

## City, DNR must resolve issues

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THAT OLD SAYING “all’s well that ends well” appears to apply to the proposed Pratt Industries development in Beloit’s Gateway Business Park.

But it could have had a different ending.

To broad approbation in Beloit recently it was announced Pratt had chosen the city to build a new plant, one which eventually would provide good jobs for more than 100 people. A good piece of land was selected and a solid deal was put together with the help of local and state incentives. But when the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources got involved, its representatives threw a monkey wrench into the works.

APPARENTLY, THERE MAY BE a few spots in the farm fields there that get damp when the rains come and could qualify under some expanded definition of “wetlands.” The bureaucrats decided more research had to be done and it could take months to sort out. Since Pratt needed to build sooner rather than later any significant development delay could have sent the investment and the jobs packing elsewhere.

Fortunately, the city and Pratt were able to come to an agreement moving the development to another nearby site. That’s wonderful, and we welcome Pratt to Beloit.

But the good feelings do not extend to the DNR. And it is still important to sort out this wetlands issue so the next potential developer in that area can get the cooperation to seal a deal.

We get it. Much of Wisconsin’s appeal comes from its natural beauty. That includes forests, streams, lakes and, yes, wetlands. Protecting the environment matters.

But so does economic development. The city and the DNR should resolve this issue now so it does not impede another project later on .