

Gov. Evers: Receives 2022 US Water Prize from the US Water Alliance

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers was recognized this week by the [US Water Alliance](#) as a winner of this year's [US Water Prize](#) in the Outstanding Public Official category. The governor's receipt of this award was announced Tuesday night at the US Water Prize 2022 Ceremony, part of the US Water Alliance's annual [One Water Summit](#), which was held in Milwaukee this year. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Secretary Preston Cole accepted the award on the governor's behalf.

"From our farmers to our outdoor recreation enthusiasts, protecting Wisconsin's vast and valuable natural resources and ensuring that everyone has access to clean drinking water are values core to who we are as Wisconsinites," said Gov. Evers. "We've worked hard over the last three years to make meaningful investments in our water infrastructure to ensure all Wisconsinites have access to safe, clean, drinking water, and I am honored to join this year's honorees in accepting the US Water Prize and to be recognized as this year's Outstanding Public Official. Wisconsin is ready for bold and urgent solutions to address the climate crisis and its effects on our water, and I know that with partners like the US Water Alliance, we are well on our way to building the resilient, sustainable future we want for our kids."

According to the US Water Alliance, the US Water Prize celebrates outstanding achievement in the advancement of sustainable, integrated, and inclusive solutions to the nation's water challenges, and is the preeminent national recognition program for exemplary efforts to secure a One Water future for all. The 2022 US Water Prize winners were selected from more than 160 nominations and applications, and the governor was selected following a nomination from [The Nature Conservancy in Wisconsin](#) for his efforts to promote and protect water quality in Wisconsin. Additional information about the US Water Prize and this year's winners

can be found [here](#).

Gov. Evers and the Evers Administration has taken critical steps to ensure clean water in Wisconsin. During his first year in office, Gov. Evers [declared](#) 2019 the Year of Clean Drinking Water in Wisconsin and created the [Wisconsin PFAS Action Council](#) to ensure collaboration across state agencies to address the issue of PFAS contamination in Wisconsin, including establishing state drinking water standards to keep communities healthy and safe. In both of his biennial budget proposals, the governor proposed major investments in water quality and infrastructure, including in flood prevention and resilience, restoring wetlands, and helping shoreline communities with dangerous shoreline erosion. Highlights regarding water quality from the signed 2021-23 biennial budget include providing \$5 million over the biennium to support the University of Wisconsin System's Freshwater Collaborative, increasing funding for producer-led watershed protection grants, providing \$7 million over the next two years for the Soil and Water Resource Management Program, increasing funding for the well compensation grant program, providing \$4 million for the urban nonpoint source and storm water management program and the municipal flood control program, and providing \$6.5 million for the Targeted Runoff Management Program, which supports the installation of structures in rural settings to improve water quality by preventing soil erosion and animal waste runoff.

In April, Gov. Evers [signed legislation](#) recommended through the bipartisan Water Quality Task Force to create a commercial nitrogen optimization pilot program and a cover crop insurance premium rebate program to help farmers implement innovative practices to protect water quality while protecting the bottom line of their farms. And in July, Gov. Evers, together with Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul, [announced](#) a lawsuit against three Wisconsin manufacturers and 15 other defendants for "wrongful, deceptive, and tortious conduct" that led directly to PFAS contamination of Wisconsin's water, property, and natural resources.

Additionally, in August, the governor, together with the DNR, [announced](#) a \$10 million grant program to support the replacement, reconstruction, treatment, or abandonment of contaminated private wells in Wisconsin. The program, based on the state's [Well Compensation Grant Program](#), will expand eligibility beyond the current Well Compensation Program to help well owners address contamination in approximately 1,036 additional wells and increase access to clean drinking water in Wisconsin. The governor also [announced](#) in August a \$4.5 million investment in five conservation projects across Wisconsin, including projects that safeguard important

watersheds across the state, conserve unique, critical shoreline habitats, and promote lakeshore recreation and safe harbor access.

An online version of this release is available [here](#).