

*A newsletter for people concerned with water management issues.*

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*The 2015 WAFSCM Conference included a tour of the World Water Hub. Page 3*



### *Did you know?*

*Job opportunities are posted on the WAFSCM website.*

[www.wafscm.org](http://www.wafscm.org)

*Click on News & Events under the training & Education link.*

### Message from the Editor

The WAFSCM newsletter is published twice a year to update members on chapter activities and to provide information on publications, seminars, etc. that may be beneficial to our water community. If you have articles, announcements, or other information that you would like us to include in future newsletters, please forward it to me at [BPowers@scsengineers.com](mailto:BPowers@scsengineers.com)

Thank you to all the newsletter contributors and to Rhonda Janos for the newsletter preparation.

*Betsy Powers, P.E.*

Newsletter Editor



## Message from the Chair

*Steve Wurster, P.E., CFM*

### Message from the Chair

I am honored to serve as your WAFSCM Wisconsin Chapter Chair in 2016/2017. My experience with our national organization started back in 2006, when I obtained my Certified Floodplain Manager designation and proudly received a certificate sent to the attention of “Ms.” Steven Wurster! 😊

Since then (and in all seriousness), WAFSCM has profoundly impacted my career. While attending my first state conference that same year, I recall talking to Dave Fowler who both welcomed me with open arms and encouraged me to get involved as a young engineer. I took Dave’s advice and am eternally grateful for the relationships I have developed and the opportunities that our wonderful organization has provided.

I would like to thank our Past Chair, Ryan Kloth and our outgoing Secretary, Matt Heyroth, for their dedication and commitment to WAFSCM. I would also like to thank Carrie Bristol-Groll and Laura Rozumalski for leading the charge in organizing and executing our 2015 Annual Conference. The leadership they have provided has been invaluable and greatly appreciated by the entire association. Finally, many thanks to our 2015 conference sponsors. Without them, such a great event would not be possible.

2016 will be a busy year for WAFSCM. Planning has already started on our 2016 Annual Conference, which will be held in La Crosse on November 9-11, 2016. The Board will spend our May meeting taking an insightful look at our organization through some strategic planning exercises. In particular, we’ll examine what areas are we strong in, where could we be better and how we want to improve as an association.

I look forward to working with our Board, our committee chairs, and many of our members over the next two years. There is much to do, but many hands make light work and the most effective way to help steer our organization is to get involved. If you are interested in helping with the conference planning, joining us for our strategic planning exercises or assisting on a committee, please reach out to any of the Board members.

Sincerely,

Steve Wurster, P.E., CFM  
WAFSCM Chair  
[swurster@ruekert-mielke.com](mailto:swurster@ruekert-mielke.com)



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## 2015 WAFSCM Conference Recap

*By 2015 Conference Co-Chair, Carrie Bristoll-Groll, PE, CFM*

Thanks in part to the time of year, location, great planning staff, interesting speakers, and great exhibitors and sponsors, we had our BEST ever turnout at our annual conference this past November! We started the conference with a Floodplain 101 Course led by Dave Fowler and Ryan Van Camp. Ben Gramling and Nadia Bogue from Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers (Milwaukee) and Steve Brachman from 1000 Friends of Wisconsin led a Green Infrastructure Workshop using the Climate Interactive's Green Infrastructure Scenarios Tool (GIST). Good feedback was received on both workshops.



We ended Wednesday with a pizza social/game night. It was a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new ones!



Thursday opened with an update and news from the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) and ended with a panel presentation/interactive discussion with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources storm water, floodplain, dam safety and total maximum daily load (TMDL) program staff. Between plenary speakers, attendees enjoyed one interesting speaker after the next during the three tracks of breakout sessions.

*Continued on next page* →

## 2015 WAFSCM Conference Recap (*Continued*)

Lunchtime awards presentations included an Innovative Green Infrastructure Project at Summerfest, designed by Stormwater Solutions Engineering, LLC, as well as the Sawyer Creek Channel Improvement Project designed by Strand Associates.



