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**Bad River Natural Resource Department**

72682 Maple Street  
 PO Box 39  
 Odanah, WI, 54806

Phone: 715-682-7123  
 Fax: 715-682-7118  
 Email: NRDO outreach@badriver-nsn.gov

**~MISSION STATEMENT~**

*The Department strives for resource management which both conserves the natural resources for the future generations and provide for the needs of the present. The departments existence reflects the importance the Bad River Tribe places on its right and ability to exercise sovereignty, self-determination and self-regulation in the area of natural resource management.*

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**Bad River Natural Resource**

**COMMON GROUND**

2019 SUMMER EDITION

**Bad River Ishkonige Nawadide Solar Project**

Daniel Wiggins, Air/Radon Technician

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced in July that the Bad River Ishkonige Nawadide Solar Project was among 14 tribal energy projects chosen for a combined \$16,000,000. The Bad River Project was awarded nearly \$1,000,000 for a total project value of nearly \$2,000,000.

Bad River has chosen to call this project *Ishkonige Nawadide* or *They Capture Fire*. The Air Quality Technician worked with a team to properly plan for the project and included William Bailey from CheqBay Renewables, Niels Wolter of Madison Solar, Travis and Amy Simpkins of MuGrid, and tribal staff from the Tribes Natural Resource Department, Planning Department, Legal Department, and Account-



ing Department.

This project plans to implement the first phase of energy independence through the installation of 520 kW DC of solar photovoltaic (PV) at three tribal buildings, 200kW

DC at the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), 300 kW DC at the Health & Wellness Center (Health Clinic), and 20 kW AC at the Chief Blackbird Administration Building (Administration Building).

...Continued on page 4...

**Special points of interest:**

- *Bad River Ishkonige Nawadide Solar Project*
- *Bad River's Tobacco Use Policy*
- *Public Notice(s)*
- *Project Reviews by NRD*
- *IAS Youth Engagement*
- *RADON Public Notice*

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**Bad River's Tobacco Use Policy**

Nathan Kilger, Air Quality Specialist

The Tobacco Use Policy approved by Bad River Tribal Council in 2014 was written to "protect employees, community members, visitors, and volunteers from the known dangers of commercial tobacco products

and second-hand smoke".

The Policy differentiates between commercial tobacco smoke (that contains up to 600 added chemicals, including ingredients found in nail polish remover and battery

...Continued on page 2...



## Tobacco Use Policy continued...

components) from ceremonial and traditional tobacco (without the deadly chemicals). The policy designates which areas are non-smoking areas; governmental vehicles are also designated as non-smoking areas.

In addition, more news about illnesses and deaths related to e-cigarettes and vaping have been coming from many states and cities, including areas in Wisconsin and Minnesota. One unnamed man in Wisconsin was in a coma and an elderly man in Minnesota has recently died.

Signs recently installed at the Chief Blackbird Center remind employees, community members, visitors, and volunteers that certain tobacco products are prohibited around the building. I'll finish this article by quoting an air quality scientist who would always remind people: "breathing is better than the alternative".



## BRNRD Hosts Annual Lake Superior Days Celebration

Berthea Olby, NRD Outreach Coordinator

On July 19th 2019 the Natural Resources Department hosted our annual Lake Superior Days Event. During this event you had the opportunity to learn a number of different things about our beautiful lake. Attendees were also given the opportunity to get hands-on and make their own "ricing sticks" with our cultural demonstrator, who happens to be a Bad River Elder and professional ricer. This year we had 65 participants.



## Indigenous Arts and Sciences (IAS) Engages Youth



The Education Department collaborated with UW Extension, Cat Techtmann, to bring youth on a field trip to discuss the history of mining and the threat of future mining in our watershed. This was one of the many IAS activities implemented this year.



