

Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant Program



Dana Christel, Producer-Led Program Manager

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

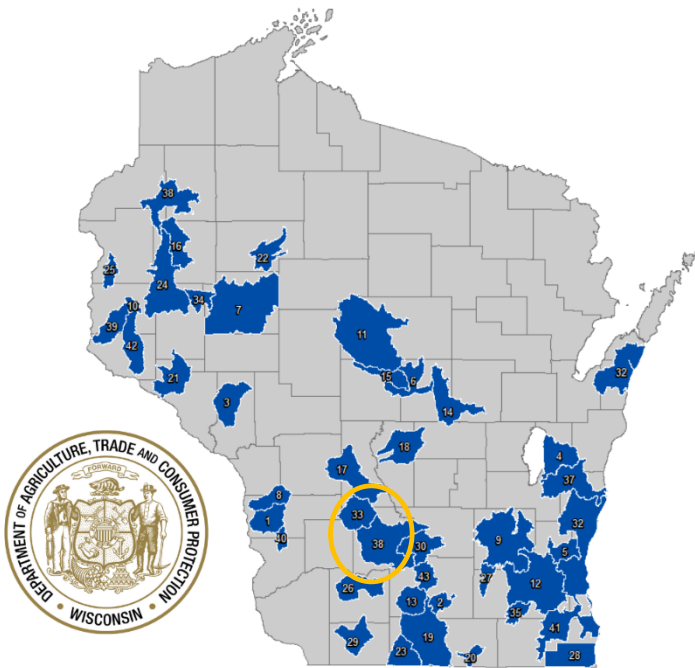
- Goal: Support farmer-driven local efforts that address water quality improvement
- At least 5 producers in a watershed project area.
- Producer-Led groups must work with a collaborator: UW-Extension, County Land Conservation Department, DNR, Non-profit
- Applicants scored on viability of work plan, anticipated outcomes towards water quality improvement, communications plan, evidence of farmer commitment
- Existing groups are evaluated more closely on their past performance

Fiscal Year	Total Requests	Total Awarded	Number of requests	Number of groups awarded
2016	\$262,550	\$242,550	15	14
2017	\$197,065	\$197,065	11	11
2018	\$619,721	\$558,246	21	17
2019	\$869,815	\$750,000	27	24
2020	\$1,051,871	\$750,000	27	24
2021	\$1,043,910	\$750,000	33	30
2022	\$1,194,543	\$1,000,000	36	36
2023	\$1,525,889	\$1,000,000	45	43
2024	TBD	\$1,000,000	TBD	TBD
Totals over time:	\$1,525,889	\$1,000,000		45 total groups funded over time



PROGRAM GROWTH

2023 Funded Producer-Led Watershed Groups



Map ID	PRODUCER-LED GROUP	Map ID	PRODUCER-LED GROUP	Map ID	PRODUCER-LED GROUP
1	Bad-Axe Farmer-Led Watershed Council	15	Farmers of Mill Creek Watershed Council	29	Lafayette Ag Stewardship Alliance
2	Biological Farming Friends	16	Farmers of the Barron County Watersheds	30	Lake Wisconsin Farmer Watershed Council
3	Buffalo Trempealeau Farmer Network	17	Farmers of the Lemonweir Valley	31	Milwaukee River Watershed Clean Farm Families
4	Calumet County Ag Stewardship Alliance	18	Farmers of the Roche-A-Cri	32	Peninsula Pride Farms
5	Cedar Creek Farmers	19	Farmers of the Sugar River	33	Producers of Lake Redstone
6	Central Wisconsin Farmers' Collaborative	20	Farmers on the Rock	34	Red Cedar Conservation Farmers
7	*Chippewa Valley Producer Led Watershed	21	FARMERS4HEALTH/H/Bear Creek Chippewa River	35	Rock River Regenerative Graziers
8	Coon Creek Community Watershed Council	22	*Flambeau Valley Watershed Group	36	Sauk Soil & Water Improvement Group
9	Dodge County Farmers for Healthy Soil & Healthy Water	23	*Green County Clean Waters	37	Sheboygan River Progressive Farmers
10	Dry Run Farmer-Led Watershed Council	24	Hay River Farmer-Led Watershed Council	38	Shell Lake, Yellow River Watershed Council
11	Eau Pleine Partnership for Integrated Conservation	25	Horse Creek Area Farmer Led Watershed Council	39	South Kinni Farmer Led Watershed Council
12	Farmers for Lake Country	26	Iowa County Uplands Watershed Group	40	Tainter Creek Farmer Led Watershed Council
13	Farmers for the Upper Sugar River	27	Jefferson County Soil Builders	41	Watershed Protection Committee of Racine County
14	Farmers for Tomorrow River Watershed Council	28	*Kenosha County Regenerative Producers	42	Western Wisconsin Conservation Council
			* New Group	43	Yahara Pride Farms, Inc.

