



Land and Water Conservation Board Agenda

February 6, 2024

The Land and Water Conservation Board (LWCB) will meet on **February 6, 2024** The board will hold its official business meeting at 9:00 am via Microsoft Teams with the option to attend in person. To attend the meeting remotely, join by telephone at +1 608-571-2209 with Conference ID 365 317 901# or click the following Teams [hyperlink](#). The agenda for the meeting is shown below.

AGENDA ITEMS AND TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

- 9:00 AM 1 Call the Meeting to Order – **Mark Cupp, LWCB Chair**
- a. Roll Call
 - b. Pledge of allegiance
 - c. Open meeting notice
 - d. Introductions, Acknowledgements
 - e. Approval of agenda
 - f. Approval of December 5, 2023 meeting minutes
- 9:10 AM 2 Public appearances*
- *Each speaker is limited to 5 minutes or less. Each speaker must complete a Public Appearance Request Card and submit it to a DATCP representative before the start of the meeting*
- 9:15 AM 3 Election of 2024 Officers
LWCB Chair
- 9:25 AM 4 Recommendation for approval of 5 Year LWRM Plan review for Douglas County
Ashley Strabel, Douglas County Land Conservationist; Sue Hendrickson, Land Conservation Committee Chair
- 9:55 AM 5 Recommendation for approval of 5 Year LWRM Plan review for Rock County
Andrew Baker, Rock County Land Conservation Department Director; Richard Bostwick, Land Conservation Committee Chair
- 10:25 AM 6 **Measuring the Impact of Nutrient Management Planning on Surface Water Quality in Wisconsin**
Andrew Beguhl, Captain, US Air Force, Instructor of Economics; Professor Marin Skidmore, University of Illinois Urbana- Champaign

Mark Cupp, Chair;

Monte Osterman, Secretary

Members: Andrew Buttles; Ron Grasshoff; Rebecca Clarke; Yogesh Chawla; Brian McGraw;

Andrew Potts; Robby Personette; Jill Schoen

- 11:00 AM 7 2022 Annual Soil and Water Conservation Report
Coreen Fallat, DATCP
- 11:20 AM 8 LWCB Advisory Committee on Research - Committee Updates
Ron Grasshoff, LWCB; Kirsten Biefeld, DATCP
- 11:30 AM 9 Agency reports
- a. FSA
 - b. NRCS
 - c. UW-CALS
 - d. UW Madison - Extension
 - e. WI Land + Water
 - f. DOA
 - g. DATCP
 - h. DNR
 - i. Member Updates
- 12:00 PM 10 Planning for April 2024 LWCB Meeting -
Mark Cupp, LWCB
- 12:05 PM 11 Adjourn

MINUTES
LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING

December 5, 2023
2811 Agriculture Drive, Madison WI
Microsoft Teams Meeting

Item #1 Call to Order—pledge of allegiance, open meeting notice, approval of agenda, approval of October 3, 2023, LWCB meeting minutes.

Call to Order

The Land and Water Conservation Board (Board) met in person at 2811 Agriculture Drive, Madison, WI 53718 on **December 5, 2023**. The meeting was preceded by public notice as required by Wis. Stat. § 19.84. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mark Cupp at **9:00 am** and the pledge of allegiance was conducted.

Members and Advisors Present

Members: Mark Cupp, Bobbie Webster, Monte Osterman, Brian McGraw, Ron Grasshoff, Andrew Buttles, Robby Personette, Andrew Potts, and Jill Schoen. A quorum was present.

Advisors: Matt Krueger (WI Land + Water), Rachel Schindler (FSA), Josh Odekirk (NRCS), Francisco Arriaga (UW CALS), Amber Radatz (UW Extension)

Approval of Agenda

Motion

Grasshoff motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Osterman, and the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Motion

Osterman motioned to approve the October 3, 2023, meeting minutes as presented, seconded by McGraw, and the motion carried unanimously. The approved minutes shall be posted as the official meeting record for publication on the LWCB website.

Item #2 Public Appearances

Dean Farr, Izaak Walton League, of Crystal Lake Illinois spoke to the Board about a predicted water shortage for the state of Illinois and the need for states to coordinate. The Board discussed the ongoing effort to track practices for watersheds that drain to the Gulf of Mexico and a coalition of Mississippi River mayors who have formed a compact to coordinate on drought, flooding and multi-state solutions to issues like runoff contributing to a dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

Item #3 Recommendation for approval of 5-year Land and Water Resource Management Plan review for Taylor County

Brent Tessmer, County Conservationist, and Ray Soper, Land Conservation Committee Chair, formally requested a recommendation of approval from the Board regarding the County's 5-year LWRM plan review.

The County provided written answers to the Board's standardized questions, recent work plans and accomplishments, and other materials (available on LWCB's website: lwcb.wi.gov).

Motion

After a discussion between the Board and County representatives, Webster motioned to recommend approval of Taylor County's 5-year LWRM plan review, seconded by McGraw, and the motion carried unanimously.

Item #4 Recommendation for approval of 5-year Land and Water Resource Management Plan review for St. Croix County

Tim Steiber, Resource Management Administrator, Jason Kjseth, Community Development Director, and Dan Hansen, Land Conservation Committee & Community Development Chair, formally requested a recommendation of approval from the Board regarding the County's 5-year LWRM plan review.

The County provided written answers to the Board's standardized questions, recent work plans and accomplishments, and other materials (available on LWCB's website: lwcb.wi.gov).

Motion

After a discussion between the Board and County representatives, Grasshoff motioned to recommend approval of St. Croix County's 5-year LWRM plan review, seconded by Webster, and the motion carried unanimously.

Item #5 Annual Soil and Water Conservation Report

This item was withdrawn from the December 5, 2023 agenda.

Item #6 Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin

Marissa Jablonski, Executive Director of the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin presented an introduction to the works of the Freshwater Collaborative.

Item #7 LWCB Advisory Committee on Research-Committee Updates

Ron Grasshoff and Katy Smith, DATCP, discussed updates from the November 7th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Research; the Committee will reconvene on January 9th, 2024 to discuss work planning.

Item #8 Review of annual agenda

Smith reviewed the draft 2024 annual agenda, noting that Langlade County will present a revision instead of a 5-year review. Cupp requested the incorporation of a Board education item at each meeting.

Potts motioned to recommend approval of the 2024 annual agenda as revised, seconded by Osterman, and the motion carried unanimously.

Item #9 Agency Reports

- a. FSA- Schindler reported that the government is operating under a continuing resolution which included a 1-year extension of the farm bill; FSA is anticipating a sign up for continuous CRP to open in the near future; Sign up for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) is ongoing with a deadline of January 30th, 2024, for drought that occurred during the 2023 grazing period; Emergency Relief Program (ERP) for 2022 for producers impacted by weather conditions and disasters that occurred during calendar year 2022 will open soon.
- b. NRCS- Odekirk reported in Fiscal Year 2023, NRCS provided \$87.6 million dollars to WI private landowners in conservation assistance; 32 new agreement collaborations for \$13 million dollars were put in place and 85 partner positions were established; NRCS is anticipating a significant increase in federal funding for the next calendar year; Field offices are already looking to obligate contracts.
- c. UW-CALS- Arriaga wished everyone a happy world soils day; The [2024 WI Agricultural Outlook](#) forum is set for January 23, 2024; Jeff Hadachek joined the Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics as an assistant professor and extension specialist and will study agricultural water issues and conservation programs. The Horticulture and Agronomy Departments have merged to form the Department of Plant and Agroecosystems Sciences. Steven Hall has joined the Department of Plant and Agroecosystems Sciences to work on water quality systems in the agricultural landscape. CALs and the Division of Extension are working to have more integrated specialists. Malika Nocco will join the Biological Systems Engineering Department to work on water quantity issues. The Dairy Innovation Hub recently hired faculty Xia Zhu-Barker (nitrogen issues), Margaret Kalcic (modeling and surface water issues) to focus on land and water stewardship issues.
- d. UW Madison- Extension- Radatz stated it's meeting season for Extension team members. The WI Water and Soil Health (WWASH) Conference will occur December 7-8, 2023, formerly Discovery farms and cover crops conference; Extension is working with all of the faculty Francisco mentioned to support outreach. Extension now has 5 outreach specialists around the state. The Discovery Farms staff is also fully staffed. Extension has [Agricultural Education Webinars](#) scheduled on Tuesdays once a month for the first quarter of 2024.
- e. WI Land + Water- Krueger reported that elections for WI Land + Water Representatives who serve on the LWCB will be shifted from the association's annual meeting in March to an election in fall of 2024; The Conservation Mentorship Pilot Program is Open; SOC is reviewing the 590 Nutrient Management Standard; In 2024, WI Land + Water will be augmenting their climate resiliency staff in partnership with the Savanna Institute.
- f. DOA- Potts reported that the state multi-discharger variance for phosphorus is past the comment period for the initial technical draft; DOA and DNR held public meetings in Madison and Stevens Point and will revise the technical draft based on those comments.
- g. DATCP- Personette submitted a written report that is available online at the Land and Water Conservation Board website within the December 5, 2023 [meeting packet](#). In addition, Anderson reported that AB 133 for Farmland Preservation will be signed December 6, 2023. The Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program request for proposal is open through January 31, 2024. Producers are starting to contact UW regarding project designs- interested producers must make contact with Monica Schauer or Lindsey Rushford on or before December 15, 2023

to discuss their proposed research design. The Crop Insurance Premium Rebate for Planting Cover Crops Program application is open. Applications will remain open until January 31, 2024 or until funding is exhausted.

- h. DNR- Schoen submitted a written report that is available online at the Land and Water Conservation Board website within the December 5, 2023 [meeting packet](#). The Department has hired Joe Bonell to work on the Department's Nutrient Reduction Strategy.

Item #10 Planning for the February 6, 2024 LWCB meeting

The Board should expect the following at the next LWCB meeting:

- Election of 2024 Officers
- 5-year Review Douglas, Rock Counties
- A Presentation on the 2022 Annual Soil and Water Conservation Report
- Report and Potential Recommendation on 2024 CREP Spending Authority
- 2021-2023 Farmland Preservation Biennial Report
- LWCB Advisory Committee on Research Updates, potentially related bylaw revisions
- Board Education Item

Item #11 Adjourn

Motion

Grasshoff motioned to adjourn, seconded by Osterman, and the motion carried unanimously. The business meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM _____ **State of Wisconsin**

DATE: January 20, 2024

TO: Land and Water Conservation Board Members and Advisors

FROM: Lisa K. Trumble, DATCP *Lisa K. Trumble*
Resource Management Section,
Bureau of Land and Water Resources

SUBJECT: Five Year Review of the *Douglas County Land and Water Resource Management Plan*

Recommended Action: This is an action item. The LWCB should determine whether the county has met the LWCB's criteria for a five-year review of a LWRM plan approved for ten years. If the LWCB makes a formal determination that the county has failed to meet these criteria, DATCP will automatically modify its order to terminate approval of the county's plan effective December of this year.

Summary: The Douglas County land and water resource management plan has been approved through December 31, 2029, contingent on a five-year review conducted prior to December 31, 2024. In advance of the five-year review, Douglas County has completed a DATCP approved form designed to implement the LWCB's reference document dated October 27, 2021, and the criteria for conducting a five-year review. The county has provided written answers to four questions regarding past and future implementation, has provided the required work planning documents, and has appropriately involved the Land Conservation Committee.