Thank you to everyone who provided feedback on the conference. We will use your comments to make next year's conference even better!

Friday's activities included the Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) exam and tour of the World Water Hub.



The tour was well attended with 27 members climbing aboard a yellow school bus to tour the UWM School of Freshwater Sciences along the Milwaukee Estuary, the Global Water Center in Walker's Point and the Urban Ecology Center in Menomonee Valley. Conclusion...Wisconsin is a great place to be working in any field of water!



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## **2015 WAFSCM Scholarship Recipient Article** ***Does Great Technology Always Result in Great Results?***

*By Yiyang Xiong, P.E., D. WRE, PMP*  
*YSJ International Consulting*

Four months ago, I attended the WASFCM annual conference as one of the lucky scholarship recipients. It was a great pleasure to meet a group of professionals that are so passionate about sustainability and green infrastructure. While it is great to see all the wonderful technologies being applied to improve our environment, it is also important to understand if they are applicable and how they can be applied to specific situations.

Over the years, I have met many environmental enthusiasts from all over the world. Last year, I joined an online forum called *the Sponge City Group*. This forum was created by a group of Chinese scholars and engineers who have invested a great deal of interest in green infrastructure, especially in urban storm water solutions and watershed management. One of the recent discussions on this forum caught my eye. The topic was about the application of porous pavement in Chinese cities. Porous pavement has been used widely in urban construction in China during recent years. However, the one thing that is often neglected is the post-construction maintenance of the pavement. In the big cities of China, there is always construction happening, which results in high concentrations of dust in the air. These fine particles can easily clog up the pores in the pavement. If not flushed clean on a regular basis, the pores can clog up and lose their permeability; however, frequent cleaning would result in high maintenance costs on top of the already high construction costs. As a matter of fact, some of the porous pavement which has been installed in recent years is not functioning as expected due to insufficient subbase layers and clogging issues. More and more Chinese water resources professionals are now starting to reconsider the applicability of porous pavement in China because of the maintenance issues. This is an interesting example of how a great technology may not be the best solution to a particular situation.

On the contrary, some technologies that may be considered as environmental hazards could be the ultimate solution to another environmental problem. Over the past couple of years, I have been helping my professor from Tsinghua University (China) with a book called *River Morphodynamics and Stream Ecology of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau*. One of the chapters in this book discusses wetland shrinkage issues in the Yellow River source region on the Tibet Plateau. Wetland shrinkage and desertification has been a long-term problem in this region due to the harsh climate and over-grazing issues. However, the construction of a 60-foot-high dam in 2002 was found to have increased the number of crescent lakes behind the dam by 20%. The reason behind it is very straightforward: the dam raised the groundwater level, which in turn increased the water supply to form crescent lakes. Crescent lakes serve a very important role in sand stabilization and ecological restoration in desert areas like the Yellow River source region. While dams are now being removed in many parts of the U.S., because of their potential environmental impacts to fish migration and sedimentation issues, they are actually one of the most effective measures to restore valuable water resources in the deserts on the Tibet Plateau.

The two examples above have been a great eye opener for me. Environmental problems may be universal in many parts of the world, however, the solutions may be drastically different. When we search for solutions to an engineering problem, it is important to understand the local conditions and the applicability of the specific technology.



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## 2015 WAFSCM Scholarship Recipient Article

*By Kari Papelbon, CFM, AICP  
Planner, City of Oak Creek*

Since relocating back to Wisconsin in July of 2013, I have been acquainting myself with the State and regional agencies, organizations, and offices that will inevitably be my go-to sources of information for planning, wetlands, and floodplain management. Delighted to see that Wisconsin had a Chapter of the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM), I became a member as soon as I could. I was thrilled that the Chapter offered me a scholarship to attend my first WAFSCM event, the 13th Annual Conference in Pewaukee.

