



Office Hours at the Capitol – June 12, 2019 Contact Information and Key Takeaways

WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY



Morgan Robertson

Professor, Dept. of Geography

mmrobertson@wisc.edu

<https://geography.wisc.edu/>

Areas of expertise: Wetlands (including their purpose and remediation methods), state wetlands permits, market-based environmental policies (e.g., wetlands banking, water quality trading, adaptive management, habitat credit trading), federal wetlands regulations, and the Clean Water Act.

Short bio: Professor Robertson is conducting studies on market-based environmental credit and mitigation policies in the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia, with funding from the National Science Foundation. From 2004 to 2007, he worked in the Wetlands Division of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Water in Washington, DC. He was one of three staff-level authors of the Wetland Compensation Rule of 2008 issued by the EPA and Corps of Engineers that created rules for wetlands banking. He also has written scientific briefs for U.S. Supreme Court cases and has served as a private consultant for various engineering firms. He earned his Ph.D. in Geography from UW–Madison.

Professor Robertson's top takeaways for legislators based on his research:

- ★ Groundwater nitrate contamination is a product of manure, fertilizer, and septic systems.
- ★ Understanding nitrate content in groundwater can help farmers manage their nitrogen application more efficiently.
- ★ Changes in agricultural practices to reduce nitrate applications can have significant impacts on groundwater quality.
- ★ Increased monitoring of private wells and septic system mapping can better inform decisions about where to locate septic systems.
- ★ Collaboration among state agencies, the University, and farmers is key to understanding and addressing groundwater quality issues.
- ★ Offset credit systems in water or habitat are place-based and do not function like carbon markets.
- ★ Offset credit markets require increased regulatory power in order to function, and do not reduce the role of state government.
- ★ Water quality trading markets have been attempted since the late 1980s, and their major challenge is defining the commodity and measuring it.



WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY



Ken Genskow

Chair and Professor, Dept. of Planning and Landscape Architecture
Water Resources Specialist, UW Division of Extension
Director, UW Environmental Resources Center

kgenskow@wisc.edu

608-890-0673

<https://dpla.wisc.edu/facstaff/faculty/genskow>

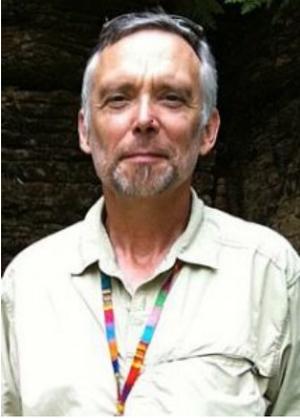
Areas of Expertise: Watershed planning and management, water policy, farmer use of nutrient management and land and water conservation practices, effectiveness of educational and technical assistance programs on land management, farmer-led watershed councils and other forms of collaborative environmental management, nutrient trading for water quality, and voluntary vs. regulatory approaches for water quality and land management.

Short bio: Professor Genskow conducts research on environmental planning and policy, watershed planning, and collaborative and participatory resource management. He is especially interested in water resource issues related to agriculture-water quality connections, joint urban-rural approaches to managing water, and minimizing local and regional impacts of storm events. At the request of the Wisconsin DNR, from 2013-2016 he led a stakeholder workgroup to review issues and develop guidance on the practices of applying livestock manure or process wastewater through irrigation equipment—referred to as “manure irrigation.” He leads a multi-state initiative to incorporate social data into the evaluation of watershed management and is researching Wisconsin’s market-like approaches to managing phosphorus. Professor Genskow earned his Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Planning from UW–Madison.

Professor Genskow’s top takeaways for legislators based on his research:

- ★ Wisconsin’s uniquely rich water resources are a highly visible and defining characteristic of our state. They are also vulnerable to degradation, and minimizing negative impacts on individuals, communities, and the environment requires attention to connections between social and bio-physical systems.
- ★ Engaging farmers as leaders in watershed councils and other local forums is essential for crafting effective plans and policies for keeping excess agricultural nutrients away from surface water and groundwater, especially if those efforts are supported by additional resources and expertise from conservation partners.
- ★ Wisconsin’s phosphorus standards have created new opportunities for market-like transactions to protect water quality, and Wisconsin is becoming a national leader in water quality trading and related activity.

INDUSTRIAL HEMP



William (Bill) Barker

Associate Dean for Research

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs)

Associate Director, Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station

william.barker@wisc.edu (preferred)

608-262-6792

<https://cals.wisc.edu/about-cals/leadership/>

Areas of expertise: Industrial hemp, mining and groundwater, restoration ecology and habitat preservation, soil microbial communities, clay minerals, urban agriculture and greenspaces, city planning, and research and development in Wisconsin's agriculture sector.

