

Freshwater Collaborative

O F W I S C O N S I N

Preparing to Launch a Bold New Plan for
Wisconsin's Water Future

Indigenous Water Acknowledgement

- As a system of universities in Wisconsin we share stewardship of the land and water between the Michigami, the full system of Great Lakes, and Michiziibi, the great Mississippi River, with the current sovereign nations of Potawatomi, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Ojibwe, Oneida and Mohican people along with the ancestors before them. Together we commit to being connected to this space, increasing our knowledge of it and transmitting that knowledge to future generations.
 - *Our thanks to Dr. Margaret Noodin, director of the [Electa Quinney Institute](#), for crafting this land and water acknowledgement.*





The Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin is a **partnership** of Wisconsin's **13 public universities**, connecting with industry partners, local communities, policymakers and advocacy groups.

Our mission is to **train the next generation of water professionals**, and to **establish Wisconsin as a global leader** in water-related science, technology and economic growth.





“The Freshwater Collaborative is going to establish the nation’s most significant, integrated, multi-institutional higher education program for the freshwater economy... Can you imagine? People all over the world could come to Wisconsin, the only state that’s going to have these programs.”

— Gov. Tommy Thompson,
addressing the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents
on August 20, 2020.



Water Is The Future

- Water is the **fastest growing sector** of the world's economy. By 2035, it will be worth approximately \$800 billion.
- According to UNESCO, **78% of all jobs globally** are water-dependent.

Climate change, increasing urbanization, intensive agricultural, and commercial fishing practices and other trends will require an ever-greater number of skilled water professionals to innovate and to tackle challenging problems.



Wisconsin's Water Industries



Agriculture



Commercial Fisheries



Energy Production



Manufacturing



Mining



Recreation and Tourism



Shipping



Water Infrastructure



Water Technology



WISCONSIN: WE RUN ON WATER



Wisconsin's unique natural setting makes it the perfect home for the Freshwater Collaborative:

- Bordered by one of the world's great river systems and two inland seas, in the heart of the **Great Lakes Region**
- More than **44,000 miles of rivers and streams** and **15,000+ lakes**
- More than **1,200 miles of shoreline**
- Rich and diverse **wetlands**; significant **groundwater** assets





The 13 public universities of Wisconsin are already home to strong water programs covering diverse and crucial areas of study, including:

- Climate Change
- Water Quality and Safety
- Emerging Contaminants
- Invasive Species
- Fisheries Management
- Infrastructure Engineering and Innovation
- Watershed and Ecosystem Management





However, these **strong and diverse programs** have traditionally been isolated, each operating largely within their own silo.



FRESHWATER COLLABORATIVE – TEN GRAND WATER CHALLENGES



Agricultural Water Management



Water Business and Finance



Industrial Water Engineering and Technology



Watershed Management and Restoration



Water Quality Safety and Emerging Contaminants



Water Security, Protection and Resilience



Great Lakes Management and Restoration



Healthy Recreational and Transportation Water Use



Water Infrastructure: Collection, Distribution, Treatment



Aquaculture, Aquaponics and Water Food Systems

To meet the challenges we face as a state, a nation and a planet, we need to work together. From our individual strengths, we can create a powerful, interdependent, collaborative whole.





Freshwater Collaborative

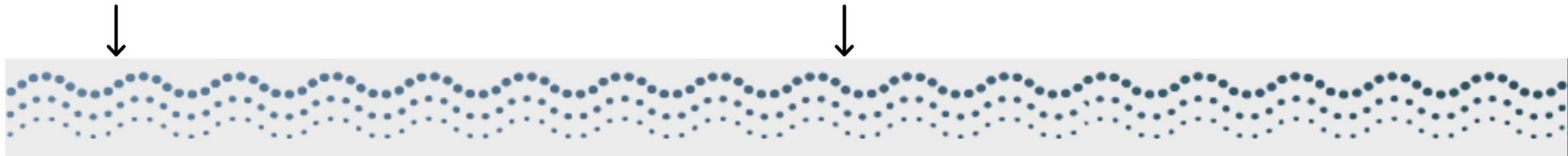
O F W I S C O N S I N

- Training **tomorrow's water professionals** with the **real-world skills** employers seek
- **Strengthening individual UW water programs** by building interdependent networks and **fostering innovation**
- Attracting students not only **statewide** but from **across the country and beyond**
- **Creating jobs** and expanding Wisconsin's stake in the freshwater economy

Our story so far...

