

TOWN OF GRANT
AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISE AREA

DUNN AND CHIPPEWA COUNTY, WI

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3/29/2013



PREPARED FOR
**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE
AND CONSUMER PROTECTION**
MADISON, WI 53708



Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection
 Division of Agricultural Resource Management
 P.O. Box 8911
 Madison, WI 53708-8911
 (608) 224-4500

Agricultural Enterprise Area Petition

The undersigned persons hereby petition the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), pursuant to s. 91.86, Wis. Stats., to create an Agricultural Enterprise Area (**AEA**) under s. 91.84, Wis. Stats. We have read the guidance provided and submit the following information in support of the petition (*use the space provided or check the appropriate box*):¹

PART I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Name of AEA. Town of Grant
- B. County or counties in which the proposed AEA is located. Dunn, Chippewa
- C. All towns, villages or cities in which the proposed AEA is located. Dunn:
Grant, Colfax, Sand Creek, Otter Creek
Chippewa:
Auburn, Cooks Valley
- D. Number of owners of eligible farms within the proposed AEA who signed the petition. 15
- E. Total number of acres in the proposed AEA. 25,908
- F. All parcels in the proposed AEA are located within a farmland preservation area designated in the certified county farmland preservation plan. Yes No
- G. All parcels in the proposed AEA are contiguous. Yes No
- H. The proposed AEA is primarily in agricultural use. Yes No
- I. Primary type of agricultural production in the proposed AEA. Row Crops and Dairy
- J. Designated contacts for the AEA. *Please list at least two contacts for the AEA; preferably at least one staff contact (county, town, UWEX, regional planning commission etc.) and one landowner representative.*² *You may have more than two contacts. Attach a separate page if necessary.*

Name: Robert Colson - Dunn County Planner
 Address: 390 Red Cedar Street, Suite C

Name: Mark Dietsche - Town of Grant Chair
 Address: N12021 1010th Street
 Bloomer, WI 52724

¹Personal information you provide may be used for purposes other than that for which it was collected, s. 15.04(1)(m), Wis. Stats.

²The listed contacts should be willing to:

- Communicate with other petitioners and partners in the AEA, with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and with contacts in other AEAs
- Respond to an annual status update inquiry from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
- Engage in activities within the AEA

Menomonie, WI 54751

Phone number: 715-231-6522

Email: rcolson@co.dunn.wi.us

Phone number: 715-568-3907

Email: bhaven@bloomer.net

PART II. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE FOR AEA³

Introduction to proposed AEA (optional):

The Town of Grant located in Northeastern Dunn County, Wisconsin, maintains a unique rural setting with 92% of its land base in agriculture and forest acreage. The middle stretch of the Red Cedar River flows south through the center of this Town. The landscape changes from low-level floodplains to rich valley soils to forested ridges. Residents enjoy and appreciate the rural character that the Town and surrounding area provides. It is for those and many other reasons this area is petitioning to establish an AEA, so they can preserve their way of life for many generations to come.

Agriculture in the Town of Grant began in the mid 1800's, when settlers came to this area. Today, 130-plus years later, farming has expanded and evolved into an "Agricultural Way of Life". The times may have changed, but agriculture remains a high priority. Today, the Town is committed today to sustaining agriculture as a way of life. The importance of agriculture as a way of life is best illustrated by the number of generational farming families within the proposed AEA boundary:

Third Generation Farm Families:

Kenneth Bjork (1880), David Buchner (1875) and Rodney Johnson (1940)

Fourth Generation Farm Families:

Toby Horn (1896), Brian Johnson (late 1800's), Mark Rhin (1884), Allen Sonnenberg (1896) and Bruce Winget (1890)

Fifth Generation Farm Families:

Mark Dietsche (1862), Brad Dietche (1862) and William Beyrer (1875)

Sixth Generation Farm Family:

Aaron Dietsche (1862)

The Town of Grant Phosphorus Reduction Pilot Project (Exhibit 1) began in 2007. Conservation Planners met one-on-one with landowners to determine why they did not adopt certain conservation practices or why they did not enroll in conservation programs. Barriers to implementing conservation practices were identified through surveys. Project partners then rented a no-till soybean drill for farmers to use, paid a custom operator to plant no-till corn, and paid costs to sample soil for Phosphorus levels. Field days on no-till farms gave other interested farmers the chance to see and ask questions about these cropping methods. Monitoring of fields found that no-till yields were comparable, but profits per acre were more favorable because planting and field maintenance accounted for less time and fuel. Less time on the tractor and more time with family has led to a higher quality of life for several landowners in the Town of Grant. Photos from the pilot project can be found in Section IV.

³ DATCP will evaluate petitions under s. 91.86, Wis. Stats., and will consider information provided in response to the following questions.

Near the end of this petition, on the Landowner Signature Page, a majority of the signatures have agricultural roots stemming back 3 to 6 generations. For more than a hundred years agriculture has been a way of life. The AEA petitioners vision is to sustain this agricultural way of life well into the future by proactively protecting and preserving their farmland from non-agricultural uses.

The proposed AEA could be a building block when set on their existing agriculture foundation. It could help maintain the existing ag-infrastructure and could be a resource for developing and/or investing in new agriculture products and ag-infrastructure. The proposed AEA could also be a marketing tool promoting an agricultural way of life as a means to attract new farmers and new agri-businesses to the area, thereby ensuring ag-succession. The notion that an agricultural way of life is worth preserving extends far beyond the Town boundaries. An AEA designation could be one of the many threads stitching together the agricultural ideals of the State, County and Town.

Through the Working Lands Initiative (WLI), the State has expressed its renewed commitment of making farmland preservation a priority. WLI demonstrates that agriculture and agricultural-related businesses and products are significant components to the State's economy. The petitioners support the States renewed efforts to revitalize agricultural preservation programs. We intend to use the proposed AEA to preserve their agricultural way of life: to use it as a support system for farmers; to assist farmers to identify means to increase productivity, thereby increasing collaboration while promoting the sale of AEA-produced products.

Dunn County, through its "Bottom Up" planning approach supported and encouraged local jurisdictions to develop and implement their respective comprehensive land use plans. The Town's land use plan speaks to the significance of an agricultural way of life. The Town's commitment to agriculture is best represented in their Zoning Map (Exhibit 2) and on the County's Preferred Land Use Map (Exhibit 3) The Preferred Land Use Map looks ahead 20 years, and for the Town of Grant, has but one land use agriculture. The County recognized the importance of agriculture in the Town of Grant and to be consistent, the Town's plan has been incorporated into the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The participants believe this petition is a strong candidate for the proposed AEA because:

There are a large number of committed farmers/petitioners already actively involved in agriculture.

The proposed AEA will help these farmers preserve farmland and provide support for existing and new ag-businesses by promoting sustainable agriculture practices necessary to produce agriculture products.

The petition is supported by landowners and by surrounding local governmental jurisdictions.

The proposed AEA will serve as an example to surrounding rural and urban areas about farmland preservation. The participants will be resources for transferring information, knowledge and experiences to other farmers and jurisdictions.

1. State the specific goals for the preservation of agricultural land use.

Sustain the Towns' "Agricultural Way of Life".

Maintain, promote, and/or develop agricultural infrastructure such as ag-related businesses, farmland,

and human resources (farmers).

Promote farmland preservation agreements and soil and water conservation plans as a means to preserve/protect farmland from non-agriculture uses.

Adopt and implement stronger land use protections such as the Working Lands Initiative and/or Exclusive Agriculture Zoning Districts.

2. State the specific goals for agricultural development and/or innovation.

Develop an AEA Agriculture Succession Plan to reduce or eliminate barriers for the expansion of existing ag-businesses and infrastructure and for start up ag-businesses.

Collaborate with surrounding jurisdictions and ag-business owners to Identify ways to;

1. Identify new ag-markets
 2. Identify new uses of ag-products and new uses for ag-byproducts
 3. Expand existing ag-markets
 4. Create and/or amend ag-business plans to pursue such opportunities.
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3. Comment on the relationship between the area's goals for agricultural preservation and agricultural development.

WLI, which includes AEAs, expresses the State's renewed commitment to making farmland preservation a priority. WLI demonstrates that agriculture and agricultural related businesses and products are significant components to the State's economy. The Town of Grant has, is, and wishes to continue contributing to the State's ag-economy. Their contributions to the ag-economy are imbedded in each of their ag-preservation and ag-development goals. The relationship between these goals is significant and is summed up in three ideas: commitment, collaboration and viability.

COMMITMENT

The Town of Grant is committed to achieving its ag-preservation goals, especially the goal of 'Sustaining Agriculture as a Way of Life'. They realize that ag-preservation alone will not sustain a prosperous agriculture future. They realize that combining ag-preservation with ag-development will substantially increase the odds of agricultural success. The petitioners feel that without an agricultural way of life, the other goals have diminished value, thereby severely decreasing their chances of success. The relationship of ag-preservation to ag-innovation is so strong that if just one ag-preservation goal falls by the wayside there is little need to pursue the ag-innovation goals.

