

JAN 31 2002

State of Wisconsin  
Department of Natural Resources

## NOTICE TO PRESIDING OFFICERS OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

Pursuant to s. 227.19, Stats., notice is hereby given that final draft rules are being submitted to the presiding officer of each house of the legislature. The rules being submitted are:

Natural Resources Board Order No. WT-7-00

Legislative Council Rules Clearinghouse Number 00-028

Subject of Rules Priority watershed management program

Date of Transmittal to Presiding Officers January 30, 2002

Send a copy of any correspondence or notices pertaining to this rule to:

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An electronic copy of the proposed rule may be obtained by contacting Ms. Turner

## REPORT TO LEGISLATURE

NR 120, Wis. Adm. Code  
Priority watershed management program

Board Order No. WT-7-00  
Clearinghouse Rule No. 00-028

### Statement of Need

The department is proposing a series of inter-related administrative rules in response to 1997 Wis. Act 27 and 1999 Wis. Act 9 requiring changes to the department's nonpoint source water pollution abatement program. The Environmental Protection Agency identified urban and rural sources of polluted runoff to be a leading cause of surface and groundwater quality problems in Wisconsin. 1997 Wis. Act 27 required the department to:

1. Develop non-agricultural nonpoint source performance standards designed to meet water quality standards.
2. In consultation with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), develop agricultural nonpoint source performance standards and prohibitions designed to meet water quality standards, including, at a minimum, the four manure management prohibitions specified in the statutes.
3. Specify a process for development and dissemination of technical standards to implement the non-agricultural performance standards.
4. Administer cost-sharing funds provided for compliance.
5. Specify criteria to determine availability of cost-sharing for compliance by an agricultural facility.
6. Jointly, with DATCP, specify procedures for review and approval of proposed local livestock regulations that exceed the performance standards and prohibitions.

1999 Wis. Act 9 provided funding and other provisions that facilitate the redesign of the nonpoint source programs. The legislation:

1. Created a new urban nonpoint source grant program.
2. Provided funding for targeted, competitive nonpoint source projects.
3. Provided base level funding to counties for staff and cost-sharing.
4. Transferred funding to DATCP for local assistance grants to priority watershed and priority lake projects.
5. Created a unified grant submission and interagency clearinghouse between the DNR and DATCP.
6. Further clarified the content and role of county Land and Water Resource Management Plans.

Chapter NR 120 is the rule under which the department currently administers the nonpoint source water pollution abatement program. The chapter specifies the process to select, plan and implement priority watershed and priority lake projects to reduce nonpoint source pollution in both urban and rural areas. The rule also includes a mandatory component in which critical sites of nonpoint source pollution must be addressed, and the procedures to administer the grants for cost-sharing best management practices and for technical and other assistance. Clearinghouse Rule No. 00-028 repeals and recreates ch. NR 120. Chapter NR 120, as recreated, contains changes in three main areas including scope of the chapter, cost-share administration and critical sites administration.

### Modifications as a Result of Public Hearing

There are three main changes in the scope of the rule. The process for selecting priority watershed and lake projects has been eliminated entirely, pursuant to s. 281.65(3m), Stats. Provisions dealing with rural local assistance grants have been deleted and moved to ch. ATCP 50 for administration by DATCP. Changes in cost-share administration include an increase in the duration of priority watershed projects, changes in cost-share rates for several best management practices, modified criteria for determining economic hardship and restrictions on cost-share reimbursements to rural grantees that exceed the expenditure amounts established by the department. Changes in critical sites administration include added flexibility in the notification schedule and an explicit requirement that grantees cover all critical sites needs provided that adequate cost-sharing is made available by the department.

The Department's response to comments on the nonpoint rules in general and specific comments on ch. NR 120 are enclosed.

### Appearances at the Public Hearing and Their Position

The Department held a series of 22 hearings across the state in March, 2000. In response to comments received at those hearings, the rules were substantially revised. An additional 12 hearings were held across the state in March, 2001. Approximately 650 people attended the second set of hearings. A list of all appearances at all 34 hearings is included in the rule jacket.

### Response to Legislative Council Rules Clearinghouse Report

The comments included in the Clearinghouse Report have either been incorporated into the proposed rule or are no longer applicable because subsequent revisions removed or significantly altered the rule.

### Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

The proposed revisions to ch. NR 120 will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small businesses. A copy of the complete Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis on the entire series of administrative rules is included in the rule jacket.

## Comments and Responses on Proposed Nonpoint Source Redesign Rules

**Most comments from all interests, written and oral, acknowledged that DNR listened to them, made revisions based on their comments and that this version was much improved. Several comments regarding editorial corrections are not cited, but all changes were made. A list of acronyms used in the comments is attached.**

### A General Comments on All Rules or More Than One Rule

**A1 Comment:** (Clean Water Coalition, TU, WAL, Grey Panthers, 4 individuals) We support strong/strongest/stricter rules for the control of nonpoint source pollution.

**A2 Comment:** (Clean Water Coalition) We would vigorously oppose any attempts to weaken the standards in the current draft.

**A3 Comment:** Several environmental groups, a friends group, many individuals, and a TU petition signed by 29 people support vegetated buffers (some specified 20 to 35 feet) along all navigable waterways, additional conservation farming 30 feet beyond the buffer, the four manure management prohibitions, infiltration standards for storm water runoff, buffer vegetation for development projects of 50-100 feet (some added new transportation construction), 80% reduction in construction site erosion, increased funding (some support additional funding for county LCDs), a requirement to cost-share agricultural improvements on impaired waterways, and streamlining the process to target impaired waters. They oppose delays in implementing nutrient management plans and exempting WisDOT from the rules. They stated that polluted runoff is costing the state billions of dollars. There is no reason why some people should be entitled to degrade everyone's water because of profit or ignorance of the consequences of their pollution. It is quick and easy to pollute, it is difficult or impossible to clean up.

(Note: see Background Memo for similar comments received from postcards, letters and petition).

**Response:** We appreciate these comments of support. Please see response to comment E149 regarding water quality corridors (vegetated buffers) and the response to the first comment under NR 151.004 regarding the process to target impaired waters.

**A4 Comment:** (individual) As a homeowner along a small river, I'm very much encouraged by these rules; they are positive. But they could also be strengthened in the incentives part.

**Response:** The cost-share rates are the maximum allowable under the law. The economic hardship provision (which allows for a higher cost-share rate) was modified to be more responsive to economic situations. Federal and county incentive programs are applicable for many control measures.

**A5 Comment:** (CWAC) These rules are long overdue. Ten years ago, a legislative study committee of agricultural and other interests worked hard for a year and reached consensus on ways to address these same problems. We have serious water quality problems from extreme levels of over-enrichment from too much sediment and fertilizer. We've spent billions on sewage treatment and industries. We need to address runoff sources.

**A6 Comment:** (individual) These are tough issues and there is probably some refining to do, but if we wait too long, it's only going to get worse.

**A7 Comment:** (individual) The degradation of Wisconsin's lakes from polluted runoff is getting worse and will not go away by itself. Sacrifices and commitments must be made if we wish to restore the lakes to what they were 40 years ago. Runoff must be controlled at whatever cost or inconvenience it may cause. Clean lakes are important to tourism and the Wisconsin economy.

**A8 Comment:** (individual) We need to act now. Wisconsin taking the lead shows that we're progressive, and we should keep the progressive tradition going in Wisconsin.

**A9 Comment:** (individual) As a former Milwaukeean who suffered through the cryptosporidium outbreak, I urge the DNR to go forward.

**Response:** We feel we are moving forward with the rules while at the same time being deliberative and inclusive about the decisions we make, recognizing the many agencies, local governments and other stakeholders that will be affected.

**A10 Comment:** (3 farmers) A lot of young DNR and other staff who could interpret and implement the law differently are coming onto farms. Farmers don't plan year to year any more—they plan 5 years down the road. If they don't know how the rules are going to be implemented or who's going to be applying them, it will be hard to plan their operations. The law should be specific and well defined.

**Response:** Grant funds can be used for a period of up to four years. LCD staff can use this time to help plan changes according to the farmer's schedule.

**A11 Comment** (farmer) Many farms, ag-related businesses and small towns will be affected by these proposed rules with a loss of tax revenue. Is this your final goal?

**Response:** The detailed fiscal analysis that is part of this rules package did not find a significant impact from potential loss of tax revenue. The department believes there may be increased revenue generated in some instances and does not agree that there are situations where tax revenues are expected to decline as a result of these rules.

**A12 Comment:** (Milw. Co.) The proposed rules language does not recognize the unique fact that Milwaukee County is the only one of 72 counties in Wisconsin that is wholly incorporated. This engenders double jeopardy for our citizens and causes undo grief between the county and its cities and villages. There is no need for both the county and the cities and villages to pass ordinances, do enforcement and charge fees to accomplish the objective of cleaner storm water runoff. This is exactly the type of bureaucratic duplication that the Kettl Commission was so critical of.

**Response:** Neither NR 151 nor changes to NR 216 would require duplicate regulation of a site by the county and its cities and villages. This is evident in looking at the various requirements. Performance standards for developed urban areas (151.13) must be met by municipalities, but management actions taken by one or more jurisdictions could be combined to meet the standard for any specific area. Performance standards for construction runoff (NR 151.11), post-construction runoff (NR 151.12) and non-municipal landscaped areas (NR 151.14) must be met by landowners and operators. A municipality may choose to develop a local ordinance, but it is not required under NR 151. Duplication of effort under local ordinances will only occur if local governments do not coordinate their local programs. Ordinances may be required under chapter NR 216 to establish an adequate local management program, but this is not a new code provision; it has been in NR 216 since its inception. NR 216 does not require duplicative regulations either and nothing in NR 151 requires counties to enact ordinances to administer the performance standards if all municipalities do so.

**A13 Comment:** (WLWCA/WALCE, several counties) We are opposed to the package of rules. While we generally support the nonpoint performance standards and many other rule provisions, we believe the rule package as a whole falls short of the original intent of the program redesign in several critical areas. Without an effective implementation strategy, we believe future nonpoint program efforts are subject to many of the same problems of the past, making the past four years of program redesign efforts of questionable value.