Materials Provided:

- Completed Five Year Review Form
- 2023 Annual Workplan with Accomplishments
- 2024 Annual Workplan

Presenter: Ashley Strabel, County Land Conservationist, Douglas County LCD
Sue Hendrickson, Land Conservation Committee Chair



**Land and Water Conservation Board
County Land and Water Resource Management Plan
Five Year Review of LWRM Plans**

County: Douglas

Implementation Covering Past Five Years and Future Directions

Answer these four questions in writing (not to exceed 4 pages)

1. Provide a representative number of accomplishments that can be directly traced to activities identified in multiple work plans. For each accomplishment, explain how the planning process helped the county achieve its outcome, including planning adjustments that helped better target county activities.

Northern Douglas County Agriculture Enterprise Area- In 2021, Douglas County created an agriculture enterprise area. Historically many farmers were enrolled in Farmland Preservation and enrollment steadily declined as contracts expired. Farmers had no ability to enroll into Farmland Preservation with the lack of an Agriculture Enterprise Area or Zoning. In 2021, the Northern Douglas County Agriculture Enterprise Area was created, and there are now four new farmers enrolled in the Farmland Preservation Program. The Farmland Preservation Plan was created in 2017, and it was previously identified as a goal to increase inspections for the program.

Agriculture Technician- Since 2021, Douglas County has hosted an annual field day focused on nutrient management funded by Nutrient Management Farmer Education Grants. Each year the event was hosted in collaboration with UW- Madison Extension. In 2022, Ashland County took the lead on securing grant funds to employ a four-county Agriculture Technician for Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland and Iron Counties. This staff has assisted by coordinating annual field days, performing farm visits and most importantly assisting in the creation of nutrient management plans. This is important because there is no local access to nutrient management planners in this region of Wisconsin. It has been a constant goal to increase nutrient management planning and Farmland Preservation enrollment, and this position has implemented these activities. Unfortunately, this position is grant-funded and therefore lacks long-term stability. Increasing the number of acres in nutrient management continues to be a priority.

Surface Waters Program- Funds to employ a seasonal Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Coordinator were secured in 2020. This position grew to full-time when staff acquired additional grant funds and eventually established the Douglas County Surface Waters Program. Annually is responsible for a large amount of AIS management, outreach and education and securing additional funding into the County to support project work. The most recent accomplishment is securing County funds to support this program to add stability for this otherwise fully grant-funded position. This program implements Goal 3 of the Land and Water Resources Management Plan focused on Invasive Species and has multiple tasks identified for completion in the annual work plan.

Cost-Share Projects- For the past five years it has been a goal to increase the utilization of DATCP cost-share funds to implement projects in the County. Cost-share projects have increased in the number completed and funds utilized since 2019. SEG funding has also been made available and was utilized for some farmers. It is consistently a goal in the work plan to successfully implement cost-share projects.

Groundwater Monitoring Program- In 2017 a groundwater monitoring program began for Douglas County utilizing grant funds. This program has continued with County funds and the annual work plan performance standard is to sample 100 wells per year. This implements Goal 2 of the Land and Water Resources Management Plan focused on Groundwater.

2. Identify any areas where the county was unable to make desired progress in implementing activities identified in multiple work plans. For each area identified, explain the work plan adjustments that were made to refocus planned activities. If no areas are identified, explain how the county was able to make progress in all the areas planned.

Douglas County In-Lieu of Fee Wetland Mitigation Program (ILF)- A goal identified in the 2019 annual work plan was the completion of an ILF for Douglas County. This program was never completed. Instead, there was a shift to trying to work to restore wetlands with cost-share funds for interested landowners. An example of a wetland restoration project which was attempted in 2022 was installing a culvert to reconnect the hydrology under a road and restore a wetland area. Unfortunately, the project was not completed due to floodplain permitting complications.

Zoning Ordinance 8.15 Douglas County Animal Manure Storage Ordinance- Updating the manure storage ordinance has been listed in work plans since 2021. Since the ordinance's inception there's only been one application received to install a new or updated manure storage facility. It was determined the facility which was applied for did not hold enough manure to require a permit; however, during the review process it became clear that the expertise to review or oversee installation of a manure storage facility is not available in this region of Wisconsin. It would be valuable to revise this ordinance to ensure the County can enforce future compliance. The ordinance update was not completed because time was diverted to other tasks, such as cost-share project installation.

Nemadji River 9-Key Element Plan- It was identified as a goal to create a 9-Key Element Plan for the Nemadji River with a collaboration between the City of Superior and Douglas County. This was never completed because DNR determined the draft plan would need to be reduced to a smaller watershed. However, the City of Superior and Douglas County have continued collaboration on planned efforts to reduce stormwater pollution by implementing a rain barrel workshop annually.

3. Describe how the county's work plans implement its priority farm strategy and the effectiveness of county actions implementing agricultural performance standards and conservation practices on farms. In particular, the county should describe outreach, farm inventories, and additional funds that were pursued to implement its strategy.

To implement the priority farm strategy, Douglas County applied for Nutrient Management Farmer Education Grant funds starting in 2021. This provides an opportunity to perform outreach and education, network with farmers and encourage nutrient management planning. This grant also provides funds to mail an annual agriculture newsletter. Through collaboration with Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland and Iron Counties, a grant-funded Agriculture Technician is employed to implement agricultural work which otherwise would not happen due to lack of staff capacity. The Agriculture Technician composes the newsletter, coordinates the field day and provides farmers with assistance composing the nutrient management plan. This results in a connection being formed with these farmers. If the farm is located within the Agriculture Enterprise Area, the farmer will typically enroll in Farmland Preservation which initiates a long-term commitment for these farmers to implement NR151 standards.

4. Provide representative examples that show changes in direction for work planning in the upcoming five years, with specific examples provided showing adjustments in planned activities in the county's most recent work plan.

In recent workplans there has been an increase in cost-share project work planned to be completed. This is reflective of the increase in cost-share funds awarded. There has also been an increase in the amount of work performed by the recently formed Surface Waters Program as funding for this position has become more stable and more project work is being accomplished. Overall, the direction of the department may shift over the next five years as the change in staff could result in different focuses for the department.

Annual Work Plans

Attach both of the following:


- a. The most current annual work prepared by the county.
- b. The work plan for the previous year that includes a column that identifies the progress in implementing the planned activities for that year.

Board Review Process

The goal of the review is not to fail counties. The board recognizes the dynamic nature of the planning process. Board members are interested in how counties tackle priorities over time and how they respond to changing conditions in pursuing their priorities. The board will evaluate a county's planning and implementation based on how well the county balances and prioritizes the following: agricultural performance standards, other state priorities (impaired waters, FPP checks), and local priorities. When needed, the Board will provide constructive support to counties to improve the quality of their planning. Counties have the option to prepare a brief presentation to illustrate their successes and future priorities.

Land Conservation Committee Notification

The LCC was provided a completed copy of these questions (including attachments) on:
11/14/2023

Signature of Authorized Representative: 
(e.g. County Conservationist, LCC chair)

_____ **Date:** 11-14-23

Send completed questionnaire and attachments to:
Lisa.Trumble@wi.gov

**Douglas 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

Table 1: Planned activities and performance measures by category

CATEGORY (goal and objective from LWRM plan can be added in each category)	PLANNED ACTIVITIES WITH BENCHMARKS If applicable identify focus areas, e.g. HUC 12 watershed code (examples of types of “planned activities” in italics)	PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS (examples in italics)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Cropland</i> 		
Cropland, soil health and/or nutrient management	NM planning and training (1 training) yes Farmland Preservation education (1 training) yes	1,008 acres with an updated nutrient management plan yes 200 41 acres with a new nutrient management plan Technical support provided for all farmers updating or composing a new nutrient management plan. yes SEG payments provided for new nutrient management plans yes 1- 3 hour field day hosted with a focus on nutrient management planning and individual 3 hour SnapPlus plan writing trainings. yes 1 new Farmland Preservation Planning enrollment 1 resolution requesting funding to test for PFAs in biosolids yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Livestock</i> 		
Livestock	Practice installation (1 practice) yes Manure storage (1 review)	1- 50.76 Livestock Watering Facilities, well installation yes Manure Storage Ordinance reviewed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Water quality</i> 		
Water quality/quantity (other than activities already listed in other categories)	Practice installation (6 3 practices) Landscape-scale surveys and/or inventories (1) Groundwater testing (100 67 tests) Outreach and education (4 3 activities) Planning (2 activities)	1- 50.88 Shoreline Protection for a total of 200 linear feet of shoreline 2 1- 50.69 Critical Area Stabilization for a total of 7,015 5,353 square feet of shoreland 2- 50.97 Well Decommissioning yes 1- 50.70 Water and Sediment Control Basin 400 67 groundwater samples tested 400 67 groundwater samples entered into geodatabase 1 groundwater education sessions completed 10 shoreland/impervious surface plans are designed or reviewed yes All shoreland/impervious surface permits issued in 2020-2021 are inspected yes 2 1 meetings with Douglas County Lakes and Rivers individuals Serve on NW WI Lakes Conference Committee yes 1 infiltration practice informational sign designed 1 grant applied to for the St. Croix Flowage yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Forestry</i> 		
Forestry	Tree planting	Connect individuals interested in planting trees to the proper

**Douglas 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

	Planning	providers. yes Direct people interested in forest management to DNR or NRCS yes
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• *Invasive*

Invasive species	Seasonal staff (2) yes Full-time staff (1) yes Invasive Species Education (5 activities) yes Control (5 events) yes Planning (8 projects) yes	1 Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) worker employed for Loon’s Foot/Arrowhead Landing yes 1 Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) worker employed for St. Croix Flowage Landing yes 1 AIS Surface Water Coordinator employed for Douglas County with funds secured for year-around, full-time employment yes Douglas County budgets funds to support Surface Water Program 1 CBCW training held yes 1 AIS newsletter sent out yes 2 garlic mustard removal field days coordinated with Northwoods Cooperative Weed Management Area (NCWMA) yes Collaborate with partner organizations such as NCWMA, Western Lake Superior AIS, and Lake Superior Research Institute for planning efforts yes Brule Aquatic Plant Management Plan approved by Douglas County Board of Supervisors and DNR yes Clough Island contract successfully completed yes Brule cattail/yellow flag iris contract successfully completed yes Stop Spiny Regional Campaign project continued with at least four talks, radio campaign and 1,000 towels shared utilizing DNR, Great Lakes Committee, Natural Resources Foundation yes Secure funds for Environmental Resource Specialist in the County budget. yes Funding secured for full-time AIS Coordinator in 2024 yes Host AIS SnapShot Day yes Assist lake organizations with completing grants and connecting them to state resources. yes Monitor CLP on Lake Nebagamon and Lake Nebagamon Creek and begin developing a Rapid Action Plan yes Assess vegetation on the Brule River yes Host Yellow Flag Iris field day on Faxon Creek yes Sample for Spiny Waterfleas and Dreissenid Mussels on six priority water bodies. yes Survey macrophyte beds on 8 priority waterbodies. Begin composing a County Lake Protection Plan. yes Organize one three AIS/outdoor recreation outdoor activity.
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**Douglas 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

- *Wildlife*

Wildlife-Wetlands-Habitat (other than forestry or invasive species)	Wildlife damage program yes Planning (2 1)	Wildlife Damage Program fully implemented yes Continue to evaluate the feasibility for Douglas County to perform wetland mitigation Serve on Allouez Bay Breeding Bird Habitat Restoration Committee yes
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- *Urban*

Urban issues	Stormwater control (2 events) yes	Inspect storm drains around courthouse annually yes 1 rain barrel workshop held with 15 rain barrels created yes
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- *Watershed*