COLLABORATION

The AEA petitioners and supporters understand the consequences of non-ag development pressures and have taken precautions to minimize their negative effects. The Town of Grant has been an agricultural area for as long as anyone can remember. During the late 1970's when the opportunity to become zoned came, the Town decided to use the A-1 Exclusive Agriculture zoning district as the primary mechanism to protect their agricultural heritage. That decision was not made without input and discussions between the County, Town officials, and Township's landowners.

In 1977, Dunn County developed its Farmland Preservation Plan. The Town again collaborated with the County to have the entire Town designated as a Farmland Preservation district.

In the late 1900's, when "Smart Growth" legislation was passed, the Town once again collaborated with the County to analyze and plan for the Town's next 20 years. That planning effort resulted in a Town of Grant Preferred Land Use map showing the entire Town as "Important" farmland, farmland worth preserving.

Today, the Town is again working with the County on two projects, the County's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Rewrite and updating the County's Farmland Preservation Plan. The Town has also set its sights on this proposed AEA designation. This designation will be yet another tool in their already extensive ag-protection tool box . The AEA petitioners intend to use the proposed AEA to assist landowners in protecting their ag-resources, thereby increasing productivity and collaboration, while at the same time promoting the sale of locally produced agricultural products. The Town has a track record showing that collaboration is a successful process.

VIABILITY

Agriculture has been around for hundreds of years as a viable industry, profession and way of life. The Town is committed to promoting agriculture through collaborative efforts with surrounding jurisdictions and landowners. Developing and maintaining a diverse mix of farming operations will provide opportunities for landowners to explore enterprise relationships. These relationships are beneficial to sustain agriculture as a viable profession for present and future generations. The outcome of such collaboration would promote lease agreements, field management practices (crop rotation), manure/nutrient management, and weed/pest control.

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4. Describe (a) all current land uses within the proposed AEA **and** (b) provide information about land use trends in and around the AEA. *(The proposed AEA must be primarily in agricultural use.)*

DUNN COUNTY

Current Land Uses in Dunn County within the proposed AEA fall into two generalized categories: Farm Use (agriculture) and Non-Farm Use (Residential). The proposed AEA spans several jurisdictions and the number of actual residential homes varies from one jurisdictional boundary to the other. However, residential development in and adjacent to the proposed AEA is considered to be light (minimal).

Dunn County has a slow to moderate rate of converting farmland to non-farm (residential) uses. In looking to the future, the actual number (density) of non-agriculture uses is influenced by numerous factors, primarily proximity to urbanized areas (City of Menomonie, City of Eau Claire, and City of Chippewa Falls) and underlying zoning. The overriding trend in the Town is agriculture, and nothing on the 20 year horizon suggests any substantial change to this trend. With respect to zoning, the Town of Grant is zoned A-1, residential minimum lot size is 35 acres. With the ever increasing cost of land, the requirement of 35 acres for a residential lot will continue to limit the number of non-farm uses in the Town.

The Town of Colfax is zoned A-3, residential lot size minimum 5 acres. Even though the Town of

Colfax has a much smaller minimum lot size than the Town of Grant, it, too, has minimal non-agricultural growth, which is expected to continue for the next 20 years.

Both the Town of Otter Creek and Sand Creek are unzoned. Both Towns are very rural. Historically, these Towns have experienced low rates of non-agricultural growth. This trend is not expected to change over the next 20 years.

CHIPPEWA COUNTY

Current land uses in Chippewa County within the proposed AEA again fall into two generalized categories: Farm Use (Agriculture) and Non-Farm Use (Residential). As is the case with Dunn County, the actual rate of converting ag-land to a non-ag use is primarily dependant on proximity to an urbanized area (City of Menomonie, City of Eau Claire, and City of Chippewa Falls). However, in Chippewa County there are two distinctive differences from Dunn County. First, the Towns within the proposed AEA in Chippewa County are both unzoned. Second, in Chippewa County there is a trend outside of and adjacent to the proposed AEA of converting land to Industrial Non-Metallic Mining, (frac sand) as a land use. Since all of the land within the proposed AEA in Chippewa County is unzoned, the petitioning landowners see the proposed AEA as a tool to assist in protecting their farmland.

5. How did you determine the boundary (location and size) of the proposed AEA?

The boundary was developed by the landowners through public outreach. Through four meetings held at the Grant Town Hall, the boundary was formed. Interested landowners from the area attended these meetings to find out about how AEAs work to help preserve farmland for generations to come. Through webinars, newsletters, emails, and phone calls, more landowners joined the farmland preservation effort. Working with the local comprehensive plans, the boundary started with a small-localized area and then spread into Chippewa County and adjacent Dunn County Townships.

The final boundary is based on contiguous acres of landowners committed to preserving farmland for years to come. See the proposed AEA map for details of the boundary line and actual size of the proposed AEA. Of all the decisions and questions surrounding the AEA petition, this was the most difficult for the Town of Grant to answer. Determining the boundary of the proposed AEA forced the Town to analyze their guiding principle that all productive agricultural land is deserving of preservation and protection.

After several meetings, the Town of Grant quickly ascertained that there was not an objective rationale for limiting the size of the proposed AEA. The Town determined that it would be best to size the proposed AEA in accordance with the Town and County adopted Comprehensive Plans and both counties Farmland Preservation Plans.

As depicted in Exhibits 2 and 3, the Dunn County and Town of Grant Comprehensive Plans, the Town is zoned A-1 Exclusive Agriculture. The current Farmland Preservation Plan shows all of the Town as Prime Agriculture-First Class, and the Preferred Land Use Plan depicts the vast majority of the Town of Grant as Exclusive Agriculture. Exclusive Agriculture is the most restrictive future land use category contained within the Town and County Comprehensive Plans. It allows non-agriculture residential development at a density of one dwelling unit per 35-acres owned. The proposed AEA boundary reflects the area designated for agriculture or agriculture-related development within the Town. The proposed AEA boundary, similar to the Town of Grant Comprehensive Plan, allows for further expansion of the Village of Colfax (travel-related commercial development along County and Town roadways). The proposed AEA also correlates with the location of the petitioners and participants in the existing Farmland Preservation Plan.

Along with the Town of Grant, some landowners own or rent land in the Townships of Colfax, Otter Creek, and Sand Creek, as well as land in Chippewa County in the Townships of Auburn and Cooks Valley. Signing up for a Farmland Preservation Agreement requires the landowner to be in NR151 compliance on all land farmed. The petitioners property and rented property are being requested to be part of the proposed AEA. These other Townships do not have Exclusive Agriculture as their primary land use, but are in accordance with the Dunn County Farmland Preservation Plan (1977) and the Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan (1985).

As for the Chippewa County Townships involved with the proposed AEA, there has been cooperation with them in the planning process. The Chippewa County Land Conservation and Forest Management Department has accepted taking on the workload of performing NR151 Compliance reviews to obtain Farmland Preservation Agreements. The Townships of Cooks Valley and Auburn have agreed to be a supporter for the proposed AEA since it would preserve farmland, boost the local economy, and protect the rural characters of the Townships.

Additionally, the size of the proposed AEA was supported by the Dunn County Farmland Preservation Plan, which depicts the entirety of the Town as Prime Agriculture – First Class, with the exception of 8% in non-agricultural uses. The Town of Grant contains relatively flat topography along the Red Cedar River and very productive agricultural soils. These factors work toward sustaining the Town's inclination toward a multi-county proposed AEA.

6. Confirm that the proposed AEA is consistent with any existing local comprehensive plan. Use the space provided for any additional information. Submit a future land use map, if available. *Please do not submit a complete copy of any comprehensive plan.*

The county(ies) of Dunn and Chippewa has(have) a comprehensive plan and the proposed AEA is consistent with this plan.

The Town(s) of Grant, Sand Creek, Colfax, Otter Creek, Auburn, Cooks Valley has(have) a comprehensive plan and the proposed AEA is consistent with this plan.

There are no comprehensive plans for the political subdivisions in which the proposed AEA is located.

7. Describe any recent investments made to support agriculture and agricultural-related business in or near the proposed AEA.

Near the proposed AEA

The proposed AEA has convenient access to existing infrastructure and transportation networks. It is strategically located on the edge of the Menomonie, Eau Claire, and Chippewa Falls urban areas. All of which provides access to urban markets for processing and marketing.

Inside the proposed AEA

Other than farms there are no other ag-businesses within the proposed AEA. Historically, a significant number of landowners have invested and reinvested capital in land, land improvements, grain storage facilities, machinery and technology. On an annual basis, farmers purchase/lease and provide routine maintenance to their machinery, implements, buildings, storage/processing facilities and livestock. The total dollar amount is impossible to track, but a conservative estimate places it in the hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. The agricultural products produced in the proposed AEA supply regional ag-processors and are critical to long term viability of these businesses. Farmers achieve efficiencies through bulk production, equipment leasing and professional management. All of the milk produced by dairy farms is shipped to regional dairy facilities. A substantial amount of corn produced in the proposed AEA is marketed to Big River Resources (Boyceville Ethanol Plant). All of the petitioners are concerned about preserving farming and farmland. They support the proposed AEA and will work together to continue producing a reliable milk and corn supply well into the future for area processors.

Outside the proposed AEA

Boyceville Ethanol Plant

Several participants in the proposed AEA provide substantial amounts of corn products to the Ethanol Plant located two Townships to the West of Grant in Hay River Township. As this facility continues to grow, there will no doubt be new opportunities to use corn and/or other ag-products.

