



State of Wisconsin

Land and Water Conservation Board

PO Box 8911
Madison, WI 53708 - 8911
608 - 224 - 4633

Land and Water Conservation Board Agenda

February 3, 2026

The Land and Water Conservation Board (LWCB) will meet on **February 3, 2026**. The board will hold its official business meeting at 9:00 am via Microsoft Teams and at 2811 Agriculture Drive, Boardroom 106, Madison, WI 53718. To attend the meeting remotely, join by telephone at +1 608-571-2209 with Conference ID **199 108 403#** or click the following [hyperlink](#) and register to receive the access link. The agenda for the meeting is 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 2, 2025 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 2026 Officials
- LWCB Chair**
- 9:20 AM 4 Recommendation for approval of LWRM Plan Revision for Crawford County
- Dave Troester, County Conservationist; Gary Koch, LCC Chair**
- 10:05 AM 5 Recommendation for approval of LWRM Plan Revision for Sawyer County
- Tim Seidl, Assistant Conservationist; Natalie Erler, Conservation Technician; Steve Kariainen, LCC Chair**

*Mark Cupp, Chair; Monte Osterman, Vice Chair
Brian McGraw, Secretary*

*Members: Andrew Buttlers; Ron Grasshoff; Rebecca Clarke; Mike Hofberger; D.J. Nichols
Andrew Potts; Tim Anderson; Jason Knutson*

- 10:50 AM 6 Reviewing LWRM Plans for Members and Advisors
Jenn Chakravorty, DATCP
- 11:20 AM 7 LWCB Advisory Committee on Research - Discussion on Status and Future of the Committee
Ron Grasshoff, LWCB; Kirsten Biefeld, Jenn Chakravorty, DATCP
- 11:30 AM 8 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 9 Planning for April 2026 LWCB Meeting -
Mark Cupp, LWCB
- 12:05 PM 10 Adjourn

MINUTES
LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING

December 2, 2025
2811 Agriculture Drive, Board Room &
Microsoft Teams Meeting

Item #1 Call to Order—pledge of allegiance, open meeting notice, approval of agenda, approval of October 7, 2025, LWCB meeting minutes.

Call to Order

The Land and Water Conservation Board (Board) met in person at 2811 Agriculture Drive, Madison WI 53718 and over Microsoft Teams on **December 2, 2025**. 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, Monte Osterman, Brian McGraw, Andy Buttles, Ron Grasshoff, Rebecca Clarke, Mike Hofberger, Tim Anderson, Andrew Potts, D.J. Nichols, and Jason Knutson. A quorum was present.

Advisors: Nathan Fikkert (NRCS), Ian Krauss (FSA), Matt Krueger (WI Land + Water), and Amber Radatz (UW CALS)

Approval of Agenda

Motion

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

Approval of Minutes

Motion

Hofberger motioned to approve the October 7, 2025, meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Potts, 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

No public appearance cards were submitted.

Item #3 Recommendation for approval of LWRM Plan Revision for Iowa County

Katie Abbott, County Conservationist and Dave Gollon, LCC Chair formally requested a recommendation of approval from the Board regarding the County's LWRM plan revision.

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, McGraw motioned to recommend approval of Iowa County’s LWRM plan revision, seconded by Anderson, and the motion carried unanimously.

Item #4 Recommendation for approval of LWRM 5-Year Plan Revision for Adams County

Colton Wolosek, County Conservationist; John West, LCC Chair; Fred Heider, North Central WI RPC; formally requested a recommendation of approval from the Board regarding the County’s LWRM plan revision.

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, Hofberger motioned to recommend approval of Adams County’s 5-year LWRM plan review, seconded by Grasshoff, and the motion carried unanimously.

Item #5 Introduction to Producer-Led Groups

Dani Heisler, Producer-Led Program Manager presented an introduction to the Producer-Led Watershed Grant Program.

Item #6 Recommendation for approval of LWRM Plan Revision for Sheboygan County

Tyler Betry, County Conservationist; Rebecca Clarke, LCC Chair formally requested a recommendation of approval from the Board regarding the County’s LWRM Plan Revision.

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, McGraw motioned to recommend approval of Sheboygan County’s LWRM 5-Year plan review, seconded by Osterman, and the motion carried unanimously.

Item #7 Approval of Proposed 2026 LWCB Annual Agenda

Jenn Chakravorty, DATCP presented the 2026 annual agenda.

After a discussion between the Board and County representatives, McGraw motioned to recommend approval of the 2026 LWCB Annual Agenda, seconded by Anderson, and the motion carried unanimously.

Item #8 LWCB Advisory Committee on Research – Committee Updates

Kirsten Biefeld, DATCP and Ron Grasshoff discussed outcomes of the November meeting of the LWCB Advisory Committee on Research. Following the November Committee meeting, a questionnaire was circulated to Board members and advisors to solicit input on educational topics for upcoming board meetings. The Board discussed the future of the Committee and expectations of recommendations to follow the January meeting of the Committee.

Item #9 Agency Reports

- a. FSA- Ian Krauss provided a written report that is available online at the Land and Water Conservation Board website within the December 2, 2025 [meeting packet](#).
- b. NRCS- No report provided.
- c. UW-Extension- No report provided.
- d. WI Land + Water- Krueger shared a video featuring the Conservation Farmer of the Year, Roger Bindl. In addition, Krueger reported that the association surveyed counties to determine the impact of increasing the allocation for SWRM staffing grant awards under the 2025-2027 biennial budget. The majority of respondents indicated that the awards would not increase their capacity to put additional conservation on the landscape.
- e. DOA- Potts reported monitoring ongoing bills in the legislature related to agriculture including: AB 93 for changes to requirements that apply to fertilizers and soil or plant additives that are produced from converting manure into compost or vermicompost and their derivatives, AB 118 for a transition to grass pilot, AB 310 for a nutrient loss reduction grant.
- f. DATCP- Anderson submitted a written report that is available online at the Land and Water Conservation Board website within the December 2, 2025 [meeting packet](#).
- g. DNR- Knutson submitted a written report that is available online at the Land and Water Conservation Board website within the December 2, 2025 [meeting packet](#).
- h. Member Updates- No member updates

Item #10 Planning for the February 2026 LWCB Meeting

The Board should expect the following at the next LWCB meeting, which will be a hybrid meeting:

- LWRM Plan Revision for Crawford and Sawyer Counties
- Report and Potential Recommendation on the 2026 CREP Spending Authority
- Election of 2026 Officers
- LWCB Advisory Committee on Research Updates

- Board Education Item

Item #11 Adjourn

Motion

Osterman motioned to adjourn, seconded by Knutson, and the motion carried unanimously. The business meeting was adjourned at 1:33 p.m.

DRAFT

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM _____ **State of Wisconsin**

DATE: February 3, 2026

TO: Land and Water Conservation Board Members and Advisors

FROM: Jenn Chakravorty , DATCP
Resource Management Section,
Bureau of Land and Water Resources

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Approval of the *Crawford County Land and Water Resource Management Plan*

Action Requested: This is an action item. The department has determined that the *Crawford County Land and Water Resource Management Plan* meets applicable statutory and rule requirements and requests that the LWCB make a recommendation regarding approval of the plan consistent with the Board's guidance.