- 1893 farmers in 2022, compared to ~800 in 2021
- 43 groups funded in 2022 (45 groups funded over time)
- 2021-2022 we saw more new groups in the central part of the state
- Last year- new groups in the north, southeast
- This year- potentially in the Fox Valley/Lake MI lakeshore area



WHAT DO FARMER-LED GROUPS DO WITH PLWPG FUNDING?

- Conservation Incentive Programs

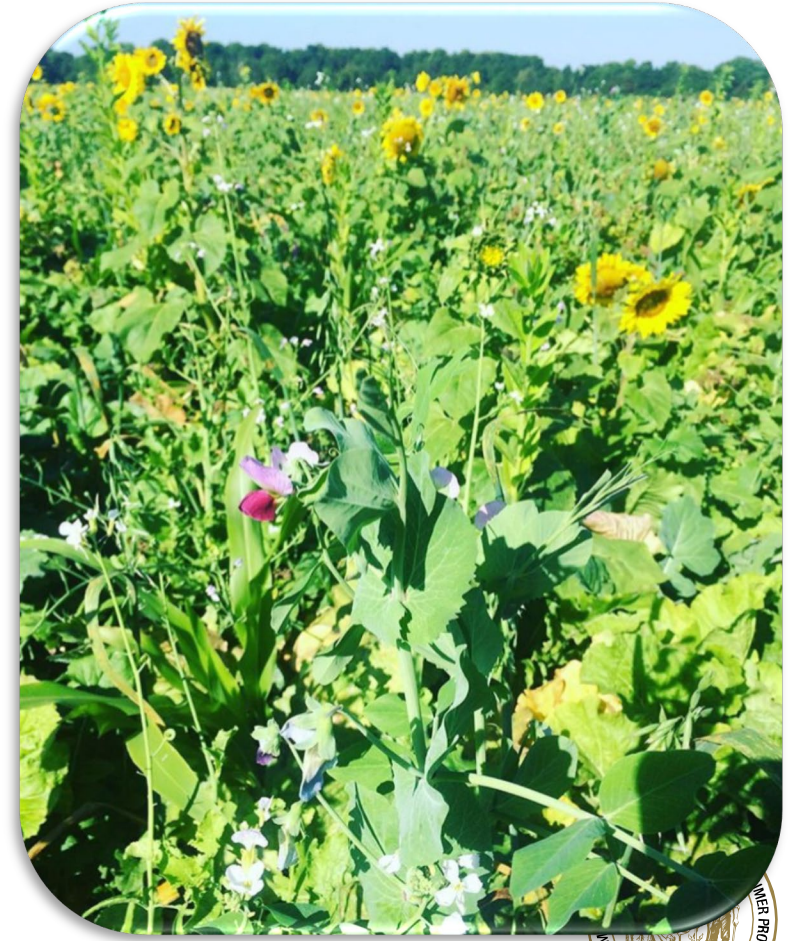


Most common
incentive program:
cover crops



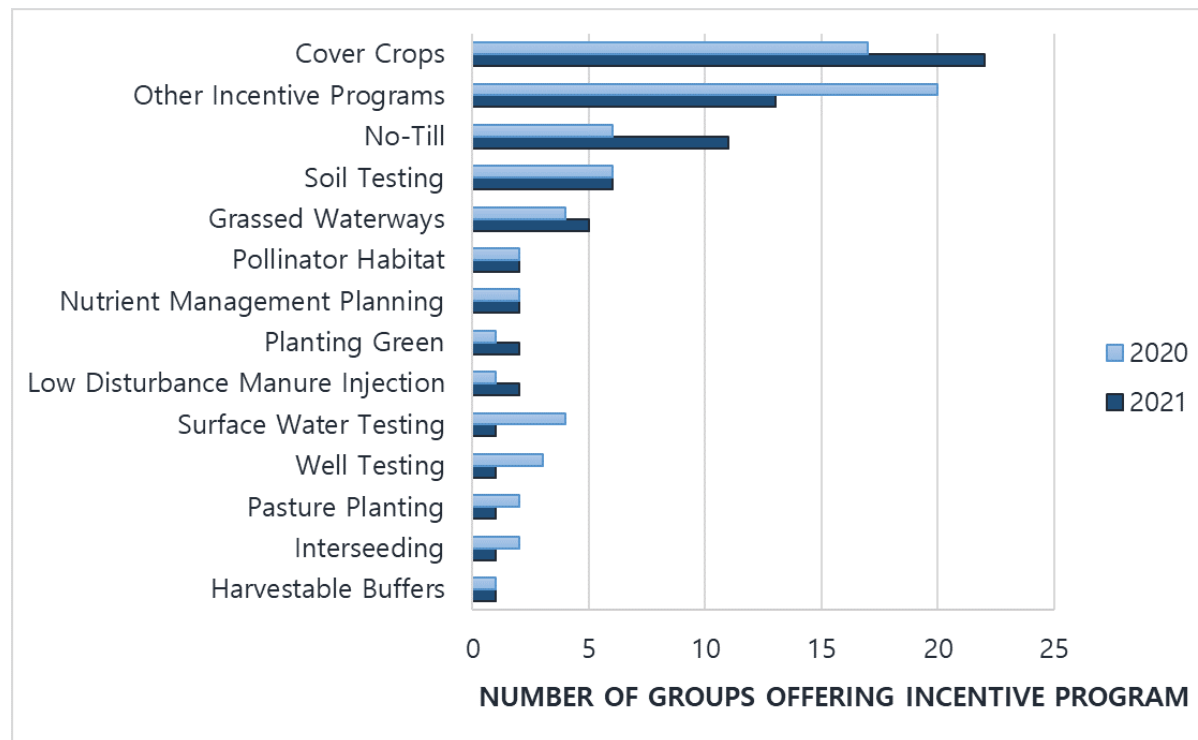
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- Education & Outreach



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Annually > 130
events hosted by
producer-led groups



