rain event observed at a 100-year recurrence interval was 38% greater than calculated in 1961. These data and models seem to be validated by recent observations and events. The total annual rainfall in the Ashland area has increased between 6 and 7 inches since the 1950s.

During the summers of 2016 and 2018, many communities around the state experienced historic flood events. In Ashland County flood events were devastating, especially in the Marengo River Watershed. Roads, trails, culverts, bridges and homes were destroyed or completely washed away. There was an estimated \$88 million in damages, some of which could have been avoided. Improved stream and wetland conditions in this region could have played an important role in minimizing the impact.

Land managers, civil engineers, land owners, and natural resource partners are exploring innovative opportunities to restore the degraded hydrologic conditions where loss of wetlands and minimized floodplain storage have created highly susceptible conditions in the Lake Superior Basin.

Done right, restoring wetlands can help improve surface and groundwater quality, recharge groundwater, and reduce flooding, but we see very little use of wetland restoration for water management in Wisconsin today. Practices that may be common in other states are not yet well established here.

Wisconsin natural resource planners and land managers need more tools, including wetlands, to help reduce flood risks and damages. This bill will provide funding to design and build natural infrastructure restoration projects in Ashland County. Demonstration projects of this sort will assist natural resource managers, hazard planners, emergency management coordinators, and road crews to understand how restoration of upper watershed wetlands, streams, and floodplains can help reduce flooding and protect vulnerable public infrastructure.

The results of these projects would then be provided to the Legislature and to the Division of Emergency Management within the Dept. of Military Affairs to be used as case studies and demonstrations as to how projects of these sorts can be further utilized around the state.

In Summary:

- Healthy wetlands and floodplains help store and slowly release rain and snowmelt, but around the state degraded hydrologic conditions have greatly reduced wetlands' natural ability to store floodwaters. This increases impacts to local roads, culverts, and bridges, and disrupts travel.
- The cost of implementing well-designed restorative conservation practices at critical areas on the landscape is far less costly than rebuilding infrastructure year after year.
- The proposed project will help test and measure natural flood management strategies, and provide a place for teaching resource and hazard managers about the costs and flood risk reduction benefits of wetland, stream, and floodplain restoration practices.
- The results of the projects that will be funded by this bill will be used as templates to show how similar projects can be used to address flooding around the state.

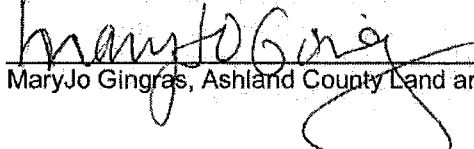
Thank you for your commitment to protecting and restoring Wisconsin's natural resources!


Pete Russo, Ashland County Board of Supervisors


Jeff Beiri, Ashland County Administrator


George Mika, Ashland County Board & Land Conservation Committee


Charles Ortman, Ashland County Board & Land Conservation Committee


MaryJo Gingras, Ashland County Land and Water Conservation Department



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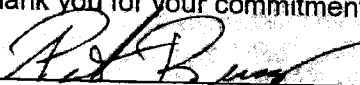
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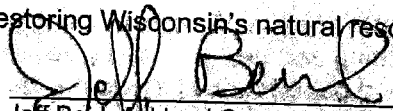
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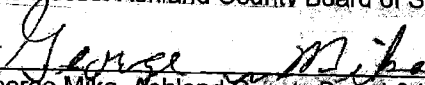
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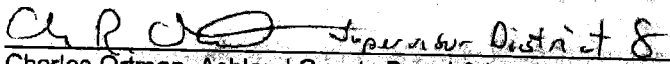
- Healthy wetlands and floodplains help store and slowly release rain and snowmelt, but around the state degraded hydrologic conditions have greatly reduced wetlands' natural ability to store floodwaters. This increases impacts to local roads, culverts, and bridges, and disrupts travel.
- The cost of implementing well-designed restorative conservation practices at critical areas on the landscape is far less costly than rebuilding infrastructure year after year.
- The proposed project will help test and measure natural flood management strategies, and provide a place for teaching resource and hazard managers about the costs and flood risk reduction benefits of wetland, stream, and floodplain restoration practices.
- The results of the projects that will be funded by this bill will be used as templates to show how similar projects can be used to address flooding around the state.

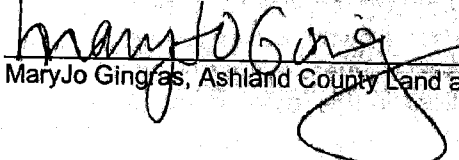
Thank you for your commitment to protecting and restoring Wisconsin's natural resources!


Pete Russo, Ashland County Board of Supervisors


Jeff Berr, Ashland County Administrator


George Mika, Ashland County Board & Land Conservation Committee


Charles Ortman, Ashland County Board & Land Conservation Committee


MaryJo Gingras, Ashland County Land and Water Conservation Department

Herkert, Toni

From: Jason Laumann <jlaumann@nwrpc.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 11, 2019 3:06 PM
To: Herkert, Toni
Subject: SB 252

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi Toni,

I'd like to request that the following letter be entered into the record since I'm unable to attend the 6-12-19 hearing on SB 252.

On behalf of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission I wish to express support for Senate Bill 252, a flood risk reduction pilot project for Ashland County and making an appropriation. Creating resilient communities and infrastructure, able to withstand flood events like those experienced in 2016 and 2018, has proven to be cost-prohibitive for many rural communities across northwest Wisconsin. Having local demonstration sites where we can test low-cost technologies and nature-based interventions under real world conditions will be invaluable in developing practical flood resiliency solutions for northwest Wisconsin. Establishing demonstration sites in Ashland County will strengthen and build upon other ongoing resiliency projects and programs in the local area and across the State of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Jason K. Laumann
Deputy Director
Northwest Regional Planning Commission
(715) 635-2197