

# UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EXTENSION

Wednesday, February 28 ~ 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Facilitator: Tim Kane

## Wisconsin Public Television

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## **Increase the Number of Professional Field Staff in Northwest Wisconsin**

*The citizens of Northwest Wisconsin request:*

- **Increasing the number of UW-Extension and Dept. of Natural Resources professional field staff in northwestern Wisconsin to help address the aquatic invasive species problem.**

**Background:** Although the northern one-third of Wisconsin includes a high percentage of the state's lakes and streams and the quality of these waters represents a critical element to the lifestyle and economy of the region, the professional expertise needed to protect these resources from the spread of aquatic invasive species has been centered in Madison. The value of placing knowledgeable professionals in the north is not only suggested by the region's needs, but by the past success of the 50 percent Fisheries Specialist position, formerly at UW-Superior, in stimulating public understanding of many critical water resource issues and in fostering the development of the statewide Wisconsin Aquatic Invasive Species Program.

**Request:** It is requested that the University of Wisconsin-Extension and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources increase the number of professional field staff in northwestern Wisconsin to help address the aquatic invasive species problem. It is specifically requested that the 50 percent time Fisheries Specialist position, formerly at UW-Superior, be filled, and that the DNR Invasive Species Specialist position be transferred from Madison to a location in northwestern Wisconsin, preferably in either Bayfield or Ashland County.

### **For further information contact:**

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## **University of Wisconsin-Extension Criminal Justice Specialists**

*The citizens of Northwest Wisconsin request:*

- **That the University of Wisconsin-Extension develops some criminal justice specialists to work with county Extension educators and local governments.**

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**Background:** Many county government officials from northwest Wisconsin and around the state are struggling with how to get control over ever rising criminal justice costs. In recent years most have either built new larger jails or jail additions, or are planning to build new larger jails to address jail overcrowding. County expenditures on criminal justice-related expenses (jail, sheriff department, district attorney's office, court system and associated social services) when added together constitute the largest county budget expenditure. Recidivism is one of the largest contributors to jail overcrowding. All too often released inmates re-offend and end up back in jail. New jails that are being built today will in all likelihood be full in the not to distance future and the specter of having to build a new larger jail will again be facing county officials and taxpayers. Unless related issues are addressed, this cycle will continue to repeat itself.

How can local government officials obtain the knowledge and tools that will enable them to manage their criminal justice system more efficiently and effectively? What criminal justice management practices have proven to be most effective? How can future jail overcrowding be avoided? What alternatives to incarceration programs have proven to work and how do you go about instituting them? What programs for county jail inmates have been effective in addressing their substance abuse, life skills and employability needs? What strategies and intervention programs have proven effective in reducing the number of repeat offenders?

A mechanism needs to be put in place that will bring the latest research-based information and education on local criminal justice management practices to local government officials and criminal justice managers. The University of Wisconsin-Extension is in a good position to do this. Its mission is to deliver research-based information to the citizens of the state, and already has numerous educational specialists available to address the needs of local governments ranging from recycling to community development to transportation to land use planning. The University of Wisconsin-Extension should obtain knowledgeable specialists in the area of local criminal justice management practices. These specialists would then work with county Extension educators to deliver criminal justice management educational programs and research-based information to local government officials and criminal justice managers.

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