**A14 Comment:** (LCD) We support the concept of performance standards. Getting the rules into a format that is workable and understandable for the counties and landowners is critical.

**Response:** These comments have been addressed in the responses to detailed comments on NR 151.

**A15 Comment:** (LCD) The rules often are too prescriptive and either have too much detail or lack detail that should be included. For instance, performance standards should state the desired end result not the means to achieve it. Local administrators and landowners are best suited to prescribe methods of obtaining the results.

**Response:** Most standards are expressed as desired end results, but this was not practical in every instance. The result is a mix. Also note that the department convened several work groups to assist in revising the rules, and the set of performance standards is a result of that process.

**A16 Comment:** (lawn care co., 6 individuals) Wisconsin doesn't need to be in the forefront to implement federal clean water standards. Let's allow other states to take the lead and learn from their mistakes.

Also, consider that the Bush administration is considering either a repeal of the Clean Water Act or major modifications to it. It makes no sense to spend hundreds of millions of dollars when there exists a possibility that such rules may not even be necessary.

**Response:** This code is in response to a state mandate, not the federal Clean Water Act. Even if the CWA is modified, it will not change the outcome of the rules.

**A17 Comment:** (individual) The proposed rules should have an amendment giving DNR authority to regulate all dams that are previously unregulated, all previous exemptions notwithstanding. Some dams, such as cranberry marsh dams, are currently unregulated due to the cranberry law.

**Response:** These proposed rules do not have authority to regulate dams. Ch. 30, Stats., regulates dams.

**A18 Comment:** (RPC) The emphasis of the proposed rules represents a fundamental departure from the past nonpoint source pollution abatement programs that were water quality planning-based, geographically directed at individual watersheds, and designed to achieve specific in-stream water quality conditions for individual stream reaches. The proposed site-based approach will require practices to be carried out that are not directly based on demonstrated water quality improvement needs and thus may be either inadequate to achieve water quality objectives or more stringent than is needed. Without a demonstrated relationship between the site-based performance standard implementation and the water quality in any given receiving watercourse, it will be difficult to justify the significant costs that have been estimated. The rules and the model storm water management ordinance should be revised to allow for the application of storm water management system plans that call for control measures needed to meet the water use objectives of receiving streams, independent of the arbitrary, uniform controls as currently prescribed in draft NR 151.

**Response:** The rules do not preclude a county, city, etc. from developing a stormwater management plan to address the watershed as a whole. The performance standards set statewide minimums. If the uniform measures are in place and the resource is not achieving water quality standards, the code provides for the development of targeted performance standards. If a governmental entity believes a greater effort is needed to control urban development, it can develop an ordinance with stricter standards than proposed in these rules and enforce them through its own authority. Uniform statewide standards will level the playing field, identify state agency expectations and go a long way toward achieving water quality standards. It is not likely that the performance standards are more stringent than needed and if that should be shown to be true for a particular site, the developer can provide justification for meeting the standard to the maximum extent practicable.

**A19 Comment:** (chemical co.) The issue of soluble phosphorus and soluble phosphorus in runoff is not mentioned (NR 243 indicates or suggests total phosphorus). Technology is in use to bind the soluble bioavailable phosphorus into a form not readily available to support eutrophication as recognized in NR 154.04(18)(b) and NR 120.14(17). These products, especially alum, are used in manure management for two express purposes: reduction of the environmental stressors, atmospheric ammonia and soluble phosphorus, and grade improvement/agronomic benefit.

**Response:** DNR does not generally support the use of amendments carried into surface waters with runoff rather than captured and removed as part of a treatment system. These amendments merely mask the presence of a pollutant and do not address its addition water resources. Department efforts are generally designed to address total phosphorus loading to surface waters given that even insoluble phosphorus present in a surface water may become bioavailable under certain conditions (e.g., changes in pH, byproduct of decay). Phosphorus binding agents may be approved or supported as a means of addressing phosphorus levels already present in a surface water. Approval of such amendments would have to be considered as part of the technical standard for nutrient management or runoff control systems.

**A20 Comment:** (WLWCA/WALCE, several counties) "Smart Growth" laws are not mentioned anywhere in the rules package, even though nonpoint programs have long recognized the link between land use and water quality. Incentives should be incorporated into urban grants to coordinate watershed protection planning with other local land use planning efforts, and vice versa.

**Response:** Although the law is not specifically mentioned, there are provisions in the grant scoring system to recognize and award additional points for “consistency with resource management plans.” This includes many plans, including those developed to comply with the “Smart Growth” legislation. The exact influence that this will have on point scores will be determined when the detailed scoring system is developed in accordance with the rule.

**A21 Comment:** (MEG) We continue to support the state's initiative to develop standards to control nonpoint sources of pollution. It is neither cost-effective nor fair to expect point sources to continually upgrade their facilities while nonpoint sources go unaddressed.

**Response:** We are glad you agree.

**A22 Comment:** (city) These proposed rules are not helping communities meet the objective of the Clean Water Act by tying them down in bureaucratic mandates. Let the local communities decide the level of clean water its residents want, the costs, and the best way to implement the requirements with general guidelines from the state. Communities are very aware of the importance of storm water management as can be evidenced by the multitude of storm water BMPs going in all over the state.

**Response:** It is true that communities are more aware of the importance of stormwater management than they once were, but for many, the emphasis is still on flood control. This nonpoint redesign effort is a state mandate to identify performance standards to achieve state water quality standards and is not a federal mandate of the Clean Water Act. If the rules are to achieve water quality standards the decision must be based on the needs of the water resource and not on a local perception of what they are willing to tolerate. Local communities can still be more stringent than these minimums if they believe it is warranted. The performance standards will be implemented through existing programs (NR 216) that have been modified to incorporate the standards.

**A23 Comment:** (WSPE) Tell the people of Wisconsin and the professionals what you want, then let the professionals design the improvements to meet the best local practice. Specifically, 80% removal of solids is different for mud than it is for drinking water. Government and consulting engineers have dealt with this issue on many specific project studies. Set a quantity number such as you have for wastewater (suspended solids, 20 ppm; BOD, 20 ppm) which will be something everyone can monitor and understand.

**Response:** In developing the rules, DNR used advisory committees and workgroups to identify the issues and concerns and worked with those affected by the rules to fashion reasonable rule language. The use of a percent reduction does tell the people of the state what we want and leaves it up to the professionals to design the practices to meet it. We chose not to use any one number, because it would not be appropriate in every part of the state. The percent figure, while not perfect, allows flexibility and modification if site conditions warrant it. The standard has to be met to the maximum extent practicable for every site. Unlike at wastewater treatment plants, we will not be asking that a community monitor the discharge from an outfall or a construction site.

**A24 Comment:** (several LCDs) The rule disregards the intent of the Legislature to redesign the nonpoint program by recreating a virtually identical priority watershed program.

**Response:** The legislature directed the department to develop a competitive grant program that selects the highest priority (based on score) projects. These projects are smaller in scale and shorter in duration than priority watershed projects. Statewide base grants to counties for maintenance-level resource conservation work is funded by DATCP under ATCP 50.

**A25 Comment:** (city public works dept.) The proposed redesign of the nonpoint source program will place an additional burden on the state's already financially challenged communities. While nonpoint source runoff management in theory appears attainable, we question whether the actual implementation of the revised requirements is practical. The various rules appear to set the stage for a potential windfall of projects for the consulting industry. Simply reading and understanding what the requirements are from the hundreds of pages involved is a project in itself. Care must be taken in developing programs, rules,

and regulations that result in creation of additional governmental bureaucracy with limited or questionable environmental improvement.

**Response:** Development, if left unchecked, will continue to degrade the water resources of the state. This has been clearly shown from monitoring around the state. Construction site erosion is recognized at the state and federal level as a serious problem that causes tons of sediment and its associated pollutants to enter lakes and streams. The cost to the municipalities will be the implementation of public education and pollution prevention efforts in the existing developed areas, and development of ordinances to control construction sites and new development. The cost without these controls will be a reduction in tourism and quality of life, not to mention dredging and aquatic weed control costs and nuisance suits between communities and surrounding farmland. The specific rule that sets the performance standards for municipalities only amounts to 13 pages. The remaining pages in the rule package include programs, guidance, and funding opportunities to assist municipalities in this effort. There will be a learning curve associated with a new body of rules, but experience will make this package easier to follow.

**A26 Comment:** (wastewater utility) The city recently built a new wastewater treatment plant that cost \$22 million, with an annual operation and maintenance budget of \$3.2 million. The plant is the primary flow source to Mill Creek, a man-made channel to the Wisconsin River and a 303(d) listed impaired water (low oxygen conditions). Initial findings of a DNR modeling study indicate the main causes of the low dissolved oxygen levels are the natural characteristics of the channel and nonpoint source discharges. We would not want to be singled out as a point source discharger affecting the water quality of Mill Creek without consideration of the nonpoint sources.

**Response:** These rules provide regulation of nonpoint sources and together with your control of the point source discharges, will help to clean up Mill Creek.

**A27 Comment:** (golf course supervisor) The words “voluntary” and “exempt” are being used when it comes to WisDOT and cities—that’s just not right. These rules need to apply to every branch.

**Response:** We agree that the WisDOT, other state agencies and municipalities need to meet the same performance standards that private owners are required to meet. Subchapter IV or NR 151 is specifically developed to address transportation facilities such as WisDOT and other locally owned or operated roads.

**A28 Comment:** (farmer) Something must be done with the farm economy in order to get these things implemented. You would certainly see a different attitude with a different farm economy.

**Response:** We are sensitive to the status of the farm economy and have included generous cost-share provisions in the rules.

**A29 Comment:** (farmer) If these rules go into effect as soon as they are approved, some people will immediately have to comply, and there will be a rush to force others by excluding cost sharing or forcing people into permits. There will be lawsuits to force compliance as soon as someone is identified as a polluter.

**Response:** These statements are not supported by the rule or the state statutes. Existing sources must be offered cost sharing before compliance can be required, and each grant can be implemented over a period that lasts up to four years. The only sources that must comply immediately are new sources, or those essentially created after the effective date of the rule.

**A30 Comment:** (OAC member) The OAC did not get to finish their task. A number of members felt we should have met in 2000 after the first set of public hearings prior to submission of these rules to the NRB. That did not happen.

