

**June 5, 2019**

**Sarah Juon  
Rhineland, Wisconsin**

**Comment for the Public Hearing on the Oneida County Land and Water Resource  
Management Plan**

Under Accomplishments for the 2012-18 Work Plan, it states: "With changes in mining legislation and increased citizen attention to water quality, LWCD expanded mining objectives and activities in their 2020-2024 Work Plan."

I looked for these expanding mining objectives and activities in the 2020-2024 Work Plan, and found under Goal 1: Protect and enhance wetlands and surface water quality, only this stated objective:

G. Maintain county mining ordinance(s)

1. Maintain working knowledge of mining. FLRC, P&DC....As needed.
2. Stay abreast of new research/policies. LWCD, P&Z.... As needed.
3. Attend workshops/seminars that expand staff knowledge base. LWCD, P&Z....Attend 1 conference/webinar.

In light of the 2018 referendum results on the Lynne mineral deposit issue, in which 62 percent of the Oneida County voters said they did not want a mine at the Lynne site, with what measures does this Plan reflect the voters' wishes?

The Plan commendably outlines areas of concern for our county. On page 24 it states "Because groundwater seeps more slowly than surface runoff, pollution that occurs today may not become evident for several years. Once polluted, the groundwater is very difficult to purify and may take many years to clean itself by the dilution process." On page 26 it states in poetic terms, "Wetlands are nurseries for fish and wildlife, purifiers for lakes, rivers and groundwater, and storage for floodwaters. They are also playgrounds for birders, hikers, hunters, and paddlers. In terms of hazard mitigation, they act as water storage devices in times of high water. Like sponges, wetlands are able to absorb excess water and release it back into the watershed slowly, preventing flooding and minimizing flood damage, including shoreline erosion. As more impermeable surfaces are developed, this excess capacity for water runoff storage becomes increasingly important."

*a non-active*  
Yet when it comes to creating Objectives for protecting these vital resources, the Plan fades into a reactive stance. I realize that Senator Tom Tiffany's 2017 Act 134 was a power-grab designed to limit the ability of local authorities to create standards that would protect our wetlands and surface water quality. But are you not allowed to state at least a few proactive goals? Such as, something along the lines of: "Given the sensitivity of wetland areas, and the importance of DNR

Designated Outstanding Resource Waters, such as the Willow Flowage near the Lynne mineral deposit, we recommend that there shall be no permitting of open pit mining granted in such areas.”

---

If the Plan is to stand for anything more than a poetic tribute to our unique area of wetlands, lakes, forests and rivers, shouldn't there be a stated commitment to improving how we protect these areas? The Plan admits right up front: “Additional staff is needed to accomplish all the activities in this plan.” An understatement. It is vital that the Plan include a stated, strong commitment to finding the means to hire the staff needed for monitoring, and fulfilling action plans.

---