Summary: The plan is written as a 10 year plan, and if approved, the plan would remain in effect through December 31, 2036, and would be subject to a five-year review prior to December 31, 2031.

DATCP staff reviewed the plan using the checklist and finds that the plan complies with all the requirements of section 92.10, Wisconsin Statutes, and Chapter ATCP 50, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

To qualify for 10-year approval of its plan, Crawford County must submit an annual work plan meeting DATCP requirements during each year of its 10-year plan approval.

Crawford County held a public hearing on November 11, 2025, as part of its public input and review process. The Crawford County Land Conservation Committee will present the LWRM plan for County Board approval after receiving a recommendation for approval from the LWCB.

Materials Provided:

- LWRM Plan Review Checklist
- Completed LWRM Plan Review form
- 2025 workplan with accomplishments and current 2026 workplan

Presenters: Dave Troester, Crawford County Conservationist
Gary Koch, Land Conservation Committee Chair



Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
 Agricultural Resource Management Division
 2811 Agriculture Drive, PO Box 8911
 Madison WI 53708-8911
 Phone: (608) 224-4608

Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM)

LWRM Plan Review Checklist

Wis. Stats. § 92.10 & Wis. Adm. Code § ATCP 50.12.

County: Crawford

Date Plan Submitted for Review: 10/20/2025

I. ADVISORY COMMITTEE		Yes	No	Page
1.	Did the county convene a local advisory committee that included a broad spectrum of public interests and perspectives (such as affected landowners, partner organizations, government officials, educational institutions)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3-1, A-1
II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COUNTY BOARD APPROVAL				Date(s)
1.	Provide the dates that the local advisory committee met to discuss the development of the LWRM plan and the county plan of work			6/16/25, 7/1/25, 9/9/25
2.	Provide the date the county held a public hearing on the LWRM plan ¹			11/11/25
3.	Provide the date of county board approval of the plan, or the date the county board is expected to approve the plan after the LWCB makes its recommendation. ²			will be after LWCB recommendation
III. RESOURCE ASSESSMENT AND WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES		Yes	No	Page
1.	Does the plan include the following information as part of a county-wide resource assessment:			
a.	Soil erosion conditions in the county ³ , including:			
i.	identification of areas within county that have high erosion rates or other soil erosion problems that merit action within the next 10 years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2-3, 2-4, 3-2, 3-3, D-7, D-8
b.	Water quality conditions of watersheds in the county ³ , including:			

¹ Appropriate notice must be provided for the required public hearing. The public hearing notice serves to notify landowners and land users of the results of any determinations concerning soil erosion rates and nonpoint source water pollution, and provides an opportunity for landowners and land users input on the county's plan. Individual notice to landowners is required if the landowners are referenced directly in the LWRM plan. DATCP may request verification that appropriate notice was provided.

² The county board may approve the county LWRM plan after the department approves the plan. The plan approved by the county board must be the same plan approved by the department. If the department requires changes to a plan previously approved by the county board, the department's approval does not take effect until the county board approves the modified plan.

³ Counties should support their analysis of soil and water conditions by referencing relevant land use and natural resource information, including the distribution of major soil types and surface topographic features, and land use categories and their distribution. Sec. ATCP 50.12(3)(b) requires that a county assemble relevant data, including relevant land use, natural resource, water quality and soil data.

- i. location of watershed areas, showing their geographic boundaries 2-5, Appendix D (D-3)
- ii. identification of the causes and sources of the water quality impairments and pollutant sources 2-6
- iii. identification of areas within the county that have water quality problems that merit action within the next 10 years. 2-5 to 2-8, D-4, D-11, D-12, D-13

2. Does the LWRM plan address objectives by including the following:

- a. specific water quality objectives identified for each watershed based upon the resource assessment, if available 2-6
- b. pollutant load reduction targets for the watersheds, if available 2-6

Other comments:

IV. DNR CONSULTATION

Yes No Page

- 1. Did the county consult with DNR⁴ to obtain water quality assessments, if available; to identify key water quality problem areas; to determine water quality objectives; and to identify pollutant load reduction targets, if any; and to review NR 151 implementation _____

Other comments: Regional coordinator, met with Andrew Craig, plan sent to additional DNR staff for review

V. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Yes No Page

- 1. Does the LWRM plan include the following implementation components: :
 - a. A voluntary implementation strategy to encourage adoption of farm conservation practices 4-5, 4-6
 - b. State and local regulations used to implement the plan 4-2, 4-3
 - c. Compliance procedures that apply for failure to implement the conservation practices in ATCP 50, ch. NR 151 and related local regulations 4-4, 4-5, 4-6,

⁴ While requirements for DNR consultation may be satisfied by including relevant DNR representatives on the advisory committee, counties may also need to interact with DNR staff in central or regional offices to meet all of the consultation requirements. DNR may point counties to other resources to obtain information including consultants who can calculate pollutant load reduction targets.

- d. Relevant conservation practices to achieve compliance with performance standards and prohibitions and to address identified water quality and erosion problems 4-5
- e. A system for meeting county responsibilities to monitor the compliance of participants in the farmland preservation program 3-6, 4-3, 4-4

- 2. Does the LWRM plan (or accompanying work plan) estimate:
 - a. expected costs of implementing the plan including cost-sharing for conservation practices needed to achieve plan objectives Appendix B
 - b. the staff time needed to provide technical assistance and education and outreach to implement the plan. Appendix B

- 3. Does the LWRM plan describe a priority farm strategy designed to make reasonable progress in implementing state performance standards and conservation practices on farms appropriately classified as a priority; **as of 2024, ATCP 50.12(2)(f) also calls for identification of priority areas of resource concern for the county** 4-3, 4-4

Other comments: 2026 work pla includes goals do transect suvey for soil erosion; thanks for acknowledging data gap and showing that you're working on getting more info

VI. OUTREACH AND PARTNERING	Yes	No	Page
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- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Does the LWRM plan describe a strategy to provide information and education on soil and water resource management, conservation practices and available cost-share funding | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4-1, 4-2 |
| 2. Does the LWRM plan describe coordination activities with local, state and federal agencies? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4-2, 4-6, 4-7 |

Other comments: _____

VII. WORK PLANNING AND PROGRESS MONITORING	Yes	No	Page
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- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|----|
| 1. Does the county's most recent annual work plan ⁵ do both of the following: | | | |
| a. Provide measurable performance benchmarks | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | NA |
| b. Identify priorities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | NA |

⁵ Counties must submit annual work plan by no later than April 15th of every year to meet the requirement in s. ATCP 50.12(2)(i) for counties to have multi-year work plans.