**Response:** The department felt that the OAC had reached an impasse on many issues and that to go out to public hearing was the best way to encourage stakeholders to get to their “bottom lines”. After the first round of hearings, we did establish work groups on specific issues that included many OAC members.

**A31 Comment:** (OAC member). The rules are very complex. This is the reason we asked for a matrix to simplify things.

**Response:** The department chose to develop fact sheets on the rules as an alternative to a matrix, which we felt was too limiting in its format for the amount of information that was necessary to be presented.

**A32 Comment:** (WAL) We should preserve habitat for all aquatic life, not just fish habitat.

**Response:** The intent of these rules is to achieve water quality standards, which includes meeting beneficial uses and their supporting water quality criteria. The department agrees that beneficial uses are not limited to healthy fish communities, but to healthy aquatic life communities, including fish. The performance standards and other rules are designed to protect all aquatic life.

**A33 Comment:** (farmer) I've seen nothing in the rules on cut-off dates for variances -- I think that is very important.

**Response:** A provision has been added to the rule that requires the department to make a determination within 60 days.

**A34 Comment:** (co. sanitary dist.) The Walworth LCD tested wells in 1998 and found 24% had unsafe bacteria results, with 10% having unsafe nitrate levels. When a home goes up for sale, the septic system needs to be updated or replaced because the area has unsuitable soil for conventional septic systems. There are also large amounts of farm runoff in this area contributing to bacteria problems. There are citizen complaints about sewage running into ditches. We have approached DNR and the county, but nothing has been done. If these situations remain, it's only matter of time before someone becomes seriously ill from bacteria. It is imperative action be given to these areas of potential health threats.

**Response:** We agree with your concerns, however, these rules do not have authority to regulate septic systems.

**A35 Comment:** (farmer) A lot of the soil maps are extremely inaccurate. According to the maps, there are 1.25 miles of streams on my property that are supposed to be impassible to farm equipment, but I make hay on just about all of that area. I have several miles of intermittent streams that the map shows are on top of the hill. There's no water up there. The county conservationist says if the soil maps are inaccurate, we have topographical maps. The topographical maps show streams coming right up to my buildings when in actuality, the stream is more than a 1/3 of a mile down the valley.

**Response:** This comment does not apply to the rule package, it is a local implementation issue.

**A36 Comment:** (individual) It is hypocritical to closely regulate septic systems and business while allowing thousands of tons of animal waste to be spread on fields to pollute both air and water. I also question allowing cities to dump truckloads of snow, also containing salt, sand, gravel and whatever else was on the street into rivers.

**Response:** There are many sources of pollution in a watershed and this comment recognizes several of them. These rules are intended to control the nonpoint sources from both agricultural and urban settings. All sources need to be controlled if a stream or lake is to improve.

**A37 Comment:** (farmer) Keep standards uniform statewide. Develop some kind of appeals for non-uniform implementation. Some areas may be stricter than others -- owners should have recourse.

**A38 Comment:** (individual) We need standard statewide rules. There should be no county options and no voluntary compliance.

**A39 Comment:** (farmer) How can you make these rules uniform for everyone when each farm is different with different situations?

**A40 Comment:** (WI Cattlemen's Assn) These rules need to be more flexible to deal with the uncertainty of our income due to weather, economy and other factors outside our control. The average size herd for the Wisconsin cattleman is 19 cows (1997 census). We are at the bottom of the cattle cycle as far as income goes. For cattle feeders, the profits from cattle finishing are continuing to narrow: the 29-year average profit/head is \$19.97, the 15-year average profit/head is \$13.14 and the 10-year average profit/head is \$5.56. Most of us do not have the financial means to hire legal or technical expertise to help us implement the rules.

**Response:** We believe we have achieved a balance between uniformity and flexibility in the rules. The performance standards set statewide minimums but the means to achieve them are flexible and recognize the variation in farm crops, crop management, farm site conditions, and water resource conditions. In cases where the commonly used standards are not adequate to meet the water quality goals in an economically feasible manner, there is a variance procedure that the farmer may utilize.

**A41 Comment:** (farmer) One of the weaknesses of the priority watershed program was that it didn't recognize the individuality of farms and the decision-making process.

**Response:** Under the proposed rules the land conservation department will be working with each farmer to determine how the farmer can best comply with the performance standards.

**A42 Comment:** Several farmers commented on the contributions of wildlife to nonpoint source pollution. One farmer stated that higher rates of nitrogen and phosphorus will be on farmland due to wildlife. Another asked, if you're going after us about all the manure from our cattle, what about your geese in Horicon Marsh – how many millions pounds per year is going into that water? A third stated that populations of wildlife, such as ducks and geese, are out of control. It's not just a matter of them passing through—they are living year round in the cities. Their mess doesn't go away; it goes into stormwater, and unless it's properly managed, it's pollution. Another stated that farmers are being asked to follow rules the state and others do not. In the Killsnake Wildlife Area with its 4,000 acres of township, it seems like the governments have exempted themselves from the manure problems that farmers have to deal with. There are no manure rules or requirements concerning geese and other wildlife. Under NR 243, anyone that has animal units in excess of 1,000 for more than 45 days is required to have a permit for discharge. If you look under animal units, you see ducks and turkeys, but there are no geese. Yet the area sees 300,000-400,000 geese.

**Response:** DNR conducted a detailed study of phosphorus loading of geese in Horicon Marsh, as compared to total phosphorus load. Horicon has the greatest concentration of waterfowl in the state. We calculated that the geese population contributes approximately 8% of the total phosphorus load in the marsh. We need to do further studies to look at this issue, but from that study of the greatest impact, we still have 92% without dealing with wildlife. This is a much greater phosphorus contribution than deer.

**A43 Comment:** (individual) Dane County spends about \$300,000 a year mowing our lakes, with the biggest problem being polluted runoff. Virtually all the pollution in Lake Mendota comes from polluted runoff. A little more than 20% of the sediment and phosphorus runoff comes from 1% of the land — land that's under development. Wisconsin spent about \$120 million on the priority watershed program, and the Legislative Audit Bureau said it didn't work because we haven't had everyone in the program, and it hasn't been uniform. Unsound practices upstream can undo all the conservation practices downstream. This effort is making the playing field even for everyone. If we would have spent that \$120 million on buffer strips, we could have bought about 120,000 acres that would have protected 10,000 stream miles with 30-foot buffers.

**Response:** The performance standards will ensure an adequate level of conservation for everyone.

**A44 Comment:** (2 farmers) The program redesign is very complicated. It would be nice to simplify things so regular people can understand what is in the proposal.

**A45 Comment:** (farmer) These rules are very complex and refer to other rules. You need to find a simple way to administer the rules so everyone can understand what their requirements are.

**A46 Comment:** (several counties) The current rules are laced with inconsistencies and have language that cannot be understood so they are useful to counties and landowners.

**Response:** Administrative rules are meant to handle legal and implementation issues. Inconsistencies have been addressed. We are planning information and education programs that will help citizens understand the new rules.

**A47 Comment:** (LCC) The rules cover too many items and are difficult for LCD staff to understand. Even if there was adequate funding, there is too much being proposed at one time.

**Response:** The department believes that a comprehensive set of rules is preferable to a piece-meal approach. Although there is a lot being proposed, these rules have been developed over a 4-year period. During this period there has been extensive public education and the opportunity for input. Overall, the department believes adequate time and information has been provided.

**A48 Comment:** (consultant) I am not against these rules, but I am against trying to comply with regulations that you can argue one way or another. There's no good answer because it's too confusing.

**Response:** Revisions to the rules have corrected the inconsistencies. Guidance documents and training will be developed outside the rule-making process.

**A49 Comment:** (DATCP) Under the statutory provision directing the redesign of the nonpoint source programs, DATCP is responsible for promulgating the technical standards necessary to comply with the agricultural performance standards. DNR should not promulgate a duplicate set of technical standards (NR 154). The technical standards will be set in ATCP 50 and NR 154 should reference ATCP 50 regarding technical standards for agricultural conservation practices.

**A50 Comment:** (farmer) I thought DATCP was supposed to be doing the technical part.

**Response:** DNR and DATCP have developed a system of cross-references for agricultural performance standards. DNR listed each BMP and made a cross-reference to ATCP 50 for relevant components of the BMP, including technical standards. If there are exceptions to any of the BMP components in ATCP 50, they are noted in the rule.

**A51 Comment:** (Co. Ext., LCD) There needs to be consistency between these rules and ATCP 50 for technical standards. They need to include prevention-based practices and need to address all nonpoint source pollution, not just from agriculture. The rules need to address the diversity of nonpoint pollution concerns in the state, including forestry and lake development.

**A52 Comment:** (LCD) The technical standards still need to do a better job of addressing all nonpoint source pollution concerns, not just agricultural practices. The rules especially need to recognize that nonpoint pollution can come from a wide variety of rural and urban sources.

**Response:** The DNR and DATCP have met extensively and revised the rules to make them as consistent as possible regarding the technical standards. Cost-share policies have differences because of the differences in the agencies' missions. The department's BMPs address urban as well as agricultural nonpoint pollution sources. DNR has a BMP to help lakeshore owners restore riparian lands to a more natural condition. Urban BMPs can also be used to control urban runoff from lakeshore areas and the department also can cost-share development of storm water management plans to help protect these areas. Forestry concerns have not been included in this version of the rules because the scope of the rules is already extensive and because there is already a program in the state to implement forestry BMPs.

**A53 Comment:** (farmer) People need access to the technical standards referenced in the codes. Not all of us are familiar with what is in those standards, like 590.

**Response:** Technical standards are available on NRCS's website, or at LCD, DNR or DATCP offices.

**A54 Comment:** (farmer) If you make a blanket ruling that these rules begin on x date, Wisconsin agriculture will be severely crippled if not gone. Is it your overall plan to get rid of Wisconsin agriculture? If it is, be honest. If it isn't, help us.

**A55 Comment:** (farmer) A phase-in period would be better. As farmers retire and operations change ownership, the nonpoint regulations would kick in and cost sharing would become available. The time frame for total compliance could be 20-30 years.

