

Central Sands Water Action Coalition

Memorandum of Agreement for Participating Organizations

Purpose of the Coalition

The Coalition is organized to advocate for the protection and sustainable use of ground and surface waters of the Central Sands – the area comprised of parts of Waushara, Portage, Adams, Marquette, Wood and Waupaca counties and containing rich quantities of groundwater and scores of streams and lakes. The Coalition exists to provide a united voice of water protection interests and to increase the power and influence of those water protection interests where acting individually would not be as effective, and where speaking to regional water issues makes good strategic sense.

Participation

Members of the Coalition are organizations or associations with an interest in groundwater and surface water protection in the Central Sands. While it is not a necessary prerequisite, it is preferred that member organizations be formally incorporated by the state of Wisconsin and the organization have a board of directors or some kind of decision-making body. Individuals not affiliated with or representing an organization cannot be a part of the Coalition.

Formal Structure of the Coalition

At its outset, the Coalition will not incorporate or create a formal structure as its own organization. It will be an informal affiliation of organizations whose boards of directors resolve, through a formal vote, to join the Coalition; regularly and meaningfully participate in it; and abide by this MOA. At its outset, the Coalition will not have dues, though it could seek funding or donations on its behalf to carry out its activities (A coalition member organization would need to act as the Coalition's fiscal agent.) The Coalition will have a Steering Committee as its deliberative and decision-making body. It will be comprised of one representative from each of the member organizations.

Operating Tenets of the Coalition

1. The Coalition will not direct activities or programs of any of the participating organizations; organizations will continue to determine their own priorities.
2. For their part, member organizations agree to support, to the extent they can, the activities and positions of the Coalition, once those activities are communicated by the Coalition Steering Committee to the member organizations' boards of directors.
3. Participating organizations will share non-confidential information regarding Coalition activities with their organizations. In instances where confidentiality for Coalition activities are essential (e.g. not revealing a political strategy), participating organizations will use discretion in keeping such matters confidential.

4. Each organizational member of the Coalition will designate no more than two individuals from its membership to represent it on the Steering Committee. Those individuals should be familiar with the substance of the issues of concern to the Coalition. Both individuals need not be present at Coalition meeting. But to ensure continuity between the Coalition and the member organization, there should not be free substitution of representatives by the member organizations.
5. Each member organization has one vote should the Coalition Steering Committee make a decision by a vote. The Coalition Steering Committee will strive to operate by consensus, but if consensus cannot be reached, a voice vote or show of hands will be taken and recorded, and treated as a formal decision by the Steering Committee.
6. A position or action taken publicly by the Coalition will not preclude a member organization from taking a similar position publicly on its own unless the Steering Committee deems that that action or position would be stronger if made by the Coalition alone. Member organizations should not publicly contradict or oppose the Coalition's publicly stated positions or public actions; doing so would end that group's relationship with the Coalition.
7. The Coalition may seek technical advice, legal counsel or political strategy from people familiar with issues of interest to the Coalition. These experts may attend Steering Committee meetings but cannot vote.