-
2. Does the LWRM plan describe a strategy and framework for monitoring county progress implementing its plan including methodology to track and measure progress in meeting performance benchmarks and plan objectives
-



6-1, 6-2

Other comments:

VIII. EPA SECTION 319 CONSIDERATIONS

1. IS THE COUNTY WORKING WITH DNR TO SEEK EPA APPROVAL OF THIS PLAN AS MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF A 9 KEY ELEMENT PLAN UNDER SECTION 319 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT: N/A
-

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff has reviewed the above-referenced county LWRM plan based on the criteria required in s. ATCP 50.12, Wis. Admin. Code, and s. 92.10, Stats., and has determined that the plan meets the criteria for DATCP approval of this plan. This checklist review is prepared to enable the LWCB to make recommendations regarding plan approval, and for DATCP to make its final decision regarding plan approval.

Staff Signature: Jennifer Chakravorty

Date: 12/12/25



Land and Water Conservation Board
County Land and Water Resource Management Plan
Review of LWRM Plan Revisions

County: Crawford

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 within the last five years 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.

The biggest obstacle that we have found for most farms to be fully compliant with the NR 151 agricultural performance standards and prohibitions has been the need for farms to develop a Nutrient Management Plan. Expanding the amount of land covered by a Nutrient Management Plan has been a big priority for us. We have found that the biggest driving factor in NMP development has been participation in the Farmland Preservation Program. In 2022, the Town of Freeman adopted Farmland Preservation Zoning so we had a great opportunity to boost FPP participation and thus the amount of land covered by a NMP. We were able to work with the Town and with UW NPM staff to host three introductory FPP/NMP farmer certification classes at a central location in the town. We have also held additional NMP update sessions the last few winters. This has led to an additional 2,299 acres of crop ground covered by a NMP. In 2015, Crawford County had 11% of its cropland covered under a NMP. By 2024 that amount had increased to 21%!

In 2020, Crawford County joined Richland and Vernon Counties in a collaborative private well testing effort known as the Driftless Area Water Study (DAWS). The Stevens Point Well-Water Data Viewer reflected minimal well testing records within Crawford County. We were very excited to collaborate with our neighboring counties to provide outreach to our residents on the importance of regular private well testing, to assist financially with the testing expenses, and to increase the amount of water quality data in the county. Rounds of coordinated well testing occurred in Fall 2020, Spring of 2021, Fall of 2022, and Fall of 2024. In total, Crawford County coordinated the testing of 269 wells over those four efforts. Crawford County is planning to continue these sampling efforts over the next 10 years and will be monitoring for potential trends that may form.

A conservation practice included in our annual work plans that has increased in popularity in recent years is the installation of Grade Stabilization Structures. Based upon past trends, we have been planning to assist with 6 grade stabilization structures each year in our LWRM work plans. In 2020, we actually assisted with 17 of these structures. In 2021, we assisted with 15. In 2022, we helped install 4 grade stabilizations. In 2023, we assisted with 18 of them. In 2024, we completed

another 16 of these structures. In 2025, we were able to assist with the installation of 19 grade stabilizations. As you can see, these structures are very popular with our landowners as they do a great job of catching sediment and controlling classic gully erosion after heavy rainfall events and is probably something we want to increase in our annual LWRM work plans.

One last practice to highlight that we have had great landowner interest in is our cost-sharing of private well abandonments. Most well drillers that work with our Crawford County homeowners know that if a new well is needed that it is critical to properly abandon the old well and they will send the homeowners to us for financial assistance to ensure that abandonment gets completed. The Crawford County Land Conservation Department feels that proper well abandonment is a critical process to help prevent potential contamination of a direct conduit to our groundwater.

2. Identify any areas where the county was unable to make desired progress in implementing activities identified in recent 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.

With the steep terrain of Crawford County, we feel that contour strips are paramount to reducing soil erosion from our agricultural fields. What was once a staple of the ridgetop fields of the area, now seems to be a more difficult practice to convince farmers to maintain or implement. We still assist farmers every year putting ground into contour strips. However, we feel that we have seen a trend of farms going to all no-till corn and beans and not wanting contour strips any longer. We have seen the number of acres of contour strips installed lessen over the years, which has been reflected in our annual work plans. For years, we reliably helped lay out 500-600 acres in contour strips each year, but beginning around 2020, we saw a noticeable reduction in the interest in strips. We have lowered our work plan goal to 250 acres annually the last 4 years, which has been a pretty accurate number. Future work plans will reflect efforts to assist cash grain producers with utilizing cover crops to assist with erosion reduction.

Due to increased construction costs due to higher standards needed to handle increased storm-related flows, landowners are less interested in streambank stabilization projects. We have noticed that since around 2018/2019, heavy rainstorms have become more frequent and have 'blown out' numerous rip-rap stabilizations. Even with DATCP or NRCS cost-share dollars, landowners are now very hesitant to risk thousands of dollars of their own money on a project that can be wiped out with a heavy rain. For sites that survive a heavy flow surge, there is still usually repair work needed to be done which is an additional cost to the landowner. In our 2020 work plan, we planned to assist with 7 streambank projects but only ended up working on 3 of them. In 2021, we planned for 4 but only worked on a couple of them. Since 2022, we have been planning to work on 1 streambank project each year, but we have not worked on a single streambank project in that time.

3. Describe the county's approach to implementation of its priority farm strategy including outreach, farm inventories and making use of multiple funding sources. How has the county evaluated the effectiveness of its priority farm strategy and used this information to improve implementation of the agricultural performance standards and conservation practices on farms?

Our first priority is to both ensure that current Farmland Preservation Program participants maintain their conservation compliance and that new claimants take the steps necessary to become compliant. As mentioned in our answer to Question #1, we assisted the Town of Freeman in promoting and adopting Farmland Preservation Zoning and then helped coordinate farmer training sessions to help bring farmers into compliance with the conservation standards. There was a lot of outreach that went along with this, which has proven to be the most successful approach to conservation compliance in the county. Crawford County will continue to attempt to convince other townships to consider FP Zoning as FPP participation is such a proven instrument to get more crop ground covered by NMPs. When the county receives complaints about a farm operation, which thankfully have been fairly infrequent, an on-site farm visit has been conducted to assess the situation and LCD staff work with the operator to find a path towards compliance. In situations involving manure runoff, LCD staff will consult with DNR and DATCP staff to resolve the issue.

With this new plan revision, Crawford County is looking to target more conservation where it is needed most, such as in watersheds with impaired waters or in areas with documented higher nitrate concentrations. Efforts will be made to provide targeted outreach in order to increase public interest in conservation efforts in those areas.

4. Provide representative examples that show changes in direction in the county's LWRM plan and annual work plans, with specific examples provided showing adjustments in goals, objectives or planned activities.

Crawford County has become more involved with private well testing and has added tasks tied to that into our annual work plans. We have been conducting coordinated testing projects every year or two and look to continue those efforts. Crawford County has dedicated funds to helping to cover some, or all, of the sampling costs in order to obtain general water quality results.

Aquatic invasive species outreach has become a large part of the LCD's workload ever since the WI DNR began allocating funds directly to each county (starting in 2021). With those funds, the county is able to hire an AIS Coordinator/ Intern to provide outreach, specifically Clean Boats, Clean Waters outreach, to the angling and boating communities. While all types of invasive species control efforts have always been important to Crawford County, these DNR funds have allowed us to specifically target aquatic invasive species to help protect our streams and rivers.