**A56 Comment:** (WPVGA) It's important that the economics of agriculture are weighed heavily as these rules are considered further. It is important to remember that producers in Wisconsin have to compete in a world market, and most of our competitors will not have the same requirements as Wisconsin producers. This puts us at a competitive disadvantage with producers in neighboring states.

**A57 Comment:** (farmer) If these rules cost us too much, this may be the last straw for our operation. Does the DNR want to help the farmer and the wildlife we feed for free, or do they want this place to be a farm of houses? The most profitable crop right now is houses.

**A58 Comment:** (WPVGA) We caution state officials from overburdening producers with too many regulations. The term "save the family farm" is becoming a household phrase. These are the types of regulations that make farming impractical on a small scale and push producers toward larger and larger operations. The economics associated with compliance begin to dictate operation size.

**A59 Comment:** (farmer) I oppose a whole new layer of regulations on agriculture at a time when we in agriculture cannot afford to implement expensive new rules. Agriculture has not enjoyed the same economic prosperity that almost all of the other segments of the economy have enjoyed over the past 10 years. Other states have taken a more common sense approach and have not gone as far as Wisconsin has in implementing nonpoint source laws. Increased regulation put my neighbors and I at an economic disadvantage to our counterparts in neighboring states and other countries.

**Response:** There is a delayed start date for the nutrient management performance standard. Because existing facilities and practices impacted by these rules must be provided 70% cost sharing (90% cost-sharing for economic hardship cases) before they are required to comply with the performance standards and prohibitions, and because funding is limited, it will take many years for sufficient cost sharing to become available. Also, technical assistance will be available to operations at the federal, state and local levels to promote compliance. These assistance efforts are intended to avoid or mitigate any negative economic impacts from these rules on agricultural operations and allow them to remain competitive.

**A60 Comment:** (farmer, shoreland, and golf course owner) People are concerned about more and more restrictions. I'm not anti-DNR, but I am opposed to the things that are being proposed.

**Response:** The law mandating performance standards was passed because the legislature did not believe that 20 years of the voluntary approach was achieving the desired water quality improvements.

**A61 Comment:** (farmer) My concerns are for the individual's liberty and property rights. If you're not affecting the rights of your neighbor, you have a right to use your property as you want. If you do cross over that line, then there should be some accountability. The rules could be simplified where it applies to people who cross over that line to see that such concerns are addressed.

**Response:** No one has the right to degrade waters of the state, which are held in trust for all citizens. If your land use practices impair waters of the state, you are crossing the line you refer to and the rules do hold people accountable for compliance with performance standards. The reason the rule provisions concerning implementation and enforcement are lengthy is because the rule needs to be very clear about expectations, consequences and procedures. The first version of the rules was criticized because this detail was not included.

**A62 Comment:** (farmer) The Legislature passed COMM 83 to free up 9 million acres in Wisconsin for development with substandard septic systems, and we farmers who have less influence and less money to fight back will face discriminatory regulation.

**Response:** No farmer with an existing facility or practice will have to meet the performance standards unless 70% cost sharing is provided. The same is not true for urban nonpoint sources. Although cost sharing may be made available, it is not required for compliance.

**A63 Comment:** (farmer) I've only got a few years left to farm. If I was required to put in a manure pit, it would be a waste of taxpayers' and my money because no one in my family is going to continue to farm.

**Response:** Your county LCD will work with you to find a reasonable solution. No one wants a manure pit that will be abandoned shortly after construction, wasting your and the state's money.

**A64 Comment:** (WI Agri-Service Assn., WI Pork Producers, WPVGA, WI State Cranberry Growers; WI Cattlemen's Assn.) The proposed rules would require compliance by all farmers but substantially limit compliance by urban communities with a population density of less than 1,000 persons per square mile. Even the standards imposed on NR 216 communities are limited and their implementation substantially delayed (20% control of suspended solids by 2008 and 40% by 2013). This approach is unfair to large urban centers and to farmers. The limits on small urban center compliance are in stark contrast to the requirements of the enabling statute and results in unequal protection of the laws.

**Response:** It is true that the agricultural performance standards apply to all farmers, but existing non-permitted operations are not required to comply unless 70% cost-sharing is provided (90% for hardship cases). There is also a delayed start date for the nutrient management performance standard. With these restrictions on implementation, DNR's intent is to direct funding toward the worst cases or the most impaired waterbodies first. Even with this focus, the funding limitation will create an implementation timeline spanning several years. The effect is the same for the rural as for the urban areas, but funding will set the schedule and compliance in the rural setting and the code will set the schedule and compliance in the urban setting. The goal is the same—identify the worst cases first and require change in a timely manner.

**A65 Comment:** (MMSD) The revised program must address agricultural and urban nonpoint pollution with equal diligence. DATCP needs to proceed in a timely fashion with the development of technical standards so that the state can enforce NR 151 provisions applicable to agriculture. The absence of timely application of NR 151 to agriculture will result in an unbalanced enforcement effort and hinder progress towards improved water quality.

**Response:** DNR has applied equal diligence to the to the development of rules that address both agricultural and urban runoff. Comments about DATCP should be directed to that agency.

**A66 Comment:** (WI Livestock Breeders, farmer) We understand that a number of communities may be forgiven any nonpoint obligations under these rules. If all of agriculture needs to comply with the rules, then why not all of the urban communities? This is a fairness issue — don't single out just agriculture.

**Response:** Agriculture is clearly not singled out since there are urban performance standards which must be met without any cost sharing being required. See the response to the comment A64.

**A67 Comment:** (nursery) The biggest source of nonpoint pollution is fertilizer (the 4-step program with some getting on the sidewalk is the worst), washing cars, oil changes, etc. done by urban homeowners. The rules must apply to all landowners. Don't single out farmers and homeowners of more than 5 acres. Start where the problem is the worst — the incorporated areas of the state.

**Response:** In any given watershed, the major source of pollutants could be urban or rural depending on the land use. The amount of land in urban use is much less than any other category in the state (farmland, forests, etc.). We agree that a landowner on a ¼ acre lot may be putting on fertilizers in quantities that may exceed what the farmer is using. However, the lawn is only 50% of the area the landowner owns and it contributes less than 10% of the runoff from the site. All incorporated municipalities with a population density of 1,000 people per square mile will be required to conduct an educational and pollution prevention effort in their existing developed areas. The state is committed to an educational program to inform the landowners of their responsibility to clean water and to the increased involvement of local government to enforce pet waste pickup, disposal of lawn clippings and leaves, etc. for the hundreds of thousands of homes in these areas. Where a municipality has control over its own property, it will be expected to control pollutants from that property in a manner similar to what a farmer will be asked to do on land he/she owns for production.

**A68 Comment:** (Milw. Co.) The requirement that cost sharing must be made available to install buffers in agricultural areas but not be required for non-agricultural performance standards amounts to an unfunded mandate for urban areas. It is totally unacceptable to treat urban riparian landowners, private or public in this fashion. How can you not offer the same cost-sharing (70-90%) to those who own property along a lake or waterway, regardless of where they live? Milwaukee County has spent many years and dollars to purchase and preserve riparian areas throughout the county, and the DNR proposes an unfunded mandate as a reward for our stewardship.

**Response:** The statutory language that governs development of the performance standards clearly states that performance standards cannot be imposed on existing agricultural facilities and practices without cost-sharing. This same provision was not included for urban development in the final statutory language. DNR has no authority to change this situation.

**A69 Comment:** (WCA) There is a lack of parity between the agricultural and non-agricultural standards. Agricultural standards are defined in more general terms, yet non-agricultural standards continue to be defined in very exact numerical requirements. Although 70% cost sharing is a prerequisite for enforcement of agricultural standards, there is limited financial assistance to meet non-agricultural requirements for local units of government. Given increasing financial constraints on local governments, additional unfunded mandates will be directly passed on to the property taxpayers of the state. We request that local units of government be granted significant flexibility in applying BMPs so as to achieve the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

**Response:** By defining the performance standards as percent controls we are maximizing the flexibility in applying BMPs to achieve the goal. It is unclear why the agricultural performance standards are perceived as non-numeric standards since many of them are. Whether a standard is numeric or prescriptive doesn't diminish its ability to control runoff pollution to equivalent levels. See the response to the previous comment.

**A70 Comment:** (CWAC) The rules seem weighted toward rural problems, leaving homeowners free to spread fertilizer on their lands with minimum control and education. You see dark green lawns for frivolous purposes--those lawns do not support a family; or provide food. They are simply creating an image they want to project. There should be much tougher standards on lawns.

**Response:** The rule currently provides for control on residential lawns under 5 acres through an information and education approach. For lawns over 5 acres, nutrient application must be done in accordance with a plan. For existing development, there are performance standards to control pollutants from greater sources of toxicants such as the streets and parking lots. Future development will also have tighter controls.

**A71 Comment:** (farmer) We have a subdivision near our farm where less than 50% of the land is permeable, and a lot more water comes off them. You will see more flooding. Even if there is grass, it's compacted and the water doesn't soak in. Those of us at the bottom of those hills have that much water coming down, more erosion and more problems with our ditches. And we are going to have more and more houses and they cause significant problems.

**Response:** The problems this comment identifies are issues related to water quantity and not water quality, which these rules were directed to address.

**A72 Comment:** (farmer) There's a big building going up 40 feet away from water and cattails. I will be told that I'll need a buffer strip within so many feet of water, but what about this building? The discrepancy doesn't sit well with me or other farmers.

**Response:** The buffer requirement was removed from the rules.

**A73 Comment:** (farmer) It seems cities just call the DNR and dump wastes without any repercussions. In our county, a farmer accidentally ran over a storage system near an old waterway. Nothing went into the creek, but he was fined heavily. Within two weeks of his overflow problem, a newspaper story reported that millions of gallons of raw sewage were dumped into the Rock River because the city didn't have enough storage to handle that kind of rainwater.

**Response:** The proposed performance standards in NR 151 regulate non-point sources and the dumping of raw sewage is classified as a point source discharge and cannot be regulated by the proposed performance standards. However, the discharge of point sources including sewage is already regulated.

**A74 Comment:** (LCD) It is good to see urban and rural nonpoint pollution concerns addressed together. Often farmers point at urban, urban points at farmers; it's good to see some consistency with these rules. We wish lawn care was made a bigger part of the rule.

