



State of Wisconsin  
2023 - 2024 LEGISLATURE

LRB-0648/1

MCP:skw

## 2023 SENATE BILL 59

February 14, 2023 - Introduced by Senators COWLES, BALLWEG, CABRAL-GUEVARA, FEYEN, JACQUE, MARKLEIN, PFAFF, QUINN, SPREITZER and TESTIN, cosponsored by Representatives KITCHENS, NOVAK, TRANEL, SHANKLAND, KRUG, J. ANDERSON, ANDRACA, ARMSTRONG, BALDEH, BEHNKE, CONSIDINE, DITTRICH, DONOVAN, EMERSON, GREEN, JOERS, S. JOHNSON, KNODL, MURSAU, O'CONNOR, OLDENBURG, PETRYK, PLUMER, ROZAR, SINICKI, SNODGRASS, SNYDER, SPIROS and VANDERMEER. Referred to Committee on Agriculture and Tourism.

**AN ACT** *to amend* 93.59 (2) (a), 93.59 (2) (d), 93.59 (3), 281.68 (1t) (intro.), 281.68 (3) (a) 1. and 281.69 (3) (a); and *to create* 281.68 (1) (ar), 281.69 (1b) (br), 281.70 (1) (am) and 281.70 (4) (a) 4. of the statutes; **relating to:** eligibility for producer-led watershed, lake, and river protection grants.

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### ***Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau***

This bill expands eligibility for producer-led watershed protection grants, lake protection grants, and river protection grants.

Under current law, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection administers a program to provide watershed protection grants to producer-led groups made up of farmers located in one watershed. The bill allows grants under the program to be awarded to producer-led groups that are made up of farmers located in adjacent watersheds.

Under current law, the Department of Natural Resources provides lake protection grants and lake management grants for monitoring and improving water quality in lakes and lake classification grants for classifying lakes. Currently, eligible recipients for these grants include nonprofit conservation organizations, counties and municipalities, qualified lake associations, town sanitary districts, qualified school districts, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, and other local governmental units that are established for the purpose of lake

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management. DNR also provides river protection grants for monitoring and improving water quality in rivers. Currently, eligible recipients for these grants include local governmental units, qualified river management organizations, and nonprofit conservation organizations. The bill provides that producer-led groups are eligible to receive lake protection, management, and classification grants and river protection grants provided by DNR. The bill defines “producer-led group” to mean any group that meets the criteria for a producer-led watershed protection grant issued by DATCP.

For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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***The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:***

**SECTION 1.** 93.59 (2) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

93.59 (2) (a) The producer-led group includes at least 5 agricultural producers each of whom operates an eligible farm, as defined in s. 91.86 (1), in one watershed or in adjacent watersheds. The group may include additional agricultural producers who are not required to be operators of eligible farms. In this paragraph, “watershed” means a watershed delineated by the U.S. geological survey using a nationwide system based on surface hydrologic features at the 12-digit basin scale (the hydrologic unit code 12).

**SECTION 2.** 93.59 (2) (d) of the statutes is amended to read:

93.59 (2) (d) The group assists agricultural producers in the watershed or watersheds under par. (a) to voluntarily conduct nonpoint source water pollution abatement activities.

**SECTION 3.** 93.59 (3) of the statutes is amended to read:

93.59 (3) A producer-led group that receives, or on whose behalf a legal entity receives, a grant under this section shall annually file a report with the department

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describing the activities conducted with the grant and the impact of those activities on water quality in the watershed or watersheds under sub. (2) (a).

**SECTION 4.** 281.68 (1) (ar) of the statutes is created to read:

281.68 (1) (ar) “Producer-led group” means any group that meets the criteria under s. 93.59 (2).

**SECTION 5.** 281.68 (1t) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

281.68 (1t) LAKE MONITORING AND PROTECTION CONTRACTS. (intro.) The department may award contracts to ~~public~~ groups or persons for the creation and support of a statewide lake monitoring network. The contracts may include payments for the costs of all of the following:

**SECTION 6.** 281.68 (3) (a) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

281.68 (3) (a) 1. Eligible recipients to consist of nonprofit conservation organizations, as defined in s. 23.0955 (1), producer-led groups conducting producer-led group projects, counties, cities, towns, villages, qualified lake associations, town sanitary districts, qualified school districts, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, and other local governmental units, as defined in s. 66.0131 (1) (a), that are established for the purpose of lake management.

**SECTION 7.** 281.69 (1b) (br) of the statutes is created to read:

281.69 (1b) (br) “Producer-led group” means any group that meets the criteria under s. 93.59 (2).

**SECTION 8.** 281.69 (3) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

281.69 (3) (a) A designation of eligible recipients, which shall include

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nonprofit conservation organizations, producer-led groups conducting producer-led group projects, counties, cities, towns, villages, qualified lake associations, town sanitary districts, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, and other local governmental units, as defined in s. 66.0131 (1) (a), that are established for the purpose of lake management.

**SECTION 9.** 281.70 (1) (am) of the statutes is created to read:

281.70 (1) (am) “Producer-led group” means any group that meets the criteria under s. 93.59 (2).

**SECTION 10.** 281.70 (4) (a) 4. of the statutes is created to read:

281.70 (4) (a) 4. Producer-led groups conducting producer-led group projects.

**(END)**