Watershed strategies	TMDL Coordination (1 project) yes Planning (2 projects) yes	Track and report P for St. Croix River TMDL yes Serve as Great Lakes Committee Vice Chair yes Serve on Harbor Technical Advisory Committee yes
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- *Other*

Other	Non-metallic mining (18 reclamation plans) yes Youth Education (3 2 events) Outreach (2 event) yes	18 non-metallic mining reclamation plans reviewed and updated yes 18 non-metallic mines flown with drone for mapping yes 44 students participate in Land+Water poster contest yes Teach at LEAPS youth education day or agriculture field day 3 classes participate in Land+Water Invasive Species poster contest yes 2 public outreach events attended for promoting LWCD (Douglas County Fish and Game League Show, Douglas County Fair, Dragon Boat Festival, North End Days, Brule Family Fun Days) yes
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**Douglas 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

Table 2: Planned activity related to permits and ordinances

Permits and Ordinances	Plans/application reviews anticipated	Permits anticipated to be issued
Feedlot permits		
Manure storage construction and transfer systems	Review ordinance	0
Manure storage closure		
Livestock facility siting		
Nonmetallic/frac sand mining	18	18 by Zoning Dept
Stormwater and construction site erosion control		
Shoreland zoning	10	10 by Zoning Dept
Wetlands and waterways (Ch. 30)		
Other		

Table 3: Planned inspections

Inspections	Number of inspections planned
Total Farm Inspections	4 2
For FPP	4 2
For NR 151	4 2
Animal waste ordinance	0
Livestock facility siting	0
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	0
Nonmetallic mining	18

Table 4: Planned outreach and education activities

Activity	Number	Events
Tours		
Field days	9	Grazing, 1 Brule AIS day, 2 Garlic mustard, 3 Clough Island days, 1 SnapShot Day, 1 Barkers Island Yellow Flag Iris Dig
Trainings/workshops	6	Rain barrel, CBCW, 4 Stop Spiny, Groundwater
School-age programs (camps, field days, classroom)	6 5	LEAPS/agriculture field day, 5 classroom event for poster contests
Newsletters	2	Ag, AIS
Social media posts	18 17	
News release/story	4 5	

**Douglas 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

Table 5: Staff Hours and Expected Costs (staff can be combined or listed individually)

Staff/Support	Hours	Costs
County Conservationist	2080	86,890
Engineering Technician	2080	76,472
AIS Coordinator	2080	68,767
CBCW Inspector	230	3,500
CBCW Inspector	230	3,500
Support Costs	N/A	11,000
Cost Sharing (can be combined)		
<i>Ex. Bonding</i>	<i>N/A</i>	\$47,473
<i>Ex. SEG</i>	<i>N/A</i>	\$5,000
<i>Ex. MDV</i>	<i>N/A</i>	0

Table 1: Planned activities and performance measures by category **2024 WORKPLAN**

CATEGORY (goal and objective from LWRM plan can be added in each category)	PLANNED ACTIVITIES WITH BENCHMARKS If applicable identify focus areas, e.g. HUC 12 watershed code (examples of types of “planned activities” in italics)	PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS (examples in italics)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Cropland</i> 		
Cropland, soil health and/or nutrient management	NM planning and training (1 training) Updated Nutrient Management Plans (4) New Nutrient Management Plans (2)	1,049 acres with an updated nutrient management plan 200 acres with a new nutrient management plan Technical support provided for all farmers updating or composing a new nutrient management plan. SEG payments provided for new nutrient management plans 1- 3 hour field day hosted with a focus on nutrient management planning and individual 3 hour SnapPlus plan writing trainings. 1 new Farmland Preservation Planning enrollment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Livestock</i> 		
Livestock	Manure storage (1 review)	Manure Storage Ordinance reviewed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Water quality</i> 		
Water quality/quantity (other than activities already listed in other categories)	Practice installation (8 practices) Landscape-scale surveys and/or inventories (1) Groundwater testing (100 tests) Outreach and education (4 activities) Planning (1 activity)	1- 50.88 Shoreline Protection for a total of 200 linear feet of shoreline 6- 50.69 Critical Area Stabilization for a total of 11,650 square feet of shoreland 1- 50.70 Water and Sediment Control Basin 100 groundwater samples tested 100 groundwater samples entered into geodatabase 1 groundwater education sessions completed 7 shoreland/impervious surface plans are designed or reviewed All landowners needing a well decommissioned are directed to the DNR well abandonment program All shoreland/impervious surface permits issued in 2021-2022 are inspected 2 meetings with Douglas County Lakes and Rivers individuals Serve on NW WI Lakes Conference Committee Hire contractors for St. Croix Flowage Comprehensive Management Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Forestry</i> 		
Forestry		Connect individuals interested in planting trees to the proper providers. Direct people interested in forest management to DNR or NRCS

- *Invasive*

<p>Invasive species</p>	<p>Seasonal staff (2) Full-time staff (1) Invasive Species Education (8 activities) Control (3 events) Planning (4 projects)</p>	<p>1 Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) worker employed for Loon’s Foot/Arrowhead Landing 1 Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) worker employed for St. Croix Flowage Landing 1 Surface Water Coordinator employed for Douglas County with funds secured for year-around, full-time employment 1 CBCW training held 1 Surface Waters Program newsletter sent out 1 garlic mustard removal field days coordinated with Northwoods Cooperative Weed Management Area (NCWMA) Collaborate with partner organizations such as NCWMA, WDNR, Western Lake Superior AIS, and Lake Superior Research Institute for planning efforts Stop Spiny Regional Campaign project continued under Stop Spiny 2.0 funding with 4 educational events Secure additional funding from sources such as the DNR, Great Lakes Committee, and Great Lakes Commission to cover cost of full-time Surface Waters Program Coordinator for 2025 Host AIS SnapShot Day Assist lake organizations with completing grants and connecting them to state resources. Monitor CLP on Lake Nebagamon and Lake Nebagamon Creek and develop a Rapid Action Plan Remove Curly Leaf Pondweed in Minnesuing Creek Host Yellow Flag Iris field day on Faxon Creek Sample for Spiny Waterfleas and Dreissenid Mussels on six priority water bodies. Survey macrophyte beds on 8 priority waterbodies. Begin composing a County Lake Protection Plan.</p>
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- *Wildlife*

<p>Wildlife-Wetlands-Habitat (other than forestry or invasive species)</p>	<p>Wildlife damage program (1) Planning (1)</p>	<p>Wildlife Damage Program fully implemented Represent the County on Allouez Bay Breeding Bird Habitat Restoration Committee</p>
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- *Urban*

<p>Urban issues</p>	<p>Stormwater control (2 events)</p>	<p>Inspect storm drains around courthouse annually 1 rain barrel workshop held with 15 rain barrels created</p>
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- *Watershed*

<p>Watershed strategies</p>	<p>TMDL Coordination (1 project) Planning (2 projects)</p>	<p>Track and report P for St. Croix River TMDL Serve as Great Lakes Committee Vice Chair</p>
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		Serve on Harbor Technical Advisory Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Other</i> 		
Other	Non-metallic mining (14 reclamation plans) Youth Education (3 events) Outreach (2 event) Planning (2)	14 non-metallic mining reclamation plans reviewed and updated 14 non-metallic mines flown with drone for mapping 3 classes participate in Land+Water poster contest 3 classes participate in Land+Water Invasive Species poster contest 2 public outreach events attended for promoting LWCD (Douglas County Fish and Game League Show , Douglas County Fair, Dragon Boat Festival, North End Days, Brule Family Fun Days) Offer 1 middle school and 1 high school Land+Water Conservation Camp Scholarship Northwest Wisconsin Land+Water Committee Wisconsin Land+Water Committee

Table 2: Planned activity related to permits and ordinances

Permits and Ordinances	Plans/application reviews anticipated	Permits anticipated to be issued
Feedlot permits		
Manure storage construction and transfer systems	Review ordinance	0
Manure storage closure		
Livestock facility siting		
Nonmetallic/frac sand mining	14	14 by Zoning Dept
Stormwater and construction site erosion control		
Shoreland zoning	7	7 by Zoning Dept
Wetlands and waterways (Ch. 30)		
Other		

Table 3: Planned inspections

Inspections	Number of inspections planned
Total Farm Inspections	2
For FPP	2
For NR 151	0
Animal waste ordinance	0
Livestock facility siting	0
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	0
Nonmetallic mining	14

Table 4: Planned outreach and education activities

Activity	Number	Events
Tours		
Field days	4	1 Nutrient Management, 1 Garlic mustard, 1 SnapShot Day, 1 Faxon Creek Yellow Flag Iris Dig
Trainings/workshops	7	1 Rain barrel, 1 CBCW, 4 Stop Spiny, 1 Groundwater
School-age programs (camps, field days, classroom)	6	3 classroom events for poster contests, 2 camp scholarships, 1 invasive species poster promotion
Newsletters	2	Agriculture, Surface Waters
Social media posts	18	
News release/story	4	

Table 5: Staff Hours and Expected Costs (staff can be combined or listed individually)

Staff/Support	Hours	Costs
County Conservationist	2080	92,308
Engineering Technician	2080	80,268
AIS Coordinator	2080	72,232
CBCW Inspector	230	3,500
CBCW Inspector	230	3,500
Support Costs	N/A	13,000
Cost Sharing (can be combined)		
<i>Ex. Bonding</i>	<i>N/A</i>	\$40,000
<i>Ex. SEG</i>	<i>N/A</i>	\$5,000
<i>Ex. MDV</i>	<i>N/A</i>	0

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM _____ **State of Wisconsin**

DATE: January 20, 2024

TO: Land and Water Conservation Board Members and Advisors

FROM: Lisa K. Trumble, DATCP *Lisa K. Trumble*
Resource Management Section,
Bureau of Land and Water Resources

SUBJECT: Five Year Review of the *Rock County Land and Water Resource Management Plan*

Recommended Action: This is an action item. The LWCB should determine whether the county has met the LWCB's criteria for a five-year review of a LWRM plan approved for ten years. If the LWCB makes a formal determination that the county has failed to meet these criteria, DATCP will automatically modify its order to terminate approval of the county's plan effective December of this year.

Summary: The Rock County land and water resource management plan has been approved through December 31, 2029, contingent on a five-year review conducted prior to December 31, 2024. In advance of the five-year review, Rock County has completed a DATCP approved form designed to implement the LWCB's reference document dated October 27, 2021, and the criteria for conducting a five-year review. The county has provided written answers to four questions regarding past and future implementation, has provided the required work planning documents, and has appropriately involved the Land Conservation Committee.

Materials Provided:

- Completed Five Year Review Form
- 2023 Annual Workplan with Accomplishments
- 2024 Annual Workplan

Presenter: Andrew Baker, Director, Rock County LCD
Richard Bostwick, Land Conservation Committee Chair



Land and Water Conservation Board County Land and Water Resource Management Plan Five Year Review of LWRM Plans

County: Rock

Implementation Covering Past Five Years and Future Directions

Answer these four questions in writing (not to exceed 4 pages)

- 1. Provide a representative number of accomplishments that can be directly traced to activities identified in multiple work plans. For each accomplishment, explain how the planning process helped the county achieve its outcome, including planning adjustments that helped better target county activities.**

Rock County LCD had various accomplishments to advance the purpose and goals of the Groundwater Nitrate Work Group as developed and appointed by County Board 2017. The workgroup is composed of County Board member, farmers and agricultural industry representatives. The County Board charged this group with developing a response to the high nitrates in groundwater water that have become common throughout Rock County. From this workgroups oversight and planning, the LCD was able to secure a staffing grant that resulted in the development of a Nine Key Element Plans (draft) and a successful National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) plan that resulted in additional NRCS-EQIP funding in Rock County. This was a principal goal of the LWRM Plan. In a similar fashion, LCD played a key role in helping to establish the first Producer Led Watershed Group in Rock County, Farmers on the Rock (FOTR). With the assistance of LCD, FOTR was successful in securing near maximum allowable grant funding from DATCP in 2022, 2023 and 2024. Their prime focus is nitrate leaching reduction and water quality in general.

