

**Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Board Agenda Item**

**Subject:** The Rebecca Wallace Award

**For:** October 2014 Meeting

**Presenter's Name and Title:** Cathy Stepp, Secretary

**Informational Item:** Secretary Stepp will present the award to the recipient

**Summary:**

Secretary Stepp will present the award to the recipient at the NRB meeting.

This is an annual award that began in 1998 following the death of Watershed Management employee, Rebecca Wallace, February 1997. Rebecca R. Wallace had been an environmental engineer with the Department of Natural Resources, since 1979. At the time of her death, she was Chief of the Runoff Management Section, in the Watershed Management Bureau. Becky was a persistent advocate for improvement and protection of Wisconsin's water resources. Her vision for the state's Nonpoint Program was clear and succinct: "Clean Water". Becky became a symbol of what goals could be achieved through not only hard work and dedication, but also with compassion and empathy for others. Becky and her husband, Lyle, died in an automobile accident on February 22, 1997, leaving three children, Spencer, Mitch, and Jeremy.

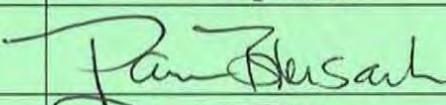
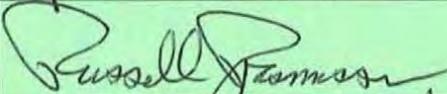
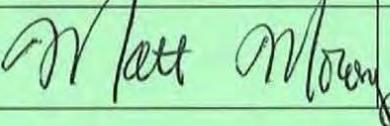
In February 1997, the Natural Resources Board passed a memorial resolution honoring Becky Wallace, establishing the Rebecca Wallace Memorial Award. Each year an award is given to an employee nominated for making the greatest contribution toward either the improvement of relationships with external partner agencies and organizations on environmental quality issues or mentoring of Department staff. In another tribute to Becky, the Wisconsin State Assembly passed 1997 Assembly Resolution 25, honoring both her career with the DNR and her strong commitment to her family.

Mr. James McEvoy, a retired DNR artist from Brooklyn, Wisconsin, created the accompanying pen and ink watercolor for the award. A print is given to each award recipient.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Information Only

**LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS :**

  X   Background Memo

Approved by	Signature	Date
Pam Biersach, Bureau Director		9/19/14
Russ Rasmussen, Division Administrator		9/24/14
Cathy Stepp, Secretary		10/6/14

## 2014 Rebecca Wallace Memorial Award Winner

### Dr. John Lyons

Natural Resource Program Supervisor  
Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Research Section  
Office of Business Support, Science, and Sustainability

Since joining the WDNR Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Research Program in 1985, Dr. John Lyons has consistently served the people of Wisconsin by providing sound science upon which to make natural resource management decisions related to fisheries and water quality. In addition, he has magnified his impact through years and years of incredible mentorship to students and employees across the agency. John is not only brilliant as a researcher; he is also effective, efficient, and dedicated toward implementing the results of his research, teaching others about our aquatic resources, and how to do good science. He serves a critical need for aquatic technical expertise for multiple programs within our agency including the Fisheries Management, Water Quality, Watershed Management and Natural Heritage Conservation.

Concerning John's great positive influence on others--one staff person who worked closely with him over the years had this to say about John:

*"John has been a role model and mentor for many people, including myself. I consider John the most influential person in my professional life. I have great respect for John in that he taught me so much about aquatic ecology and science, but moreover, because he taught me the importance of developing interpersonal relationships, remaining professional in giving or taking scientific criticism, and ultimately sharing the Department's core values. Even if he is not actively mentoring he is always leading by example."*

John is internationally known for his research in aquatic ecology and fisheries science (with over 100 peer reviewed papers). In addition to establishing a highly respected research program, John serves the mission of the WDNR through serving on numerous teams, committees and cooperative projects. He normally leads at least 10 research projects every year that bear directly on resource management decisions. All in all, John has greatly influenced scientific based natural resource management in Wisconsin and we are very fortunate that he is part of the WDNR.

## Previous Award Recipients

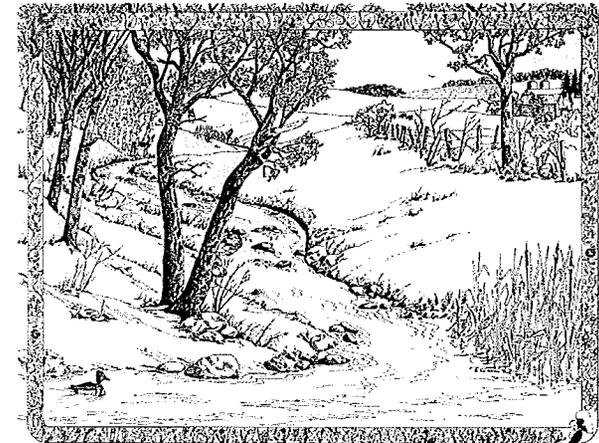
- 2013 Barb Bickford, Bureau of Waste and Materials Management
- 2012 Jeff Bode, Lakes and Rivers Section, Water Quality
- 2009 Sandy Manthei, Southeast Region
- 2008 Cheryl Bougie, Northeast Region
- 2007 David Zebro, Northern Region
- 2006 Carol Bentzler, Drinking Water & Groundwater
- 2005 Tom Lovejoy, West Central Region
- 2004 Laura Herman, Northern Region
- 2003 Nancy Larson, Northern Region
- 2002 Ron Preder, Southeast Region
- 2001 Kathy Bartilson, Northern Region, Spooner
- 2000 Eileen Trainor, Community Financial Assistance
- 1999 Janet Beach Hanson, Community Financial Assistance
- 1998 Karen Voss, West Central Region



## 2014 Wisconsin

## Department of Natural Resources

## Rebecca Wallace Award



## Natural Resources Board Meeting

October 2014

Madison, Wisconsin

## MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

It is with deep regret that the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board recognizes the untimely passing of DNR employee Rebecca Wallace on February 22, 1997.