There are several agriculture cooperatives serving the Town. The following are typical examples of the size and scale of these businesses:

Agri-Tech is a typical storage and drying facility, serving the area. In 2012, approximately 3.9 million dollars was invested to provide additional storage and drying space to the facility.

Lakeland Cooperative Services

In 2011, they built a grain drying and storage bin for 1.4 million bushels of corn at the Cameron facility that cost about 4 million dollars.

In 2012, they added a 515,000 bushel bin for corn and 100,000 bushel bin for soybeans that cost about 1.2 million dollars.

In 2013, Lakeland plans to add a 650,000 bushel bin for corn storage. The cost for this upgrade is estimated at about 1 million dollars.

Lakeland is planning to build a seed storage building, a chemical building, and a fertilizer mixing and storage building in the next 2 to 3 years. These building will cost approximately 5 million dollars.

Annually Lakeland Cooperative Services invests 1.5 to 2 million dollars updating equipment, sprayers, fertilizer spreaders and trucks to serve the agricultural needs of farmers in the area including the proposed AEA area.

Each of these Cooperatives are relatively close to the AEA petitioners, which can reduce the ever increasing cost of transporting goods to a market.

8. Indicate the approximate level of petitioner compliance with state soil and water standards.

- Nearly all petitioners are in compliance
- More than half of the petitioners are in compliance
- Half or less than half of the petitioners are in compliance
- Few or no petitioners are in compliance
- Compliance status of petitioners is unknown

9. Describe the level of non-petitioner cooperator support for the petition.

Residents, businesses and landowners in the surrounding villages, towns and counties have been kept informed through public meetings as agenda items or through public comment sessions. As a result, there is a high level of support for the proposed AEA. Attached as part of this petition are all of the signed non-petitioner cooperator documents. Multiple farmers, business owners, non-profit

organizations and government bodies have shown their support for the program. They have asked numerous technical questions as part of their decision making process to support this petition. The overall feedback is positive and, in going forward, we will continue to keep them informed in hopes of securing additional support and an increased number of participants.

10. Fill in the tables to provide information about partners/advisors and activities in the proposed AEA.

A. AEA Partners/Advisors
Dunn County Environmental Services Department: Robert Colson ,County Planner, Division Head Daniel Prestebak, Land Conservation, County Conservationist, Division Head Christopher Gaetzke, Land Conservation, Conservation Planner

B. Farmland Preservation Agreement Strategy	
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Summarize future outreach efforts, including who will provide assistance (use an additional page if necessary)</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informational meeting(s)	<p>Over the past year four public informational meetings have been held. . These meetings created public interest in petitioning for the AEA as well provided residents in the area a good understanding of the program. Articles have been posted in local newspapers and newsletters, WQOW TV News, Eau Claire Leader-Telegram newspaper, and the Dunn County UW-EXT newsletter (Exhibit 4). Multiple mailings have been sent on information about AEAs. Town of Grant board members have gone door-to-door talking to residents about the benefits of being included in an AEA and in the Farmland Preservation Program. Dunn County hosted a webinar event organized by DATCP to let citizens hear the information from the source and to ask questions.</p> <p>In the future, the Town of Grant board members and the landowners that have signed this petiton will continue to talk to their neighbors about the benefits of the program and signing a Farmland Preservation Agreement (FPA). The Dunn County Planning and Land Conservation Divisions will coordinate informational meetings for the public and other local leaders to explain the content of the agreements and the requirements of ATCP 50.04. Land Conservation Division staff will meet with all landowners individually that are considering signing a FPA and conduct individual on-farm evaluations and determine compliance with ATCP 50.04. The contents of the agreement and ATCP 50.04 complinace will be understood before a landowner signs a FPA.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mailing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One-on-one conversations	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newsletter/media	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

C. Land Use Controls

<i>Type of Control</i>	<i>Existing/Future</i>	<i>Provide details about the selected control (use an additional page if necessary)</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Farmland preservation zoning ordinance	Existing & Future	<p>In the existing Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance there is an Exclusive Agriculture District, which has served local jurisdictions including the residents of the Town of Grant, to preserve agriculture.</p> <p>The County is going through a Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance rewrite which will include a new Exclusive Agriculture District. The new district will contain the standards, restrictions and permitted uses according those necessary for DATCP approval.</p> <p>Currently, the Dunn County Farmland Preservation Ordinance is compliant with state regulations. We are undergoing an update and recertification of the plan. It is scheduled to be completed by December, 2013.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other zoning ordinances Specify: Shoreland/Wetland Protection Ordinance, Manure Management Ordinance, Floodplain Ordinance		Each of the ordinances listed to the left will be reviewed and when ever possible actions taken that benefit the proposed AEA but also actions that further the goals, objectives and purpose of each respective ordinance.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Farmland preservation agreements		<p>Of the proposed AEA petitioners, 7 currently have Farmland Preservation Agreements.</p> <p>Town officials and staff from the Dunn & Chippewa Counties Planning, Resource & Development and Land Conservation Departments will support and assist with any paperwork involved in Farmland Preservation Agreements.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Purchase of development rights and/or easements (donated or purchased)		NA
<input type="checkbox"/> Transfer of development rights		NA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subdivision ordinances		The County has a Subdivision Ordinance in place which is effective County wide. Some local jurisdictions (Town of Colfax) have adopted local subdivision ordinances which are managed and enforced by the respective local jurisdiction.

		<p>The Town of Grant does not have its own subdivision ordinance.</p> <p>Due to pending changes in the rewrite of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, specifically in the Exclusive Agriculture District, the County Subdivision Ordinance will be analyzed for consistency and ammended accordingly. This analysis and ammendment process will begin when the revised Zoning Ordinance is adopted (late summer of 2013).</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cooperative boundary agreements/inter-municipal agreements		<p>In the Dunn County Comprehensive Land Use Plan there is a goal to achieve consistency between other jurisdictional plans. There are four implementation strategies to accomplish this:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help to establish mutually beneficial intergovernmental relations. 2. Assist to educate local jurisdictions about extraterritorial rights. 3. Help establish intergovernmental land use policies. 4. Facilitate intergovernmental agreements. <p>As the AEA participants move forward there may be an opportunity for Cooperative Agreements. The County has a good working relationship with all of the participating jurisdictions. The County would work with specific AEA participants to develop and implement such agreements.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural area protections	<p>Future</p>	<p>In Dunn County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan there is a goal to "Create an Environmetally Sensitive Areas Policy". The first activity for this goal will be to define and map Environmentally Sensitive Areas.</p> <p>Methodologies for protecting Environmentally Sensitive Areas will be included in these discussions and mapping exercises. Overall, farmland fits into this goal because farmland contains open and/or wooded areas that are part of the farm but not necessarily farmed. These areas should be left as they are and protected from non-agricultural development pressures.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)		<p>NA</p>

<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)		NA
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D. Agricultural Development Activities		
<i>Type of Activity</i>	<i>Existing/Future</i>	<i>Provide additional details (use an additional page if necessary)</i>
<i>Ex: Joint marketing or purchasing, development of agri-tourism opportunity, value-added agricultural activity</i>		
Outreach Programs	On Going	<p>County staff will collaborate with UW-Extension, NRCS, DATCP, DNR, The Prairie Enthusiasts, Tainter-Menomin Lake Improvement Association, and the Conservation Alliance of Dunn County to develop a structured communication program to:</p> <p>Inform and educate the public, AEA landowners and select agriculture industries about Farmland Preservation and the role of the proposed AEA. This communication program will focus on improving crop production through discussions on weed control, invasive species, disease control, pest control, and soil and water conservation practices.</p> <p>County staff will work with landowners to develop and implement Farmland Preservation Agreements, detailing the time and capital resources necessary to implement and administer Farmland Preservation Agreements. (See Section B)</p> <p>County staff will work with AEA participants to apply for and manage ag-related grants.</p> <p>County staff will research ag-based economic development funding sources to provide revenue for planned community activities.</p> <p>County staff will organize and schedule workshops for AEA participants and surrounding businesses regarding the development and upgrading of agricultural business plans.</p>

E. Other AEA Activities		
<i>Type of Activity</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Provide additional details (use an additional page if necessary)</i>
<i>Ex: Form a stakeholder group, attend statewide AEA meetings, develop strategic plan, set up website</i>		
ATCP 50.04 standards planning/educational meetings	At least once a year	<p>Preliminary analysis of farmers within the AEA suggests less than 50% compliance with the standards contained in ATCP 50.04. Staff from the respective Land Conservation Divisions will meet with individual landowners and ensure that each of the components of ATCP 50.04 are understood and in compliance before a FPA is signed.</p> <p>The Dunn County Land Conservation Division and Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) have a program in place that allows landowners to attend classes and develop and update Nutrient Management Plans. This program will be offered to landowners that are considering signing a FPA. It will also be used to introduce landowners in other parts of the County to the concept of creating additional AEA's.</p> <p>Efforts from LCD staff will include farm visits, informational meetings, and field days with ag owners, either one-on-one or in a group setting, to discuss and answer questions about soil erosion, feedlot runoff, manure storage and nutrient management planning.</p>
The Red Cedar Conference	Annually in mid-March	<p>The Red Cedar Conference began in 2012. It has become an annual conference about the environmental, economic and social issues facing the Red Cedar River Watershed. Each year there have been break out sessions on Economic Development, Profitable Farming, Water Quality, Recreation, Tourism, and Property Values. At the center of all these discussions are farmers, professionals, and the agricultural community.</p> <p>The sponsors of the conference realize that cleaning up the watershed involves more than looking at point source and leaky septic systems; it also involves the ag-community. Going forward there will be opportunities for landowners to share success stories and strategies related to water quality. County staff will encourage land owners, especially within the proposed AEA to attend the conference and, in some instances, to present their unique agricultural successes and failures.</p>
Informational Meetings	To Be Determined	The proposed AEA should provide stability to this region and could encourage farmers and local financial institutions to