Without various workplans and a consistent effort of staff and partners, the next accomplishment would likely have not come to fruition: a partnership with UW Discovery Farms. LCD and the Groundwater Nitrate Work Group made a concerted effort to further nitrate leaching research in the County. One of the best tools to do so is the installation of pan lysimeters. Lysimeters are essentially a stainless steel box that is buried beneath the root zone that captures water that leaches through the profile. The testing of samples from control and research areas in the same field can help to develop nitrate leachate models based on various conservation practice such as cover crops or timely application of nitrogen. The initial goal was to focus on the Rock County Farm, where monitoring wells have already been installed. However, in the mission of Discovery Farms is to work on privately owned lands, therefore an alternative site was selected 2022. For various reasons, the installation of the facilities was completed in the fall of 2023. LCD assisted with the installation and is responsible managing the facilities and collection of water samples. The project will likely last as long as the physical systems are viable, 7-10 years. This is the second or third installation in the state. The result will be a research asset valuable well beyond the boundaries of Rock County.

Another accomplishment is developing a tracking process for installed practices and specific the practices that require maintenance. For example, the LCD is working toward a more proactive approach to the inspection and maintenance of the numerous CREP agreements and easements in the County. With thirty-five easements (for a total of over nine hundred acres) and three hundred seventy five agreements (approximately three thousand acres) there is a large workload in this regard. LCD is using technology as much as possible to make tracking and management or practices as efficient as possible.

2. Identify any areas where the county was unable to make desired progress in implementing activities identified in multiple work plans. For each area identified, explain the work plan adjustments that were made to refocus planned activities. If no areas are identified, explain how the county was able to make progress in all the areas planned.

Rock County LCD was unable to make desired progress toward documenting the requirements of the Rock River TMDL as it relates to urban storm water management quality required by the WPDES-MS4 permit associated with sediment and phosphorous removal. Water quality modelling efforts were hindered by lack of qualified staff to accomplish the task. While plans cannot be adjusted to change this required task, there has been a more direct effort to make sure staff gain the proper training and expertise to complete this effort. Once modelling work is done, there will be a better ability to evaluate whether or not the TMDL standards have been met.

With staff turnover internally and in our partner agencies (NRCS, DNR, UWEX and DATCP), the finalization of the Nine Key Element Plan has stalled in the last couple years. LCD will work to make sure that Plan because rises on priority list to complete.

While included as an accomplishment in the last report from 2019-2020, staff vacancies and general inexperience in the matter has caused the LCD to take a step back from offering services for water quality training and adaptive management for phosphorus reduction the Rock River Basin. An agreement has been in place with Yahara WINS since around 2017 and agreements with the City of Janesville and the City of Beloit were developed in 2021-2022. The agreements generally required LCD to seek possible trade practices, develop overall plan for the community, design the practices, calculate expected phosphorus capture, oversee installation, provide as-built documentation and monitor the site for the maintenance period (10-15 years). This is a very time consuming process to identify potential projects that are “valuable” enough in terms of the cost/benefit, commands a thorough understanding of acceptable planning process to meet DNR approval and requires a unique set of design and modelling. The staff person that led this effort retired in early 2023, but there were also notable challenges before that occurred due to the erroneous assumptions and complexity of the tasks. For that reason, LCD had no choice but to pause on developing new water quality trading or adaptive management agreement until other priorities are met and staff abilities are developed.

3. Describe how the county’s work plans implement its priority farm strategy and the effectiveness of county actions implementing agricultural performance standards and conservation practices on farms. In particular, the county should describe outreach, farm inventories, and additional funds that were pursued to implement its strategy.

As noted above, the LCD is taking strides to use technology to our advantage when it comes to tracking properties, areas of concern and installed practice. Three new staff are taking the lead on this use of technology because that is what they learned in school and is the norm for them. This will be the hub for priority farm implementation going forward from outreach through implementation. This is very important way to compile data and record of communication in one location to have access by all staff and to not rely on institutional knowledge as done in the past. Having new staff has also provided an opportunity to renew relationships with operators that may have faded over the years for one reason or another, for example if there was a bad experience years ago with another staff person. Looking at it another way, while new staff will require a lot of training to get up to speed they also come with a clear, unbiased, perspective.

LCD continues to focus on excessive nutrient application and farms in watersheds that have exceptional water resources or 303(d) impair waters. Watersheds have not yet been entirely ranked but will be as part of the completion of the Nine Key Element plan.

A recent relatively new trend tied to a focus on regenerative agriculture is introducing cattle in a grazing setting on either former cropped land converted to pasture or temporary paddocks installed to graze cover crops. While the LCD does not have funding to support these types of projects directly there are federal sources that landowners are taking advantage of in the County. This trend has required LCD to be diligent about educating our partners as to the requirements of NR 151, ATCP 50, etc, especially when it

comes to grazing in surface water quality management areas. Because the programs offered by NRCS or others have a focus other than regulatory, it falls to the LCD to make sure compliance standards are met to prevent resource concerns. LCD also ensures that these practices are accounted for the nutrient management plan for the farm.

Nutrient management has been a priority for Rock County for at least a decade. This is evidenced by supporting a full time staff person to review the details of the plans, not just the checklist. While not every plan is reviewed on annual basis (approximately 109,000 acres enrolled now), we have the knowledge and ability to do so. This level of review is a rarity in the state based on a simple poll taken when the position became vacant in the spring of 2023. The position was filled and the new staff person is very willing to tackle challenging farms by way of assisting operators with their planning efforts and working through the challenges of implementing new practices, such as cover crops. This position is a key component to implementing many aspects of the priority farm strategy related to nutrient application and agronomy (outreach and implementation), but could have been cut from the budget when the position became vacant (the County Board has started the process of analyzing all vacancies, where in the past it was a department by department decision). While this is not an example of seeking a new funding source to implement the strategy, it is an example of maintaining County Board support that could have been reduced or eliminated.

As noted in a prior report, there is a challenge in Rock County because there is not county-wide zoning so it is up to the twenty towns to enforce livestock operations from a zoning standpoint. That very rarely happens, which leaves the LCD in tough spot that could often be avoided if Town Zoning Ordinances were enforced. However, one benefit of having a Director that is also the Director of County Planning and Development (position was combined in 2021) is there is a better connection between with the Towns from a landuse perspective then there has been in the passed just through LCD. The P&D Department has MOUs with many Towns for zoning administration. While true enforcement is still up to the Towns, this connection can do nothing but help with making sure performance standards are met at new or expanding operations in particular (and to a lesser extend existing operations).

As example of additional funds secured was providing the lead planning effort that lead to USDA-NRCS NWQI funds coming to Rock County. This was a “win” with possible value up around \$400,000 (pending approval of projects)

4. Provide representative examples that show changes in direction for work planning in the upcoming five years, with specific examples provided showing adjustments in planned activities in the county’s most recent work plan.

Staff turnover in early 2023 (not yet fully staffed) will have a great impact on the direction of work priorities at the LCD. As noted above regarding water quality trading agreements, there will be tasks and projects will simply not be able to accomplish due to having experienced staff. This applies to all facets of our charter and specifically when it comes to engineering job approval authority. Our technician with 35 plus years of experience was one of the three retirements. That, coupled with a general lack of qualified NRCS staff to assist, will require that the practices will be next complex than in the past. DATCP Engineering staff have been extremely helpful with training our young staff people, but their time is limited to and we cannot expect them to do our work for us. From a positive point of view, the young staff have already shown their more recent educational experiences will complement the on-the-job experience of remaining existing staff. This was considered when developing the 2024 work plan.

Since the Director was hired in June 2020, additional efforts have been made to keep the Land Conservation Committee informed of our day-to-day activities and not wait for the next monthly meeting. While this has many benefits, one is to help them have a clearer understanding between the plans they approve and how implementation is achieved. One way to do this is expanding from one annual conservation “tour” to inviting members to field days that are hosted by LCD or others. We also have the benefit of UW Weed Science research at the County Farm that on an annual basis provides representative examples of some of the agronomic challenges faced by producers. The goal is that additional knowledge and understand will help the LCC guide the policy decisions that dictate the LCD work plans. It is not acceptable considering all the challenges we face rely on “that’s what we have always done.” Similar to staff turnover, there will be a large turnover on the LCC in April 2024 simply based on the members not running for reelection. We will

be losing a great deal of experience, but on the plus side there is an opportunity for a fresh perspective. While the general work plan will not be drastically altered going forward, we are respectful of the fact the LCC guides priorities.

In general, it will be the focus of the LCD in the next five years to be more proactive regarding the work plan items by conducting more education and outreach to generate interest in county programs, educate producers regarding NR 151 compliance standards and commence formal enforcement action on a consistent basis where necessary.

Annual Work Plans

Attach both of the following:

- a. The most current annual work prepared by the county.
- b. The work plan for the previous year that includes a column that identifies the progress in implementing the planned activities for that year.

Board Review Process

The goal of the review is not to fail counties. The board recognizes the dynamic nature of the planning process. Board members are interested in how counties tackle priorities over time and how they respond to changing conditions in pursuing their priorities. The board will evaluate a county's planning and implementation based on how well the county balances and prioritizes the following: agricultural performance standards, other state priorities (impaired waters, FPP checks), and local priorities. When needed, the Board will provide constructive support to counties to improve the quality of their planning. Counties have the option to prepare a brief presentation to illustrate their successes and future priorities.

Land Conservation Committee Notification

The LCC was provided a completed copy of these questions (including attachments) on: February 7, 2024

Signature of Authorized Representative: Andrew M. Baker **Date:** January 8, 2024
(e.g. County Conservationist, LCC chair)

Send completed questionnaire and attachments to:
Lisa.Trumble@wi.gov

**ROCK COUNTY 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN LOCALLY IDENTIFIED
PRIORITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Table 1: Planned activities and performance measures by category

CATEGORY (goal and objective from LWRM plan can be added in each category)	PLANNED ACTIVITIES WITH BENCHMARKS If applicable identify focus areas, e.g. HUC 12 watershed code (examples of types of “planned activities” in italics)	PROGRESS MADE TOWARD 2023 PLANNED ACTIVITIES	PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS (examples in italics)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Cropland</i> 			
<p>Cropland, soil health and/or nutrient management</p>	<p>Implement Best Management Practices in Rock County from the SWRM Grant.</p> <p>10 acres Grassed Waterways 3 WASCOBS 1000 Lineal Feet of Terrace installed 2 Grade Stabilization Structures 200 feet of lined waterway.</p> <p>Enroll 5 new Farmland Preservation Program Participants.</p> <p>Conduct two Farmer trainings sessions for nutrient management planning if possible due to staffing limitations. (15 farmers representing 4,000 acres). Alternatively, individual assistance will be provided to operators that complete their own plans.</p> <p>Conduct 60 FPP field status reviews. Conduct 20 additional FPP office reviews</p>	<p>20.2 acres 2 WASCOBS (460 feet) 1433 LF of Diversion No grade stabilization structures No line waterways 6394 LF of subsurface drains associated with waterways 1965 LF of underground outlets</p> <p>“New” participants in 2023 were new entities. No new farms.</p> <p>Assigned staff person to this program retired in March and the position was filled in June 2023. Farmer training sessions were held on December 12th and 13th 2023. 13 producers were in attendance, representing 9,457.2 acres in NMPs. New staff person is beginning the process to provide individual assistance as well.</p> <p>Completed approximately 60 field checks in 2023 for FPP and NR 151. 6 office reviews so far, should be at 20 +/- when done. Office reviews for farm changes delayed by 2 – 2.5 months into late December – early January 2024 because of network and software problems since a early October cyber “event” in the County system</p> <p>Fifty four of the 614 entities were issued updated Certificates of Compliance for Tax Year 2023. Total acreage in the program is approximately 109,400.</p>	<p># of Grassed Waterways # of WASCOBS # of Lineal Feet of Terrace installed # of Grade Stabilization Structures # feet of lined waterway.</p> <p># of new FPP participants # number of completed and approved plans</p> <p># additional farmers and acres in Nutrient Management (non – FPP) # of participants.</p> <p># of completed FPP reviews. # of farms and acres in compliance with FPP standards.</p>