## BRNRD hosts Annual Beach Clean-up Event

Berthea Olby, NRD Outreach Coordinator

On August 16th we held our 2019 Beach Clean-up Event. During this event we sent a group to both Bad River Mouth Beaches, and also Waverly Beach. We had approximately 25 people participate in this event this year, including our summer youth crew. Next year we are hoping to expand and include Joe Rose Beach, Second Landing, and Long Island Beaches. As our Beach Monitoring Message states, our beach going public is our priority, and Nobody likes a Dirty Beach!

Current Status of Reservation Beaches can be obtained by calling (715) 685-7870.



## Game Warden Thoughts on Animal Scraps

Gerry White, Lead Conservation Warden

Each time anyone sees a group of birds, mainly crows and bald eagles, along the roadway usually the first thought is “There is a gut pile there.” Many birds stick around throughout the winter. Some of those birds scavenge for food. Not only will birds scavenge in the winter but other animals will also scavenge like the fox and coyote. To some of those animals, scavenging would include picking at road kill, gut piles and deer scraps tossed out from processing the latest hunt. Any animal parts along the road way are in itself a hazard and unsightly to those driving on the road. Once the animals find scraps to scavenge they will flock there until there is nothing left to eat. This becomes an additional hazard causing motorists to have to possibly slow down and in some cases swerve in attempts to keep

from hitting animals. It is safe driving practice not to swerve and keep safe control of the vehicle. What ends up happening in some cases those animals will get hit by the oncoming vehicle injuring them and sometimes unintentionally killing the animal. Bad River Tribal members practice a deer harvest season from July 1<sup>st</sup> to January 31<sup>st</sup>. Although most hunting occurs during the “rut” some hunting occurs before and after. If the mosquitoes are still out it’s nice to get out of the woods towards the roadway to field dress the deer. Once the snow flies it is easier to field dress your deer at the roadway instead of in the



deep snow. Plus if you didn’t have to drag your dressed deer thru the snow it won’t get full of snow. Most gut piles and deer scraps end up staying on or getting tossed in the ditch along the roadway. Scavenging animals end up pulling the scraps out into the roadway causing driving hazards. It would be a courtesy to all motorists including the animals scavenging if the gut piles and deer scraps were not along the roadway. It would be a good practice to put the gut piles and deer scraps further into the woods past trees and shrubs. This would make it harder for scavenging animals to drag them further into the roadway. Don’t worry, the scavenging animals will find the scraps if they are further into the woods. By this practice your help can go a long way. Thank you!

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## NRD New Wildlife Specialist Abigail Fergus

My name is Abi Fergus and I started working as Mashkizibi’s new wildlife specialist on Lake Superior Day this past July. Two years ago, I came up to Mashkizibi from lower Michigan to work as an intern by collecting input for the update of the Ma’iingan plan. Mashkizibi amazed me in a way that no other place has. Ma’iingan runs through the woods, sloughs pour into Gitchi Gummi, leeches the size of blue gills swim around. It was heartbreaking to leave at the end of my internship two years ago, so I moved back in January of 2018—as soon as I graduated Alma College with a biology degree.

I had the opportunity to work as Bad River’s wildlife technician in the 2018 summer season. In that role I did everything from pick up nearly 100 piles of Ma’iingan Moo (wolf scat) to use in a diet survey to assist in organizing outreach about Chronic Wasting Disease. It is a dream come true to hold the wildlife specialist position now and I am excited to serve the Tribe and change the wildlife field to bring awareness and respect for tribal sovereignty and reciprocity.

I am also a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I study in the Nelson Institute and the Carnivore Coexistence Lab. Through a research project with nearby, non-tribal farmers I am exploring the effectiveness of light makers, noise makers, and fladry (flagging) at keeping Makwa (black bear), Ma’iingan (gray wolf), Coyote (Wiisagi-ma’iingan), and possibly Mishibizhii (mountain lion) away from livestock farms. Bad River is funding this work with a BIA Endangered Species grant. I could not get this research

done without the hard work that two Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Committee interns and members of the



Natural Resource Aide Crew have put in. Miigwetch! This research is fostering a positive relationship between Bad River and nearby livestock owners, and this relationship building can lead to better collaboration in carnivore coexistence.