		<p>invest in ag-related facilities and infrastructure.</p> <p>Once the proposed AEA is up and running, County staff will work with participants to evaluate, track, monitor progress and discuss opportunities such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing Farmland Preservation Agreements. 2. Developing intergovernmental boundary agreements that could benefit proposed AEA participants by providing relief from non-agriculture development and costs. 3. County staff will work with proposed AEA participants to develop projects within the proposed AEA which would qualify for economic development grants or loans to improve agricultural operations.
		<p>Exhibit 1 - Tainter Lake Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Project Final Report</p> <p>Exhibit 2 - Town of Grant Existing Zoning Map</p> <p>Exhibit 3 - Dunn County Land Use Maps, both existing and preferred</p> <p>Exhibit 4 - Media - Local Newspapers, TV Stations, Newsletters</p>

Tainter Lake Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Project Final Report

August 19th, 2011

By Amanda Hanson and Dan Prestebak
Dunn County Land Conservation Division

Implemented by:
Amanda Hanson, Lance Klessig, Greg Leonard, Dan Prestebak
Dunn County Land Conservation Division

In Cooperation with:
Melanie Baumgart, Brian Brezinski, Kirsten Cahow-Scholtes
River Country RC&D (Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.)

The Dunn County Land Conservation Division was awarded a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for the Tainter Lake Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Project. The grant period was January 1, 2010, through July 30, 2011.

The intent of this grant was to continue working with farmers in Grant Township of Dunn County to provide them with the education and tools to implement best management practices to reduce nutrients and sediment leaving their land. The costs of shipping and testing soil samples, rental cost of a no-till drill, custom planting cost of no-till corn planting, and profit analysis were tools offered to participants to assist them in achieving the goals of the project.

Soil testing provides a scientific determination of the crop nutrient needs specific to the soil being tested. Soils maps, instructions, soil information sheets, sample bags and a soil probe were provided to interested participants who signed a simple contract agreeing to discuss the results with staff. Producers returned soil samples, soil information sheets and the soil probe to the Dunn County Land Conservation Office. The samples and information sheets were then forwarded to Wisconsin DATCP state approved laboratories for analysis. The cost of shipping and analyzing the soil samples were paid for through this project. Once the test results were received by staff, they provided the results to the participants and discussed the results as well as fertility management.

Soil sampling turned out to be a very valuable tool because it became a great way to meet and get to know landowners and to get them involved in the project. In some cases it has led to the most desired outcome of adoption of a full nutrient management plan. In other cases it has not, but in all cases it has created a positive relationship between the landowner and the conservation planning staff.

No-till planting of crops disturbs less soil than minimum or conventional tillage resulting in a significant reduction of soil, water, and nutrients leaving the field. Farmers were given the opportunity to try no-till planting.

A custom operator was contracted to plant no-till corn with the cost of the planting (\$14.00/acre in 2010, \$16.00/acre in 2011) covered by the grant. The farmer was responsible for contacting the custom operator prior to planting to discuss the location of the fields to be planted and to top off the diesel fuel tank of the custom operator's tractor before leaving the farm. The farmer provided the seed corn and starter fertilizer (if they chose to use starter fertilizer).

A no-till drill owned by Seeds & Stuff Farm Market, Inc., was contracted and made available to farmers who were interested in planting no-till soybeans or alfalfa. The farmer signed an agreement and notified Seeds & Stuff Farm Market, Inc., of their interest to be placed on the waiting list for planting. The company called the farmer when the drill was available for use. The farmer had to pick up and return the drill, supply the seed, fertilizer, tractor, and labor to plant the field. The grant paid Seeds & Stuff Farm Market, Inc., the contracted fee of \$14.00/acre in 2010 and 2011 after staff verified that the required amount of residue remained after planting.

In 2010, there were 45 landowners with 2,732 cropland acres who received benefits from this grant. Breaking down the totals, 9 producers planted 183 acres of no-till corn, 2 producers planted 279 acres of no-till soybeans and alfalfa, and 34 landowners soil tested 2,270 acres.

Profit analysis calculations were completed with participating farmers after harvest of the crops in 2010. Cost of seed, fertilizer and herbicide are a few examples of the factors used to calculate profit analysis. The average yield of no-till corn was 143 bushels per acre, resulting in an average net profit per acre of \$331.79. Average yield of no-till soybeans was 54 bushels per acre, resulting in an average net profit per acre of \$398.64.

In 2011, there were 17 farmers with 1,906 cropland acres who received benefits from this grant. Breaking down the totals, 10 farmers planted 460 acres of no-till corn, 1 farmer planted 28 acres of no-till soybeans, and 6 farmers soil tested 1,418 acres by taking 308 soil samples.

During 2010, assistance was offered specifically to those farmers operating land in Grant Township of Dunn County. In 2011, farmers operating land in Dunn County within three miles of the border of Grant Township, which includes parts of Colfax, Otter Creek and Sand Creek Townships, were eligible. First year participants were given priority in both 2010 and 2011.

Manure application to land may be a source of nutrients leaving the field. To keep this risk at a minimum, a manure spreader calibration can be preformed. By using portable scales, the volume of manure in a manure spreader can be calculated. This information can be utilized to apply the manure to a field to more precisely meet the nutrient need of

the desired crop. Manure spreader calibrations were offered to those farms generating manure.

Nutrient Management classes were provided by the Dunn County Land Conservation Division and Chippewa Valley Technical College with additional assistance from River Country RC&D and UW-Extension. Farmers were able to choose between creating an electronic plan by utilizing SNAP-Plus which calculates crop nutrient needs, soil loss, and the Wisconsin Phosphorus Index (PI) or a handwritten plan utilizing 590 EZ forms.

Ten farmers (who operate 2,427 acres of cropland) wrote their own plans by participating in these classes. Five farmers chose to write electronic SNAP-Plus plans for 1,049 cropland acres, and five farmers chose to handwrite 590 EZ plans on 1,378 cropland acres. More than 170 soil samples were tested for the 10 farmers. The soil testing and classes were offered at no monetary cost to the farmers with the only investment being their time. Farmers who participated obtained a greater understanding of how their choices directly impact their crop yields, soil fertility, soil loss, and, ultimately, water quality.

The Dunn County Land Conservation Division is currently in the process of calculating the Phosphorus Index for producers who chose the 590 EZ method of developing their Nutrient Management Plan. The Phosphorus Index is a measurement that estimates the amount of phosphorus leaving a field. Soil test results, field slope and length, soil type, nutrient applications, and crop rotation information are all combined in a calculation of the PI value, which is performed by the SNAP-Plus computer program.

Staff met with the Steering Committee throughout the course of the project. During these meetings, staff were given the opportunity to update the Committee on progress and listen to the ideas and suggestions of the Committee. Members of the Steering Committee included representatives from Dunn County LCD, River Country RC&D, Tainter/Menomine Lake Improvement Association, UW-Extension, West Wisconsin Energy, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Education and outreach were also important components of the grant. Both years, meetings were held in the communities where the farmers reside, seeking farmers interested in no-till planting and soil testing before the crops were planted.

In July of 2010, a No-Till Field Day was held in Grant Township. It was hosted by a farmer who had recently tried no-till. This event allowed people to walk in the fields, ask questions, and hear the story directly from the farmer. Due to the positive results with his no-till experience, the host farmer chose to purchase the needed parts to convert his conventional corn planter to a no-till corn planter.

Local newspapers published articles on the progress of this grant. The No-Till Field Day was showcased by a writer at the "Colfax Messenger". The semi-annual report from Dunn County Land Conservation Division and River Country RC&D, as well as reports for the Red Cedar Phosphorus Reduction Program from River Country RC&D, contain

detailed achievements of the project. A featured article in the August, 2010, edition of the "Wisconsin Natural Resources" magazine entitled "Less P is Key" focused on the implementation of this project.

Several presentations on this successful project have been provided to the Dunn County Land Conservation Committee and at events hosted by Sustainable Dunn, the Tainter/Menomine Lake Improvement Association, and also at the St. Croix Basin Protection Conference at UW-River Falls in April of 2011.