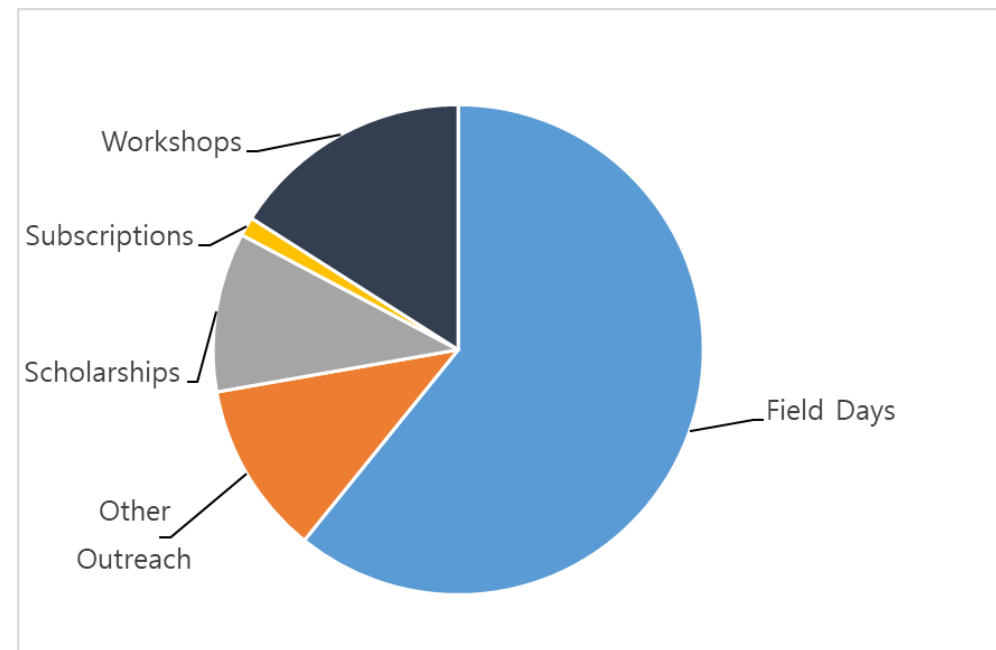
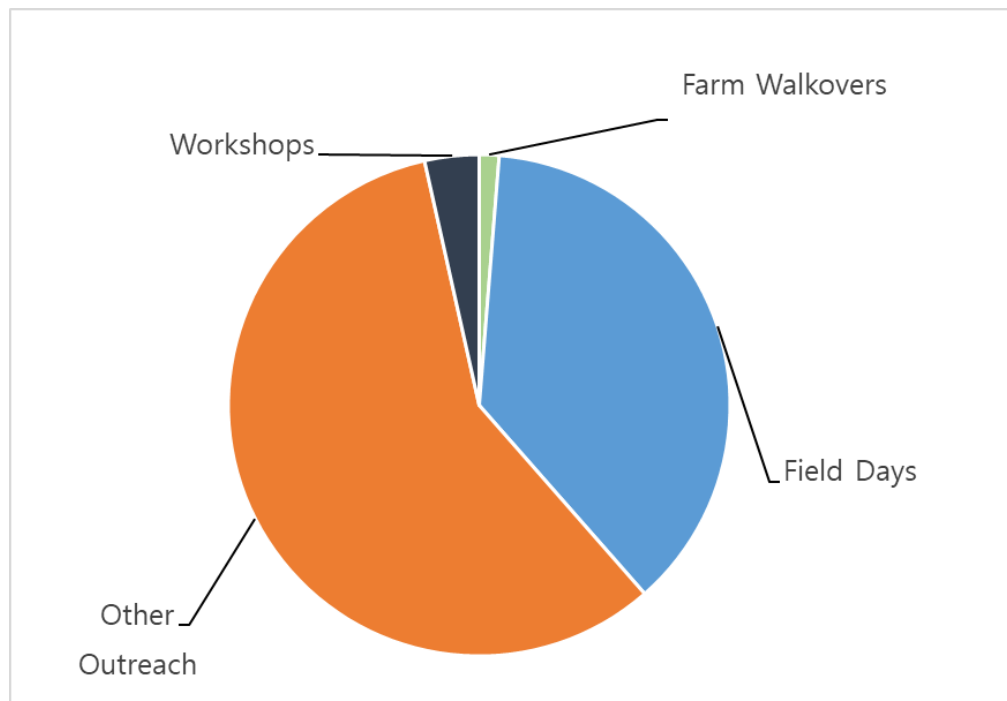
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EDUCATION & OUTREACH TRENDS

2020 vs. 2021 outreach activities



WHAT DO FARMER-LED GROUPS DO WITH PLWPG FUNDING?