**Response:** We agree that urban and rural nonpoint source pollution need to be addressed together. Larger lawns (five acres or more) will have controls placed upon them. Smaller lawns, of which there are too many for DNR to control, will receive information and education at the local level to encourage responsible application of nutrients.

**A75 Comment:** (farmer) I looked at several counties by total stream miles listed in the 303(d) list, and concluded that the problems with the water supply seem to be originating at the municipal and urban level, not so much with agriculture. An EPA representative said impairments are being removed, with streams getting better in the long-term. Since we are seeing an improvement, let's leave well enough alone. Why spend more time and money when we are already improving? A lot of money will need to be spent because of these rules, but the money will not be there to work with agriculture. Agricultural sources of nonpoint source pollution should be secondary to urban and municipal causes, since that seems to be where the real problem is.

**Response:** Although the state has made progress in protecting its waters, much remains to be done. Although urban storm water runoff is the principal cause of degradation in urban streams, runoff from agriculture still has a profound influence throughout much of the state. Both sources must be further controlled to achieve surface water and groundwater quality standards.

**A76 Comment:** (farmer) My concern is making sure everyone who contributes to the runoff problem is treated equally, whether it's a municipality, construction, or whatever. If you are polluting more than your neighbor, whether it's construction or municipality or farm, they should be the ones who have to fix it first, not necessarily picking on just one group.

**Response:** The rules do not pick on one group. They are comprehensive and address both agricultural and urban sources of nonpoint pollution. The performance standards are minimum standards that all must meet. We agree that the worst violations should be addressed first and will attempt to do so through our permitting and cost-share programs. Governmental units will also play a major role in setting priorities through development of county land and water resource management plans, other types of plans and by submitting applications for various grants to help finance the needed controls.

**A77 Comment:** (farmer) There does not seem to be any concern here about Milwaukee dumping millions and millions of gallons of pollution into Lake Michigan, but you're concerned about the cows in the creek. That is just totally ridiculous. I understand it's statutory. I'd like to get that statute replaced until you make Milwaukee abide by the same rules that you expect each individual farmer to follow. I have no power when I go up to the state capitol. Milwaukee does. But if you're going to make me do it -- at least accommodate me.

**Response:** Nonpoint pollution and the discharge from sewerage facilities must both be controlled. Milwaukee is being required to address any by-passing that is a violation of its WPDES permit.

**A78 Comment:** (individual) The fairness standards are not yet met. Urban use of fertilizers, pesticide, etc., along with the existence of a large percent of impervious areas in urban areas means more needs to be done and addressed through lakeshore areas, Walmarts, lawn care and landscape companies, golf course managers, etc. -- city by city, village by village.

**Response:** We believe these rules and ATCP 29 (pesticides) address all of these pollution sources.

**A79 Comment:** (individual) Do not enact these rules until further adequate research has been done. Do not destroy our state with more questionable regulations.

**A80 Comment:** (WI Cattlemen's Assn.). There is no documentation that these rules are necessary or justified to protect water quality.

**A81 Comment:** (farmer) Use scientific reasons for developing the rules. The DNR has targeted certain watersheds for protection. If we happen to have a watershed that has 10 times the phosphorus because of rocks on-site, is it fair to have an unattainable standard for people living in that area? Use common sense.

**Response:** The department is required by s. 281.16 Wis. Stats. to establish performance standards designed to meet water quality standards by limiting nonpoint source pollution. State law does not give us an option. We have held hundreds of meetings with stakeholders, experts and the public in the development of these rules. We are confident that they can be implemented with a limited amount of adverse impact on agricultural and other operations and will provide a significant positive impact on water quality in Wisconsin.

**A82 Comment:** (individual) DNR has always based its decisions on current law and sound science. These new/revised rules do just that. The new rules are not overreaching by any means. DNR not only allows time for the rules to be phased in but they also give the communities and citizens substantial grant monies to offset the cost to become compliant.

**Response:** Thank you.

**A83 Comment:** (individual) There should be surface water modeling and groundwater modeling so you can understand what's happening and how big of a water problem we have (quantity and quality). There would be a different priority put on this program if you knew that.

**Response:** DNR performed extensive modeling using SLAMM, P8, RUSLE, T55 and other models in the development of these performance standards. We also consulted and relied on countless scientific studies, experts from numerous universities and state agencies, scores of agricultural producers, municipal and transportation engineers, biologists, hydrogeologists, local government officials, and representatives of trade and other associations. We believe we have a better understanding of the water quality problems facing the state than we have ever had in our history and that these performance standards represent a balance between protection and enhancement of water quality and cost-effective implementation.

**A84 Comment:** (farmer) A farm magazine reported that applying cow manure to farm fields diminishes sediment and phosphorus losses. Researchers at the University of Minnesota used various methods to apply the equivalent of 25 tons of steer manure per acre. They collected the runoff to monitor sediment and phosphorus losses and found that sediment loss was only half as great where manure was applied compared to soil that did not get manure. Phosphorus losses were also lower in the manure-treated plots. When you read the regulation about what we should do and what we can't do, it clearly conflicts with a lot of the science that is available.

**Response:** The department recognizes that importance of manure as a nutrient and soil conditioner which can have beneficial environmental impacts. The performance standards and prohibitions and associated technical standards do not eliminate the land application of manure on cropped fields. However, they do place restrictions on how and in what amounts the manure may be landspread in order to avoid direct and indirect water quality impacts associated with improper land application of manure.

**A85 Comment:** (LCD) State, federal, and local agency cooperation will determine the success or failure of this conservation effort. There must be full support of DATCP, FSA, and NRCS.

**A86 Comment:** (MEG) Coordination between the DNR and DATCP needs to continue. DNR's rules standing alone do not provide a comprehensive nonpoint program. For example, detailed implementation and enforcement language is contained in NR 151.09 and NR 151.095. But this mechanism only applies to cost-share eligibility associated with targeted runoff management (TRM) grants. The implementation and enforcement language for the bulk of the funding that will constitute cost-share dollars through the DNR and DATCP is not contained in NR 151. By proceeding sequentially with their separate rules, DNR and DATCP should be in a better position to avoid some of the inconsistencies that arose in the first round of hearings. However, proceeding sequentially also carries with it the potential for delay. The protections provided by these rules are long overdue and we would urge the DNR and the NRB to work cooperatively but vigorously with DATCP and its Board to ensure that his rule process as a whole moves forward.

**Response:** We agree and intend to continue working with our state and federal partners.

**A87 Comment:** (CWC) There should be a way to monitoring the impact of these standards 5, 10 or 15 years from now. One easy way would be to add a grant category that enables county agencies to receive funds to monitor the water quality impact of various best management practices.

**Response:** The proposed rules allow the department to fund project evaluation activities, including monitoring. However, the monitoring effort must compete for funding and be an integral component of the project being funded. A comprehensive monitoring approach to overall program evaluation is best accomplished through other means, including the department's baseline monitoring conducted through its other water quality evaluation programs. The intergovernmental agreement identified in NR 151.09 will contain an element that addresses monitoring.

**A88 Comment:** (MMSD) Meeting the performance standards will require significant expenditures by both the private and public sectors. It is important for the state to evaluate the impact of the performance standards on reducing pollutant loadings, and ultimately, on water quality. We would welcome cooperating with the DNR in such an endeavor by making available our water quality data, which would be very useful in establishing a pre-implementation baseline.

**Response:** We are aware that we need an evaluation strategy for the programs and the performance standards associated with nonpoint pollution. While the rules are more enforceable than the original priority watershed program, because of cost-sharing requirements for rural landowners, the implementation of practices may again be somewhat scattered. If in a given watershed, not all the practices are implemented, then water quality monitoring may not show a response in the stream. Baseline data will be very useful and appreciated. The DNR already evaluates the water resources according to a 5-year plan. This process will continue to operate, although it is not appropriate to include that process in these rules.

**A89 Comment:** (WLWCA/WALCE, several counties) Water quality monitoring is not mentioned anywhere in the rules, even though past program audits have criticized the department for not being able to document the success of program efforts over the last 20 years. Neither federal, state nor local units of government will ever be able to do this independently. We strongly believe that interagency partnerships and citizen volunteers are needed to get the job done. Somewhere in the rules, state grants and technical assistance should be offered to support local water quality monitoring efforts.

**Response:** We understand the concern. See the response to previous comments on monitoring.

**A90 Comment:** (farmer) I've been involved in a test trial project with barnyards in the Waumandee watershed project that has been going on for 11 years. I have spent a lot of money doing no-till, barnyard projects, manure storage, streambank restoration, etc. There are no results to say whether we have improved the water or not. You should see if it's working before requiring anything else.

**Response:** What we have learned from our priority watershed projects is that a comprehensive effort must be made before measurable water quality improvement can be made. We would not expect to be able to determine the extent of improvement based on the efforts at one farm. We would need a whole farm effort in at least 60% of the farms in the watershed (preferably 80%) before we would expect to see significant improvement in water quality. These performance standards are designed to provide a base from which such a comprehensive effort can be achieved.

**A91 Comment:** (farmer) When we do these things, like installing a 10-foot buffer, we would like to see some numbers on what has happened and how it has improved things. It would also let the DNR see what is the most effective practice. We might need to reassess practices that are not working.

**Response:** DNR, NRCS, DATCP and counties have been tracking BMP installations for years and these rules provide for evaluation of conservation practices.

**A92 Comment:** (individual) Increase funding education, monitoring, and enforcement. One of the failings of the current nonpoint program is that it's very difficult to enforce against a small percentage of irresponsible people.

**Response:** We hope to be able to obtain the resources to accomplish this. Effective enforcement will be best achieved through state-local partnerships. We believe our rules promote this.

**A93 Comment:** (individual) We need to continue working on information and education, possibly a website with information.

**Response:** We agree. We currently maintain a website with this information.

**A94 Comment:** (individual) Nothing is said in the regulations about educating the public. Construction folks, farmers, (and) municipal governments are well educated. The common landowner needs to be educated. I don't see that requiring permitted municipalities to perform information and education for the public will be effective.

**A95 Comment:** (farmer) One of the biggest strengths of the priority watershed program was the education component. We shouldn't lose that.