I am reevaluating the focus of Bad River’s wildlife program. Chronic Wasting Disease, Ma’iingan, and Piping Plover work will remain high priorities, and I would love to hear what else the community thinks we should focus on protecting

When I’m not working or doing school full time, I enjoy playing my ukulele, having play time with my two pet rats, and foraging for food and medicine. Please feel free to say hi in the Natural Resource office or by calling or emailing me.

[Wildlife@badriver-nsn.gov](mailto:Wildlife@badriver-nsn.gov) 715-685-7840 x 1554

### Ishkonige Nawadide continued...

The solar PV systems will be integrated with the existing utility grid but will be able to operate independent of the grid using Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). Because of the utility's maximum net metering policy of 20 kW AC, the two larger installations will be designed for "behind-the-meter" electric usage, and store electricity for use when site demand exceeds the solar generation. The BESS also creates resiliency providing power when the grid is down. All three buildings are essential tribal buildings.

The PV systems will generate approximately 625,000 kWh annually and offset 100% of the annual electric usage of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Health Clinic, and 5.5% of the Administration Building. They will reduce the Tribe's electric bills by \$841,000 in the first 25 years and eliminating 487 tons of CO2 emissions. This pilot project represents the Tribe's continued progress down the economic and environmental path to a 100% clean and resilient energy future while further developing the Tribe's expertise needed to realize that future.

In July of 2016, the Tribe experienced a 500-year flood and in response adopted an Emergency Response Plan, along with Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan. The Tribe's goal is to mitigate and prepare for the consequences of hazards and effectively respond and recover in the event of an emergency or disaster. The Tribe identified the Health & Wellness Center and the Wastewater Treatment Plant as the most important tribal facilities and decided to locate the Tribal Emergency Operation Center (EOC) at the Chief Blackbird Administration Building. Further, the Tribe



Location of 200kW DC at the Wastewater Treatment Plant

Location of 300 kW DC at the Health & Wellness Center



has included energy as a major component of operations under the EOC.

The ability to invest in large energy projects within the reservation, allows the Tribe to exercise its sovereignty and protect the natural resources. The Project Manager, partners and team members will be responsible for completing the project and continue to assess objectives to the Tribe's long-term goals to achieve energy independence while further developing and implementing mitigation strategies towards the Tribe's Emergency Preparedness Plan. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Daniel Wiggins at [Air1@badriver-nsn.gov](mailto:Air1@badriver-nsn.gov).