For six years I worked in a small, rural town in Vermont as a Zoning/Floodplain/Planning Administrator. Being a mountainous area, much of the flooding potential came from mountain runoff, riverine and wetland overflow, and the only detailed studies had been conducted on the river to where it split into different tributaries (south part of town). The rest of the town was designated as Zone A, and the town adopted the Federal minimum (with a couple of exceptions) floodplain regulations. So while that particular type of floodplain management was quite familiar to me, urban Special Hazard Flood Areas (SFHAs) and coastal flooding in Wisconsin are not.

My first session of the WAFSCM conference introduced the Green Infrastructure Support Tool (GIST), a computer simulation program focused on the 26 square-mile Kinnickinnic River (KK) Watershed. The main objective of this tool is to build a broader and stronger voice for green infrastructure investments by modeling how certain investments impact the watershed over time. By comparing different scenarios, based on the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District's plan for an estimated \$150 million investment in area infrastructure projects, participants can see the effects of certain infrastructure investments on sewer overflows, water quality, air quality, flooding/high water events, basement back-ups, heat island effect, jobs, property values, new greenspace, and energy savings. Each scenario includes the initial investment and the cost to maintain that investment, compared to a baseline of no investment. There is also an option to determine the effect of different levels of stakeholder support for a preferred investment. GIST is a very powerful and visual tool that can demonstrate the real-world effects of investments in a watershed, which is particularly helpful for stakeholder engagement and understanding, and local decision-making. It is impressive that this tool is the first of its kind in the country, and will be configured for use next in Atlanta. After seeing this tool in action, I can only imagine that more scenario modeling is very likely on the horizon.

During the Opening/Plenary Session, ASFPM Deputy Director Ingrid Wadsworth informed us that updates to No Adverse Impact guides and the American Planning Association's (APA) Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Report "Subdivision Design in Flood Hazard Areas" were forthcoming. Additional Planning Information Exchange webinars and an APA and ASFPM cooperative series focused on hazard mitigation and recovery planning and preparedness were also announced. As a planner and CFM, I have experienced the indispensable relationship between planning and floodplain management, and it is encouraging to see a commitment by the professional associations to that connection.

The remainder of the conference was jam-packed with sessions ranging from the pros & cons when considering use of permeable pavement options, the status of and process for continued review of the Lake Michigan-Waukesha transfer project, the Oconomowoc Watershed Protection Program, the multi-phase Pike River Restoration Adaptive Design and Management project, storm water infrastructure installations at Summerfest, and updates to program guidance documents and staffing at the DNR. I left the conference with a greater understanding of Wisconsin's unique environmental challenges, and the diverse approaches to floodplain and storm water management at the regional and community levels. Our local codes and plans will be updated in the very near future, and will no doubt include much of the information received from this experience.





## SAVE THE DATE!!!!

We are pleased to announce the  
14<sup>th</sup> Annual WAFSCM Conference - 2016

**November 9th - 11th, 2016**

**Radisson La Crosse**

200 Harborview Plaza La Crosse, WI

Details on registration, sponsorships, speakers and award submittals, scholarships, and conference content will be coming soon to the WAFSCM website. [www.wafscm.org](http://www.wafscm.org)

We plan to fill 3 tracks for the breakout sessions – one each for stormwater, floodplains, and coastal projects/issues. **Plan your abstract submittals - a request will be sent soon!**

**Schedule:**

**Wednesday 11/9:** Workshops and Networking

**Thursday 11/10:** Main Conference Day (plenary and breakout sessions)

**Friday 11/11:** Morning Field Tour

**We will have the CFM review and exam again this year.** Contact one of the Conference Co-Chairs:

Laura Rozumalski at [lrozumalski@freshwatereng.com](mailto:lrozumalski@freshwatereng.com) or

Minal Hahm at [minal@msquaredengineering.com](mailto:minal@msquaredengineering.com)

for more information.