Please consider answering the following optional question (not to exceed 1 page)

1. The LWCB is interested in learning how county conservation staff are addressing changing weather patterns. To this end, the LWCB reached out to WI Land+Water for guidance, see the [WI Land+Water memo](#) dated for October 28, 2020. Your response to the following question will be appreciated.

Is climate change resiliency contained in your LWRM plan (Yes or No). If yes, indicate with page number(s) or statement(s) where within the LWRM plan it is located and please consider the factors below, as examples, in your answer.

- a. *Plants and natural communities (forests, wetlands, prairies, invasive species)*
- b. *Soil and agriculture*
- c. *Weather (growing season, seasonal temperatures, precipitation)*
- d. *Infrastructure*
- e. *Land owners (residents)*
- f. *Water resources (groundwater and surface water quality and quantity)*
- g. *Fisheries*
- h. *Wildlife*
- i. *Human health and recreation*

Climate Change is discussed in Section 2-9, where we present data that shows that on average, Crawford County follows statewide trends by getting both warmer and wetter since 1950. We also discuss the increase soil erosion risks climate change brings to the Driftless Area with its rugged topography.

In Section 6-3, we reference a WI DNR Fisheries report that lists climate change as one of the major challenges facing Crawford County trout populations.

Several climate change maps reflecting UW-Madison Nelson Institute Center for Climatic Research data are included in Appendix D (D-16 & D-17).

Annual Work Plans

Attach both of the following:

- a. The most current annual work plan, prepared in the current format from DATCP, and addresses all required items such as needed funding and staff hours.
- b. The work plan for the previous year that includes a column that identifies the progress in implementing the planned activities for that year.

Presentation Regarding County Resource Concerns

Prepare and present an 8-10 minute snapshot to the board regarding county resources and management issues. The county must prepare one of following as part of this brief presentation:

- a. A PowerPoint (showing what your county looks like, can include maps), or
- b. A hand out (2 page max)

Guidance on Board Review Process

The LWCB's review supplements, but does not replace compliance with the DATCP checklist for LWRM plan approval. This encourages and supports honest presentations from the county. The county is strongly encouraged to have the LCC chair or committee member be a part of the presentation to the Board to contribute policy and other insights to the discussion. 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.

Land Conservation Committee Notification

The LCC was provided a completed copy of this form (including attachments) on: 12/5/2025

Signature of Authorized Representative: David Toedt **Date:** 12/9/2025
(e.g. County Conservationist, LCC chair)

Send completed form and attachments to:
jennifer.chakravorty@wisconsin.gov

**CRAWFORD COUNTY 2025 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> 	<p><i>Increase county NMP-covered acres by 300 acres</i> <i>Review 500 acres of NMP Checklists/ NR151 compliance</i> <i>Assist with 2 acres of grassed waterways</i> <i>Promote cover crops with expected goals of 500 acres of land seeded to cover crops in the county</i> <i>Lay out 250 acres of contour strips</i></p>	<p><i>*Increase of 1,301 acres of NMP-covered ground</i> <i>*17,352 acres of checklists received and preliminarily reviewed for red-flag compliance issues, ~500 acres reviewed more thoroughly</i> <i>*1.1 acres of grassed waterway installed</i> <i>*1,116 acres of cover crops seeded down</i> <i>*Laid out 140 acres of contour strips</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Livestock</i> 	<p><i>Permit and assist with 1 manure storage structure</i> <i>Close 1 manure storage structure</i> <i>Develop 2 grazing systems</i></p>	<p><i>*No new storage structures</i> <i>*No storage abandonments</i> <i>*Assisted with development of 3 grazing plans</i> <i>*23,000’ of fencing installed</i> <i>*673’ of trails/ walkways installed</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Water quality</i> 	<p><i>Assist with 1 streambank project</i> <i>Assist with 7 well-closing projects</i> <i>Assist with 6 grade stabilization projects</i> <i>Inspect, enroll, or re-enroll 4 properties in CREP</i> <i>Pursue strategies to increase voluntary well testing in the county</i> <i>Test 50 private wells under the DAWS water study</i></p>	<p><i>*Assisted with 2 streambank restorations</i> <i>*3 well decommissionings</i> <i>*19 grade stabilizations</i> <i>*Inspected 7 CREP sites</i> <i>*Distributed 10 well testing kits and provided outreach to those homeowners</i> <i>*Did not conduct any coordinated well testing</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Forestry</i> 	<p><i>Assist with 1 stream crossing project</i> <i>Assist with 500’ of forest access roads</i></p>	<p><i>*No stream crossings installed</i> <i>*1,764’ of forest access roads</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Invasive species</i> 	<p><i>Coordinate DNR Lake Monitoring and Protection</i> <i>50 landing visits for CBCW surveys & outreach</i> <i>Network Grant for invasive species</i></p>	<p><i>*Conducted CBCW/ watercraft inspections at 9 different landings in the county (58 days where inspections occurred)</i> <i>*Presented AIS information at several youth events and at the department booth at the county fair</i></p>

**CRAWFORD COUNTY 2025 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

- *Wildlife*

Wildlife-Wetlands-Habitat (other than forestry or invasive species)	Coordinate the county's wildlife damage program Sell 4,500 trees during county's annual tree sale	*5 property owners in the program *4,360 trees/ shrubs sold
--	--	--

- *Watershed*

Watershed strategies	Promote DATCP's Farmer-Led Watershed Program	*Provide conservation compliance information to 2 landowners in the Tainter Creek Watershed
-----------------------------	--	---

- *Other*

Other	Coordinate County's NRI35 NMM Reclamation Ordinance Inspect and maintain county's PL-566 dam Conduct annual Clean Sweep event (e-waste, Rx, chemicals) Conduct annual Tire Collection Event	*1 inspection done on Blackhawk/ Kickapoo #6 PL-566 dam *Clean Sweep event held in October... 7,048 pounds of chemicals collected, 26,309 pounds of electronics collected, and a large quantity of prescription drugs *Conducted tire collection event on June 21, 2025
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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	2	2
Manure storage closure	0	0
Livestock facility siting	0	0
Nonmetallic/frac sand mining	0	0
Stormwater and construction site erosion control		
Shoreland zoning	10	8
Wetlands and waterways (Ch. 30)	14	14
Other		

**CRAWFORD COUNTY 2025 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

Table 3: Planned inspections

Inspections	Number of inspections planned
Total Farm Inspections	40
For FPP	0
For NR 151	0
Animal waste ordinance	2
Livestock facility siting	1
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	1
Nonmetallic mining	5
	3

Table 4: Planned outreach and education activities

Activity	Number
Tours	1
Field days	2
Trainings/workshops	2
School-age programs (camps, field days, classroom)	4
Newsletters	
Social media posts	20
News release/story	10
	200
	5

