

Dept. of Natural Resources: Secretary Payne appoints Steven Little Deputy Secretary; Mark Aquino Assistant Deputy Secretary

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Secretary Adam N. Payne announced that he is appointing DNR Assistant Deputy Secretary Steven C. Little to serve as DNR Deputy Secretary beginning April 9, 2023, filling the role previously held by Sarah Barry.

“Sarah had been with the DNR since early 2022, and we are grateful for her public service and leadership in the Agency,” Payne said. “Sarah will certainly be missed by our DNR family, and we wish her and her family well.”

Little has served as the Assistant Deputy Secretary since 2020, and brings to the DNR’s Leadership Team more than 25 years of public policy, executive budget management, financial regulatory, and government relations experience in both the public and private sectors. Before accepting an appointment as the Director of Management and Budget for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in 2019, he was a Senior Vice President of Government Relations for Citigroup Inc., focusing on state government relations in the Upper Midwest.

Little holds a master’s degree from the Robert M La Follette School of Public Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He received his undergraduate degree in Government from Beloit College.

Secretary Payne also announced that Mark Aquino, the DNR’s Secretary’s Director for south central Wisconsin since 2011, will serve as DNR Assistant Deputy

Secretary. Aquino, a manager at the DNR since 2001, started his career with the state as a management analyst at the Legislative Audit Bureau. In 1997, he was promoted to Section Supervisor of the Department of Transportation's strategic issues section. He started with the DNR in 2001 working as land services team leader, and was promoted to south central region land leader in 2005 and subsequently deputy land division administrator in 2009. Since then, Aquino has also served as Division Administrator for the External Services Division.

"I have spent the last few months getting to know our team and have been so impressed with the knowledge, passion and dedication of everyone that I have met. Steven and Mark are highly regarded, and I am looking forward to working closely with them and our strong leadership team," Payne said.