The accomplishments of this project were a result of the teamwork between the partners involved in each step along the way. These partners included: Dunn County Land Conservation Division, River Country RC&D, U.W. Extension, Dairyland Laboratories Inc., U.W. Soil Testing Lab, L & M Mail Service, Crossroads Ag, Agri-Tech Services, Seeds & Stuff Farm Market, Inc., Xcel Energy, Town of Grant, Town of Otter Creek, Town of Sand Creek, Town of Colfax, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Tainter/Menomine Lake Improvement Association Inc., Western Wisconsin Energy LLC, Chippewa Valley Technical College, Tom Polen, Bruce Winget, Nelson Farms Inc., the Steering Committee and all of the farmers who volunteered to be a part of this project.

The Tainter Lake Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Project grant has opened up the possibilities to farmers in the area near the Town of Grant, in Dunn County, to reduce nutrients and soil leaving their fields. Through this voluntary project, farmers have chosen to learn more about their farming activities while benefiting from profitable returns through the use of no-till planting of crops, soil testing, and fertility management. These tools were furnished with little to no out-of-pocket expense to the farmers. Participants were provided opportunities to attend events, meet other farmers in their geographical area, and network to further enhance their own agricultural operations.

The public became aware of this success story through meetings, events, and publications. There has been a "bridging" of the gap between urban and rural opinions and general knowledge of sediment and nutrient issues within the watershed. Many farmers have chosen to purchase no-till equipment, modify their conventional equipment to no-till, or have a custom operator plant crops utilizing no-till methods. A majority of these farmers have willingly declined program funding with the intent to pass it on to those farmers who have not had the opportunity to try no-till planting. By reducing nutrients and sediments flowing downstream, the farmers have achieved ultimate success by improving their bottom line, enhancing their farm land, and creating a positive impact on their watershed.

Photos from the Tainter Lake Nutrient & Sediment Reduction Project
All photos of the Project were taken by staff



No-Till Field Day - July, 2010



Lance Klessig and participants evaluate a stand of no-till soybeans during the Field Day

Photos from the Tainter Lake Nutrient & Sediment Reduction Project
All photos of the Project were taken by staff



Greg Leonard speaking to farmers at a meeting before crop season begins



Planting no-till corn

Photos from the Tainter Lake Nutrient & Sediment Reduction Project
All photos of the Project were taken by staff



Planting no-till corn on corn residue



Planting no-till corn on chopped corn residue

Photos from the Tainter Lake Nutrient & Sediment Reduction Project
All photos of the Project were taken by staff



No-till corn field



No-till corn planted on corn residue

Photos from the Tainter Lake Nutrient & Sediment Reduction Project
All photos of the Project were taken by staff

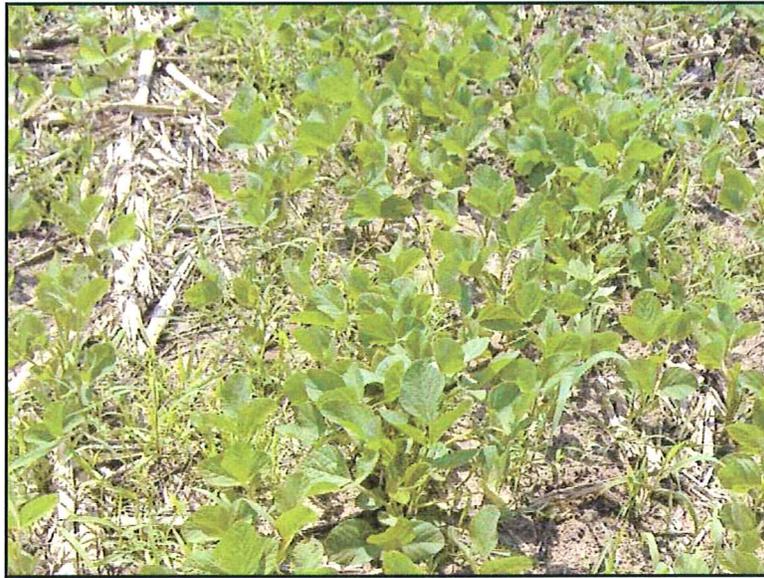


No-till corn planted on alfalfa hay residue



A Grant Township landowner uses the no-till drill to plant soybeans

**Photos from the Tainter Lake Nutrient & Sediment Reduction Project
All photos of the Project were taken by staff**

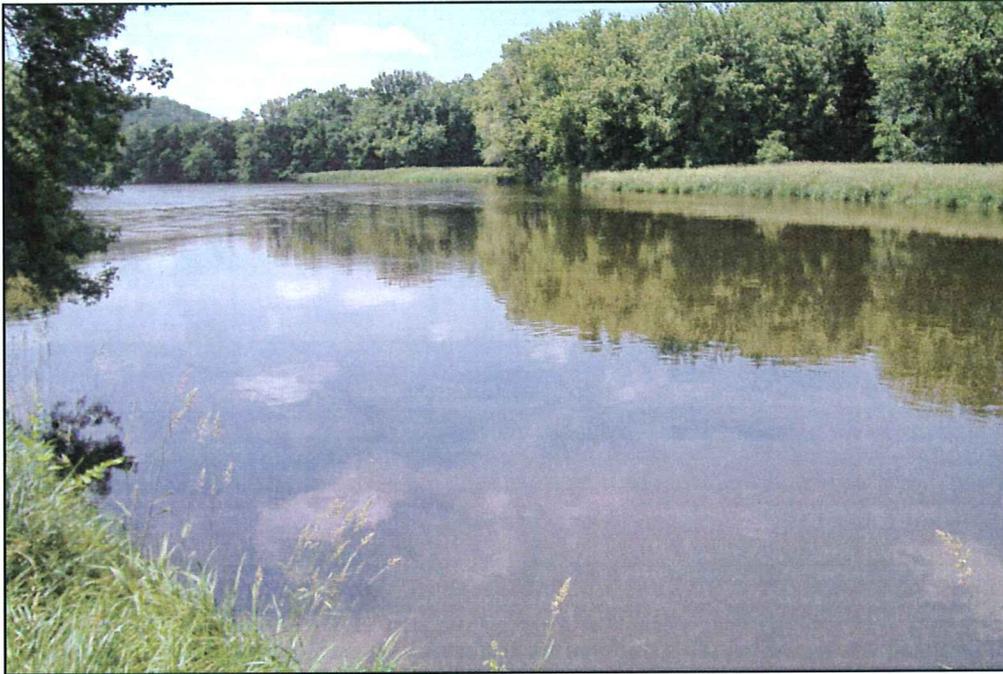


No-till soybeans drilled on corn residue



No-till alfalfa with an oats cover crop

Photos from the Tainter Lake Nutrient & Sediment Reduction Project
All photos of the Project were taken by staff

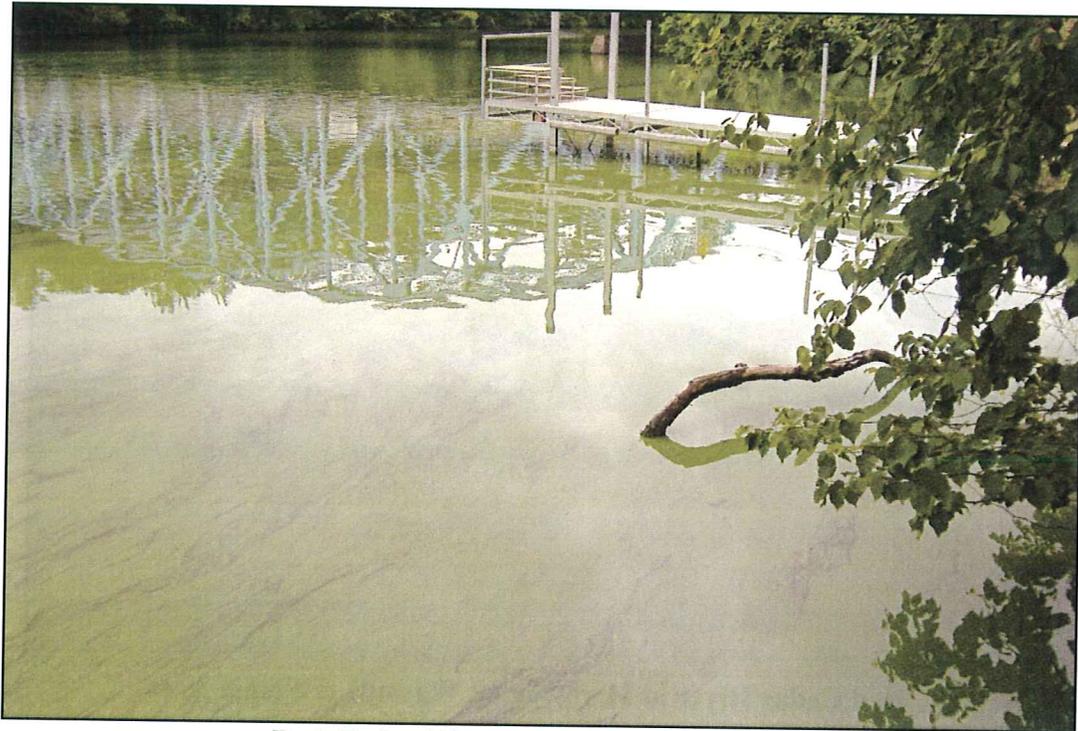


Red Cedar River at Highway 64 Wayside & Picnic Area



**Bridge on County Road D and County Road G at Tainter Lake/Red Cedar River
from Lambs Creek Park**

Photos from the Tainter Lake Nutrient & Sediment Reduction Project
All photos of the Project were taken by staff