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

Staff/Support	Hours	Costs
<i>County Conservationist</i>	1950	\$106,000
<i>Conservation Specialist</i>	1950	\$96,250
<i>Clerk</i>	1950	\$61,000
<i>AIS Intern</i>	500	\$7,500
<i>Support Costs</i>	N/A	\$5,000
Cost Sharing (can be combined)		
<i>Bonding</i>	N/A	\$51,000
<i>SEG</i>	N/A	\$8,000

**CRAWFORD COUNTY 2026 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> 	<p>Cropland, soil health and/or nutrient management</p> <p><i>Increase county NMP-covered acres by 300 acres</i> <i>Review 500 acres of NMP Checklists/ NR151 compliance</i> <i>Assist with 2 acres of grassed waterways</i> <i>Promote cover crops with expected goals of 500 acres of land seeded to cover crops in the county</i> <i>Lay out 250 acres of contour strips</i></p>	<p><i>Type and units of practice(s) installed</i> <i># of acres of cover crops</i> <i># of acres of NMP Checklist acres</i> <i># of acres of strips laid out</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Livestock</i> 	<p>Livestock</p> <p><i>Permit and assist with 1 manure storage structure</i> <i>Close 1 manure storage structure</i> <i>Develop 2 grazing systems</i> <i>Obtain manure spreading agreements from permitted facilities</i></p>	<p><i>Type and units of practice(s) installed or permits issued</i> <i># of livestock facilities in compliance with a performance standard</i> <i># agreements obtained</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Water quality</i> 	<p>Water quality/quantity (other than activities already listed in other categories)</p> <p><i>Assist with 1 streambank project</i> <i>Assist with 7 well-closing projects</i> <i>Assist with 6 grade stabilization projects</i> <i>Inspect, enroll, or re-enroll 4 properties in CREP</i> <i>Pursue strategies to increase voluntary well testing in the county</i> <i>Test 100 private wells under the DAWS water study</i></p>	<p><i>Type and units of practice(s) installed</i> <i># CREP inspections, enrollments, or re-enrollments</i> <i># of private wells tested with county assistance (outreach or coordinated sampling effort)</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Forestry</i> 	<p>Forestry</p> <p><i>Assist with 1 stream crossing project</i> <i>Assist with 500' of forest access roads</i></p>	<p><i>Type and units of practice(s) installed</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Invasive</i> 		
<p>Invasive species</p>	<p><i>Coordinate DNR Lake Monitoring and Protection</i> <i>50 landing visits for CBCW surveys & outreach</i> <i>Network Grant for invasive species</i></p>	<p><i># of surveys completed</i> <i># of outreach activities</i> <i># of control efforts implemented/sites treated</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Wildlife</i> 	<p>Wildlife-Wetlands-Habitat (other</p> <p><i>Coordinate the county's wildlife damage program</i></p>	<p><i># of landowners enrolled in program</i></p>

**CRAWFORD COUNTY 2026 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

than forestry or invasive species)	Sell 4,500 trees during county's annual tree sale	# of trees sold
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watershed 		
Watershed strategies	Promote DATCP's Farmer-Led Watershed Program Conduct a Transect Survey of the county to determine watershed soil erosion rates	Number of meetings attended/presentations given Modeling completed Number of partner contacts made Information system/tracking developed Number of partnership development activities accomplished
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other 		
Other	Coordinate County's NRI 35 NMM Reclamation Ordinance Inspect and maintain county's PL-566 dam Conduct annual Clean Sweep event (e-waste, Rx, chemicals) Conduct annual Tire Collection Event	# of PL-566 inspections # lbs of chemicals collected # lbs of electronics collected # lbs of tires collected

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	1	1
Manure storage closure	1	1
Livestock facility siting	1	1
Nonmetallic/frac sand mining	1	1
Stormwater and construction site erosion control		
Shoreland zoning	15	13
Wetlands and waterways (Ch. 30)		
Other		

**CRAWFORD COUNTY 2026 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

Table 3: Planned inspections

Inspections	Number of inspections planned
Total Farm Inspections	30
For FPP	30
For NR 151	30
Animal waste ordinance	2
Livestock facility siting	1
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	
Nonmetallic mining	5

Table 4: Planned outreach and education activities

Activity	Number
Tours	1
Field days	2
Trainings/workshops	2
School-age programs (camps, field days, classroom)	4
Newsletters	
Social media posts	20
News release/story	10

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

Staff/Support	Hours	Costs
<i>County Conservationist</i>	1950	\$109,000
<i>Conservation Specialist</i>	1950	\$98,750
<i>Clerk</i>	1950	\$62,750
<i>AIS Intern</i>	500	\$7,800
<i>Support Costs</i>	N/A	\$5,000
Cost Sharing (can be combined)		
<i>Bonding</i>	N/A	\$51,000
<i>SEG</i>	N/A	\$8,000

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM _____ **State of Wisconsin**

DATE: February 3, 2026

TO: Land and Water Conservation Board Members and Advisors

FROM: Jenn Chakravorty , DATCP
Resource Management Section,
Bureau of Land and Water Resources

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Approval of the *Sawyer County Land and Water Resource Management Plan*

Action Requested: This is an action item. The department has determined that the *Sawyer County Land and Water Resource Management Plan* meets applicable statutory and rule requirements and requests that the LWCB make a recommendation regarding approval of the plan consistent with the Board's guidance.

Summary: The plan is written as a 10 year plan, and if approved, the plan would remain in effect through December 31, 2036, and would be subject to a five-year review prior to December 31, 2031.

DATCP staff reviewed the plan using the checklist and finds that the plan complies with all the requirements of section 92.10, Wisconsin Statutes, and Chapter ATCP 50, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

To qualify for 10-year approval of its plan, Sawyer County must submit an annual work plan meeting DATCP requirements during each year of its 10-year plan approval.

Sawyer County held a public hearing on December 10, 2025, as part of its public input and review process. The Sawyer County Land Conservation Committee will present the LWRM plan for County Board approval after receiving a recommendation for approval from the LWCB.

Materials Provided:

- LWRM Plan Review Checklist
- Completed LWRM Plan Review form
- 2025 workplan with accomplishments and current 2026 workplan

Presenters: Tim Seidl, Sawyer County Assistant Conservationist
Steve Kariainen, Land Conservation Committee Chair



Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
 Agricultural Resource Management Division
 2811 Agriculture Drive, PO Box 8911
 Madison WI 53708-8911
 Phone: (608) 224-4608

Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM)

LWRM Plan Review Checklist

Wis. Stats. § 92.10 & Wis. Adm. Code § ATCP 50.12.