**ROCK COUNTY 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN LOCALLY IDENTIFIED
PRIORITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

	<p>Review Nutrient Management Plans</p> <p>Complete the development of 9KE Plan for City of Beloit Lower Rock River HUC 12.</p>	<p>Complete. Assigned staff person to this program retired in March and the position was filled in June 2023</p> <p>9KE Plan Draft Submitted for DNR Review in Early 2023</p>	<p>Complete and submit DATCP Annual Update Approximately 106,000 acres of nutrient management are planned by private consultants and submitted to the LCC for review and approval.</p> <p>Completed plan</p>
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**ROCK COUNTY 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN LOCALLY IDENTIFIED
PRIORITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

	<p>Conduct two soil health workshops in priority HUC 12 watershed in partnership with the Farmers on the Rock Producer Led Watershed Group.</p> <p>Complete county-wide transect survey in Spring 2023 utilizing SnapPlus (dependent on staffing limitations)</p>	<p>Workshop was held with Farmers on the Rock Producer Led Group on September 8, 2023 with a focus on cover crops (including grazing cover). 34 people were in attendance, including 21 farmer-participants. Additional workshops were not conducted due to staff vacancies.</p> <p>Completed transect for second consecutive year</p>	<p># of workshops # of participants</p> <p>Completed transect survey</p>
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• *Livestock*

<p>Livestock</p>	<p>500 ft. of streambank improvement 2 animal waste system closures 1000 ft. of streambank fencing 5 well closures 2 livestock/equipment crossings. 1-2 new animal waste storage permits.</p> <p>Determine compliance of animal husbandry facilities based on HUC 12 Watersheds. Priorities will be based on 303d Impaired Waters and Nine Key Element Plan if completed in 2023.</p>	<p>No streambank improvement projects Three closures No streambank fencing that was designed by staff One well closure One crossing installed One new/modified permit</p> <p>This planned activity is a work in progress was greatly limited by staff turnover (three out of six positions) in 2023. There are challenges with hiring capable staff at this time. Currently five of six positions have been filled.</p>	
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• *Water quality/watershed*

<p>Yahara WINS-Adaptive Management Program</p>	<p>Provide assistance to the Yahara WINS group to implement BMP's in the Yahara River and Badfish Creek subwatersheds.</p>	<p>Staff vacancies beginning in March 2023 greatly limited the implementation of this program. 24.1 acres of perennial vegetation were installed (two projects) resulting in annual Phosphorus reduction of approximately 106 pounds.</p>	<p># acres of Riparian Buffer. # acres of annual cropland seeded to perennial forages. # linear feet of Stream Bank Stabilization. # linear feet of grassed waterway # lbs. of Phosphorus reduced.</p>
<p>Rock River TMDL Implementation Strategy and Partnership Development with Cities of Beloit and Janesville</p>	<p>Continue partnerships for pollution trading that were executed with the City of Beloit and the City of Janesville in 2020-2021. Practice design and implementation will continue in 2023.</p>	<p>Staff vacancies beginning in March 2023 greatly limited the implementation of this program. One 1 acre WASCOP (along with an associated diversion and underground outlet) was installed for Beloit, resulting in approximately 80 pounds Phos reduction annually. 16.7 acres of perennial vegetation was installed for Janesville, resulting in approximately 84 pounds of Phos reduction annually</p>	<p># acres of Riparian Buffer. # acres of annual cropland seeded to perennial forages. # linear feet of Stream Bank Stabilization. # linear feet of grassed waterway # lbs. of Phosphorus reduced.</p>

**ROCK COUNTY 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN LOCALLY IDENTIFIED
PRIORITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Protect and Improve Groundwater Quality	Continue to work with the Rock County Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup. Monitor the established Groundwater Nitrate Pilot Area on the County Farm.	Efforts continue in this regard, with the Work Group meeting at least quarterly. Monitoring wells are maintained by the Rock County Health Department and reports are provided to the Work Group. Cover crops are used annual on the County Farm along with nitrogen use efficiency practices.	Report to the County Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup on accomplishments.
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**ROCK COUNTY 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN LOCALLY IDENTIFIED
PRIORITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

	<p>Implement a nitrate leaching research project in partnership with Discovery Farms (postponed from 2022)</p> <p>Continue to help guide the recently established producer led watershed group (“Farmers on the Rock” / FOTR)</p> <p>Clean Sweep collections (3) for hazardous farm and household chemicals</p>	<p>Installed in October 2023 with the assistance of County staff. County staff will collect the water samples and ship to lab per Discovery Farms protocol</p> <p>Nutrient management/agronomy focused staff person hired in June 2023 is the primary go to person for FOTR.</p> <p>Three events were held in 2023 funded through a DATCP grants (HHW and Ag), municipal contributions and user fees. Household waste collected totaled 8,435 pounds (172 participants) and ag waste totaled 590 pounds (6 participants). 9 businesses used the service including 2 business with ag chemicals for disposal.</p>	<p># lbs hazardous AG and Household chemicals collected # participants at Clean Sweep events</p>
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	<p>Install 5 conservation buffers along streams</p> <p>Complete status reviews of CREP Easements in Rock County.</p>	<p>No new agreements in 2023. Seven re enroll. There are approximately 3,000 acres included in agreements in Rock County</p> <p>Processed eight transfers. Developing a system to be more proactive in terms of inspections on the thirty-five easements in Rock County (924 acres). In many cases, it has been determined that little or no maintenance was completed during the CRP contract period. The primary problem is trees and other undesirable vegetations. Approximately eight status reviews were completed in 2023.</p>	<p># tons of sediment (approved method) # lbs. of Nitrogen and Phos. (approved method) # number of new contracts</p> <p># of reviews</p>
Stream monitoring	<p>Continue baseline stream monitoring program with volunteers and partners at Rock River Coalition, Water Action Volunteers (WAV), and DNR. Baseline is once per month, May – October.</p>	<p>Held 1 stream volunteer training event with Rock River Coalition and WAV. Trained 1 new team. Supported 7 teams at 9 sites in 2023.</p>	<p>Host one training event with partners Train 1 -2 new teams in county Maintain at least 4 teams per year Quality check data entered into DNR SWIMs by volunteers</p>
<p>• <i>PACE</i></p>			
Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easements.	<p>Purchase two easements per year. Monitor the existing twenty three easements for contract infractions and NR 151 requirements</p>	<p>Three easements were acquired in 2023 (approximately 195 acres) All existing easements monitored in 2023 (approximately 2,200 acres)</p>	<p># easements purchased # easements monitored # easements and total acres in compliance with NR 151</p>
<p>• <i>Invasive</i></p>			
Invasive species	<p>Continue to support Rock River Coalition (RRC) as our Cooperative Agent for the Aquatic Invasive Species Grant obtained from the DNR for 2023</p>	<p>RRC completed at least eight field days, training sessions and/or outreach events on behalf of Rock County. Sixteen media posts/events were completed.</p>	<p># of field days held # of outreach events Response to outreach efforts</p>

**ROCK COUNTY 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN LOCALLY IDENTIFIED
PRIORITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- *Wildlife*

Annual Tree Sales Program	Sell 13-15 thousand trees for wildlife habitat improvement. Distribute 1,000+free trees for the Rock River Trail Initiative and Living Lands and Waters program	7200 trees sold. Order was reduced due to supply decrease and cost increase. 900 trees distributed through the Rock River program	# tree sold # tree distributed for Rock River Trails Initiative and Living Land & Waters program.
Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program	Administer the Wisconsin Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program. Contract USDA-WS for field work.	USDA Wildlife Specialists assisted three enrollees in 2023; there were no claims submitted.	# of persons assisted # of claims submitted

**ROCK COUNTY 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN LOCALLY IDENTIFIED
PRIORITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- *Urban*

Erosion Control and Stormwater Management	Process and issue 30 permits for Rock County ECSW Ordinance. Conduct site visits on all permitted sites.	Thirty eight new permits issued. Few compliance inspections were completed in 2023 due to staff vacancies (assigned position for this program was vacant from March until November). At least one site visit was completed per site in 2023.	# Construction Site Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Permits # site visits to review new Stormwater management practices.
Non-Metallic Mining Ordinance	Issue one new permit. Evaluate compliance on 46 existing permits through site visits.	0 new permits issued Few compliance inspections were completed in 2023 due to staff vacancies (assigned position for this program was vacant from March until November)	Evaluate and issue new permit. Evaluate compliance on 46 existing permits through site visits Number of plans revised

Table 2: Planned activity related to permits and ordinances

Permits and Ordinances	Plans/application reviews anticipated	Permits anticipated to be issued	Actual
Feedlot permits	Not Applicable	0	0
Manure storage construction and transfer systems	1	1	0
Manure storage closure	2	2	0
Livestock facility siting	Not Applicable	0	0
Nonmetallic/frac sand mining	5 Revised Plans 44 Annual Reports	1	0 Revised Plans, 0 New Permits 44 Annual Reports
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	30	30	38
Shoreland zoning	Not Applicable	0	0
Wetlands and waterways (Ch. 30)	Not Applicable	0	0
Other			

**ROCK COUNTY 2023 ANNUAL WORK PLAN LOCALLY IDENTIFIED
PRIORITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Table 3: Planned inspections

Inspections	Number of inspections planned	Actual
Total Farm Inspections	105	
For FPP	80	Completed approximately 60 field checks in 2023 for FPP and NR 151. 6 office reviews so far, should be at 20 +/- when done. Office reviews for farm changes delayed by 2 – 2.5 months into late December – early January 2024 because of network and software problems since a early October cyber “event” in the County system
For NR 151	25	
Animal waste ordinance	6	8
Livestock facility siting	0	0
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	95	40
Nonmetallic mining	10	5

Table 4: Planned outreach and education activities

Activity	Number	Actual
Tours	2	1
Field days	5	4
Trainings/workshops	5-10	8
School-age programs (camps, field days, classroom)	1	1 (assisted at outdoor ed session at Carver Roehl)
Newsletters	4	1 (FPP)
Social media posts	20	16
News release/story	5	One for Clean Sweep

Table 5: Staff Hours and Expected Costs (staff can be combined or listed individually)

Staff/Support	Hours	Costs
<i>Total Staff (6.5 FTE)</i>	13,520	\$613,447
Cost Sharing (can be combined)		
<i>Ex. Bonding</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>\$65,000</i>
<i>Ex. SEG</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>\$75,000</i>