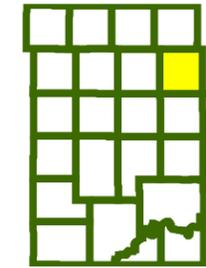


Red Cedar River at Lambs Creek Park

EXISTING ZONING

Town of Grant

Dunn County, Wisconsin



Zoning

- Exclusive Ag
- Agricultural
- Ag Residential
- Commercial
- Restricted Commercial
- Industrial
- Residential 1
- Residential 2
- Rural Housing
- Shoreland Recreational
- Non- Taxed

TRANSPORTATION

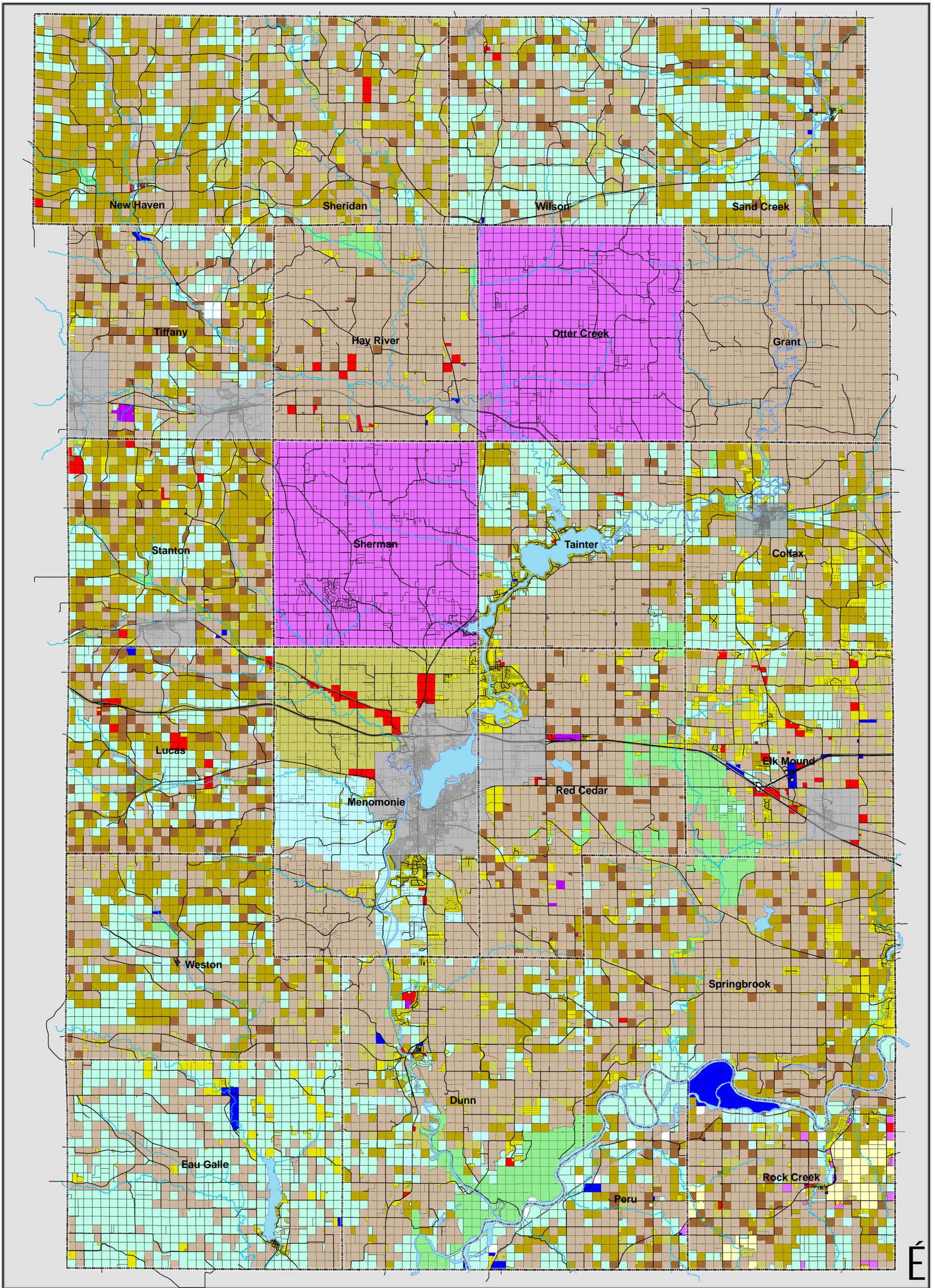
- Interstate
- Federal
- State
- County
- Town

- Sections
- Hydrology



Dunn County

Existing Land Use

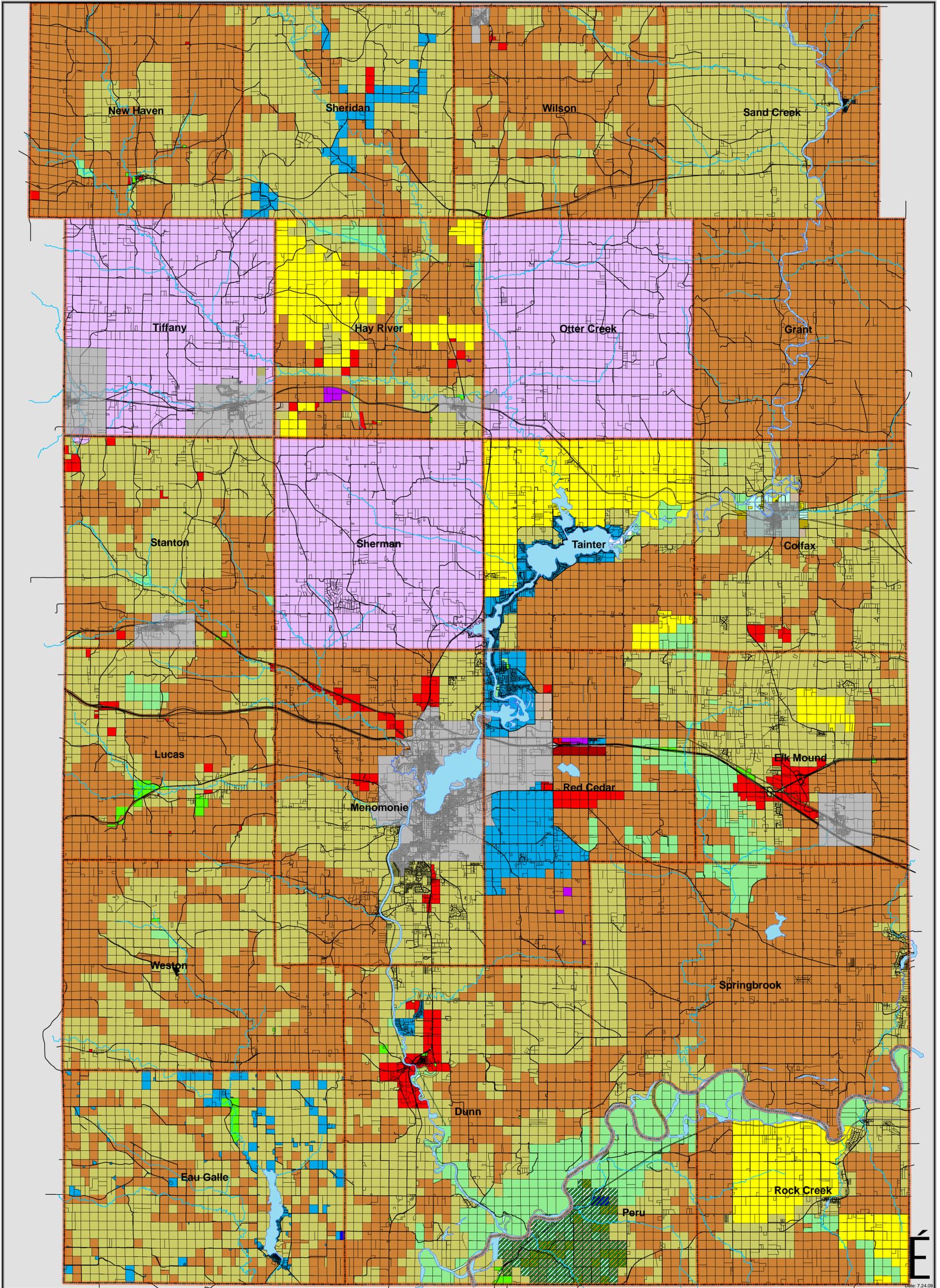


Legend

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|---|----------------|---|---------------------|
|  | Residential-Woods |  | Farmstead |  | Information Pending |
|  | Industrial |  | Residential-Ag |  | Mixed |
|  | Commercial |  | Farmland |  | Public Recreation |
|  | Residential |  | Farmland-Woods |  | Public |
| | | | |  | Irrigated |

Dunn County

Preferred Land Use



0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Legend

	Industrial		Farmland		Highway Commercial
	Commercial		Public Recreation		Conservancy
	Residential		Public		Information Pending
	Residential-Ag		Low Density Residential		

NOTE: Information on this map is generalized for planning purposes which does not replace the need for site-specific evaluation and verification.