County: Sawyer

Date Plan Submitted for Review: 10/15/2025, 12/12/25

I. ADVISORY COMMITTEE	Yes	No	Page
1. Did the county convene a local advisory committee that included a broad spectrum of public interests and perspectives (such as affected landowners, partner organizations, government officials, educational institutions)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2, 7
II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COUNTY BOARD APPROVAL			Date(s)
1. Provide the dates that the local advisory committee met to discuss the development of the LWRM plan and the county plan of work			5/13/25, 6/12/25, 7/17/25
2. Provide the date the county held a public hearing on the LWRM plan ¹			12/10/25
3. Provide the date of county board approval of the plan, or the date the county board is expected to approve the plan after the LWCB makes its recommendation. ²			After LWCB recommend ation
III. RESOURCE ASSESSMENT AND WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES	Yes	No	Page
1. Does the plan include the following information as part of a county-wide resource assessment:			
a. Soil erosion conditions in the county ³ , including:			
i. identification of areas within county that have high erosion rates or other soil erosion problems that merit action within the next 10 years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	45-48, 49
b. Water quality conditions of watersheds in the county ³ , including:			
i. location of watershed areas, showing their geographic boundaries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9, 13- 17

¹ Appropriate notice must be provided for the required public hearing. The public hearing notice serves to notify landowners and land users of the results of any determinations concerning soil erosion rates and nonpoint source water pollution, and provides an opportunity for landowners and land users input on the county's plan. Individual notice to landowners is required if the landowners are referenced directly in the LWRM plan. DATCP may request verification that appropriate notice was provided.

² The county board may approve the county LWRM plan after the department approves the plan. The plan approved by the county board must be the same plan approved by the department. If the department requires changes to a plan previously approved by the county board, the department's approval does not take effect until the county board approves the modified plan.

³ Counties should support their analysis of soil and water conditions by referencing relevant land use and natural resource information, including the distribution of major soil types and surface topographic features, and land use categories and their distribution. Sec. ATCP 50.12(3)(b) requires that a county assemble relevant data, including relevant land use, natural resource, water quality and soil data.

- | | | | | |
|------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| ii. | identification of the causes and sources of the water quality impairments and pollutant sources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 18-20, 62 |
| iii. | identification of areas within the county that have water quality problems that merit action within the next 10 years. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12, 19-20, 49, 57-62 |

2. Does the LWRM plan address objectives by including the following:

- | | | | | |
|----|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| a. | specific water quality objectives identified for each watershed based upon the resource assessment, if available | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13-17, 20 |
| b. | pollutant load reduction targets for the watersheds, if available | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13-17 |

Other comments: Appendix B is Soil Erosion Control Plan from 1998; Sawyer Co is aware that this is an old report, but the data has not been updated recently and information from the report is still relevant

Phosphorus TMDL for St Croix River Basin and Red Cedar sub-watershed - Lake St Croix watershed (expiring) and Red Cedar sub-watershed (active) 9 key element plans.

Draft 9 key element plan for Lac Courte Oreilles Lake watershed

Watershed resource assessments at the HUC-8 level

IV. DNR CONSULTATION	Yes	No	Page
1. Did the county consult with DNR ⁴ to obtain water quality assessments, if available; to identify key water quality problem areas; to determine water quality objectives; and to identify pollutant load reduction targets, if any; and to review NR 151 implementation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

Other comments:

V. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION	Yes	No	Page
1. Does the LWRM plan include the following implementation components: :			
a. A voluntary implementation strategy to encourage adoption of farm conservation practices	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22-24
b. State and local regulations used to implement the plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	28-29
c. Compliance procedures that apply for failure to implement the conservation practices in ATCP 50, ch. NR 151 and related local regulations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	21-25, 28

⁴ While requirements for DNR consultation may be satisfied by including relevant DNR representatives on the advisory committee, counties may also need to interact with DNR staff in central or regional offices to meet all of the consultation requirements. DNR may point counties to other resources to obtain information including consultants who can calculate pollutant load reduction targets.

- | | | | | |
|----|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| d. | Relevant conservation practices to achieve compliance with performance standards and prohibitions and to address identified water quality and erosion problems | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 42-43,
46 |
| e. | A system for meeting county responsibilities to monitor the compliance of participants in the farmland preservation program | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 44 |

- | | | | | |
|----|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 2. | Does the LWRM plan (or accompanying work plan) estimate: | | | |
| a. | expected costs of implementing the plan including cost-sharing for conservation practices needed to achieve plan objectives | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 31-32,
36-40 |
| b. | the staff time needed to provide technical assistance and education and outreach to implement the plan. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 36-40,
46 |
| 3. | Does the LWRM plan describe a priority farm strategy designed to make reasonable progress in implementing state performance standards and conservation practices on farms appropriately classified as a priority | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 20-22 |

Other comments: Sawyer Co no longer participates in the Farmland Preservation Program

VI. OUTREACH AND PARTNERING

Yes No Page

- | | | | | |
|----|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Does the LWRM plan describe a strategy to provide information and education on soil and water resource management, conservation practices and available cost-share funding | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 23-25,
32-33 |
| 2. | Does the LWRM plan describe coordination activities with local, state and federal agencies? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 24-25,
29-31 |

Other comments: _____

VII. WORK PLANNING AND PROGRESS MONITORING

Yes No Page

- | | | | | |
|----|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| 1. | Does the county's most recent annual work plan ⁵ do both of the following: | | | |
| a. | Provide measurable performance benchmarks | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | NA |
| b. | Identify priorities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | NA |
| 2. | Does the LWRM plan describe a strategy and framework for monitoring county progress implementing its plan including methodology to track and measure progress in meeting performance benchmarks and plan objectives | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 26, 33,
36-40 |

Other comments: see pgs 36-40 in addition to the annual work plan

⁵ Counties must submit annual work plan by no later than April 15th of every year to meet the requirement in s. ATCP 50.12(2)(i) for counties to have multi-year work plans.

VIII. EPA SECTION 319 CONSIDERATIONS

1. IS THE COUNTY WORKING WITH DNR TO SEEK EPA APPROVAL OF THIS PLAN AS MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF A 9 KEY ELEMENT PLAN UNDER SECTION 319 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT: N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff has reviewed the above-referenced county LWRM plan based on the criteria required in s. ATCP 50.12, Wis. Admin. Code, and s. 92.10, Stats., and has determined that the plan meets the criteria for DATCP approval of this plan. This checklist review is prepared to enable the LWCB to make recommendations regarding plan approval, and for DATCP to make its final decision regarding plan approval.

Staff Signature: Jennifer Chakravorty

Date: 1/12/26



Land and Water Conservation Board
County Land and Water Resource Management Plan
Review of LWRM Plan Revisions

County: Sawyer

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 within the last five years 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.

One accomplishment category is cost share program implementation. The interest in cost share projects exceeds our cost share funding allocation each year and projects are prioritized as outlined in the Land & Water Resource Management Plan. The past 5 years have seen 1 agricultural project and 11 streambank or shoreline protection projects. Total streambank/shoreline protection linear feet resulting directly from cost share projects alone has been 1,867 feet in the past 5 years. Increase in project costs have drastically reduced the number of projects we are able to do each year.

Ag producer contacts, meetings & site visits to inform and encourage participation in conservation practices is ongoing. In the last number of years we have seen a divergence in agriculture to fewer but larger more consolidated traditional agricultural operations and to smaller niche farming activities. We have had the opportunity to work with several producers both large and small offering advice on steps they can take to improve conservation on their properties.

An increase in population density, lot division, runoff, tourism, and lake use has increased the number of site visits to properties and landowner meetings regarding erosion control and shoreline education/mitigation/restoration. As a department, we have placed more emphasis on obtaining grading permits on shoreline properties to help deter erosion.