**A96 Comment:** (UW CALS) To complement and enhance any regulatory action, effective information and education strategies and delivery mechanisms must be in place. Farmers need information to allow them to judge the impact of management practices on the economics and sustainability of their farming operations. Education programs that deliver practical, research-based information and also compliment the proposed regulations must also be offered to farmers.

**A97 Comment:** (LCC) Education plays a large role in landowners complying with the standards. Those responsible for meeting these new performance standards need assistance as their operations change to continue to be in compliance.

**Response:** We agree that education is an important component and we will be working with counties, UWEX, DATCP and other agencies to deliver educational materials and training for both rural and urban residents affected by the rules. County LWRM plans will also have an education component. DATCP will provide support funding for this under ATCP 50.

**A98 Comment:** (golf course supervisor/former municipal official) Our attitude on the municipal level is that these rules are a great idea, and if this has to happen, it's going to cost us taxpayers money to make it happen. No big deal. It's the right thing to do. We hope they are implemented and handled properly on the state level. Let's just use our head and document things and figure out the right way to handle this.

**Response:** While the rules don't identify the evaluation effort that will be used, we heartily agree that we need to measure the response to the rules. The water resources are already monitored on a recurring basis to assess their improvement or decline. If the performance standards are implemented such that all nonpoint sources are controlled in a watershed, then we should see significant improvement, particularly in streams dominated by nonpoint sources.

## **B General Funding and Cost-share Comments**

**B1 Comment:** (farmer) The estimated cost of \$930 million over a 10-year period to implement the rules is staggering. Not only am I outraged by the portion of this price tag that will be placed on me as a producer, but as a taxpayer who will help pay the other 70 percent.

**Response:** The revised state cost estimates to implement the agricultural performance standards range from \$356-434 million over 10 years. This price tag is a fraction of what it costs to restore water resources once they have been degraded.

**B2 Comment:** (LCC) There is a need to re-evaluate the way budgeting is done when proposing project resources. Under budgeting is done to get support for the programs. Once projects are underway, they are reduced in scope or additional funds are needed because of other demands for the money. At least use inflationary increases, or strive for a lesser degree of correctness. Under budgeting and delays or cancellations of projects have created a lot of discouragement with our employees and their customers.

**Response:** This comment is not germane to these rules.

**B3 Comment:** (individual) We're already bearing costs of nonpoint source pollution in impacts on fisheries, on the tourism industry, and in impaired waterways affecting the health of humans and other species. Certainly, there will be further costs.

**B4 Comment:** (student) We have a choice: if we're going to have a good environment or pay more taxes so businesses can be well-off. It's a trade-off. Imagine how bad the water will be in 20 years if we do nothing. One way or another, we will end up paying taxes to have clean water.

**Response:** We agree that these are all good reasons to promulgate this rule.

**B5 Comment:** (Corn Promotion Bd.) The costs that were presented to the NRB were not the true costs. We commissioned a study by Randy Fortenbery, UW agricultural economist, ("A Study of Costs of Compliance Related to Non-point Pollution Rules for Wisconsin Crop Producers") that shows \$61-80 million annual costs associated with this for about 5 million acres of corn and soybeans grown in Wisconsin. These costs include the farmers' share of compliance with the rules on land rated above acceptable levels of soil loss, including the costs of idling land in strips and contours. It does not address

any costs by livestock producers or the cost of preparing nutrient management plans for all Wisconsin cropland. It also does not address the state share of the costs and these will be larger, as most costs will be shared on a 70/30 basis with the state picking up the 70% share. Any area where a large share of the farmland would be forced to strip crop, contour farm or use no till will pick up a disproportionate share of the cost. (Note: See Background Memo for related comments from postcards.)

**Response:** The study focuses on lost revenue involved in bringing all Wisconsin cropland to the tolerable soil loss value and ignores the long-term benefit and cost-savings of maintaining soil productivity.

**B6 Comment:** (RPC) Are there any estimates of the costs involved for the agricultural and non-agricultural standards, including implementation of the rules?

**Response:** State cost estimates for implementing the rules are described in the Fiscal Estimate for NR 151, part of the rules package. Costs to implement BMPs to meet the agricultural performance standards and prohibitions are estimated to be \$35.6-\$43.4 million annually. Costs to implement the non-agricultural performance standards are estimated to be range from \$28.7-\$31.9 million annually from 2002 to 2007, from \$58.7 -\$61.9 million from 2008 to 2012 and from \$90.2-\$96.4 million annually starting in 2013.

**B7 Comment:** (individual) Increase funding for full implementation. Farmers can't do it on their own, but if we have an effective program in place, it will be easier to get the funding.

**Response:** We believe the cost-share program provides adequate support to farmers required to comply with the performance standards. We agree that full funding to cover implementation is desirable, but that is a legislative issue.

**B8 Comment:** (state senator) It's a pipe dream to tell people that anything less than 100% paid construction cost will be a reality. Environmental progress should be paid for with general tax dollars-- that is a fair way of reaching our environmental objectives. We need to spend a lot more effort in the future providing incentives for better environmental management and less effort on regulations.

**Response:** The state law requires that cost sharing under DATCP or DNR programs not exceed 70% except in cases of economic hardship. Governmental units can use other funding sources to increase the cost share rate above this amount if they so choose.

**B9 Comment:** (farmer) Lack of funding will greatly devalue existing operations and increase the difficulty of selling. Perhaps the only way to sell land under these conditions will be to a developer. The economic impact in rural Wisconsin will be significant.

**Response:** We do not agree with the comment. The availability of funding to implement performance standards should not have an effect on operations or their market value.

**B10 Comment:** (MEG) The performance standards will be meaningless in the absence of adequate funding and a commitment of resources from the DNR for education and enforcement. We encourage and support the DNR's effort to receive adequate funding for cost-sharing and program implementation.

**Response:** We agree with the importance of education and welcome your support for the rule.

**B11 Comment:** (LCC/LCD) There needs to be ample funds allocated annually to make this rule package succeed.

**B12 Comment:** (WI Env. Decade) While not within the purview of the DNR rule-making actions, we note that the effectiveness of the proposed rules depends upon sufficient cost-share resources, and we support full funding for all conservation programs called for in the rules.

**B13 Comment:** (individual) Suggestions can be made to legislators who will be writing the checks.

**B14 Comment:** (WAL) It is critical to support adequate funding for this program.

**Response:** We agree.

**B15 Comment:** (CWC) We support full funding of the nonpoint program in the 2001 biennial budget to ensure full implementation of the agricultural performance standards. The costs of polluted runoff in terms of tourism, water treatment and the degradations of our fisheries have reached billions of dollars.

We support the need for adequate funding for implementation of the non-agricultural performance standards. We oppose the proposal in the Governor's budget to reduce funding for the urban nonpoint program and to combine that program with the urban flood control program. We will be urging the Legislature to split these two programs and to increase the funding from the current \$11 million in the Governor's budget to the \$28 million level proposed by the DNR. We further believe that the primary source of funding for the nonpoint program should be derived from vehicle transfer fees and not from general purpose revenues.

**Response:** These comments will be passed on to the legislature as part of final rule promulgation. We appreciate the support for this program evident in the comment.

**B16 Comment:** (WI Agri-Service Assn., WI Pork Producers, WPVGA, WI State Cranberry Growers) The rules create expectations for substantive reduction in nonpoint source pollution but, despite the statutory requirement for cost sharing, provide no significant funding sources to support the hundreds of millions of dollars of required cost sharing. The rules require compliance by every farmer in the state regardless of a farmer's ability to pay a 30% cost share.

**Response:** The state law limits the amount of funding offered under DNR and DATCP programs to 70% (90% for economic hardship). A governmental unit need only provide 70% cost sharing in order to enforce compliance under local ordinances. Although a governmental unit can use several funding sources to increase the cost-share rate for a farmer, doing so is at its own discretion. The law recognizes that farmers must pay part of this cost.

**B17 Comment:** (WI Agri-Service Assn., WI Pork Producers, WPVGA, WI State Cranberry Growers) These rules should not be implemented until the cost-sharing funds are available. The great expectations created by these rules cannot be realized until the reality of over a half billion dollars of state cost-sharing support is identified.

**B18 Comment:** (farmer) The \$20-\$30 million for funding doesn't amount to much when spread over the entire state. When and where does it become available? You can pass rules, but then you say they don't go into effect until I have cost-sharing money to make the required changes. Why pass rules until we have money to put them into effect? There's no money in the state budget now; when will it be there?

**Response:** The legislature directed DNR to develop these standards regardless of the money to be made available for implementation. The legislature, through its future budget bills, will decide how much funding to dedicate to this program and consequently how long it takes to implement the standards statewide. Funding under s. 281.65 is considered available when a landowner receives a written offer of cost share from either DNR or a governmental unit.

**B19 Comment:** (farmer) There may be money initially for cost sharing, but how do we finish the work cost-sharing funds have initially started?

**Response:** Once compliance is achieved, the landowner will be responsible for the cost of long-term maintenance.

**B20 Comment:** (LCD) The lack of program funding will put an extraordinary strain on the producers and the LCD in our county. Based on our cost-share funding in 2000 and the projected amount available in 2002, the average landowner can expect to receive cost sharing once every 17 years. The LCD was never able to match the need for cost sharing for structural erosion control practices. With the promulgation of these rules, the demand for cost sharing and technical assistance will be even greater and complaints of non-compliance will be higher. Our LWRM plan was approved in 1999. Through 2002, the state will have funded less than 8% of the cost sharing approved in the plan. We request a review of the well-documented historic and ongoing need for cost sharing assistance in the county to determine a reasonable state match to maintain a minimum conservation effort in the county.

**Response:** The legislature has decided what the state match will be. The proposed rules provide for the highest cost-share rates allowable under the law. DNR's programs are, by law, competitive grant programs and not programs designed to insure a minimum level of funding for on-going, baseline conservation efforts in every county. Cost sharing is available for base-line maintenance through DATCP under ATCP 50.

**B21 Comment:** (farmer) I'm glad to see the continuing programs you've started. A problem in the past was that the funding stops, and then you're sitting with half of a (nutrient management) plan done.