Becky began her career with the Department in 1979 as an environmental engineer in the Water Quality Evaluation Section of the Bureau of Water Quality in Madison. In 1980, she moved into an engineering position in the Municipal Wastewater Section of the Bureau of Wastewater Management.

In 1988, Becky was appointed unit supervisor in the Nonpoint Source Technical Support Unit of the Bureau of Water Resources Management. In 1991, Becky was appointed chief of the Nonpoint Source and Land Management Section in the same bureau. She recently was appointed chief of the new Runoff Management Section in the newly organized Bureau of Watershed Management.

During her nearly 18-year career with the Department, Becky distinguished herself as a tireless advocate for the improvement and protection of Wisconsin's water resources. As chief of Wisconsin's Nonpoint Source Pollution Abatement Program, more popularly referred to as the "priority watershed" program, she forged partnerships with counties, municipalities, and other state and federal agencies involved in land conservation, stormwater management, and agricultural land management.

Becky's accomplishments in managing the Department's nonpoint source program are many and varied. Her dedication to Wisconsin's water resources and to her staff will be both long remembered and sorely missed. As one of her highest priorities, Becky worked extremely hard at improving relationships between the Department and its partner agencies. She will long be affectionately remembered by her colleagues at the Department for her dedication to mentoring and supporting her staff, her positive disposition, and her ability to forge partnerships and find common ground between strongly-held divergent points of view.

Throughout her career, Becky provided the Department with the highest level of professional service. As evidence of this, Becky was nominated in 1995 for the John Brogan Environmental Achievement Award as part of the Department's team effort on the Animal Waste Advisory Committee. She also participated on the Great Lakes Commission's Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Task Force along with representatives from the other Great Lakes states. She also represented Wisconsin on numerous regional and national nonpoint source-related committees and was one of the founders of the bi-annual Upper Midwest Conference on Nonpoint Source Pollution.

**WHEREAS**, Rebecca Wallace served the people of the State of Wisconsin long and faithfully in the performance of her duties;

**WHEREAS**, Rebecca Wallace earned the respect and admiration of her colleagues at the Department for her commitment, energy, and dedication to her staff;

**WHEREAS**, Rebecca Wallace's career and advancement through the ranks of the Department to a position of high responsibility and visibility as a relatively young woman serves as an inspiration to professional women in the fields of environmental engineering and natural resources management;

**WHEREAS**, Rebecca Wallace was dedicated to her husband and three children and maintained this commitment even as she faced the demands of a professional career;

**WHEREAS**, Rebecca Wallace exhibited the rare ability to bring diverse groups of people together to work effectively toward common goals and used this ability to contribute greatly to the fulfillment of the Department's mission.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, we, the members of the Natural Resources Board at our February 1997 meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, recognize such faithful service with due respect and gratitude and hereby establish the Rebecca Wallace Memorial Award for Departmental staff to be awarded annually to the employee making the greatest contribution toward either the improvement of relationships with external partner agencies and organizations on mutually-shared environmental quality issues or the mentoring of Department staff. This memorial resolution is made a part of the official records of the Natural Resources Board.

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD

Trygve A. Solberg, CHAIRMAN



## The Rebecca Wallace Memorial Award

Rebecca R. Wallace had been an environmental engineer with the Department of Natural Resources, since 1979. At the time of her death, she was Chief of the Runoff Management Section, in the Watershed Management Bureau. Becky was a persistent advocate for improvement and protection of Wisconsin's water resources. Her vision for the state's Nonpoint Program was clear and succinct: "Clean Water". Becky became a symbol of what goals could be achieved through not only hard work and dedication, but also with compassion and empathy for others. Becky and her husband, Lyle, died in an automobile accident on February 22, 1997, leaving three children, Spencer, Mitch, and Jeremy.

In February 1997, the Natural Resources Board passed a memorial resolution honoring Becky Wallace. As part of that resolution, the Board established the Rebecca Wallace Memorial Award. Becky's staff were instrumental in the development of the criteria and guidelines for this award. Each year an award is given to an employee nominated for making the greatest contribution toward either the improvement of relationships with external partner agencies and organizations on environmental quality issues or mentoring of Department staff. The first award was presented in June, 1998, by Governor Tommy Thompson. In another tribute to Becky, the Wisconsin State Assembly passed 1997 Assembly Resolution 25, honoring both her career with the DNR and her strong commitment to her family.

Mr. James McEvoy, a retired DNR artist from Brooklyn, Wisconsin, created the accompanying pen and ink watercolor for the award. A print is given to each award recipient.