

2006 ENVIROTHON ORAL TOPIC

Water Stewardship in a Changing Climate

The Team Oral Competition:

The oral presentation segment contains twice as many points as the individual testing stations. Maps and other visuals shall be no larger than 22" x 28" on poster or tag board or equivalent material. There is no access to electronic media. All five members of the team must verbally participate in the oral presentation. Your team will have ten minutes to present your plan.

You may cite outside reference materials and sources. The score sheet to be used by the judges is attached.

Water and Climate Change in Wisconsin

Climate change is likely to have a major impact on Wisconsin's waters. The data are telling us that the climate is changing (Houghton et al.2001). Air temperatures have increased around the northern hemisphere over the last century. In the Unites States, the 1900s were the warmest century in the last 1,000 years and the 1990s were the warmest decade in the 1900s (Trenberth 2001). Over the last 150 years, the duration of ice cover on lakes has decreased in Wisconsin and around the northern hemisphere (Magnuson et al. 2000). Changes in ice cover have been more rapid in the last 20 to 30 years than over the last 150 years (Magnuson et al in press). The percentage of rain falling during extreme events has increased since 1910. These are some of the observed changes, and they are well documented.

– Waters of Wisconsin Report

Your project:

Studies have shown that the Great Lakes region will experience a warming climate over the next century. How might this affect Wisconsin's water?

Hypothetically, you are an advisory committee appointed by the Governor to give him a report on the situation and make policy recommendations based on your research.

In your presentation you will want to:

- Explain your findings of any quality/quantity problem associated with climate change on Wisconsin's waters.
- Include who should be involved with addressing or adapting to these changes and why?
- Develop a proposal to address the issues. Recommendations should be economically and politically feasible.