

Wisconsin Water Timeline



1800s

Number of sawmills peaked at 1,100 and declined to 113 by 1930

1848

First paper mill (Milwaukee)

1860

First commercial cranberry production

1880s

Waukesha and Racine establish municipal water supply



1882

First hydroelectric dam (Appleton)

1887

First fish hatchery (Madison)

1898

First lake association (Lake Geneva)



1914

Diana Shooting Club v. Husting expands scope of Public Trust Doctrine to include protection of scenic beauty, water quality and wetlands

1919

First wastewater treatment facility (Milwaukee)



1945

Post-war shoreline development increases with highway improvements, automobile ownership and leisure time

1950-1969

Over 2 million pounds of sodium arsenite, a cancer-causing agent, are applied to 167 Wisconsin lakes to control aquatic plants



1959

Creation of Wis. Federation of Lakes

1965

Wis. Water Resources Act provides authority for shoreland and floodplain zoning



1968

Wis. Shoreland Management Program provides minimum shoreland zoning standards for counties (first in nation)

1972

Federal Clean Water Act supported by the Clean Water Act of Wis.

Just v. Marinette Co. upholds counties' rights to prohibit wetland fill through ordinance



1983

Wis. Groundwater Protection Act establishes groundwater quality standards

1985

Great Lakes Charter establishes principles for management of Great Lakes water resources



1990

Federal Stormwater Rules limit industrial discharge in medium and large cities

1991

State enacts water quality standards for wetlands (first in nation)

1994

First indoor water park in nation (Wisconsin Dells)



1999

Phase II Stormwater Rules expanded to include small communities and construction sites

2001

State enacts protections for isolated wetlands (first in nation)



2003

Wis. Groundwater Protection Act expanded to include groundwater quality

2008

Great Lakes Compact bans diversion of water from Great Lakes

2010

State Water Quality Standards limit phosphorus discharge to surface waters

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