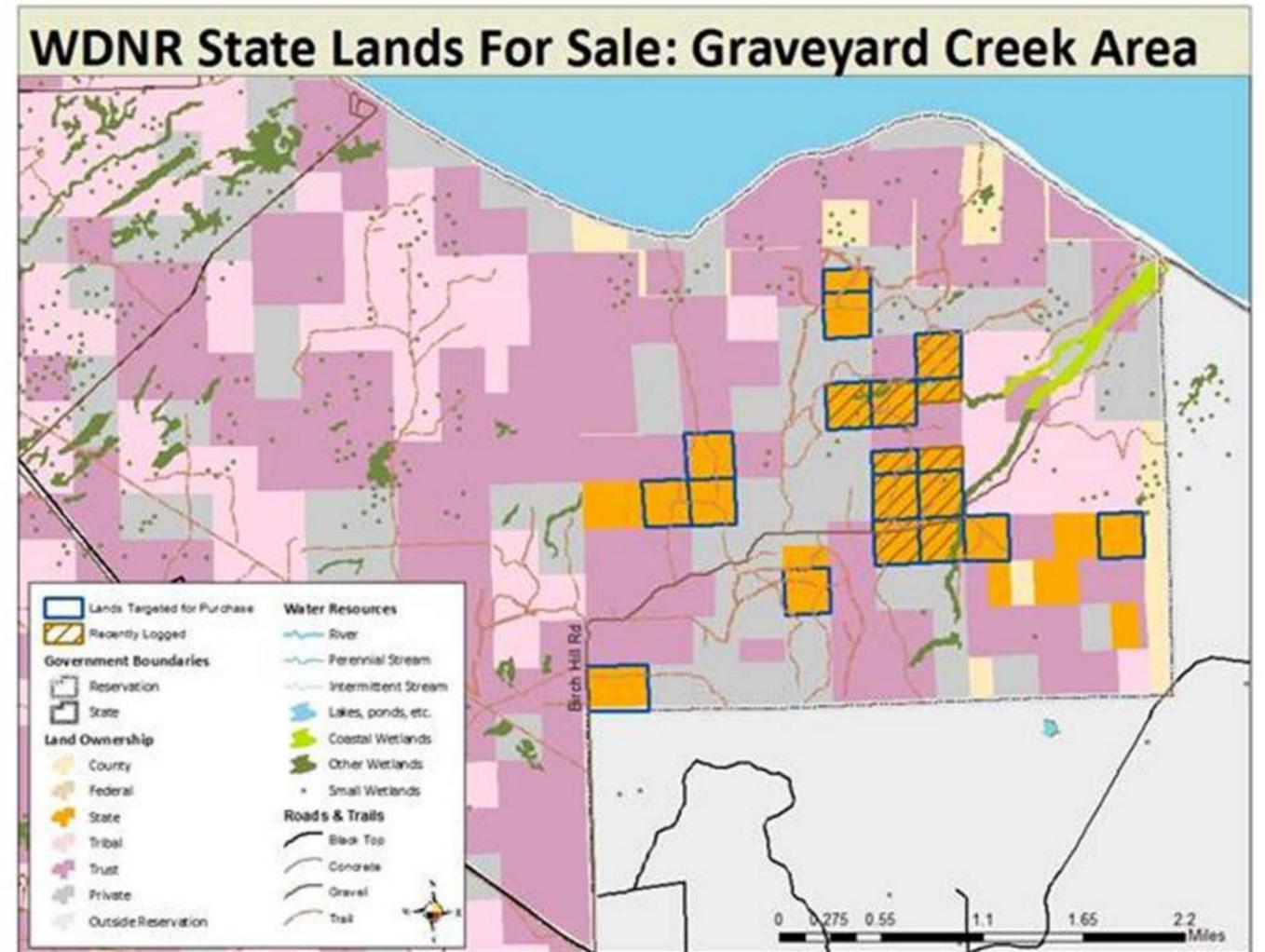
### Coastal Habitat Protection for Namegos (Coaster Brook Trout) through Land Acquisition.

Suzi Smith, GIS Specialist & Naomi Tillison, NRD Director

In autumn of 2018 Bad River Band received \$330,000 of Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funding administered through the Bureau of Indian Affairs to help with the purchase 915 acres of land within the exterior boundaries of the Reservation in the vicinity of Graveyard Creek. On September

17, 2019 the Tribal Council authorized a purchase agreement with the State of Wisconsin DNR on all the parcels within the Reservation owned by WDNR in Iron County. The closing will take place in 3 groups of parcels, starting in the next 45 days, as title issues are addressed.

This land acquisition will help us better protect and restore Graveyard & Bell Creeks, cold water trout streams, and connected waters.



## Project Reviews by NRD continued...

Continuing educational outreach about the project review process and various ordinances, including a working session with Tribal Council, a display at the NRD Open House, newsletter articles, and a postcard mailing to all owners of fee lands within the Reservation boundaries. (We are currently working on a mailing for all those who have interests in trusts lands.)

Aspects like open lines of communication, accurate and complete information, transparency, and forethought regarding review and permitting timelines for non-emergency projects are key for a smooth project review and permitting process. Thus, we encourage applicants to provide as much information as possible on their applications and to promptly respond to questions or requests for additional information as we at NRD work to make our process more transparent and easier

to understand for applicants. Working together we can continue to protect and restore resources for the seventh generation while providing for the needs of the current generations.

We encourage feedback from applicants who have gone through the project review process, and questions from anyone interested in learning more about the process.



Environmental Program display at NRD Open House discussing the Project Review process."