The annual tree sale has been offered as a service to landowners for 30 years. The tree sale brings in landowners looking to add native trees and shrubs to their properties for restoration projects, erosion control projects, wildlife value, and reforestation. The tree sale opens the door for landowner contacts and results in restoration projects, erosion control, and site plan discussions. A major accomplishment was moving the tree sale to an online platform. This made the sale run more efficiently and was easier for customers to order.

Education and outreach to landowners, lake associations, schools, and the community is an important component of department duties. Acting as a resource for landowner questions and connecting them to the appropriate information relevant to their projects or problems is a daily function that runs a wide range of topics. Guidance for site-specific solutions helps the landowner navigate conservation concerns on their properties that are often resolved with an on site visit. Lake associations regularly contact the department for brochures, guidance, and presentations. The Conservation Speaking & Poster Contest is held annually and gives students the opportunity to dive deep into conservation topics. Over the last 5 years, several posters won the State contest and qualified for nationals which makes a positive impact not only on the student but also their families and community as well. We have also partnered with local conservation groups to provide scholarships to local students to attend conservation themed summer camps.

2. Identify any areas where the county was unable to make desired progress in implementing activities identified in recent 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.

An area where the county is continuing to struggle to meet desired progress is in the installation of several cost share projects for shoreline protection where the plan calls for utilizing lake ice to transport materials. Due to climate change, the lake ice has not been conducive to hauling heavy materials and equipment on the ice and projects have been delayed or forced to find other means to proceed. This has resulted in a few projects each year being carried over with an extension of funds. Ideally, we would be able to clear this backlog of projects. The demand for cost shared shoreline projects greatly exceeds the annual funding available and has limited the ability to target and pursue other projects.

We held a Nutrient Management Farmer Education Training, however we did not get the turnout we were hoping for. We are now in the process of using the remaining funding for nutrient management for cranberry producers which Sawyer County has never done before. Wisconsin is the top cranberry producer in the nation with Sawyer County being one of the top producers in the State.

The department sent out a agricultural producer survey to 600+ landowners with agricultural land. The resulting data showed several practices that landowners were interested in, but due to lack of funding and staff time we have been unable to follow up on requests.

The demographics of Sawyer County do not lend themselves to as many agricultural projects as other regions of the state. There is a good working relationship with our small pool of farmers, but much of the interest in cost share projects comes from the larger resource base of concern: water and shoreline. Staff works diligently with the agricultural producers to offer technical assistance and cost share projects whenever possible, however the numbers are just not as robust as areas of the state with more agriculture.

3. Describe the county's approach to implementation of its priority farm strategy including outreach, farm inventories and making use of multiple funding sources. How has the

county evaluated the effectiveness of its priority farm strategy and used this information to improve implementation of the agricultural performance standards and conservation practices on farms?

Sawyer County's methodology for identification of farms is rather simplistic. There are very few farms remaining in the county. Dairy farming has been reduced to only a few operations, but with a trend towards larger herd sizes. Other former dairies have transitioned to cash grain operations. Cranberry production has always been a part of Sawyer County agriculture. Recently there has been an increase in small scale agriculture growing a diverse mix of livestock and specialty crops. Due to the small number of agricultural operations, all operations are considered a priority farm. Agricultural requests for services are ranked ahead of all other requests. Outreach to our local farmers is ongoing and staff has a good relationship with the producers to offer assistance as requested and funding support whenever possible.

4. Provide representative examples that show changes in direction in the county's LWRM plan and annual work plans, with specific examples provided showing adjustments in goals, objectives or planned activities.

Each year we prioritize our farmers and agricultural projects. The nature of the resources in Sawyer County brings our attention to many shoreline erosion projects due to all of our water resources here. The other major natural resource in Sawyer County is forests. Our workplans give a focus to collaborating with landowners, land managers, and consultants to increase our presence with forestry related management practices. Sawyer County land use is 74% forestry, making the importance of working with forestry management practices in Sawyer County the equivalent of agriculture land use in other regions of the state.

With Sawyer County being one of the top cranberry producers in the state, we are also pivoting towards cranberry producer nutrient management education. We are also working towards adding a native plant sale in addition to our tree sale to reach more landowners. provide more pollinator habitat, and help reduce shoreline erosion.

Please consider answering the following optional question (not to exceed 1 page)

1. The LWCB is interested in learning how county conservation staff are addressing changing weather patterns. To this end, the LWCB reached out to WI Land+Water for guidance, see the WI Land+Water memo dated for October 28, 2020. Your response to the following question will be appreciated.

Is climate change resiliency contained in your LWRM plan (Yes or No). If yes, indicate with page number(s) or statement(s) where within the LWRM plan it is located and please consider the factors below, as examples, in your answer.

- a. *Plants and natural communities (forests, wetlands, prairies, invasive species)*
- b. *Soil and agriculture*
- c. *Weather (growing season, seasonal temperatures, precipitation)*
- d. *Infrastructure*
- e. *Land owners (residents)*
- f. *Water resources (groundwater and surface water quality and quantity)*
- g. *Fisheries*
- h. *Wildlife*
- i. *Human health and recreation*

Answer Below
Climate Change information is included in the Appendix.

Annual Work Plans

Attach both of the following:

- a. The most current annual work plan, prepared in the current format from DATCP, and addresses all required items such as needed funding and staff hours.
- b. The work plan for the previous year that includes a column that identifies the progress in implementing the planned activities for that year.

Presentation Regarding County Resource Concerns

Prepare and present an 8-10 minute snapshot to the board regarding county resources and management issues. The county must prepare one of following as part of this brief presentation:

- a. A PowerPoint (showing what your county looks like, can include maps), or
- b. A hand out (2 page max)

Guidance on Board Review Process

The LWCB's review supplements, but does not replace compliance with the DATCP checklist for LWRM plan approval. This encourages and supports honest presentations from the county. The county is strongly encouraged to have the LCC chair or committee member be a part of the presentation to the Board to contribute policy and other insights to the discussion. 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.