Short bio: Dr. Barker, a geologist by training, oversees the cutting-edge research being conducted across the spectrum of agricultural and life sciences at UW–Madison. He is well-versed on industrial hemp—including seed options, uses for hemp, and state and federal regulations that govern the growing and transport of hemp. Prior to this position, he was the Director of Research Policy and Industrial Partnerships at UW–Madison. Earlier in his career, he was a geologist at UW–Madison, private environmental consulting firms, and the University of Georgia–Athens. Dr. Barker served more than 10 years on various City of Madison parks, habitat stewardship, and community gardening committees. He earned his Ph.D. in Geology from the University of Georgia–Athens.

Dr. Barker's top takeaways for legislators based on his research:

- ★ Research on hemp is hampered by considerable confusion around seed availability, limited access to different strains, inability to use hemp as animal feed by law, lack of research funding, and uncertainty of exploring CBD (cannabidiol) uses.
- ★ The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture prohibits the harvesting of hemp that has more than 0.3% THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) by weight, because THC levels in excess of this are legally defined as marijuana. Farmers are reluctant to grow hemp because THC levels can vary depending on growing conditions. The response (THC levels) of the plants to various growing conditions is not well understood. This represents a serious risk to hemp agriculture, because crops that exceed legal THC limits must be destroyed.
- ★ Farmers also are concerned about the current lack of markets for anything other than CBD extracts or seed production. Confusion in the financial industry related to CBD also inhibits commercial activity and this negatively impacts agriculture.
- ★ An interdisciplinary team of faculty, staff, students, and Extension outreach personnel are conducting research on multiple varieties of hemp at three locations around the state. Variety field trials (both conventional and organic), basic agronomic research, and studies of THC levels in plants subject to various growing conditions and harvesting methods will occur this season. Robust public outreach through field days, training of county Extension agents, and course curriculum development are also planned.
- ★ Please consider attending the Soils and Agronomy Field Day at Arlington Agricultural Research Station on August 28, 2019, if you'd like to learn more about this work and talk with the team of researchers working on hemp in Wisconsin.

MOSQUITOES, TICKS, AND INSECT DISEASES



Susan Paskewitz

Professor and Chair, Dept. of Entomology
Co-Director, Midwestern Center of Excellence for Vector-Borne Disease
smpaskew@wisc.edu (preferred)
608-262-1269
<http://labs.russell.wisc.edu/ento/people/faculty/paskewitz/>

Areas of expertise: Tick surveillance and management, mosquito surveillance and management, impacts of mosquito control on other insects and humans, vector-borne diseases (e.g., Lyme disease, West Nile virus, Zika, malaria), and white-tail deer as carriers of disease.

Short bio: Professor Paskewitz's research focuses on insects, primarily ticks and mosquitoes, involved in disease transmission. She co-directs the Midwestern Center for Excellence for Vector-Borne Disease, which is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to better understand these diseases in the Midwest. She works with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services on tick and mosquito management and with the City of Madison on mosquito surveillance. She is a member of the American Mosquito Control Association and American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. Professor Paskewitz earned her Ph.D. in Entomology from the University of Georgia.

Professor Paskewitz's top takeaways for legislators based on her research:

- ★ Wisconsin faces three problems in relation to vector-borne disease (diseases spread by mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas).
 - Lyme disease is a "slow-burn" epidemic that has spread throughout the state and continues to increase, officially affecting 3,000 to 4,000 people each year but probably causing 10 times as many illnesses.
 - Emerging infections are increasing. Deer ticks now transmit at least seven different human pathogens, including two kinds of Lyme bacteria, human anaplasma, babesiosis, ehrlichiosis, a relapsing fever bacterium, and Powassan virus. New vector mosquitoes and ticks have been found in the state, increasing the risk of additional emerging infections.
 - Episodic outbreaks of mosquito-borne viral diseases, like West Nile virus, continue to occur.
- ★ Management of ticks, mosquitoes, and wildlife reservoirs (wild animals infected by pathogens) requires a multi-pronged strategy that reduces risks in the environment. Compared to surrounding states, Wisconsin has very few publicly funded vector control districts and little organized surveillance to enable early detection of new problems.
- ★ Currently available methods to control the mosquitoes that transmit West Nile virus as well as Lyme disease ticks may not be sufficient. Researchers are now determining the effectiveness of combining multiple tools, such as landscape manipulation, treating the wildlife that harbor the pathogens, using biologicals like fish that eat the insects, and pesticide applications. The integration of multiple strategies is promising because it may result in reduced application of pesticides to the environment.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HEALTH CARE



Donna Friedsam

Distinguished Researcher and Health Policy Programs Director

Population Health Institute

dafriedsam@wisc.edu (preferred)

608-263-4881

<https://uwphi.pophealth.wisc.edu/staff/friedsam-donna/>

Areas of expertise: Medicaid; BadgerCare; Affordable Care Act (ACA); health care financing, coverage, access, quality, and cost; disparities in health status and health care utilization; and health care and safety net providers.