Please contact the NRD Office with questions and comments.

## Wigwaas (Birch Trees)

Gena Abramson, Forestry Specialist

**W**igwaas remains an important part of the culture at Bad River (Mashkiiziibii). The moratorium (2016) on birch gathering has curtailed some of the cultural activities associated with birch for some members. Unfortunately, the act of overharvesting by a few has impacted the community as a whole.

Our Natural Resources Department is actively trying to address this situation. We have formed a work group that aims to develop recommendations to ensure a healthy population of birch on the Reservation. We also aim to unify the community members' ideals and values regarding what it means to gather sustainably.

Once we have a definite plan for birch management, we hope to bring our findings to the Bad River Tribal Council for their approval.

As our community grows, sometimes forested areas need to be cleared of trees. When this happens, we open these areas for future development under the moratorium and require an access permit to gather birch. This allows our community members to harvest birch.



We want members to speak up when they know of illegal birch gathering. It is not necessary to identify yourself when reporting illegal harvesting. We want opportunities to be there for all tribal members (especially the 7th generation). Birch needs to be protected on the landscape as it is in decline all across the region. Additionally, climate change is expected to have a severely negative impact on the birch population.

Sustainable harvesting is very important. Please do not harvest more than you need. It is important to leave some for the next person. This is a great topic to discuss with the elders. Please reach out to them for advice. They will appreciate your respect for the land, the ancestors, and the 7th generation.

Contact Forestry in the Natural Resources Department if you have any questions or concerns.

# PUBLIC SAFETY NOTICE

## AN INVESTIGATION IS UNDERWAY OF A POSSIBLE LEAK ALONG THE ENBRIDGE LINE 5 CORRIDOR WITHIN THE BAD RIVER RESERVATION

For your personal safety, please be aware of the following:

- Bad River Tribe and our experts in pipeline safety and integrity have concerns about odors detected near one of Enbridge's pipeline anomaly dig locations west of Pine Flats Road.
- The odors detected may be associated with a leak of natural gas liquids (NGLs) from Line 5.
- The Tribe recommends the general public avoid the Line 5 area west of Pine Flats Road near Sugarbush Creek.
- The Public Safety Notice will be active until we can verify the site is safe.
- If you *must* be in the area:
  - **DO NOT SMOKE**, NGLs are combustible.
  - **Leave immediately** if you detect any unusual odors (the exact odor may be interpreted differently by different people) or signs of a leak.
  - **Report any signs of a leak** (haze, hissing noises, dead animals/vegetation, odors, etc.) to the National Response Center: 1-800-424-8802.

For more information, contact the Bad River Natural Resources Department at 715-682-7123

Posted 8:45 pm 9/16/19



**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**Emergency Work – Enbridge Line 5 @ Denomie Creek Tributary**

Notice Date: September 18, 2019

Notice is hereby given that the Bad River Tribe’s Natural Resources (BRNRD) drafted an Anti – Degradation Decision on September 18, 2019 for an emergency response to a threatened release into the environment of hazardous substances which may pose an imminent danger to public health or welfare. On August 21, 2019, Bad River environmental staff identified exposed oil pipeline operated by Enbridge on the eastern portion of the Bad River Reservation at a Denomie Creek Tributary. On September 18, 2019 and September 19, 2019, Enbridge engineering and environmental contractors will install sandbags at the exposed oil pipeline to reduce exposed span length, as a temporary measure to reduce the stress on the pipeline.

The Denomie Creek Tributary is an Exceptional Resource Water (Tier 2 Water) protected for cultural, wildlife, aquatic life and fish, and recreational uses among other uses.

The BRNRD is soliciting public comments on the work site and on the additional monitoring needed to evaluate impacts to the natural resources. Copies this notice, the Anti- Degradation Decision Draft, and supporting information are on file and available for public inspection from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at Bad River Tribe’s NRD Offices in the Chief Blackbird Center, address 72682 Maple Street, Odanah, Wisconsin.

