

Dept. of Natural Resources: Plans drawdown for Cruson Slough in August 2023

Posted on Thursday, Jul 27, 2023

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) today announced it will be conducting a full drawdown on Cruson Slough in Richland County beginning this August.

The drop in water levels is necessary to prepare the site for upcoming construction and repairs slated for late summer of 2023. The project will involve rebuilding the dike and replacing the water control structure, as recommended by the DNR's annual structural inspections.

“Though our primary reason is to prepare for construction, we expect to see overall positive impacts on the habitat, as well,” said Savanna Hartman, DNR Wildlife Biologist. “When we drop the water level and expose areas that are typically submerged, we’ll be allowing sunlight to reach the soil and thereby promote new vegetation growth. By raising the water levels in September when those plants are producing seed, we can provide a large quantity of food for a variety of wildlife, especially waterfowl and shorebirds that will be passing through on their fall migration.”

The drawdown will begin in early August and water levels will be lowered slowly throughout the month until the lowest levels have been achieved. Water levels will be returned to normal levels by the start of October when construction is complete.

Wildlife staff conducted a partial drawdown on Cruson Slough in 2021 to observe how the ecosystem would respond to a temporary change in water level. The slough's ecosystem responded well, and additional germination of certain wetland

plans was observed in the newly exposed sediment. This partial drawdown has provided DNR staff confidence that water levels can be dropped even farther to accommodate the construction project with little to no impact on the overall ecosystem.