## Thank you to the 2015 WAFSCM Conference Sponsors and Exhibitors!

*By Cindi DeBruine, Conference Sponsor and Exhibitor Coordinator*

We had a very successful conference in Pewaukee last November, and a lot of that success is due to the wonderful Sponsor and Exhibitor support. The contributions from our Sponsors and Exhibitors helps WAFSCM provide a quality conference at a very reasonable cost, so please let them know you appreciate their support. All the Sponsors and Exhibitors are acknowledged in this newsletter.

We look forward to seeing our long-term Sponsors and Exhibitors at the 2016 conference, plus some new supporters!

Thank you to the sponsors and exhibitors shown on next page.....

Thank you to the 2015 WAFSCM Conference  
Sponsors and Exhibitors!

<b>SPONSORS</b>	<b>GOLD</b>	 <p><b>Ruekert Mielke</b> engineering solutions for a working world</p>	 <p><b>SEH</b></p>	
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	<b>BRONZE</b>	 <p><b>CDM Smith</b></p>	 <p><b>AYRES ASSOCIATES</b></p>	
<b>EXHIBITORS</b>			 <p><b>STORMWATER SOLUTIONS ENGINEERING LLC</b></p>	 <p><b>BAXTER &amp; WOODMAN</b> Consulting Engineers</p>
	<p><i>A special <b>THANKS</b> to MMSD &amp; SEWRPC for their support.</i></p>			

<b>EXHIBITORS</b>	 <p><b>AYRES ASSOCIATES</b></p>	 <p><b>BLOCKSOM &amp; CO.</b> Storm Water Inlet Filter</p>
	 <p><b>CONTECH</b> ENGINEERED SOLUTIONS</p>	 <p><b>COUNTY</b> MATERIALS CORPORATION</p>
	 <p><b>STORMTRAP</b> Precast Concrete Modular Stormwater Management System</p>	 <p><b>FloodBreak</b> REVOLUTIONARY FLOOD CONTROL</p>
	 <p><b>XERIPAVE</b> SUPER PERVIOUS PAVERS</p>	 <p><b>Rinker</b> MATERIALS™ Licensed Manufacturer of <b>Stormceptor</b>®</p>
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Wisconsin Association for Floodplain,  
Stormwater, & Coastal Management

### Membership Application/Renewal Form

Membership Fee: \$20.00

Payments received from January 1 through September 30 are for current year membership.

Payments received from October 1 through December 31 will also include next year membership.

Name:		
Title:		
Organization:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Phone:	Ext.:	
E-mail:		
Would you like to receive occasional announcements, newsletters and/or notices via E-mail?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Other Affiliations:		
Primary Interest:	<input type="checkbox"/> Floodplain	<input type="checkbox"/> Stormwater <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal
Would you like to participate on a committee? If so, check the appropriate box(es) below.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Floodplain	<input type="checkbox"/> Stormwater	<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal <input type="checkbox"/> Website
<input type="checkbox"/> Legislative	<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/> Membership <input type="checkbox"/> None
Referred By:		

**Please include a check for the annual Membership Fee of \$20.00  
made payable to WAFSCM**

Return to:      Kristen Belan, PE, CFM  
WAFSCM  
c/o R.A. Smith National, Inc.  
16745 W. Bluemound Road  
Brookfield, WI 53005-5938

If you have questions:

Contact Kristen Belan at (262) 317-3224 or [Kristen.Belan@rasmithnational.com](mailto:Kristen.Belan@rasmithnational.com)

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## Parting Words from Gary Heinrichs

It's still hard for me to say the words some days, but after 26 years of service – 23 as the Wisconsin State NFIP Coordinator – I have retired. I write these words to you from the Oceanside CA Public Library, within view of the blue Pacific. It's still a mite cool out here; high today is only going to be 63, but we expect a nice weekend in the low 70's with plenty of sun. I plan to be at the beach all weekend. Just wanted to share with you that there is light at the end of the storm drain.

