



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.