- On-farm Demonstrations



2022: 70+ research and demonstration projects

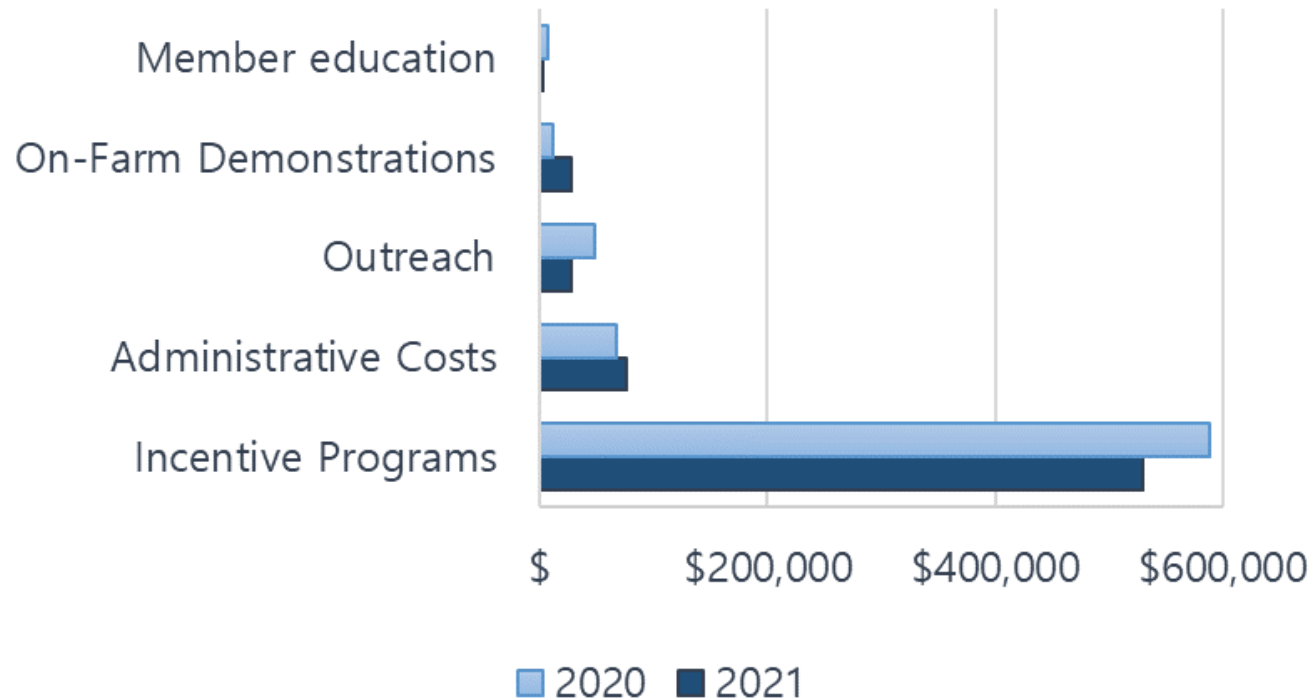


WHAT DO FARMER-LED GROUPS DO WITH PLWPG FUNDING?

- Work planning, strategic planning
- Water quality testing, soil health testing
- Watershed planning
- Equipment sharing



SPENDING TRENDS



10% of funds towards administrative costs

~80% of funds towards conservation incentive programs

“Lean” program



CONSERVATION IMPACT

2022 Conservation Progress (wi.gov)

2022 Conservation Progress Report



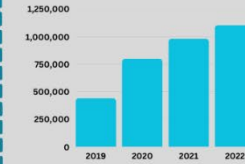
PARTICIPATION CONTINUES TO GROW

In 2022 there were **36 producer-led groups** funded by the program encompassing **1,893 members** and **643,829 acres of managed farmland**, compared to 807 members and 526,846 acres in 2021.



CONSERVATION PRACTICES INCREASE BY 13% FROM 2021

In 2022 conservation practices implemented by producer-led groups **grew to over 1.1 million acres**.



KEEPING SOIL AND NUTRIENTS IN PLACE

35% increase in no-till practices



Minimizing disturbance to the soil to help prevent erosion from wind and water.

30% increase in nutrient management



Applying nutrients at the right rate, time, and place so they don't run off into waterways.

27% increase in cover crops



Keeping the ground covered to hold soil in place and feed soil microbes.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The 127,324 acres of cover crops planted and 112,936 acres of land under no-till management in 2022 potentially reduced an *estimated**:

Did you know?
This is comparable to 13,622 gas powered passenger vehicles driven for one year.

61,214 tons of carbon dioxide equivalents of soil-based greenhouse gas emissions

218,480 tons of soil erosion occurring on farm fields

154,367 pounds of phosphorus from leaving farm fields

Did you know?
One pound of P that reaches a waterbody can feed up to 500 pounds of algae and one dumptruck load can carry as much as 10 tons of soil.

SOIL HEALTH SYSTEMS

Farmers in producer-led groups are integrating multiple practices onto their farms as part of a larger soil health system, including **innovative or non-traditional soil health practices**.

In 2022, producer-led groups implemented nearly **260,000 acres** of these "other soil health practices", which includes **targeted nitrogen management, managed grazing, and other perennial vegetation practices**.



This report was developed by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection.

* All estimates are provided from models. Actual reductions in pollutants may be higher or lower.

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Thank you for your time!



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