
Wisconsin Legislative Council

ACT MEMO



Prepared by: Anna Henning, Senior Staff Attorney

March 16, 2020

2019 Wisconsin Act 177
[2019 Senate Bill 485]

Floating Treatment Wetlands

BACKGROUND

Among other grant programs, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) administers grant programs for lake management projects and river protection. Activities eligible for lake management project grants include, for example, certain land acquisition projects, certain wetland and habitat restoration projects, and certain DNR-approved activities in conjunction with a plan to improve or protect a lake's water quality or natural ecosystem. River protection grants support both planning projects and management projects. Relevant to 2019 Wisconsin Act 177, river protection management grants provide funding for activities such as land acquisition, in-stream and shoreline habitat restoration, and installing pollution control practices. [ss. 281.69 (3) and 281.70, Stats.]

2019 WISCONSIN ACT 177

2019 Wisconsin Act 177 makes the placement of floating treatment wetlands specifically eligible for lake management project and river protection management grants. For that purpose, the act defines "floating treatment wetland" to mean an artificial, buoyant platform for keeping plants afloat that: (1) mimics the function of natural wetlands; (2) allows plants to grow in water that is typically too deep for them; and (3) is placed below the ordinary high-water mark in a navigable water. The act does not affect permit requirements that would apply to such structures under current law.

Effective date: March 5, 2020

AH:mca;jal