The BRNRD will submit a summary of comments received and the Department’s responses to the Tribal Council with the final Anti – Degradation Decision on October 15, 2019. Written comments can be sent via email or post office to:

Naomi Tillison  
 Bad River Tribe’s Natural Resources Department (BRNRD)  
 P.O. Box 39  
 Odanah, WI 54861  
[NRDDirector@badriver-rsn.gov](mailto:NRDDirector@badriver-rsn.gov)

**Comment deadline is: October 4, 2019.**

Posted as of: September 18, 2019

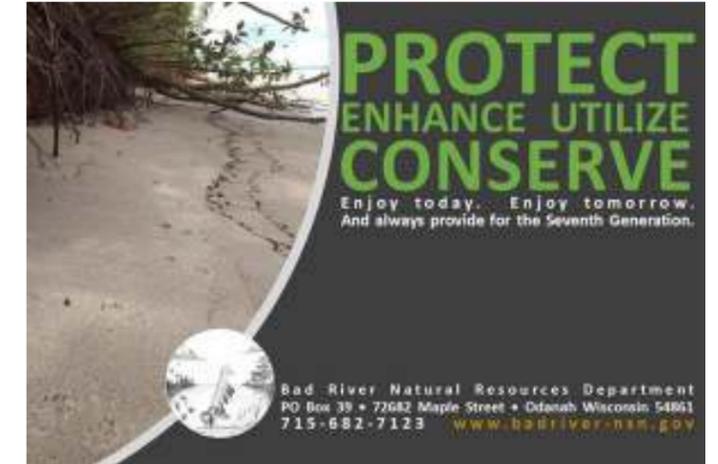
# Project Reviews by NRD: A Year in Review

Jessica Strand, Environmental Specialist

The Natural Resources Department (NRD) began the project review process (in it’s current form) on August 1, 2018—and since we are a year into the process it is time for us to stop and reflect about what has worked and what hasn’t worked and how far we’ve come.

As of September 9<sup>th</sup>, we have completed 53 initial project reviews and have another 14 that we are currently reviewing. On average, it has taken us 40 days to complete initial project reviews during this timeframe, though our project review packet lets people know we aim to complete the initial project review in 45 days. The longest it has taken us for an initial review has been 64 days, and the shortest has been a couple days when there has been an emergency review (clean-up of a spill associated with the truck crash on Hwy 2).

Our review of projects has been ongoing through our busiest times and during periods where we’ve had up to five vacancies in staff positions that are supposed to provide reviews. We’ve reviewed projects with the bare minimum of information and others with all the information we need and others that change even as we’re trying to review them. We’ve re-viewed very simple projects with little impact on the environment and more complex projects that have larger environmental implications. These scenarios, and many others, contribute to how long our initial reviews of projects take. They also contribute to how easy it is for an applicant to move



from an initial review to project implementation.

The average project requires additional steps to be completed before the applicant moves to implementation—sometimes this is in the form of additional information that needs to be turned in, while other times in the

form of permits that need to be acquired. Very few projects are cleared to proceed with just the initial project review since the Tribe seeks to minimize potential impacts to the environment for every project, and oftentimes has ordinances that require conditional permits to ensure this happens that need to be applied for as well.

The initial review period, plus timelines associated with various ordinances and permits, are often where friction is generated between applicants and NRD. Friction seems to be generated due to confusion about the process/ permits and a dislike of how long it takes from the start of a project review to implementing the project. Thus, NRD has been working on con-

**Table: Summary of Projects Reviewed by Status**

Application Type/Entity	# of Initial Reviews		# of Projects Completely Reviewed/Permitted
	Under Review	Completed*	
Bad River Tribal Projects	4	25	11
Enbridge Energy	1	2	2
Misc. Companies	2	4	3
Northern Natural Gas	1	7	5
Private Miscellaneous	4	1	1
Residential Leases	1	7	0
Shoreline Riprap	0	5	1
Xcel Energy	1	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>25</b>

\*Includes in the count the number of projects completely reviewed and permitted.

Continued on page 8