**ROCK COUNTY 2024 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

Table 1: Planned activities and performance measures by category

<p style="text-align: center;">CATEGORY (goal and objective from LWRM plan can be added in each category)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PLANNED ACTIVITIES WITH BENCHMARKS If applicable identify focus areas, e.g. HUC 12 watershed code (examples of types of “planned activities” in italics)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS (examples in italics)</p>
<p>• <i>Cropland</i></p>		
<p>Cropland, soil health and/or nutrient management</p>	<p>Implement Best Management Practices in Rock County through the SWRM Grant Funds and other Funding Sources.</p> <p>10 acres Grassed Waterways 5 WASCOS 1000 Lineal Feet of Terrace installed 300 Feet of Diversion</p> <p>Enroll 5 new Farmland Preservation Program participants.</p> <p>Conduct two Farmer trainings sessions for nutrient management planning if possible due to staffing limitations. (15 farmers representing 4,000 acres). Alternatively, individual assistance will be provided to operators that complete their own plans. This includes assistance from partners such as UW Extension and NPM Staff and DATCP</p> <p>Conduct 60 FPP field status reviews. Conduct 20 additional FPP office reviews</p> <p>Review Nutrient Management Plans</p> <p>Complete the development of 9KE Plan for determined priority watershed(s)</p>	<p># of Grassed Waterways # of WASCOS # of Lineal Feet of Terrace installed # Feet of Diversion installed</p> <p># of new FPP participants # number of completed and approved plans</p> <p># additional farmers and acres in Nutrient Management (non – FPP) # of participants.</p> <p># of completed FPP reviews. # of farms and acres in compliance with FPP standards.</p> <p>Complete and submit DATCP Annual Update Approximately 110,000 acres of nutrient management are planned by private consultants or farmers and submitted to the LCD for review.</p> <p>Completed plans</p>

**ROCK COUNTY 2024 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

	<p>Conduct two soil health workshops in priority HUC 12 watershed in partnership with the Farmers on the Rock Producer Led Watershed Group.</p> <p>Complete county-wide transect survey in Spring 2024 utilizing SnapPlus (dependent on staffing limitations)</p>	<p># of workshops # of participants</p> <p>Completed transect survey</p>
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• *Livestock*

Livestock	<p>3 animal waste system closures 5 well closures 1-2 new animal waste storage permits.</p> <p>Determine compliance of livestock facilities. Priorities will be based on 303d Impaired Waters and Nine Key Element Plan(s) if completed in 2024.</p>	<p># animal waste system closures # well closures # of animal waste storage permits</p> <p># of reviews completed # of proactive site visits initiated by staff to promote available programs to assist with performance standards</p>

• *Water quality/watershed*

Yahara WINS-Adaptive Management Program	<p>Assistance to the Yahara WINS group to implement BMP's in the Yahara River and Badfish Creek subwatersheds is currently on hold due to staff vacancies. Rock County LCD will continue to seek to assist with Yahara WINS in 2024 and beyond if possible based on staff levels and qualifications.</p>	
Rock River TMDL Implementation Strategy and Partnership Development with Cities of Beloit and Janesville	<p>Partnerships for pollution trading that were executed with the City of Beloit and the City of Janesville in 2020-2021 are currently on hold due to staff vacancies. Rock County LCD will continue to seek to assist with TMDL Implementation with partners in 2024 and beyond if possible based on staff levels and qualifications.</p>	
Protect and Improve Groundwater Quality	<p>Continue to work with the Rock County Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup.</p>	<p>Report to the County Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup on accomplishments.</p>

**ROCK COUNTY 2024 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

	<p>Monitor the established Groundwater Nitrate Pilot Area on the County Farm.</p> <p>Implement a nitrate leaching research project in partnership with Discovery Farms (installed fall 2023)</p> <p>Continue to help guide the producer led watershed group (“Farmers on the Rock”)</p> <p>Clean Sweep collections (2 events) for hazardous chemicals from farms, households, and businesses</p>	<p>Collect water samples and send to lab based on Discover Farms protocol Provide simple maintenance to equipment.</p> <p>Increase membership Increase field days Assist with successful funding requests</p> <p># lbs hazardous AG and Household chemicals collected # participants at Clean Sweep events</p>
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	<p>Develop three new CREP contracts Re-enroll five existing contracts</p> <p>Complete status reviews of CREP Easements in Rock County through partnership with DATCP staff.</p>	<p># number of new contracts # number of renewals # tons of sediment (approved method) # lbs. of Nitrogen and Phos. (approved method)</p> <p># of reviews</p>
Stream monitoring	<p>Continue baseline stream monitoring program with volunteers and partners at Rock River Coalition, Water Action Volunteers (WAV). Baseline is once per month, May – October.</p>	<p>Host one training event with partners Train 1 new team in county Maintain 1-4 teams per year Quality check data entered into DNR SWIMs by volunteers</p>

• *PACE*

Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easements.	<p>Purchase two easements per year. Monitor the existing twenty six easements for contract infractions and NR 151 requirements .</p>	<p># easements purchased # easements monitored # easements and total acres in compliance with NR 151</p>
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• *Invasives*

Invasive species	<p>Continue to support Rock River Coalition as our Cooperative Agent for the Aquatic Invasive Species Grant obtained from the DNR for 2024</p>	<p># of field days held # of outreach events Response to outreach efforts</p>
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• *Wildlife and Habitat*

Annual Tree Sales Program	<p>Sell seven thousand trees for wildlife habitat improvement. Distribute 700-1,000 free trees for the Rock River Trail Initiative and Living Lands and Waters program</p>	<p># tree sold # tree distributed for Rock River Trails Initiative and Living Land & Waters program.</p>
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**ROCK COUNTY 2024 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program	Administer the Wisconsin Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program. Contract USDA-WS for field work.	# of persons assisted # of claims submitted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Urban/Non-Ag Priorities</i> 		
Erosion Control and Stormwater Management	Process and issue 30 permits for Rock County ECSW Ordinance. Conduct site visits on all permitted sites.	# Construction Site Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Permits # site visits to review new Stormwater management practices.
Non-Metallic Mining Ordinance	Issue one new or revised permit (if applicable). Evaluate compliance on 46 existing permits through site visits.	Evaluate and issue new or revised permits. Evaluate compliance on 46 existing permits through site visits Number of plans revised

Table 2: Planned activity related to permits and ordinances

Permits and Ordinances	Plans/application reviews anticipated	Permits anticipated to be issued
Feedlot permits	Not Applicable	0
Manure storage construction and transfer systems	1	1
Manure storage closure	2	2
Livestock facility siting	Not Applicable	0
Nonmetallic/frac sand mining	5 Revised Plans 44 Annual Reports	1
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	30	30
Shoreland zoning	Not Applicable	0
Wetlands and waterways (Ch. 30)	Not Applicable	0
Other		

**ROCK COUNTY 2024 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

Table 3: Planned inspections

Inspections	Number of inspections planned
Total Farm Inspections	105
For FPP	80
For NR 151	25
Animal waste ordinance	6
Livestock facility siting	0
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	95
Nonmetallic mining	10

Table 4: Planned outreach and education activities

Activity	Number
Tours (Including Southern Area Tour)	2
Field days	5
Trainings/workshops/education activities	5-10
Newsletters	4
Social media posts	20
News release/story	5

Table 5: Staff Hours and Expected Costs (staff can be combined or listed individually)

Staff/Support	Hours	Costs
Total Staff (6.5 FTE)	13,520	\$431,524
		Decrease from 2023 solely due to hiring three generally entry level staff that replace senior level staff/salaries
Cost Sharing (can be combined)		
Approved Bonding	N/A	\$65,200
Approved SEG	N/A	\$80,000
<i>Does not include carryover or potential transfers in</i>		

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 6, 2024

TO: LWCB members and advisors

FROM: Ian Krauss, Farm Service Agency

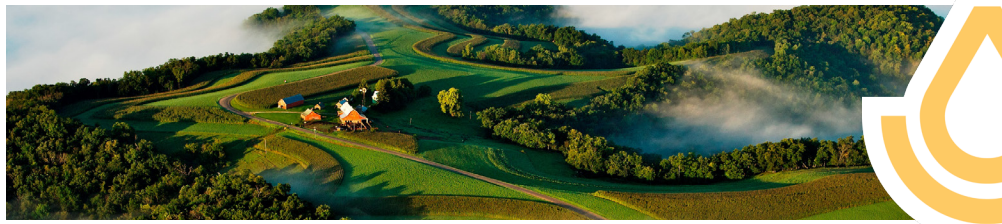
SUBJECT: FSA Program Updates for February LWCB Meeting

- The deadline to submit applications for Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) and Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP) was January 30th, 2024.
 - Since July through LFP, the FSA has approved around 5000 applications for just under 20 million dollars paid.
- ARC/PLC signup is underway statewide with an enrollment deadline of March 15th.
- Conservation Reserve Program
 - Continuous Signup 61 was authorized beginning January 12th, 2024. This signup authorizes producers to enroll into Continuous practices as well as SAFE, HELI, and CREP. It is expected that there will be a General and Grassland signup this year.
 - With the extension to the 2018 Farm Bill, the FSA is still under the 27-million-acre cap initially established. There are currently around 2.3-million-acres eligible for new enrollment.
 - To ensure FSA remains below the acreage limitation, Continuous offers will be accepted via batching. The first batching period will close March 15th. Conservation Planning will happen after we receive notification of approval via batching.
 - Of note, CREP offers will not be required to be batched and can be accepted and approved as they are offered and workload permits.

NRCS Wisconsin

Quarterly Update

January 2024



Environmental Quality Incentives Program

EQIP is the primary program available to farmers for farm and woodland conservation work, offering payments for over 90 basic conservation practices. Applications are accepted on a continuous, year-round basis. Applications received by November 3, 2023 are being evaluated and considered for potential funding in Fiscal Year 2024. Contact Melissa Bartz, melissa.bartz@usda.gov, for more information.

Conservation Stewardship Program

CSP provides assistance to landowners who practice good stewardship on their land and are willing to take additional steps over the next five years to further enhance their stewardship efforts. Applications are accepted on a continuous year-round basis. Applications received by February 9, 2024, will be evaluated and considered for funding in Fiscal Year 2024 for CSP Classic sign-up. Contact Melissa Bartz, melissa.bartz@usda.gov, for more information.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements. Current active projects for water quality improvement are located within the Oconomowoc River, Milwaukee River and Yahara River watersheds, Driftless Area to improve fish and wildlife habitat, stream and riparian habitat, and select counties in Northern Wisconsin to improve Golden-winged and Kirtland's warblers' habitats and select areas of Southern Wisconsin to improve soil health and protect agriculturally productive farmland. Contact Melissa Bartz, melissa.bartz@usda.gov, for more information.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) focuses on restoring and protecting wetlands, conserving productive agricultural lands and conserving grasslands. Landowners are compensated for enrolling their land in easements. Applications for the ACEP are taken on a continuous basis, and they are ranked and considered for funding one time a year. The application deadline for Fiscal Year 2024 was November 13, 2023. A total of 3 Agricultural Land Easement and 24 Wetland Reserve Easement applications are under consideration for funding this fiscal year. Contact Dave Gundlach, david.gundlach@usda.gov, for more information.