This map is a compilation local and county land use maps and is based on the following:

- * Recognizes the future land uses from local comprehensive plans.
- * Preferred land uses are divided into three major categories

- Residential
- Non Residential
- Agriculture



CHIPPEWA VALLEY AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION REPORT

Dunn County – 715-232-1636
Katie Wantoch – Agriculture Agent
Specializing in Economic Development
<http://dunn.uwex.edu>

Eau Claire County – 715-839-4712
Vacant – Agriculture Agent
Erin LaFaive – Horticulture Educator
<http://eauclaire.uwex.edu>

Chippewa County – 715-726-7950
Randy Knapp – Agriculture Agent
Jerry Clark – Crops & Soils Educator
<http://chippewa.uwex.edu>

Volume 3 Issue 1

Winter 2013

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- 6 **Local Group of Land-owners in Northeast-ern Dunn County look-ing into an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA):** *Red Cedar Conference 2013*
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**HAPPY HOLIDAYS
FROM ALL OF US
AT YOUR LOCAL
UW-EXTENSION
OFFICE!**



Upcoming January Meetings—contact local Ag Agent for more info:

Jan. 9th—Reproducing Profitability Workshop in Menomonie & Barron, This solution-oriented workshop will provide farmers with practical ideas delivered by UW experts who will share proven methods and decision-making tools to help them better manage their dairy reproductive program. Menomonie workshop morning and afternoon refreshments will be sponsored by Prairie Ag Supply. Barron workshop refreshments will be sponsored by Lakeland Cooperative and WITC. This workshop is part of the 2013 UW REPRO Road Show Series. Sponsors for this series include: Accelerated Genetics, Adisseo, Animart, Cooperative Resources International (CRI), NorthStar Cooperative and Pfizer Animal Health. Menomonie - Dunn County Judicial Center and Barron – Barron County Electric Cooperative. Cost is \$10 per person. Contact Katie Wantoch, Dunn County, for more information.

Jan. 14th—Farm Financial Recordkeeping Using QuickBooks, CVTC, Meno-monie Make plans to attend this hands-on workshop where attendees will receive information for intermediate level users of QuickBooks and discuss questions you have using QuickBooks for your farm's financial recordkeeping. Come to the work-shop & learn tips, tricks and updates from other participants as well as from Jenny Vanderlin, Center for Dairy Profitability and Stan Schraufnagel, University of Wis-consin-River Falls. Workshop held at the Chippewa Valley Technical College, Menomonie Campus, 403 Technology Drive, Menomonie WI. Cost is \$10 per per-son or \$15 per farm. Contact Katie Wantoch, Dunn County, or Mark Denk, CVTC, for more information.

Jan. 23rd-Feb 27th—Annie's Project, A program for beginning farm women or farm women considering a direct marketing enterprise, AgStar Financial Ser-vices office, Baldwin A new program has been developed to assist farm women who are just starting or are direct-marketing their farm products in Dunn, Pierce, Polk & St. Croix and surrounding counties. The program will be on six consecutive Wednesday s, starting in January through February. The dates are January 23 & 30 and February 6, 13, 20 & 27, from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The cost for this project has been subsidized through grants and sponsorships, so organizers are able to offer this program for \$40 per participant for the entire six week course. This fee covers materials, speakers, and lunch for the six sessions. For more information, or to register for the class, contact Katie Wantoch, Dunn County.

Feb 25th—Winning the Game, launching your pre-harvest marketing plan, Menomonie This half-day workshop gives you an opportunity to develop your own marketing plan. Workshop sponsored by Bremer Bank. Cost is \$10 per person. Contact Katie Wantoch, Dunn County, for more information.

UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment & programming, including Title IX requirements. Requests for reasonable accommoda-tions for disabilities or limitations should be made prior to the date of the program or activity for which it is needed. Please do so as early as possible prior to the program or activity so that proper arrangements can be made. Requests are kept confidential.

Randy's Rumors . . .

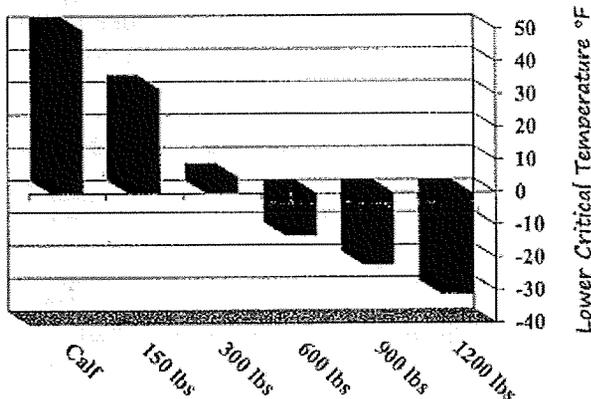


Randy Knapp
Chippewa County Agricultural Agent

Gearing Calves Up for 'Ole Man Winter

As a rule of thumb, if you need to wear a sweatshirt to do chores, temperatures are cool enough to turn your focus on a winter calf management program. Temperatures are now low enough for calves to become cold stressed. The thermal neutral zone (comfort zone) for newborn calves is 50-78°F. Once the temperature reaches below the lower critical temperature of 32°F for our one-month old calves or 50°F for our newborn calves, the energy they consume is now used for maintenance making less available for growth and immune function.

Lower Critical Temperature °F
Holstein Replacement Heifers



If a 100 pound calf has only 1.5 pounds of fat reserves at birth, this fat reserve can easily be depleted within 18 hours under certain conditions. For every 1°F drop below the lower critical temperature, maintenance requirements increase 1%. If increased energy is not provided, calves have the potential to become sick and/or die.

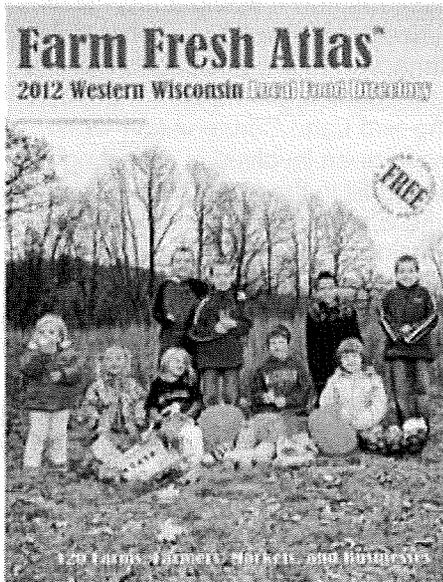
Based on a NAHMS USDA study, only 33% of dairy producers change calf-feeding practices in cold weather. Failure to minimize the effects of cold stress results in depressed immune function, increased risk of sickness, poor response to treatment, decreased growth performance and possible death.

A calf can stand a good deal of cold weather if it is dry and protected from drafts. To minimize cold stress one area of focus is the calf's environment. This environment includes the calf's resting space, feeding area, and walking surface. As temperatures begin to drop in the fall, the following are cold weather comfort indicators:

- A dry, clean place to lie with plenty of clean, dry bedding. Based on UW research, calves tend to lay down nearly 50% of the time during the day and 100% of the time at night. Wet bedding causes the hair coat of the calf to "clump" and lose insulation value. Ideal bedding provides a good base to soak up liquid, provide a "buffer" from the cold ground, provide insulation and allow the calf to nestle. Dairy Calf & Heifer Association (DHCA) gold standards recommend 6 to 12" of bedding per calf or 20-25 pounds of bedding per calf to provide a good base. To maintain the base, 2 to 3 pounds of bedding per day should be added to the pen or hutch. It's the amount of bedding used that is more important than the specific material used.
- Plenty of fresh air with minimal draft. UW-School of Veterinary Medicine research shows as temperatures fall, pneumonia incidences rise. Pneumonia can be attributed to cold stress and calves not meeting their energy need to support their immune systems. Pneumonia can be contributed to air quality as we close up barns during the winter. DCHA Gold Standard indicates indoor ventilation should be 50 cfm during mild weather and 15 cfm during cold weather to provide good air quality while minimizing cold air drafts.
- Provide calf blankets to help keep calves warm. North Dakota State University research shows calves wearing calf blankets during cold weather had 1.4 pounds daily gain from birth to 4 weeks of age as compared to 1.2 pounds of gain by calves with no blanket. Blankets should fit properly and allow room for growth. Blankets should be dry. Monitor blanket usage to minimize sweating or over heating which would affect the insulation value of the calf's hair coat.
- Minimize frost or condensation during very cold weather to minimize bacterial growth in pens and calving environment.

As you manage this winter's calf program, don't forget about the calf's environment and focus on comfort and cleanliness to help your calves thrive this winter season!

2013 FARM FRESH ATLAS APPLICATION WESTERN WISCONSIN (18 COUNTY REGION)



The *Western Wisconsin Atlas* was started in 2006. It lists farms, farmers' markets, and businesses that sell and support locally grown food and use sustainable production and business practices. The 2013 hardcopy of the *Atlas* will be available in early April 2013. It will be released at UWEC when Will Allen from Growing Power speaks at the university.

30,000+ copies will be distributed throughout western Wisconsin, including the Twin Cities.