2017-2019: Representatives of water-focused programs from all 13 UW System partners develop a preliminary plan that combines the unique strengths of each campus to create a water sciences powerhouse.

August 2019: The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation awards \$670,000 to FCW, in addition to \$1.4 million in funding from the UW System, as seed money for the collaborative's initial phase.



June 6, 2019: UW System announces the formation of the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin (FCW), the nation's "most significant, integrated, multi-campus higher education program to meet the pressing needs of freshwater access and security."

November 2020: A year into its existence, FCW has already supported research projects at more than 12 partner campuses, providing approximately \$500,000 of funding.



FCW Grants Program



Track 1: Research
Collaboration
Summits/Working groups



Track 2: Strategic Research



Track 3: Undergraduate
Interdisciplinary curriculum,
training & course
development and design



Track 4: Freshwater
Research Experience for
Undergraduate Awards



Track 5: Inter-Institutional
Undergraduate Training
Programs

From 2019 to present, we have received research project proposals in five tracks, and have funded more than 12 projects statewide.





To date, our grants program has benefitted undergraduate and graduate students with hands-on experience in lab and field studying:

- Invasive species
- Emerging contaminants
- Agricultural runoff
- Microplastics
- Surface and wellwater quality
- Harmful algal blooms
- Groundwater conservation





We are now building a **statewide, interdependent educational programming network** that, beginning Fall 2022, will include:

- Customizable **undergraduate degree programs** that allow students to enroll in courses at UW campuses statewide
- **Majors/Minors/Certificate programs** for deep dives into specific topics, with field opportunities at multiple campuses
- **Transformative hands-on student experiences** at different campuses throughout the year
- **Internships and job opportunities** through industry, government and community partners



As part of our new phase, we have begun a **public awareness campaign** online, including:

- **Website** (freshwater.wisconsin.edu)
- Quarterly digital **newsletter** - Contact Us
- Active **social media** presence (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

The collage displays the following digital assets:

- Website (freshwater.wisconsin.edu):** Features the organization's logo, navigation menu (Research, Plans, Academic Programs & Partners), and a mission statement: "We are a partnership of Wisconsin's 13 public universities, connecting with industry partners, local communities, policymakers and advocacy groups." A photo of a person in a boat is also visible.
- Instagram Profile:** Shows the profile for @freshwatercollabwi with 5 posts and 97 followers. The bio reads: "Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin - a partnership of Wisconsin's 13 public universities, connecting with industry partners, local communities, policymakers and advocacy groups. freshwater.wisconsin.edu".
- Newsletter:** Titled "Fall 2020 Newsletter", it features a photo of staff at a Northern Aquaculture Demonstration and a "Special Shout-out" to former governor Tommy Thompson. The shout-out text states: "The Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin (FCW) 'could be the biggest thing you have,' said former governor and current UW System interim president Tommy Thompson during his State of the University Address on Aug. 20. FCW is one of the projects Thompson listed as key to the system's future." It also mentions the establishment of a national higher education program for the freshwater economy.
- Facebook Post:** A tweet from @FreshwaterWI with 14 tweets, featuring a graphic titled "WISCONSIN: WE RUN ON WATER". The graphic lists statistics: 44,000+ acres of forest, 1,000+ miles of shoreline, 15,000+ acres of wetlands, and 200+ miles of waterways. It also notes that 3 Wisconsin Trout Hatcheries are located in the state. The post includes a photo of a woman fishing and a thank-you message to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.





With State Funds... Our Plan for the Next Five Years

- 400 new undergraduate students studying water science
- 150 new graduate research students
- 26 new faculty, researchers and water professionals
- More than 200 new jobs created



Thanks to our 13 UW System campus partners for contributing images and ideas to this presentation.

University of Wisconsin
Eau Claire



UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
GREEN BAY

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
LA CROSSE



WISCONSIN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
UW MILWAUKEE



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
PARKSIDE



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
PLATTEVILLE

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
River Falls



University of Wisconsin
Stevens Point

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
STOUT
WISCONSIN'S POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
Superior



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
WHITEWATER



Thank you!

Visit freshwater.wisconsin.edu to learn more and sign up for our quarterly digital newsletter



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@FreshwaterCollabWI



@freshwatercollabwi

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