NRCS Financial Programs Update				
Program		FY22	FY23	FY24
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	Financial Assistance	\$33.3M	\$37.3M ^a	\$0
	Contracts	1073	1,104 ^a	0
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Financial Assistance	\$15.5M	\$23.7 ^a	\$6.7M
	New Contracts	273	402 ^a	0
	Renewal Contracts	217	291	266
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program- Agricultural Land Easements (ACEP-ALE)	Financial Assistance	\$404,088	\$304,000	0 ^c
	Parcels	3	1	0 ^c
	Acres	260	288.5	0 ^c
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program- Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP-WRE)	Financial Assistance	\$3.3M	\$4.1M	0 ^c
	Easements	5	9	0 ^c
	Acres	478	545	0 ^c
Emergency Watershed Protection Program- Floodplain Easements (EWPP-FPE)	Financial Assistance	\$1.05M	0	0 ^b
	Proposed Easements	4	0	0 ^b
	Proposed Acres	272	0	0 ^b
Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	Financial Assistance	\$3.0M	\$1.88M	0
	Contracts	110	82	0
	Acres	2,712	4,736	0
	Easement Parcels	3	3	0
	Easement Acres	362.3	166.87	0
	Easement Financial	\$1.3M	\$538,559	0

^aIncludes initiatives and special funding.
^bInitiatives and special funding allocations have not been determined yet.
^cFunding decisions not yet complete for the fiscal year.

Biden-Harris Administration Provides Historic \$3 Billion through Inflation Reduction Act for Climate-Smart Practices on Agricultural Lands

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is making more than \$3 billion in funding available for agricultural producers and forest landowners nationwide to participate in voluntary conservation programs and adopt climate-smart practices in fiscal year 2024 as part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

Wisconsin NRCS Announces First Batching Period for Agricultural Easement Applications

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) encourages landowners interested in restoring and protecting critical wetlands, agricultural lands and grasslands to consider enrolling their property into conservation easements. The [Natural Resources Conservation Service \(NRCS\) Agricultural Conservation Easement Program \(ACEP\)](#), compensates landowners for voluntarily enrolling their land, focusing on restoration and protection of wetlands as well as conserving productive agricultural lands and grasslands.

[Click here to read more.](#)

USDA Streamlines Regional Conservation Partnership Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is making historic investments to the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and streamlining the program to make it work better for producers and partners. This combination will deliver conservation at a scale never before achieved through RCPP. This year, more than \$1 billion is being invested to advance partner-driven solutions to conservation on agricultural land through 81 projects, including \$29.5 million to three projects in Wisconsin.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

Wisconsin NRCS Helps Celebrate 10 Years of Locally Led Watershed Conservation

Farmers, conservation professionals and project partners gathered at Brickstead Dairy Farm in Greenleaf, Wisconsin, earlier this month to commemorate and celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the [Lower Fox Demonstration Farms Network](#). Funded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative program, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, Brown and Outagamie County Land and Water Conservation Departments, Green Bay Metropolitan Sewerage District (NEW Water), the Great Lakes Commission, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension, the project was designed to showcase and demonstrate the effectiveness of conservation practices on participating farms located in the Lower Fox River watershed.

[Click here to read more.](#)

Wisconsin NRCS Encourages Producers Within High-Priority Watersheds to ACT NOW

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), has announced they will begin utilizing the new Act Now policy, which offers additional flexibilities for eligible Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) applicants enrolled in the [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative \(MRBI\)](#) and [National Water Quality Initiative \(NWQI\)](#). These NRCS initiatives were designed to help agricultural producers within high-priority watershed areas implement voluntary conservation practices to control nutrient runoff, improve water quality and wildlife habitat, and maintain agricultural productivity.

Through Act Now, Wisconsin NRCS can immediately preapprove all EQIP applications eligible through the MRBI and NWQI.

[Click here to read more.](#)

Wisconsin NRCS Offers Big Opportunity for Small-Scale Operations Through the Conservation Stewardship Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is encouraging farmers, agricultural producers and forest landowners in Wisconsin to apply for the [Conservation Stewardship Program \(CSP\)](#) by Feb. 9, 2024, to be considered for funding in 2024. Currently, an unprecedented amount of funding is available through the Farm Bill and the [Inflation Reduction Act](#), which provides an additional \$19.5 billion in funding for CSP and other oversubscribed NRCS programs.

With the start of the new fiscal year, the minimum annual payment for CSP participants has been increased from \$1,500 to \$4,000. This increase aims to address challenges faced by small-scale, underserved, and urban agricultural producers, by making the program more equitable and financially beneficial for smaller operations.

[Click here to read more.](#)

USDA is Here to Help You Recover from Severe Winter Weather

Winter storms create significant challenges and often result in catastrophic loss for agricultural producers, especially for those raising livestock, row crops and other vulnerable crops. Despite every attempt to mitigate risk, your operation may suffer losses. As you prepare for the potential impacts of severe winter weather, know that the [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#) offers several programs to help with recovery.

[Click here to read more.](#)



February 2024

Soil and Water Resources Management (SWRM) Grants

- Reimbursement requests for 2023 must be submitted to DATCPSWRM@wisconsin.gov by **February 15, 2024**. This includes SWRM cost-share, staffing, NMFE, and cooperator grants.
- The [2025 SWRM Application](#) is available on the SWRM webpage.
- Until ATCP 50 receives approval from the governor, legislature, and is published, the new practices are not available for cost-share.

Annual Reports for 2023

- County submission of their responses to annual reporting questions for 2023 are due March 4, 2024. An email containing a link to the report questions was sent to all county conservationists on Monday, December 18, 2023. If you did not receive the message, please reach out to Coreen Fallat at coreen.fallat@wisconsin.gov.

ATCP 50 Update

- ATCP 50 has been referred to Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules. A link to the webpage with all related documents is available [here](#).

Nutrient Management News

- **UPCOMING:** Online Nutrient Management Farmer Education Trainings will be hosted in February and March this year.
 - Wednesday, February 7, 2024
10 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
 - Wednesday, March 6, 2024
10 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
 - The target audience of these trainings is farmers who are wanting to become certified to write their own nutrient management plans, but anyone is able to attend! Registration is free! Register here: [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#).
- **SNAPPLUS V3 Reports Survey-** If you haven't had a chance to take the V3 report survey, there is still time! We are looking for feedback on the current reports in SnapPlus and what are some things we can change or add. We appreciate your time and feedback. Survey link here:

<https://forms.office.com/g/nUZR4Z0Lw>.

- **2024 NMFE Webinar** and presentation slides are now available on the NMFE webpage, found here: [DATCP Home Nutrient Management Farmer Education Grants](#).
- Previous SnapPlus Trainings can be found here: [DATCP Home Nutrient Management Trainings](#).

Land and Water Conservation Board – LWRM Plans

- Douglas and Rock counties will be presenting five-year LWRM plan reviews to the LWCB at their February 6, 2024 meeting.
- The 2024 annual workplan template was mailed out the last week of January and will be due back April 15, 2024.

Conservation Engineering

- Funding opportunity: DATCP will again be offering Engineering Reserve Funds in 2024. These funds are intended for engineered conservation practices and prioritize projects that address farm discharge(s) that need additional funding to get completed. Deadline for project consideration is **March 29, 2024**. Additional information on the application process will be coming from your DATCP area engineering contact.
- The DNR is currently seeking public comments on issuance and reissuance of five General Permits (GP). One of those is the new statewide GP22 for Hydrologic Restoration projects. This GP should aid in the permitting process for conservation projects designed “to return wetland, stream, and floodplain hydrology to a natural and self-regulating condition in order to achieve such goals as slow the flow of runoff, reduce flood peaks, restore surface and groundwater interactions, improve water quality, or increase soil retention, groundwater infiltration, base flow, upper watershed storage, and flood resilience.” If you are interested in review and/or commenting, additional info can be found on the DNR website linked [here](#).

DATCP Drainage Program

- The Drainage Program website is currently being updated to include an information page. The goal of the update is to provide our drainage community members easy access to the most recent information and give them the opportunity to provide feedback. The information page will also archive issues of *The Root Zone*, the forthcoming official e-newsletter of the DATCP Drainage Program. If you have any questions, please contact Barton T. Chapman, Drainage Program Manager, at Barton.Chapman@Wisconsin.gov.

Farmland Preservation (FP) Program and Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA)

- Counties that update or issue new CoCs for Tax Year 2023 should submit updates for their DOR Spreadsheet to DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov. Updates may be submitted as needed throughout the tax season.
- **NEW:** Agreement holders with effective agreements signed prior to July 1, 2009 that have not been modified to meet current standards will be required to provide their agreement number on tax schedule FC. If you have questions about the DOR spreadsheet or have questions with respect to any element of the FP Program, contact DATCPWorkingLands@wi.gov.
- On December 6, 2023, Governor Evers signed Assembly Bill 133, now Wisconsin Act 42, which makes changes to farmland preservation agreements minimum term lengths and increasing farmland preservation tax credits for all current participants. These changes went into effect on December 8, 2023 and will affect tax credit claims beginning tax year 2023. Check out the [Legislative Updates to the Farmland Preservation Program](#) handout for more information.
- The 2024 Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) petition cycle is in full swing. Petition materials for new designation and modification to existing AEAs are available on the [Petitioning for AEA Designation](#)

[webpage](#). Petitions will be accepted until **August 2, 2024**. For additional information or to schedule a meeting to discuss an AEA petition in your county, contact wednesday.coye@wisconsin.gov.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- [Annual Summary Reports for Counties 2023](#): DATCP sent out the annual summary reports for counties in an email on January 4, 2024. Please review the records for your county to ensure that the state CREP records match the county CREP records. Also, please share these summaries with your local FSA office to compare enrollment numbers for the year. If you find a discrepancy or have questions, please let DATCP CREP staff know.
- A new [Relinquishment of Lands Under CREP Conservation Easements Guide](#) is available on the [DATCP CREP – For Counties website](#). As landowners work to keep the conservation practices in compliance on their CREP perpetual easement, we sometimes get the question of whether DATCP would relinquish the easement? To guide helps landowners and LCDs, determine if they meet the relinquishment criteria and the process for making a relinquishment request.
- Virtual CREP 101 Training is offered by DATCP to all CREP counties. The training is offered per LCD request and reviews program requirements, landowner engagement, agency partnership coordination, and county administrative processes. All local agency partners are invited to attend, and the training is valuable to both new and seasoned local CREP staff. Please contact Brian Loeffelholz at Brian.Loeffelholz@wisconsin.gov to set up a time for training in your county.

Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant (PLWPG) Program

- The 2024 Annual Workshop will be held on February 20, 2024 at NorthCentral Technical College in Wausau. Registration for groups and collaborators is open here: <https://forms.office.com/g/TYws700vCD>.
- Reimbursement requests AND final reports with tracking are due to DATCP by February 15, 2024. Please remember to mark all of your receipts with the corresponding budget category.
- We have funding for groups to host regional winter workshops or spring field days in the range of \$500-\$1,500 per event through the Producer-Led Regional Network effort. Contact your regional coordinator or Randy Zogbaum at Randy.Zogbaum@Wisconsin.gov for more information or if you have ideas for a shared, collaborative event to host with other groups in your region.

Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program (NOPP)

- The 2024 grant cycle closed on January 31, 2024. Grant recipients will be announced in spring 2024.

Legislation Updates

- [2023 Act 42](#)- Relating to: farmland preservation agreements and tax credits.
- [Senate Bill 468](#) and [Assembly Bill 480](#) – Relating to: eligibility for farmland preservation tax credits and photovoltaic solar energy systems.
- [Senate Bill 220](#) and [Assembly Bill 220](#) – Relating to: funding for the Fenwood Creek watershed pilot project.
- [Senate Bill 409](#) and [Assembly Bill 419](#) – Relating to: creating an online interactive carbon calculator for farmers.
- [Senate Bill 619](#) and [Assembly Bill 655](#) – Relating to: a transition to grass pilot program.