The Western Region consists of: Barron, Buffalo, Burnett, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Rusk, St. Croix, Sawyer, Trempealeau, and Washburn counties. The *Atlas* will also be distributed in the Twin Cities area.

Interest and purchasing of local food is on the rise, with several counties in the region seeing over a 100 percent increase between 2002 and 2007*.

* courtesy of the USDA 2007 Census of Agriculture
The Wisconsin counties above experienced an 86 percent increase in value of direct market AG products sold between 2002 and 2007 (50 percent statewide), with nine exceeding 100 percent. The 18 Wisconsin counties totaled \$9 million and the seven major Twin Cities counties \$8 million in direct market sales in 2007.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE ATLAS

WHAT IS THE FARM FRESH ATLAS?
The *Atlas* is a publication that lists farmers and businesses that grow, sell, and support locally grown food. This directory includes:

- Farms that direct market
- CSAs
- U-pick farms
- Retailers/Restaurants
- Sponsors
- Farmers' markets

Participants must be family/cooperatively owned and sign a pledge that affirms their commitment to reducing chemical use, raising animals humanely, conserving the environment, and treating workers fairly.

WHY SHOULD I LIST IN THE FARM FRESH ATLAS OF WESTERN WI?

Help your customers find you. The *Atlas* and website puts you on the map. In addition, the *Atlas* helps build our culture of eating local food. The *Atlas* will be distributed at libraries, tourism offices, grocery stores, UW-Extension offices, farmers' markets,

through businesses that sponsor the *Atlas*, etc., and any other business/organization that wants to provide them.

WHO'S BEHIND THE ATLAS?

Farm Fresh Atlas is a trademark of Research, Education, Action, and Policy on Food Group, Inc. used by permission by grassroots coalitions throughout Wisconsin to produce five independent atlases. The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is leading the project for the *Western Wisconsin Farm Fresh Atlas*.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Fill out and return the application form on the back.

Contact Eric Anderson for more information: eanderson@wcvrpc.org or 715.836.2918.

The 2013 paper atlas and website will be available in early April.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

FARMS

- farms – \$50
- farms with 1/8 page ad – \$150

NON-FARM BUSINESSES

Businesses or organizations interested in supporting the development of a local food system and a healthy farm community may place a listing with or without an ad in the *Atlas*.

(All ad prices include listing)

- Listing only – \$150
- 1/8 page ad – \$200
- 1/4 page ad – \$300
- 1/2 page ad – \$600
- One page ad – \$1,200

FARMER'S MARKET

All farmers' markets are free. Days and hours will be listed.

Applications are due January 13, 2013.

CHIPPEWA VALLEY AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION REPORT

Local Group of Landowners in Northeastern Dunn County looking into an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA)

Recently, a group of landowners located in the townships of Grant, Sand Creek, Colfax, Otter Creek and some in Chippewa County are in the process of petitioning to establish an AEA. This would be the first AEA in Dunn County. This designation from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) would bring protection on farm related activities for decades to come. So what is an AEA? See below for information.

An AEA is part of the new Working Lands Initiative, which was setup to replace the original Farmland Preservation Program that many farmers are involved with. An AEA is a tool that can be used to protect the agricultural land base for continued production. In addition, the designation can help to promote investment in agriculture, agricultural infrastructure and agricultural-related businesses. Once an AEA is designated, the eligible farm owners within the area could consider voluntary signing a farmland preservation agreement with the state to protect the land for agriculture and collect state tax

credits that are much higher than the previous Farmland Preservation Program that ended in 2009.

There have been meetings at the Town of Grant town hall the past year to explain the program and answer any questions how it would affect citizens of the area. The meetings have been successful and a core group of landowners are pushing forward to apply by the next deadline on March 13, 2013. Dunn County Planning and Land Conservation Departments have been involved in collecting the data and starting to fill in the application. We are looking to get the word out to other landowners in the area that are interested in being a part of the planning process or joining the group by being in the designated area. For any questions, please contact either office at Dunn County at 715-232-1496 (LCD) or 715-231-6522 (Planning) for more information. You can go to this website to see more details http://datcp.wi.gov/Environment/Working_Lands_Initiative/AEA/index.aspx.

For more information, you can attend a webinar at the Dunn County Government Center, 800 Wilson Ave, Menomonie on **January 3rd** at 2:30pm in room 122/124 (County Board Room).



SAVE THE DATE

The Red Cedar Conference

Thursday, March 14, 2013

University of Wisconsin-Stout
Memorial Student Center
Menomonie, Wisconsin

Learn more at
www.uwstout.edu/profed/redcedar

THURSDAY
MARCH 14, 2013

14



How does the economic and environmental health of the Red Cedar watershed affect you?

Economic Development – Profitable Farming – Water Quality –
Recreational Activities – Tourism – Property Values

Whether you farm, live along the water, or enjoy the impact of the landscape, a day of conversation will be an all benefit of the solution.

Planned Keynote Speakers:

- Mr. Brady Hultaker, President and Executive Director, The Aldo Leopold Foundation
- Dr. Ehsan Hamedy, Associate Professor, Ecological Science, Department of Wisconsin-Whitewater
- Dr. Gary P. Green, Professor, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

Dunn County town seeks special ag status

By Pamela Powers Menomonie News Bureau | Posted: Wednesday, January 23, 2013 12:17 am

MENOMONIE — Town of Grant officials are seeking state designation as an agricultural enterprise area, a Dunn County panel learned Tuesday.

County planner Robert Colson told the Planning, Resources and Development Committee there are at least five landowners in the town — located north of Colfax in the northeastern part of the county — seeking the designation for their properties. Enrollment is voluntary.

Agricultural enterprise areas are part of Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Program, according to the state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Designating land as part of the program is intended to encourage preservation of agricultural land use and promote agricultural economic development.

Landowners in enterprise areas are not subject to new land use regulations, Colson said. Farmers owning land within the program receive tax credits ranging from \$5 to \$10 an acre in exchange for signing an agreement to keep their land in agricultural use for at least 15 years.

"There is a lot of interest in protecting agriculture, the culture and that way of life," Colson said in reference to the town of Grant.

The committee took no action Tuesday but will receive more information about the proposal later this month. The County Board would have to approve the town's enrollment in the program.

The deadline for the town to apply is March 28. Any landowners within the town may opt out.

The footprint of the enterprise area could extend beyond the boundaries of the town, Colson said, including possibly parts of the town of Colfax and into Chippewa County.

Zoning matter

The committee also recommended that the County Board approve the town of Stanton becoming part of county zoning regulations. The town currently is not zoned.

The majority of the town has requested to be zoned as agricultural property, county zoning administrator Cleo Herrick said.

The County Board is scheduled to act on the request Feb. 20.

Powers can be reached at 715-556-9018 or pamela.powers@ecpc.com.

WARNING - The web site you are attempting t

Dunn County family pursues farming deal over frac sand future

Posted: Feb 21, 2013 10:27 PM CST

By Megan Wiebold - bio | email

Town of Grant (WQOW) - Drive anywhere in Wisconsin, and you're bound to see a farm. They dot the landscape from Hudson to Green Bay to Milwaukee. In western Wisconsin, there's a precious commodity beneath those farmlands: sand. Sand companies are paying big bucks to get access. Here's an example: State records show a property owner in Barron County sold 120 acres to a Texas sand company for \$5.5 million. That's \$46,000 an acre.

Sand companies have knocked on many doors in recent years, looking to access the frac sand under the farm land. So is farming Wisconsin's past and sand mining Wisconsin's future? If you ask the Dietsche's from Dunn County, it's a resounding no.

Farming has been in the Dietsche's blood for decades.

"I'm fifth generation farm. My son will be sixth generation," says Dunn County farmer Mark Dietsche. "As everybody knows, the farms are declining. I mean we're definitely a smaller and smaller percent of the population of the United States, and especially in Wisconsin."

And Mark knows his farm is smack dab in the middle of a potential gold mine.

"This hill here is signed up to mine. But we own the land around it, and we own all this bluff over to here," says Mark, pointing to a map. "I cut a road between some fields through the bluff and actually the frac sand in our bluff, we hit it about 3 feet down. We probably could frac sand, at minimum 16 million ton of frac sand."

But even though he knows his land could be worth millions to sand companies, he won't sell.

"I certainly wouldn't begrudge anyone that sold their land for that kind of money. We wouldn't do it," says Mark.

In fact, the Dietsche's are making a commitment to the state to keep their farmland for many years to come. They're among a group of 15 farm families interested in creating an Agricultural Enterprise Zone. That's an area that would provide tax credits to property owners, if they sign a 15-year contract to keep the land as it is now: farmland.

"If you sign a 15-year contract, it goes with the land. So if the land is sold, that contract needs to be upheld by the new owner," Mark says.

The Dietsche family has decided to sign.

"There's no question that we enjoy the rural landscape out here," Mark says.

The creation of the Agriculture Enterprise Zone needs to be approved by every municipality within those 25,000 acres. Dunn County, Sand Creek and Otter Creek have approved it

They're waiting on the boards of the towns of Auburn, Cooks Valley, the village of Colfax, and Chippewa County to say yes.

Once that happens, farms within that area can sign that contract and receive tax credits.