



### **Chris Danou's Capitol Report**

#### The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands Helps Local Municipalities

Wisconsin State Government has many moving parts. Between the legislative, executive and judicial, as well as the non-partisan agencies and entities that conduct state business, there's a lot happening every day. One agency that seldom gets attention in the press, but does so much for our community and others all over the state is the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL).

While most people might not have heard of this entity, it's actually the oldest state agency that brings together the Secretary of State, Treasury and the Attorney General to make up its board. Under direction of those three individuals, the BCPL manages Wisconsin's trust assets for public education and carries on the pioneering commitment of our state's early leaders to a constitutionally protected form of public education financing that originated with millions of acres of land granted by the federal government.

With only 10 full-time employees, the BCPL manages over \$1 billion in trust fund assets and 77,000 acres of School Trust Lands. The School Trust Lands provide revenue through sustainable timber management and are used for hunting, fishing, trapping, protection of water quality and biological diversity, aesthetics and outdoor recreation. At no cost to taxpayers, the BCPL has a proven record of selling assets, reinvesting revenue and experiences continued growth with revenue from unclaimed property, clear proceeds of civil and criminal fees, fines and forfeitures, and timber production on School Trust Lands. In fact, the BCPL distributes about \$0.96 on every \$1.00 earned from investments to K-12 public school beneficiaries.

The BCPL truly is an important part of Wisconsin's history and economy. Their financial investments, land management practices, and extensive archival collection benefits every citizen of the state. Last year alone the BCPL distributed \$35.5 million for public school library aid and they loaned nearly \$122 million for municipalities and school districts for public purpose projects. These distributions, and others help municipalities in our community, region and across the state.

Along with the great work they do in our area and around the state, I appreciate the excellent job the BCPL does to inform me of work they're doing in the 92<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District. About two weeks ago, I was notified by the BCPL that they distributed a BCPL State Trust Fund Loan to the Town of Ettrick in the amount of \$130,000.00 for the purpose of financing the purchase of a rescue-pumper fire truck. This will help with public safety in Ettrick and is just one example of the real help BCPL can give to a municipality.

The BCPL has approved over two dozen loans totaling \$13,617,902.92 within the 92<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District since July 1, 2010. Some of these projects have included purchasing a dump truck in the Town of Canton, purchasing a brush cutter in the Town of Mondovi, financing utility construction in the Village of Strum and repainting a water reservoir in the City of Mondovi. These are all projects that help our municipalities conduct business that keeps us moving forward.

I hope this has been informative and helps people understand the work of this important piece of Wisconsin State Government. To learn more about its history and what BCPL does for municipalities across Wisconsin, please visit their website at <http://bcpl.state.wi.us/>.