Short bio: Ms. Friedsam has worked extensively on access to and financing of health care. She consults widely with the public and private sectors on state government programs and on reform initiatives. She leads a team of faculty and researchers evaluating Wisconsin's Medicaid and BadgerCare programs and waiver initiatives. She also oversees the UW Evidence-Based Health Policy Project and Covering Wisconsin program. Prior to joining UW-Madison, Ms. Friedsam served as executive director of the Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association. She earned her Master's degree in Public Health Policy and Administration from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Ms. Friedsam's takeaways for legislators based on her research:

- ★ Enrollment in Medicaid has increased in Wisconsin and nationally due to expanded eligibility for low-income adults, but the costs of coverage for this population (at both an individual per capita level and in aggregate) remain substantially below the costs associated with the elderly, blind, and disabled (EBD) population. In Wisconsin, EBD members account for only 20% of enrollees but 66% of Medicaid program costs. Children account for 43% of Medicaid enrollees and 12% of Medicaid program costs, while non-disabled adults account for 30% of Medicaid enrollees and 23% of Medicaid program costs.
- ★ Among non-disabled (non-SSI) adults enrolled in Medicaid, approximately 60% are employed and about 80% reside in a household with an employed family member. These employed adults do not have access to health insurance through their employment. Most Medicaid-enrolled adults not attached to employment report a reason that would exempt them from work requirements, including attending school or being ill or disabled. In Arkansas, 45% of individuals subject to the work requirements were already working at least 80 hours per month, and most others 1) were exempt from Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) employment and training requirements, 2) had a dependent child in the household, or 3) were identified as medically frail.
- ★ Many states, including those that use a managed care/HMO model for Medicaid, have been adopting value-based payment reforms for providers, such as bundled payments, health homes, integrated care management, and accountable care models. Some states have spearheaded multi-payer initiatives in which the Medicaid agency works with private sector payers to align incentives, promoting efficiency, cost reductions, and quality improvements throughout the delivery system.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HEALTH CARE



Justin Sydnor

Associate Professor, Dept. of Risk and Insurance

justin.sydnor@wisc.edu (preferred)

608-263-2138

<https://bus.wisc.edu/faculty/justin-sydnor>

Areas of expertise: Insurance markets (e.g., health insurance), health insurance decision-making (e.g., how consumers choose health plans), regulation of health insurance plans, market dynamics of health insurance, behavioral economics, and wellness programs or incentives to change behaviors.

Short bio: Professor Sydnor is an applied microeconomist who specializes in behavioral economics, particularly in the area of health. He is conducting a study on how to encourage people to access services such as nurse health lines or urgent care instead of the emergency room. Professor Sydnor is a member of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) Health Care Program. He earned his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of California, Berkeley.

Professor Sydnor's top takeaways for legislators based on his research:

- ★ There is mounting evidence at a national level that a substantial part of the rising cost of health care is due to market power by hospitals and providers that limits competitive forces that would hold down costs.
- ★ Researchers find disappointing results from many programs and policies that create financial incentives for people to lead healthier lives, such as differential insurance premiums and corporate wellness programs. Most programs get little engagement from those with poor health behaviors and generate little behavior change. Instead, the programs typically reward those who are already doing healthy things.
- ★ High deductible plans paired with health savings accounts are good in theory. But in practice, people react to them by pulling back on all kinds of care, including valuable care like chronic disease management. This is partly because many people have too little savings to absorb bills early in the year. However, it also relates to how people think about premiums vs. out-of-pocket costs; they react more strongly to out-of-pocket costs.
- ★ There is limited value to giving people choices about their level of health insurance coverage. The main driver of choice is health status, but having healthy and less healthy people separated into different plans creates a tension that can drive up the cost of high-coverage plans. People do not understand insurance well enough, and there is not enough information about health costs available for people to make informed choices based on their attitudes about financial risk.

Contact: Heidi Normandin

Director of Legislative Outreach, UW–Madison La Follette School of Public Affairs

hjnorman@wisc.edu or 608-263-2353