DATE: February 6, 2024

TO: LWCB members and advisors

FROM: Jill Schoen, DNR

SUBJECT: DNR Update, December 2023 - January 2024, for February 2024 LWCB meeting

Runoff Grants – TRM & UNPS Construction applications and Application Tuturoials now available

Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) grant applications for projects beginning in 2025 are now available on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)'s [grant program webpage](#). **NEW!** For an overview of the Targeted Runoff Management grant program and application process, please watch the presentation on the [grant program webpage](#).

Urban Nonpoint Source & Storm Water (UNPS & SW) Construction Grant applications for projects beginning in 2025 are now available on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)'s [grant program webpage](#). **NEW!** For an overview of the Urban Nonpoint Source Construction grant program and application process, please watch the presentation on the [grant program webpage](#).

Eligible applicants have until April 15, 2024 to submit applications.

Storm Water Program Update

Winter Salt Awareness Week kicked off on January 22nd and ran through January 26th. This year's event had a national presence! The Week included a series of YouTube livestreams on the [WI Salt Wise YouTube Channel](#) featuring speakers and topics focused on the true cost of salt and how to be a freshwater advocate. Speakers included Hillary Dugan (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Sawyer Bailey (Adirondack Action), Bill Hintz (University of Toledo), Bill Quackenbush (Ho-Chunk Nation), Jeremy Weso (Menominee Nation) and Laura Fey (Western Transportation Institute, Montana State University).

While salt keeps Wisconsin roads safe during winter, using more salt than needed comes at a price. In Wisconsin and much of the U.S., chlorides from salt are infiltrating lakes, streams and groundwater. According to Wisconsin Salt Wise, one teaspoon of salt is all it takes to make five gallons of water toxic for freshwater organisms.

The DNR measures chloride levels in Wisconsin rivers over time, monitoring cumulative chloride loading results at 26 of the state's largest river systems. Recent studies have shown a steep increase in chloride loads. In the early 2000s, the DNR measured about 600,000 tons of chlorides annually. By 2018, that number increased to nearly 800,000 tons per year. Fifty lakes and one stream in Wisconsin have been designated as impaired by high salt concentrations.

Increased chloride levels have [significant impacts](#) on our daily lives, including environmental and economic effects. Nationwide, winter salt causes \$5 billion in damage to infrastructure each year, causing corrosion of bridges, roads and other infrastructure. Road salt can also impact pets by causing irritated paws or other health concerns if ingested.

Salt Tips For Wisconsin Residents

Reducing salt use is key to decreasing chloride loads. Follow these steps to right-size your salt use:

- Shovel: Clear walkways and other areas before the snow turns to ice. The more snow removed manually, the less salt you will need and the more effective it will be.
- Scatter: When using salt, scatter it so that there is space between the grains. A 12-ounce coffee mug of salt is enough to treat an entire 20-foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares. If you see oversalting, [follow these simple steps](#) to help educate others about salt.
- Switch: Salt won't work when pavement temperatures drop below 15 degrees. Switch to sand for traction or a [different ice melter](#) that works at lower temperatures.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law - Staff

As mentioned in the last update, the Wisconsin DNR has been building staff capacity to help connect small, rural, and Tribal governments with expanded funding opportunities through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. These positions provide technical assistance, create new grant opportunities, and conduct outreach, and are embedded in program areas across the Department to ensure integration and a strong foundation of support for the communities in Wisconsin. You can view a list of the new staff and their roles here:

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/Aid/loans/BILfundingOutreachTAcontacts.pdf>. For more information on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding, visit <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/aid/BILfunding>.

CAFO Program Update

The 2024 CAFO Workshops will be held from January 29 to February 13 in Rice Lake, Curtiss, Green Bay, Fond du Lac, Manitowoc, Jefferson, and Darlington. To register: <https://go.wisc.edu/cafo2024>.

Surface Water Grant Program Update

The DNR Surface Water Grant Program has reviewed and ranked approximately 250 final grant applications and finalized the funding list for FY24 surface water grant recipients. Additionally, we received and funded 147 Clean Boats, Clean Waters and 38 Lake Monitoring and Protection Network noncompetitive grants. The Lake Monitoring and Protection Network is now present in 69 of 72 counties.

Overall, the Program received over \$9.3M in requests resulting in the program being oversubscribed by \$3.1M. The rivers category received approximately \$500k in requests, with the category 73% oversubscribed; the lakes category received \$3.6M in requests, with the category 65% oversubscribed; the AIS category received over \$5.2M in requests, with the category 39% oversubscribed.

Grant awards will be announced in the beginning of February 2024, with the priority funding list posted to the [Wisconsin DNR's Surface Water Grant website](#).

Nine Key Element Watershed Based Plans Update – December 2023

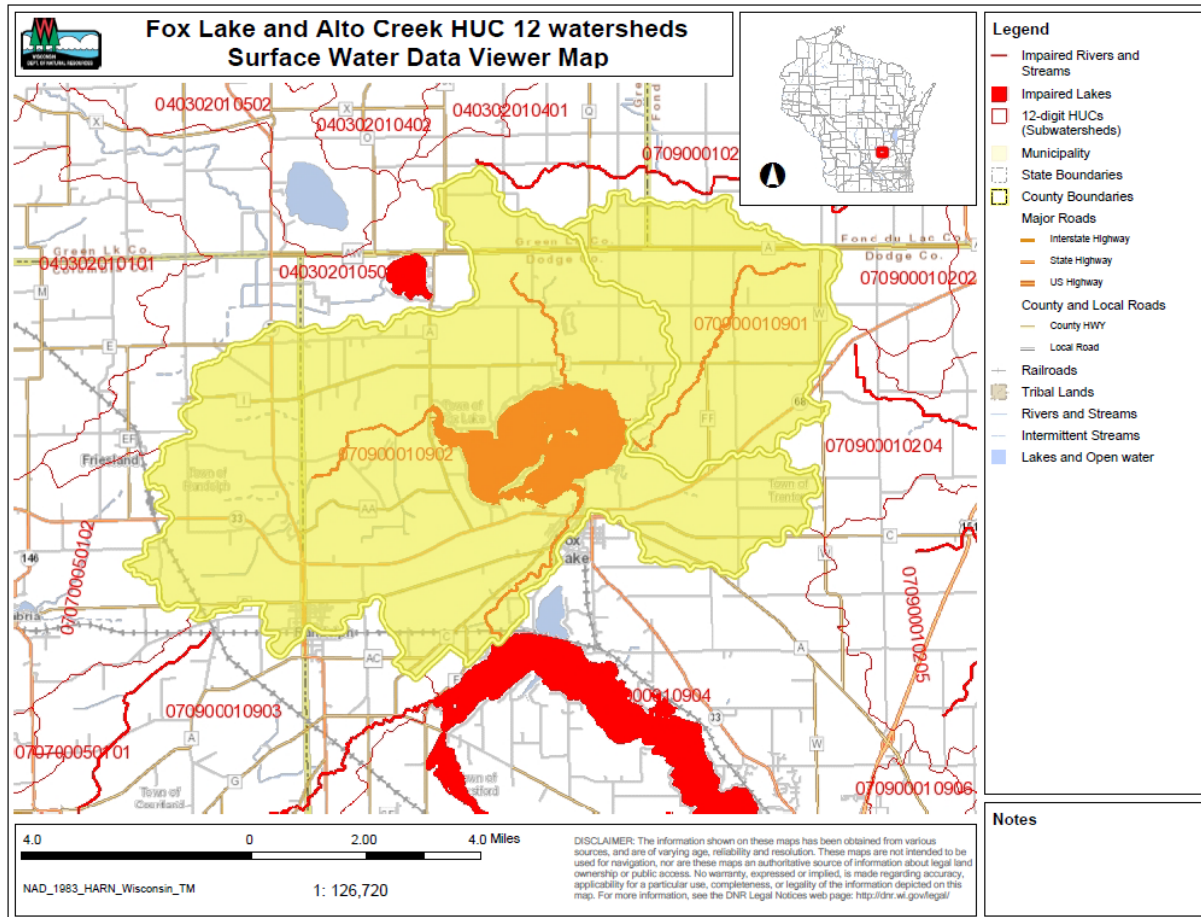
As of December 2023, Wisconsin DNR and US EPA region 5 staff completed review of the Fox Lake Watershed 9-Key Element Plan and determined it to be consistent with the US EPA's 9 Key Elements. The plan was prepared by Emmons and Olivier Resources, Inc. (EOR) and the Fox Lake Inland Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District (FLILPARD) via a DNR Surface Water grant. DNR nonpoint and lakes staff also provided technical assistance to complete the plan.

Fox Lake is a 2,713-acre unstratified (shallow) drainage lake, impounded by a dam at the lake's southern outlet to Mill Creek. Before the outlet dam was originally constructed in 1845, open water would have only existed in the current "deep hole" area of the lake and the now-shallowest regions of the lake were originally fertile prairie, riparian lands (Fox Lake Historical Society), and shallow marshlands dominated by native species such as wild rice.

This is the third nine key element plan created within Dodge County - although the plan area also includes limited portions of Columbia and Green Lake counties – see attached map. The plan focuses upon reducing external nonpoint pollutant sources in the watershed via identification of critical areas and multiple best management practices. It was developed to help FLILPARD, agricultural operations/producer led group members, county staff and other key stakeholders meet/make progress towards meeting the phosphorus and sediment reduction goals within the 2011 Rock River Total Maximum Daily Load report.

Watershed plans consistent with EPA's nine key elements provide a framework for improving water quality in a holistic manner within a geographic watershed. The nine elements help assess the contributing causes and sources of nonpoint source pollution, involve key stakeholders and prioritize restoration and protection strategies to address water quality problems. The first three elements characterize and set goals to address water pollution sources. The remaining six elements determine specific resources and criteria to implement and evaluate the plan.

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Nonpoint/9keyElement>



Water Quality/Water Evaluation Update

On October 30, 2023, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) approved the “Northeast Lakeshore Total Maximum Daily Loads for Total Phosphorus and Total Suspended Solids.” Following WI Statute 281.145, the DNR was directed to develop a watershed study aimed at reducing the amounts of nutrients entering waters within the Lake Michigan watershed which extends from just south of Sturgeon Bay to Port Washington and reaching west toward Lake Winnebago, covering 1,964 square miles, approximately 3.5 percent of the state. This study took the form of a TMDL for total phosphorus (TP) and total suspended solids (TSS); and a separate watershed study for nitrogen (which was reported on to the LWCB at the February 2023 meeting).

The Northeast Lakeshore TMDL identified and quantified the sources, including agriculture, of TP and TSS and evaluated their loading on the waters within the watershed. Additional analysis showed that with comprehensive management measures and strategic deployment of resources, water quality standards can be met. The TMDL now provides a strategic framework for implementation. With the EPA’s approval, the DNR will now begin collaboration with partners to implement efforts toward meeting the goals outlined in the study.

For agriculture, conservation practices that address the large amount of cropland in the watershed will be key to improving water quality. Keeping the cropland covered year-round (with crop residue and/or living cover) and balancing nutrient inputs for crop needs will be important for agricultural sustainability, profitability, and resiliency while benefitting future food production, reducing flooding, and improving water quality which are all essential to the region’s economy, recreation, environment, and health.

The multi-year TMDL study received state funding and U.S. EPA contractor support. In addition, the DNR is thankful to its many partners, including county land and water/soil and water conservation departments (Brown, Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Calumet, Sheboygan, Fond du Lac and Ozaukee) who assisted during the TMDL study. The DNR looks forward to working with partners throughout the basin to provide support to implement management measures.

The TMDL study and supporting information can be found on the DNR's website:
<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/TMDLs/NElakeshore.html>