

# Current legislation impacting water

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Presented by Michael Engleson, WI Lakes  
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Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention



# Agenda

- Focus on current legislation, a touch on the budget
- Groundwater/high capacity wells
- Aquaculture
- DNR general permit for small scale dredging in lakes
- Mining bill
- State budget proposal

## Two types of legislation

- Budget bill
- Everything else

## Legislative timeline

- Legislative session is two years
- Budget is worked on Feb-June of 1<sup>st</sup> year of session
- Other legislation is before budget work, and then winter-spring
- Floor periods are limited

## High Capacity Wells (SB76/AB105)

- Prohibits DNR review of permit requirements upon repair, reconstruction, replacement, or transfer.
- Review not currently undertaken at any other time, and permits do not expire
- Bill would also authorize (but not fund) a DNR study of certain areas in central WI to create management recommendations
- Passed out of Senate committee, scheduled to be voted on April 4

## Aquaculture

- Would treat aquaculture similarly to agriculture
- Exemptions from wetland permits and some Chapter 30 regulations
- Impact unclear. Most conservation groups not actively opposing

## DNR General Permit for Dredging Lakes

- Proposal to allow “small scale” dredging by waterfront property owners
- 25 cubic yards over 5 years
- Other allowances
- Public comment concluded, awaiting DNR decision

## Mining

- Coming in April (source: Sen Tiffany's office)
- Probably a repeal of the mining moratorium



## The big thing nobody's talking about (SB15)

- Modelled on federal "REINS Act"
- In budget and as stand alone legislation (SB15)
- Scope of a rule would need to be reviewed by DOA for agency authority to promulgate
- JCRAR can direct agency to hold public hearing on scope statement
- A law would need to be passed allowing rule if it would result in implementation and compliance costs of \$10 million dollars
- JCRAR can request economic impact study

## Timeline for state budget development

A horizontal timeline graphic with a blue background and a yellow arrow pointing right. Below the arrow are seven blue upward-pointing arrows, each above a white text box with a blue border. The text boxes describe the steps in the budget development process from Fall 2016 to June 2017.

Fall 2016  
Agencies  
submit  
budget  
requests to  
Governor

Feb 2017  
Governor  
announces  
Executive  
Budget  
Proposal

Mar 2017  
Legislature's  
Joint Finance  
Committee  
Hold Hearings  
with Agencies  
and Public

April 2017  
Joint Finance  
Committee  
votes on  
each section  
of the budget

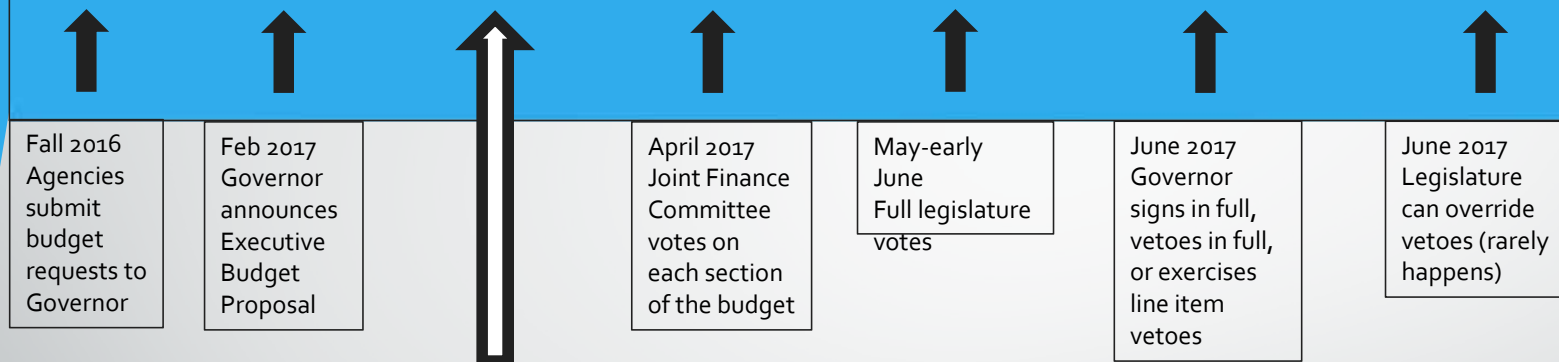
May-early  
June  
Full legislature  
votes

June 2017  
Governor  
signs in full,  
vetoes in full,  
or exercises  
line item  
vetoes

June 2017  
Legislature  
can override  
vetoes (rarely  
happens)

- State budget is biennial – 2 years (July 2017-June 2019)

# Timeline for state budget development



Mar 2017  
Legislature's Joint  
Finance Committee  
Hold Hearings with  
Agencies and Public

- Agency hearings allow legislators to ask questions of agency heads – can be more theater than informational

## What's In the Budget?

- No major funding changes to DNR
- No change to surface water grants, lakes & rivers program
- Study to move CAFO regulation to DATCP
- Reduces county conservationist funding
- Cuts to Natural Resource educators
- Forestry mill tax cut
- Elimination of DNR's magazine

## What does it all mean?

- This is a budget written by an unpopular governor in an election year
- The legislature can and will change the budget
- Lakes and rivers funding probably safe - but not out of the woods yet
- Who knows what non-fiscal policy items are coming?

## How to keep informed and act

- Follow [wisconsinlakes.org](http://wisconsinlakes.org) or sign up for our Lake Policy report
- Participate in WI Lakes/River Alliance of WI's "Lakes In Action" program
- Research bills, find your legislator and more on the WI Legislature's website: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/>
- Read newspaper articles, press releases, more at [thewheelerreport.com](http://thewheelerreport.com)
- Watch it all happen on Wisconsin Eye ([wiseye.org](http://wiseye.org))
- Talk to your legislators!



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