

# Let's Do It Again! Day on the Hill - February 14th

By **Brian Swingle**, Executive Director, Wisconsin Green Industry Federation



On February 14th, the green industry in Wisconsin will descend on Madison for our second biennial *Wisconsin Green Industry on the Hill*. This event will not only include members of the WGIF but also green industry related associations such as the Wisconsin Christmas Tree Producers Association, Wisconsin Arborist Association, Wisconsin Golf Course Owners Association, and Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association. In 2005, seventeen state green industry associations and over 200 professionals participated.

This is truly a "Green Industry on the Hill" which will have long lasting benefits for your business and our industry as we move into the 2007-2008 legislative session. We can ride on the wave we created two years ago when we used the 2002 Green Industry Survey as our cornerstone to impress upon our state lawmakers the impressive scope of our business. We need to reinforce our importance to the state's economic and environment health. Remember, we have an annual economic impact of \$2.7 billion to the state's economy, are 4,700 businesses strong, employ over 43,000 people in the state, and we are a growing segment of the agriculture, entertainment, service and environmental sectors.

Our industry is moving into a renewed awareness and concern for the environment. We are stewards of the land who are concerned with our waters, land use, invasive species, and economic pests issues. We are employers who are concerned with continuing increasing health care costs and taxes. We enjoy the benefits of a top-notch educational system but are concerned for the future and growth of the University of Wisconsin with decreasing state financial support. We are a strong, vibrant, hard-working, critical business

sector in Wisconsin's economy and its future. And we have to use the opportunity on February 14th to back it up with a strong presence in Madison at the Monona Terrace and Capitol.

This is an event that you need to commit to participating in. Immediately following our event in 2005, every single participant's hand shot into the air when asked if they wished to repeat our endeavor. There is no cost to you to attend. The costs are being defrayed by donations from participating associations and event sponsors, but I ask you to contribute your time. One day in the dead of winter. This is the most important business meeting you will attend this year - guaranteed!

In order for us to be successful, we need to show our legislative representatives that we are well organized and have large numbers who will turn out. We can do that by bringing 400 - 500 green industry business owners and leaders to the Capitol on February 14th. WGIF has 630 companies within our member associations. We should be able to double that number by ourselves! We will schedule appointments for "teams" of constituents with assigned team leaders to meet with legislators in groups.

Please contact the WGIF office for a registration form, fill it out and return it to our office. Commit to your business, your association, and your industry. It is one day to do what you cannot do alone, I cannot do on my own for you, but we can accomplish if we do this together. As the

executive director of **your** Wisconsin Green Industry Federation, my life's work is striving to help you and your business in every way possible. But this is something we have to do together. Let's do it as a team! 🌱

