



Press Release

June 1, 2017

Contact: Raymond “Skip” Hansen, CSWAC Chair for more information: 414-651-1570,

info@centralsandswater.org

Governor Sides with Industry by Signing the High-Capacity Well Bill

Now that the Governor has yet again chosen industry over our waters and local communities by signing SB 76, Wisconsin needs even more concerned citizens watching over our water resources. Since the DNR will no longer be able to review high capacity well permits when they are replaced, repaired, or transferred, the burden of watching these irrigation wells and their impacts on our lakes and rivers is now on scientists, landowners, local communities and water advocates across the state. Lawyers will also continue to be busy as they help lake associations and individuals protect their lakes and property values from dropping further.

The Central Sands Water Action Coalition (CSWAC) has worked for years to protect lakes and rivers from the harms of high capacity wells. Our work is far from over. CSWAC is committed to working on long-term solutions to protect our lakes, rivers, wetlands, private wells and local economy. We will continue to work with stakeholders from all sides that truly want to find balanced solutions to our water needs.

Unfortunately, one of the actions citizens are forced to take is litigation. CSWAC fully supports Clean Wisconsin’s [challenge of eight high capacity wells the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources](#) approved in 2016. The DNR has the duty to protect the waters of Wisconsin and the approval of these wells shows that the DNR chose to ignore their own science about the harm these wells have on lakes and streams. “When our state is not protecting our waters, which impacts both our ecosystem and economy, we have no choice but to stand up and demand that the courts intervene to assure our laws are followed,” said CSWAC Chairman Skip Hansen.

CSWAC is working with Clean Wisconsin, Pleasant Lake Management District, and Midwest Environmental Advocates to make sure the courts understand the impact high capacity wells have had in the Central Sands and to stress the importance of the Public Trust Doctrine’s requirements to protect the Waters of Wisconsin.

CSWAC also encourages the Department of Natural Resources to make a request this month to the Joint Committee on Finance, as allowed in the bill, to “provide funding and positions for the evaluation and modeling” specified in the bill. It is important for the DNR to begin the important work of studying **all** of the watersheds listed in SB 76 to gather the scientific data that will allow for the development of solutions to balance the water usage in the central sands.

The Central Sands Water Action Coalition is a membership organization of 67 lake associations, lake districts, and conservation groups representing more than 50,000 members and their families concerned with negative impacts on water resources in the Central Sands Region of Wisconsin.