

Wild Rice Advisory Committee Protocol
February 2015

Goal: This protocol is designed to foster clarity, consistency, efficiency, and transparency for advisory committee operations. The membership of this committee is designed to ensure collaboration among field and central office staff and with external partners and stakeholders. This diversity of membership is designed to provide consideration of social, economic and ecological considerations. Involvement of stakeholders and partners will increase the probability that recommended policies are sustainable, with maximum implementation potential.

Advisory Committee Purpose: The advisory committee exists for the purpose of developing recommendations on policies, plans and wild rice harvest prescriptions. It serves to provide advisory recommendations to DNR leadership, which ultimately implement the department's mission. Recommendations are to be science-based with consideration for social, economic, and recreational factors and institutional and legal constraints, within the bounds of existing statutory authority.

Committee Charge: The committee shall advise the department on matters pertaining to regulatory and management practices that affect wild rice in Wisconsin. The committee shall make recommendations to the department, which support the conservation of the native wild rice resource for the health of aquatic and wetland ecosystems.

Scope of Committee Recommendations: The committee may make recommendations on issues related to wild rice which are within the bounds of existing statutes and the committee purpose. Recommendations may relate to matters in which the department has discretion to engage in rule making, policy development, and other decision making but may not include recommendations for statutory change.

Committee Work Plans and Reporting: DNR leadership may require the advisory committee to submit annual or biennial work plans and progress reports.

Committee Sponsors: Sponsors are expected to regularly communicate with the committee co-chairs and the tribal liaison, and provide advice regarding draft agendas; challenges; timetables for recommendation development; and follow up on committee deliberations. Given the diversity of wild rice, sponsors are representative of the major programs involved as well as representatives of the Secretary's Office.

Committee Co-Chairs: Co-Chairs will be the staff specialists who are responsible for the programs that the committee works on (both Land and Water Divisions for this committee), and they will be assigned by division leadership. Co-Chairs will consult with the committee sponsors for advice on committee work plans, issue resolution, timelines, and follow up on recommendations. Committee co-chairs will prepare agendas, minutes and logistics for

meetings. Co-Chairs will ensure follow through of issues with their respective program, and ensure Law Enforcement participation when appropriate.

Members: The committee will be comprised of DNR staff, stakeholders and partner members. Membership appointments will be at the sole discretion of DNR leadership. Staff members representing districts or bureaus are responsible for soliciting input on agenda items in advance of meetings and in turn representing those perspectives on the committee.

Tribal Membership: Under the Voigt case and related stipulations, Wisconsin's six Chippewa Bands are allowed a collective representative as a member on the advisory committee.

Partner Members: Partner members shall be comprised of key stakeholder groups and key federal agencies. There may only be one member representative from each partner group or agency. The list of partners will be reviewed in January of even-numbered years by the committee sponsors and co-chairs. The sponsors and co-chairs will suggest any revisions to membership, if needed, and send such requests to DNR leadership for approval.

DNR member limits: The committee will have limited staff members from the following divisions/bureaus given their relationship to wild rice management: Land, Water, and Law Enforcement. Total department membership may be limited to maintain a balance between the number of department and partner members.

Invitees: All members will be invited to each meeting. Non-members will not receive an invitation unless they are needed for particular agenda items (e.g. Professor reporting on a research project). The committee is encouraged to seek opportunities to invite non-member stakeholders and internal staff on a case-by-case basis to gather input, information and perspective on issues as needed.

University Staff and Students: Committee co-chairs may invite University personnel to attend meetings on an ad hoc basis if they have information that will be helpful for particular agenda items, but they will be informational/consultants rather than members.

Decision Making: Co-Chairs will have the goal of substantial effective agreement for all items, but may take votes if agreement cannot be reached. Co-Chairs should document where substantial disagreement exists among members and the basis for disagreement. All members and only members will be permitted to vote.

Committee Decisions are Recommendations: Committee members must understand that their role is to advise DNR leadership through recommendations. Committee members do not speak for the department, but rather provide recommendations to department leadership.

Communications with Division Policy Teams: Committee recommendations will be in the form of an issue brief that is prepared far enough ahead of the policy team meetings to allow adequate review time. Issue briefs will state the problem or issue being addressed, a brief

background, recommendations, justification for recommendations, and anticipated impacts on the department, stakeholders and partners. This structure will allow for Land, Water and Law Enforcement awareness and input prior to recommendations being presented to department leadership for review and approval.

Approvals of Recommendations: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee must be approved according to the appropriate DNR procedure before they can be implemented. Depending on the nature of the recommendation, approvals may be required from the sponsors, policy teams, bureau director, division administrator, Secretary, and/or Natural Resources Board. The sponsors together with bureau directors will make this decision or seek guidance from the Secretary's Office.

Meeting Frequency: Advisory committees will meet as often as is needed to complete assigned work. There are not a required number of meetings per year. Efficiencies may be gained by assigning subcommittees to work on specific tasks and by holding conference calls.

Public Notice: All meetings will be public noticed. Public notices must follow the guidelines of the department and co-chairs are responsible for public noticing meetings.

Non-Member Opportunity for Input: Non-members are not permitted a seat at the table and may not participate in advisory committee discussions unless they are called upon by one of the co-chairs. However, co-chairs will schedule a short time at each meeting to allow statements to be made by those attending who are not members. Non-members are welcome to provide written comments to co-chairs at any time. Non-members will have an opportunity to provide testimony to the Natural Resources Board on items that go before them for approval. For some issues, mail, telephone or web surveys may be designed to gather additional public input.

Meeting Record: It will be the responsibility of the co-chairs to ensure meeting minutes are prepared and posted on the department website.

Internal Committees: This advisory committee protocol does not apply to internal work groups assigned by department managers to accomplish specific department operations or solve specific problems.