**Response:** We regret any circumstances that led to your situation. DNR has worked with county organizations to be fair in our statewide allocation of available budget resources. Once a county has its allocation, it makes specific decisions about which BMPs are provided funding in any given year.

**B22 Comment:** (farmer) Make sure you have enough money for these programs because the farmer can't bear the costs on their own right now with the prices being what they are. We have many conservation practices that I don't mind keeping up, but don't make it too hard on us — just be reasonable. Before I lay out a large amount of cash to do something, I will quit.

**Response:** The legislation requires that 70% cost sharing be made available as a condition of requiring compliance at existing sources (90% in cases of economic hardship). The county can combine different programs to provide an even greater cost-share rate if it so chooses. There are also generous federal cost share programs. The rule requires that new agricultural facilities and practices achieve compliance regardless of the availability of cost sharing.

**B23 Comment:** (individual, River Alliance, Sierra Club, WISPIRG, TU) Additional funding is needed for county LCDs. These agencies will be the ones most responsible for implementing and enforcing these new standards and need adequate funding to do the job.

**B24 Comment:** (LCD) As a function of total county levy, Buffalo County provides more than the regional average amount of funds to the LCD. If Buffalo County were to lead the region in funding, we still would be unable to meet the need for landowner technical assistance under the state's current funding scenarios. To meet the greater demands these proposed rules will place on landowners, our LCD will need to retain at a minimum, the 3 technicians we currently have. Under the current funding scenarios proposed by the state agencies, this will not be possible. The state must, at a minimum, meet the obligations in Act 9 to fund 100% of the first position, 70% of the second, and 50% of the remaining LCD staff.

**B25 Comment:** (WCA) Adequate and consistent financial assistance to county LCDs for both cost sharing and staff support is the key to successful implementation. The uncertainty of state funding from one fiscal year to the next severely impedes the ability of counties to adequately plan for and prioritize workloads. The gap between funding and expectation put on counties continues to widen. The DNR and counties must work jointly to secure the level of funding that is necessary to meet state and local water quality goals and to simplify and stabilize county funding sources.

**B26 Comment:** (LCC) With the Legislature defining the rules of the various state agencies in the area, the DNR is responsible for establishing the agricultural performance standards. It is important that the counties have adequate funding to support staff in assisting and enforcing these rules.

**B27 Comment:** (LCC) County LCDs are the local team players, each with different capacities and abilities to carry out the performance standards. All this will take staff and money, and without this the performance standards mean nothing.

**B28 Comment:** (LCC) There is no viable staffing strategy that will provide adequate dollars or a secure funding source to address the workload associated with standards implementation. A staffing strategy should look at where intensive agriculture is taking place, current staff capability and the impact on water quality, not a simplistic 3 staff per county approach. A staffing strategy is important because: 1) it can take years for staff to build confidence and develop a relationship with a farmer before the farmer is willing to spend money on new conservation practices that may be expensive; and 2) cost-share dollars must accompany staffing for technical assistance — one without the other will result in lack of implementation; and state requirements to cost-share agreement forms, program tracking and reporting have gotten progressively more detailed and time consuming.

**B29 Comment:** (CWC) We strongly support additional funding for county LCDs. The DNR should take the concerns of WLWCA very seriously. We recognize that they are much more involved than any other interest group in the process. The county conservationists will be on the front lines in implementing and enforcing the new standards and to the extent possible their concerns must be addressed if these rules are going to be effective. We don't believe that the WLWCA concerns merit opposition to the rules. If we

had waited for all the enforcement and implementation issues to be resolved in the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, or the Endangered Species Acts, we would likely still not have any of these laws on the books.

**B30 Comment:** (individual) Often more money is available than staff to help use it. With all the grant programs at the state and federal level, our biggest need is personnel to administer the programs.

**Response:** We agree that staffing is critical. The DATCP is responsible for the allocation of state funds to support county staff. We have, and will continue, to support DATCP and counties in developing and implementing fair statewide staffing strategies.

**B31 Comment:** Several producers, crop consultants, a UW professor, and agricultural companies and organizations commented that 70% cost sharing was not enough, and that funding should not be limited to only capital improvements. They cited management considerations, manure transport, nutrient management plan writing, and other costs incurred to implement nutrient management, additional equipment needs, up-keep, loss of production, additional property taxes, future problems that need correcting, other potential impacts and manure storage while the ground is frozen. One LCD estimated it will cost \$80,000 to \$100,000 to build a retaining wall and filter strip and another \$130,000 for a nutrient storage facility. Another noted that farmers cannot pass the cost of environmental protection on to the consumers as industries can, so they should not be expected to shoulder the entire burden. Cost sharing must be significant and permanent.

**Response:** We do not agree that all of these factors should be fully compensated since some practices simply reflect sound stewardship. The grant provisions cover the reasonable value of farmers' in-kind contributions of donated labor, materials, equipment and supplies (excluding normal operating routines). Economic hardship funding will allow needy farmers to receive cost sharing of 90%. In addition to cost sharing structural practices, the rules provide cost sharing for several lower cost non-structural BMPs. such as nutrient and pest management, prescribed grazing and conservation tillage practices.

**B32 Comment:** (WI Cattlemen's Assn.) Requiring manure storage while the ground is frozen is expensive. Additional equipment will be required to handle stored manure.

**Response:** Manure storage is not a requirement of these rules, but those farmers that may need to install manure storage will have 70% cost sharing available for the construction of the facility. In cases of economic hardship, the cost share increases to as much as 90%. In addition, storage facilities allow the farmer to spread manure at a time when nutrients can be used more effectively by crops and reduce the need for purchasing commercial fertilizers.

**B33 Comment:** Several different cost-share rates were suggested. One farmer said that cost-sharing major projects at 75-85% would keep farmers from going out of business, a county LCC recommended 80-85% and elimination of the economic hardship clause, another farmer recommended 85%, five farmers, WI Livestock Breeders, WI Cattlemen's Assn. and DATCP recommended 90%, WI Pork Producers, WI Agri-Service Assn., WPVGA, and WI Cranberry Growers Assn. commented that the 70 % cost-share rate is the statutory minimum and should be raised to 90%, which they consider to be a major compromise. Another farmer suggested 90% cost sharing with 100% in hardship cases while another farmer suggested 90-100% for everything. Two farmers along with PLOW commented that the cost-share rate should be 100%.

**Response:** The state law governing DNR cost-sharing for the nonpoint source program states that cost sharing shall not exceed 70% except in cases of economic hardship, when it shall not exceed 90%. DATCP has the same restriction on its programs. In addition, both ATCP 50 and NR 153 do not allow state funds under these programs to be combined in such a way as to exceed these limits. So, the state share may not exceed these rates when the source of funding is for either the DNR or DATCP cost-share programs administered under s. 281.65 and/or chapter 92. A county can assemble a cost-share package that exceeds these rates, but would have to use funds from other sources such as federal sources, local sources or state programs other than those administered under s. 281.65 or chapter 92.

**B34 Comment:** (farmer) The agricultural economy needs all of the help it can get right now. We are losing money on every acre of corn and soybeans we grow (cost to produce a bushel corn is \$2.40, price has been \$1.50-\$2.00/bushel; cost to produce a bushel of soybeans is \$5.80, price has been \$4.00 -

\$4.80/bushel). We need government funding to break even and will need more help with more regulations.

**Response:** The state law requires that 70% cost share be made available to the landowner (up to 90% in cases of economic hardship) before compliance can be required for existing facilities and practices. The state cost share laws also limit the amount of cost sharing DATCP and the DNR can provide through their respective grant programs. The rules are consistent with the law. There is also an option for the county to combine other funds with the DATCP and DNR funds to pay for more of the compliance costs. This is a local decision.

**B35 Comment:** (2 farmers, 2 individuals) Many farmers are in debt and can't come up with the 30% match. Even if/when the farm economy recovers, it will take years for us to be a prosperous operation again.

**B36 Comment:** (DATCP) Either expand the conditions under which a farmer becomes eligible for an economic hardship award or remove the statutory barriers to increasing the cost-share rate to 90%.

**Response:** State law essentially requires a local match for state cost sharing, unless the county can bring other funding sources into the picture to increase the cost-share rate. The economic hardship criteria were modified to allow for a hardship finding based on debt repayment capability as well as debt to asset ratio.

**B37 Comment:** (farmer) It makes little sense in poor economic times for agriculture to make it even tougher for agricultural producers to survive. If these rules are for the public good, the public should participate in the cost.

**Response:** The state tax payers all contribute by providing cost-share funds for implementation and by paying for county government, which provides the staff resources to assist landowners. Those staff resources are paid both through county levy as well as through state tax revenue.

**B38 Comment:** (farmer) Cost sharing should be provided for conservation tillage equipment such as no-till drills/planters and/or custom labor performing those tasks. So should moving an operation to a new location.

**Response:** Cost sharing is provided for all of these.

**B39 Comment:** (tech. col. ag. instructor) Cost sharing of farmer practices to reduce erosion and nutrient loss needs to remain at 70% or be increased. Farmers are receiving 1979 prices for their dairy products while paying 2001 costs. Grain prices are also at very low levels. Generally, small farms have less erosion than larger farms. Small farms normally have smaller fields, which contribute less erosion. Small livestock farms also rotate crops more and have more acres in legume/grass forage so there is less erosion. Small farms need cost sharing to help pay the expenses for these mandates.

**Response:** At least 70% cost share must be made available (up to 90% for economic hardship cases) to require compliance, and the state cannot offer more than this amount through its grant program. So, the cost-share rates offered through the state are relatively fixed. A local governmental unit, at its option, can increase this amount but other funding sources must be used. Cost sharing is required for farms, regardless of size, unless the farming operation is a point source under Wisconsin law. Point sources are not eligible for state cost share funding under 281.65.

**B40 Comment:** (2 farmers) Cost sharing 70% really amounts to 50% because of the added costs associated with those practices. Cost sharing does not cover management of those practices, only capital costs — out of pocket expenses. Last year we estimated an average of \$6,000 per farm across the state while an increase of 20% adds \$1,200 more. This won't break the bank.

**Response:** We have endeavored to reduce the amount of "slippage" on cost-sharing by allowing payments for farmer's labor and equipment expense.

