State Budget & Legislative Update

Presented by Michael Engleson, WI Lakes
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Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention
Focus on budget (other legislation to be focus of the 8-9 “Water & Legislation” breakout session on Thr)
- Budget process
- Specific items in budget
- What it means in context
- Other legislation
Two types of legislation

• Budget bill
• Everything else
Legislative timeline

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

- In general, more spending than usual - education, transportation, etc
- DNR funding largely stable
- No apparent change to lakes & rivers funding
- Surface water grants untouched
- Funding not restored for non-profit conservation organizations
What’s In the Budget?

- Money provided to study moving Combined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) regulation from DNR to DATCP
What’s In the Budget?

- County Conservationist funding would be reduced to 2013 levels
What’s In the Budget?

- Some funding for natural resource educators would be cut, especially those working on polluted runoff issues
What’s In the Budget?

- Elimination of forestry mill tax
- Elimination of DNR’s “Natural Resources” magazine
The big thing nobody’s talking about

- 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
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?
Non-budget legislation

- High-cap well bill
- Aquaculture bill
- DNR issuance of general permit for small scale dredging in lakes
- Mining bill (coming soon)
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