Looking back to 1993, it's hard to comprehend all that I've seen and experienced in this job. I started in January of that year, dealing with routine matters like ordinance reviews and approvals, mundane policy decisions and the usual bureaucratic mumbo jumbo. Of course that all changed in June when the Great Midwest Flood of 1993 descended on us. The next three to four months were hectic to say the least. Between numerous field inspections, media contacts, wading through damage reports, and coordinating with WEM and FEMA, believe when I say my vacation time that summer was extremely limited – maybe two 3-day weekends.

After suffering almost one billion dollars in total damages in 44 counties, Wisconsin was hard pressed to effectively respond, but we did. Recovery moved ahead, mitigation projects were conceived and carried out, the Wisconsin Interagency Disaster Recovery Group was formed and met regularly to ensure effective coordination between state agencies. I wrote and edited a DNR report entitled, "The Floods of 1993; The Wisconsin Experience." It was an exciting time as this was the beginning of a more comprehensive federal mitigation program, with the establishment of the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program as well as greater emphasis on creating and updating local mitigation plans. This work continues today under the capable guidance of Roxanne Gray and her staff.

The flood waters receded but the work continued. The floodplain management staff spent a lot of time on the implementation of the Darlington flood mitigation project, which involved the floodproofing and elevation of numerous historic commercial structures, acquisition and removal of several large commercial structures, establishment of recreational facilities along the riverway, and outreach to numerous constituencies about the effectiveness of small-scale mitigation options for residential properties. In 1997 the DNR released a nationally recognized video about this project, which I wrote and produced. It was one of my proudest moments, and I am grateful to all the people and agencies that made it possible.

In 2000, I convened a committee of state and local officials to develop a state mitigation grant program to complement the federal programs. Enacted in 2001, the Municipal Flood Control Grant program provides 70% state funding for structural acquisition and elevation projects, purchase of flood-prone lands, and construction of structural flood control projects. While most federal funds are only available after a presidential disaster declaration, the state program receives funding each biennium, thereby ensuring a reliable source of dollars for ongoing mitigation projects. In many cases, the state program has provided the matching funds for a federal grant which has benefitted many poverty-stricken communities to achieve their mitigation goals.

These programs were put to the test after the historic floods of 2007/2008. Over \$23 million federal dollars with \$8 million in state and local matching funds were allocated for mitigation projects in addition to a special appropriation of over \$70 million for a variety of projects. State grant dollars were a key component for ensuring the success of many projects.

## Parting Words *by Gary Heinrichs (continued)*

While the floodplain management program can be justly proud of many accomplishments, recent years have not been as kind. After a major department reorganization in 1998, the floodplain staff was reduced to 2 full-time positions and eventually just one (me) and a half-time LTE. We've soldiered on since then, continuing to provide service and support to 550 Wisconsin communities, while meeting the requirements of our federal grants. Another blow has been changes at FEMA regional headquarters in Chicago, as long-time staff have moved on and not all vacant positions have been filled. Travel for FEMA staff has been reduced so our people have shouldered a bigger share of the burden for community assistance visits, enforcement actions and ordinance review/approval. The consolidation of FEMA into the Department of Homeland Security has been challenging, as the focus has changed from natural hazards to terrorism.

One of the continuing headaches, which I leave to my successor, is nonconforming structures. It was difficult enough in the past explaining what exactly the 50% rule means, to say nothing of structural repairs vs. maintenance repairs vs. alteration, or what requires a permit, or who is responsible for issuing the permits, or what about historic structures, or ADA, etc. Don't even bring up the differences between state and federal requirements for nonconforming (what FEMA calls pre-FIRM) structures. Now, with recent changes to state statutes for shoreland and general zoning, the pot is even muddier. I have spent a lot of time in recent years explaining to property owners, developers, local officials, attorneys and others why these changes don't affect floodplain zoning, why FEMA regulations and the state model floodplain ordinance trump state statutes, and why they can't do anything about it. Trust me, that's not what they want to hear.