**B41 Comment:** (farmer) These rules will have an impact on whether we expand or not. If DNR or government is going to say we have to follow the requirements in these rules, the DNR or the government should pay for it. Farmers should not even have to have the 30% (funding match) loaded onto our backs.

**Response:** The legislature has specifically authorized the department to require compliance with performance standards at existing facilities provided that 70% cost sharing (90% in cases of economic hardship) is made available. This means that compliance can be required even though the landowner must provide a local match of 30% (10% in cases of economic hardship). Although a local governmental unit can combine other funding sources to increase the cost share rate, this is not required.

**B42 Comment:** (individual, River Alliance, TU) We support adding a requirement to spend cost-share dollars for agricultural improvements on impaired waterways.

**Response:** The state statute sets forth a variety of water resources problems that the grant programs may address. Improving impaired waters (303(d) listed waters) is only one of the problems identified. Although projects to improve impaired waters are given higher priority in the proposed rule, other projects may receive funding consistent with the state law.

**B43 Comment:** (UW rural sociology) With a seemingly very limited state budget looming, financial resources are best targeted to high ranking priority areas. Much of the funding will come from bonding limiting the opportunity to invest in changing management practices. Research has demonstrated that investment in capital expenditures without changing the associated management practices provides little gain in environmental protection. Education and compensation for adopting what is perceived to be risky practices needs more attention in the proposed rules. Using bonded dollars to invest in technical fixes does little for changing these inappropriate behaviors.

**Response:** The legislative budget process has greatly limited the amount of funding available under these rules that can be used for non-structural management practices. These projects will, however, be conducted in the context of broader county land and water resources management programs funded by DATCP under ATCP 50. Counties that receive those funds must have an approved LWRM plan that, by law, must contain an educational component. The department will develop an intergovernmental agreement with key partners (as required under s. NR 151.09) to help coordinate education, structural and non-structural management changes in areas of greatest need.

**B44 Comment:** (farmer) I hope you don't come after every farm in a watershed, but look each farm over and target the farms with problems first. I hope you watch residential developments very closely. Waterfront development in our northern county could possibly be a larger problem and do more polluting than farmland.

**Response:** The county will play the most important role in targeting and working first with priority landowners. DNR will work closely with the county, and only intends to approach landowners directly in those cases where the county is unwilling or unable to take the necessary steps. We agree that waterfront development can be a problem and the rules (both DNR's and DATCP's) contain some provisions that can be used to help address this problem.

**B45 Comment:** (farmer) Concerning spending priorities: do you want to spend money on concrete when 90% of cropland needs a nutrient management plan? My priority watershed spends \$250,000 on cement. Can taxpayers afford to invest in bricks and mortar when farmers probably will not be in business?

**Response:** Counties will play a major role in setting priorities during implementation. Most of DNR's money is bonding money and cannot be used for nutrient management. There are some funding sources that can be used for these types of management practices, including a small amount of state GPR funding and federal funding under s. 319 of the Clean Water Act. We hope to work with DATCP and other partners to develop additional resources needed for nutrient management and other cropping practices.

**B46 Comment:** (WISPIRG) In accordance with the proposed Family Farm Protection Act, we must not simply hand out state and federal dollars to whichever operations apply for them: You need to distinguish between small and large farms. You need to provide cost sharing for subsidies for state- and federally required nutrient management plans giving priority to small farms. We want cost sharing to be directed to small farms, not industrial operations.

**Response:** The department has no authority to deny cost sharing to larger operations, although once an operation is large enough to require a WPDES permit (for animal waste management) it is not eligible for

funding under ch. NR 120 or ch. NR 153. The rules do contain some provisions to cost share limited expansions at smaller operations.

**B47 Comment:** (UW rural sociology) Sources of agricultural nonpoint source pollution should be identified, measured, then ranked, with resources allocated to addressing the most significant pollution problems first, rather than regulating all farms regardless of their contribution to nonpoint source pollution. There is an increasing amount of research that demonstrates that the majority of pollutant loading comes from a small area (sub-field) during a few episodic events, such as construction site erosion or a severe storm. The scale of policy implementation needs to match, or at least approximate, the scale where the most severe sources originate.

**Response:** The state law requires that statewide performance standards be developed so that all farmers will have a common understanding of management expectations. Targeting will occur in the grants process. Counties will submit grant applications to compete for funds, and will be submitting those applications to work in high priority areas identified in Land and Water Resource Management Plans.

**B48 Comment:** (individual) I urge the application of funds and coalitions with organizations that might provide additional resources to make cleanup feasible now and not cause undue problems for those who live and work in the watershed. Given insufficient funds to do the whole state, I suggest selection of several demonstration projects that are cleaned fully with an intensive effort. An example would be the Brill River, about 12 miles long, that flows out of Long Lake and is the most upstream river to feed directly into the Red Cedar River. The river starts out clean and clear, running through forest and grass-buffered banks, and becomes brown as it runs through agricultural land, where cattle are allowed in the river. DNR should have the will, the power, and the clout to take the lead in cleaning up the river. There are a number of concerned citizens, including hunting and fishing associations, that would help.

**Response:** Contact your county and work to get funding for this through the TRM grant program administered under ch NR 153. DNR can only issue grants for projects that have been applied for by local governments.

**B49 Comment:** (LCC) The cost estimates make it seem like agriculture is not doing anything. We disagree — much improvement has been made voluntarily by the industry over the years. It appears that only the "bad actors" will receive the funding. This should not be. One alternative would be to offer "green credits," or utilize the use value assessment law to reward those farmers who are meeting the new standards.

**Response:** We agree that many conservation practices have been implemented voluntarily, but more needs to be done. Landowners that already meet these standards will not have to implement new measures but will be required to maintain the land in such a way as to continue compliance with the standards. Funding must be made available under the law to achieve compliance, and that is the state's funding priority. This will require a substantial amount of financial resources. Once compliance is achieved, the department believes that the landowner must maintain compliance at his/her own expense.

**B50 Comment:** (LCC) There is no strategy or schedule to fund the redesign package. Only bonding or general funds have been proposed. Creating the standards without funding or a strategy to implement is meaningless. With costs reported at \$16-\$80 million annually, there needs to be another source of stable and adequate funding, like the title transfer fee revenues that used to pay for water quality improvements but were lost to another program. Three (3) suggestions are offered:

1. License fees from snowmobile and boat trailers. These should be dedicated to funding LWRM plans (staffing and cost sharing).
2. Water use fees. a) The City of New York provides dollars for protection of their drinking water supply—a reservoir in upstate New York. The cost-share dollars pay for agricultural nonpoint pollution protection. b) The City of Appleton (1996) charges a quarterly fee of \$13.50 for a single-family home for storm water management. c) Grand Chute established fees in 1997 and charges a quarterly cost of \$10 for a single-family home.
3. Food tax. Missouri has had a one-tenth of one percent sales tax since 1983, half of which is dedicated to soil and water conservation. In 2001, this portion was \$40 million of which \$20 million was provided

for cost sharing for farmers and the rest for program administration and soil and water conservation districts.

4. Manure fee on WPDES permits. Require the DNR to annually charge 0.0005 cents per gallon of manure that is land spread in addition to the current annual WPDES permit fee. The additional fee must be provided to LCDs in counties with WPDES permitted operations for staff costs to annually review and approve 590 nutrient management plans and landowner compliance with new state standards. The fee on a 1,500 cow operation would generate \$5,118 a year compared to \$18,000 a year for consulting costs to the same operation. For a 700-cow operation, the fee would generate \$2,389 a year compared to a consulting fee of \$8,400 a year for the operation. Currently there is no strategy or mechanism to pay for LCD staff to provide technical assistance on WPDES permits or NR 243 NODs or the new state standards.

**Response:** These are interesting ideas. Please work with your legislator to see how they might be implemented.

**B51 Comment:** (farmer) The responsibility for funding should be spread around and not just come from the DNR's budget. The UW could do some monitoring.

**Response:** Funding and support will come from many sources, including DNR, DATCP, NRCS, FSA, EPA and county government to name a few. UW also plays a major role in training and providing educational and evaluation resources.

**B52 Comment:** (farmer) Concerning equipment, innovative ways of sharing or financing need to be tried. Concerning the loss of income: even though equipment is expensive, it has some resale value.

**Response:** Some counties have offered equipment-sharing options to farmers. Contact your county LCD with your suggestion.

**B53 Comment:** (farmer) Reward good practices. Get every acre on nutrient management plan before trying buffer strips. Cost-sharing intervals and rates should be increased for grid sampling. And there should be a money-back guarantee to try practices on a smaller scale, like the Discovery Farm concept.

**Response:** Many of these concepts are being investigated such as nutrient management insurance. It should be noted that while nutrient management will reduce the potential of excess nutrients entering surface waters, sediment is also a major pollutant of our lakes, rivers and streams.

**B54 Comment:** (S. Fork Hay Project Manager) Instead of providing 70% cost sharing, our project has provided a sliding-scale funding formula based on the amount of reduction. Instead of paying on a practice, the payment is based on the value of the reduced amount of phosphorus to waters of the state. It is performance-based. We have only a few projects left this spring; when completed, we will have addressed all critical sites for a total cost of about \$25,000 to the state—less than the traditional barnyard projects alone usually cost (\$35,000). A program like this provides funding to the farmers -- it does not fund contractors or consultants. It also acknowledges that the farmers are the resource managers. LCDs help facilitate this.

**Response:** Each county staff will work with its landowners to achieve performance standards given the amount and type of funds available. We hope that applicable parts of your approach can be used by other counties, consistent with administrative rule requirements.

**B55 Comment:** (co. public works dept.) These rules could eat up \$250 million because only 1/3 of every dollar goes to brick and mortar. What the DNR is proposing is funded largely through other budgets. Since the gasoline tax has been maxed out and registration fees are low, maybe there needs to be an additional tax on transportation-related items that could include a tax on tires, parts for tires, and on transportation-related services, because we have to find the money somewhere.

**Response:** The cost to comply with the municipal performance standards includes retrofitting in existing development in addition to information and education and good housekeeping. DNR is able to offer some cost sharing for the activities but it will clearly not meet the need. The statutes are clear that the performance standards are to be met regardless of cost sharing for urban nonpoint sources. This comment will be passed on to the legislature.