



# WATER QUALITY TASK FORCE HEARING

AUGUST 29<sup>th</sup>

Raj Shukla, River Alliance of Wisconsin  
David Trimner, Miltrim Farms



RIVER ALLIANCE  
of WISCONSIN



CLEAR  
WATER  
FARMS



**RIVER ALLIANCE**  
*of WISCONSIN*

**Empowering people  
to protect and  
restore water.**



Photo: Jonathan Cody, Wisconsin River

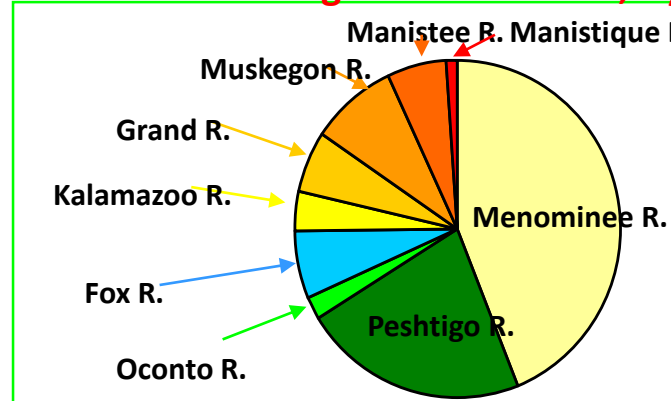


## RIVER ALLIANCE *of* WISCONSIN

- **Statewide nonprofit. Nonpartisan. Formed 26 years ago.**
- **Membership = 1,500+ individuals, businesses, and local watershed groups.**
- **Advocacy, water policy, polluted runoff, groundwater, invasive species, mining, hydro/fish passage, dam removal.**

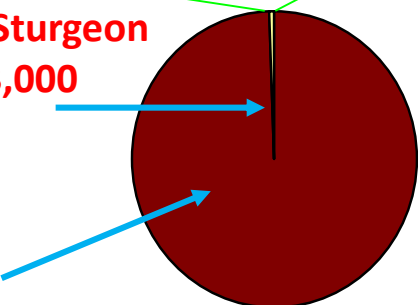
# Mine proposed on Michigan-Wisconsin border prompts concerns

Current Adult Sturgeon Abundance, by river.



Current Adult Sturgeon Abundance  $\approx 3,000$

(< 0.01% of historical abundance)



**\$12 million has been invested in sturgeon passage project on the Menominee River.**

A wide, calm river reflects a dense forest of tall evergreen trees under a cloudy sky. The water is still, creating a clear mirror image of the forest and the sky. The trees are mostly dark green, with some lighter green foliage visible near the water's edge. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

**Photo: Tight Lines Fly Fishing, Menominee River**

A circular portrait of a man with a mustache and goatee, wearing a dark baseball cap with "FISHBUSH" and "THE ANGLER'S" visible. He is looking slightly to the right. The background shows a display with a fish and the word "Fishbush".

**MIKE GALLAGHER**  
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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
May 20, 2019

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTRY  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS  
INTELLIGENCE AND ENERGY  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS AND TRANSITATION  
PETER CARRO AND MARSHALL T.

Mr. Preston Cole  
Secretary  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
101 S Webster Street  
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Secretary Cole,

We wish to express our continued concerns regarding the proposed Back Forty Mine. Our meeting with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff provided useful information on the status of the permits, and we thank you for affording us the opportunity to meet. We were encouraged to learn of WDNR's ongoing conversations with Michigan's Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and respectfully request these discussions continue throughout the duration of the permitting process.

Wisconsin's water resources, from Lake Michigan to our rivers and streams, support the health of our communities, economies, and livelihoods. The location of the Back Forty Mine's open pit, only 50 yards from the banks of the Menominee River, which serves as the source of drinking water for thousands of people, is a significant concern. We urge your office to ensure that the mining operation does not compromise the integrity of this vital resource.

Sincerely,  
**John J. Manly**  
President, Menominee Riverkeeper Association



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## Back 40 Mine:

- We are pleased that Congressman Gallagher, Representatives Mursau and Kitchens & others have asked WI DNR to take a more active role in the Back 40 Mine.
- We echo the legislators' ask that **WI DNR take a more active role.**



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# River Alliance Supports:

- PFAS: **Senate Bill 302** – The CLEAR Act
- Lead: **SCHOOL Acts and \$40 million in bonding** to replace lead service lines
- Nitrate: **NR 151 targeted performance standards**
- County Conservation: **Provide 3M more** to sufficiently fund county conservation program

# Lancaster Task Force Hearing Examples



**“My nitrate levels rose from 3ppm to 20ppm  
which is twice the level considered to be safe.”**

Chuck Horn, Retired DNR Conservation Warden

**“We need to look at agriculture policy & economic  
considerations as part of the big picture. What is the  
economic reality of farms today?”**

Katie Abbot, Iowa County Conservationist



**“It’s hard to think green when your business is in the red.”**

Laura Daniels, Dairy Farmer



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# CLEAR WATER FARMS

*Successful farms engaged in water stewardship.*

Certification of on-site water stewardship practices using the Alliance for Water Stewardship International Water Stewardship Standard (the AWS Standard).



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ALLIANCE FOR  
WATER STEWARDSHIP



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# Benefits of Participation

- ✓ Detailed **assessment** of water costs, risks, and impacts
- ✓ **Reduction of risk** in supply chain
- ✓ Clear guidance to **meeting or exceeding regulatory standards**
- ✓ **Valuable credential** to attract processors and consumers
- ✓ **Positive environmental consequences**



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*"We want to see this become standard practice for the industry."*

David Trimner, Miltrim Farms Inc.

- Will be the **first farm in America** to achieve water stewardship certification.
- 1,800 Cows | 4,800 Acres
- Converting marginal land back to wetlands and pollinator habitat.
- Reducing wash water by 15 gallons/day per head, for average water savings of 16 million gallons/year.
- Cover cropping, manure injection, no-tillage practices.
- Engaging community members.



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# Steps to Certification

## Key Steps to AWS Certification



- **Recruitment** in Clear Water Farms
- Working with CWF and AWS to complete **assessments**, make adjustments, & prepare documentation for certification
- **Formal certification** by independent auditor
- **Communication and education** of other producers



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## Our Solution

**River Alliance is asking the State to match farmers' investment in this homegrown effort.**

- Farmers are matching up to 10K in time invested.
- Scale to 20 participating farms.
- 200-250K for training and cost of audit.