If I had to identify one overarching trend in the development world in recent years, it is that the type of property owner who runs afoul of floodplain, shoreland and wetland regulations has changed and the new breed is not content with the status quo. They want what they want and they will go to any lengths to get what they want. Only my opinion and maybe a bit harsh, but that's how I see it. I'm not bitter, just realistic and glad to be getting out now while I'm still full of sunny optimism.

Speaking of optimists, eight people applied for my job and by the time you read this there should be another floodplain god enthroned in the royal tomb that is GEF II. I will miss all of my colleagues at all levels of government and the private sector. Most of all I will miss the day-to-day conversations with folks from around the state who are looking for a little help from the government and maybe found what they were looking for when they reached me. At least I hope they did.

Even though I'm stepping down from the day-to-day dogfights, I will stay in the ring. I will stay on as the Flood Insurance Committee liaison for ASFP, as well as any and all duties that WAFSCM sees fit to saddle me with. I hope to see you all in November in LaCrosse, if not sooner.

Auf Wiedersehen

Herr Heinrichs



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## Wisconsin Signs Silver Jackets Charter

*By Roxanne Gray*

*Mitigation Section Supervisor*

*Wisconsin Emergency Management*

The charter for the **Wisconsin Silver Jackets Hazard Mitigation Team** was recently completed with core agencies from the Wisconsin Hazard Mitigation Team (WHMT) as signatories and the remaining agencies and organizations on the WHMT as supporting agencies. The WHMT was organized in 2003 (formally known as the Interagency Disaster Recovery Group) with Wisconsin Emergency Management as the lead. The group is made up of state and federal agencies as well as other organizations. The team works together to further a statewide hazard mitigation program by establishing state goals, objectives and strategies for reducing future disaster costs in the state. The team works together to implement the mitigation actions identified in the Wisconsin Hazard Mitigation Plan and to coordinate recovery and mitigation efforts after a disaster. Team members provide a variety of expertise and perspective to the hazard mitigation planning process including emergency management, natural hazards, land-use planning, agriculture, building codes, transportation and infrastructure.

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers developed the approach and term “Silver Jackets.” The approach is to bring together multiple state, federal, tribal and local agencies with mission areas of hazard mitigation, emergency management, floodplain management, natural resources management, conservation, etc. to learn from one another and apply their knowledge to reduce the risk from natural disasters. The name “Silver Jackets” was formed from the fact that traditionally different agencies wear different colored jackets when responding to emergencies. For example, FEMA personnel wear blue, and the USACE personnel wear red. The name Silver Jackets is used to underscore the common mission of a single team of diverse agencies working together to reduce risk at the state level.

The Charter does not change how the WHMT operates as a team; what the Charter does is formalizes the “Silver Jackets” approach that multiple agencies share their knowledge and expertise to enhance mitigation and recovery efforts after a disaster and to reduce future disaster costs.

The core signatory agencies on the Charter are as follows:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM)
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Weather Service (NOAA/NWS)

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## Wisconsin Signs Silver Jackets Charter (*continued*)

And supporting agencies are:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture
  - ◊ Natural Resources Conservation Service
  - ◊ Rural Development
- U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U. S. Department of Economic Development Administration
- Wisconsin Department of Administration
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
- Wisconsin Department of Health Services
- Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
- Wisconsin Office of the Commissioner of Insurance
- Wisconsin Historical Society
- Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
- University of Wisconsin-Cooperative Extension
- Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
- Wisconsin Association of Floodplain, Stormwater, and Coastal Management
- Wisconsin Emergency Management Association
- Cooperative Network
- Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

For more information visit <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov/mitigation/default.asp>.



Laura Kletti demonstrated the floodplain model to 7<sup>th</sup> grade students as part of the Menomonee Falls Stormwater Expo. The floodplain model is stored at the Southeastern Wisconsin Planning Commission in Waukesha and is available to WAFSCM members. If you would like to use the model for an educational event, please contact Laura Kletti at [lkletti@sewrpc.org](mailto:lkletti@sewrpc.org) to coordinate.



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## WAFSCM Board Members

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