Land Conservation Committee Notification

The LCC was provided a completed copy of this form (including attachments) on:

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



Date:

10/8/2025

Send completed form and attachments to:
jennifer.chakravorty@wisconsin.gov

**Sawyer County 2025 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> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>NM planning and training</i> <i>Promotion of soil health practices</i> 	<i>Type and units of practice(s) installed</i> <i>Amount of cost-share dollars spent</i> <i># acres of farmland enrolled in NM</i> <i># of farms assisted</i> <i>- Began planning for a future cranberry NM training</i> <i>- Assisted Idairy farm</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Livestock</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Provide technical assistance including design preparation & construction oversight when needed</i> 	<i>Number of landowners assisted</i> <i>No assistance requested</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Water quality/quantity</i> (other than activities already listed in other categories) 	<i>Citizen Lake Monitoring Network</i> <i>8 Streambank or Shoreline Protection projects enrolled</i>	<i>Amount of cost-share dollars spent</i> <i># of Streambank/shoreline protection (feet) 819ft</i> <i># of lakes monitored 2 lakes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Forestry</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Evaluate eligibility of Stream Crossing projects (2 contacts)</i> <i>Evaluate eligibility of Access Road projects</i> <i>Refer landowners to NRCS for forestry practices cost-sharing</i> 	<i>Amount of cost-share dollars spent</i> <i># of staff hours expended for design and installation</i> <i>No assistance requested</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Invasive species</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Survey at least 3 Sawyer County lakes for AIS</i> <i>Provide guidance to lake associations</i> <i>Assist partners & public with terrestrial invasive control & removal</i> <i>Public information booth at festivals</i> <i>Training sessions – at least 2</i> 	<i>Number of surveys completed</i> <i>Number of control efforts implemented/sites treated</i> <i># of lakes surveyed 4 lakes</i> <i># of associations assisted 15 associations</i> <i># of landowners assisted 3 landowners</i> <i>-6 trainings</i>

**Sawyer County 2025 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

- *Wildlife*

<p>Wildlife-Wetlands-Habitat (other than forestry or invasive species)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with mandatory mitigation and restoration of shoreline violations • Partner with school groups and other organizations to educate about soil and water resource protection • Assist with technical planning for voluntary and incentivized shoreland restoration projects • Coordinate annual spring tree sale • Lend out tree planting supplies • Evaluate eligibility of wetland restoration projects • Provide technical assistance to landowners • Collaborate with NRCS on wetland projects 	<p># of staff hours expended for design and installation <i>No assistance requested</i> # of site visits <i>56</i> # of organizations/landowners assisted <i>130 people</i> # of trees sold <i>2,800</i> # of student volunteers <i>No requests</i> # of tree planter rentals <i>No requests</i> Type and units of practice(s) installed <i>No assistance requested</i> Amount of cost-share dollars spent <i>No assistance requested</i> # acres of restored/enhanced wetland</p>
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- *Urban*

<p>Urban issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance for grading permits 	<p>Number of permits issued <i>43</i></p>
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- *Watershed*

<p>Watershed strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical guidance and oversight to active watershed organizations restoration & planning activities • Advise landowners, organizations & other departments on effective erosion control measures • Work with Towns to ensure proper erosion control practices 	<p>Number of meetings attended/presentations given Number of partner contacts made # of landowners, organizations, departments and towns Type of practice(s) installed <i>-50 contacts made</i></p>
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- *Other*

<p>Other</p>	<p>Non-metallic mining</p>	<p>Number of plans reviewed <i>27</i> Number of inspections <i>20</i></p>
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**Sawyer County 2025 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	NA	
Manure storage construction and transfer systems	2	2 2
Manure storage closure	1	1 1
Livestock facility siting	NA	
Nonmetallic/frac sand mining	1	1 27
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	20	15 43
Shoreland zoning	20	10 (now handled by Zoning)
Wetlands and waterways (Ch. 30)	NA	
Other		

Table 3: Planned inspections

Inspections	Number of inspections planned
Total Farm Inspections	
For FPP	N/A
For NR 151	4 1
Animal waste ordinance	2 2
Livestock facility siting	N/A
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	10 12
Nonmetallic mining	22 20

Table 4: Planned outreach and education activities

Activity	Number
Tours	1 1
Field days	0
Trainings/workshops	5 6
School-age programs (camps, field days, classroom)	2 2
Newsletters	0 2
Social media posts	NA
News release/story	2 1

**Sawyer County 2025 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

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

Staff/Support	Hours	Costs
<i>Assistant Conservationist</i>	2040	\$73,168
<i>Conservation Specialist</i>	2040	\$67,170
<i>ZAC Administrator</i>	1020	\$42,453
Cost Sharing (can be combined)		
<i>Structural</i>	N/A	\$35,700
<i>SEG</i>	N/A	\$8,000

**Sawyer County 2026 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> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>NM planning and training</i> <i>Promotion of soil health practices</i> 	<i>Type and units of practice(s) installed</i> <i>Amount of cost-share dollars spent</i> <i># acres of farmland enrolled in NM</i> <i># of farms assisted</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Livestock</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Provide technical assistance including design preparation & construction oversight when needed</i> 	<i>Number of landowners assisted</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Water quality/quantity</i> (other than activities already listed in other categories) 	<i>Citizen Lake Monitoring Network</i> <i>8 Streambank or Shoreline Protection projects enrolled</i>	<i>Amount of cost-share dollars spent</i> <i># of Streambank/shoreline protection (feet)</i> <i># of lakes monitored</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Forestry</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Evaluate eligibility of Stream Crossing projects (2 contacts)</i> <i>Evaluate eligibility of Access Road projects</i> <i>Refer landowners to NRCS for forestry practices cost-sharing</i> 	<i>Amount of cost-share dollars spent</i> <i># of staff hours expended for design and installation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Invasive</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Survey at least 3 Sawyer County lakes for AIS</i> <i>Provide guidance to lake associations</i> <i>Assist partners & public with terrestrial invasive control & removal</i> <i>Public information booth at festivals</i> <i>Training sessions – at least 2</i> 	<i>Number of surveys completed</i> <i>Number of control efforts implemented/sites treated</i> <i># of lakes surveyed</i> <i># of associations assisted</i> <i># of landowners assisted</i>

**Sawyer County 2026 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

- *Wildlife*

<p>Wildlife-Wetlands-Habitat (other than forestry or invasive species)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with mandatory mitigation and restoration of shoreline violations • Partner with school groups and other organizations to educate about soil and water resource protection • Assist with technical planning for voluntary and incentivized shoreland restoration projects • Coordinate annual spring tree sale • Lend out tree planting supplies • Evaluate eligibility of wetland restoration projects • Provide technical assistance to landowners • Collaborate with NRCS on wetland projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of staff hours expended for design and installation • # of site visits • # of organizations/landowners assisted • # of trees sold • # of student volunteers • # of trees planted • Type and units of practice(s) installed • Amount of cost-share dollars spent • # acres of restored/enhanced wetland
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- *Urban*

<p>Urban issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance for grading permits 	<p>Number of permits issued</p>
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- *Watershed*

<p>Watershed strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical guidance and oversight to active watershed organizations restoration & planning activities • Advise landowners, organizations & other departments on effective erosion control measures • Work with Towns to ensure proper erosion control practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of meetings attended/presentations given • Number of partner contacts made • # of landowners, organizations, departments and towns • Type of practice(s) installed
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- *Other*

<p>Other</p>	<p>Non-metallic mining</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of plans reviewed • Number of inspections
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**Sawyer County 2026 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	NA	
Manure storage construction and transfer systems	0	0
Manure storage closure	1	1
Livestock facility siting	NA	
Nonmetallic/frac sand mining	2	2
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	20	15
Shoreland zoning	20	10
Wetlands and waterways (Ch. 30)	NA	
Other		

Table 3: Planned inspections

Inspections	Number of inspections planned
Total Farm Inspections	2
For FPP	0
For NR 151	2
Animal waste ordinance	1
Livestock facility siting	NA
Stormwater and construction site erosion control	10
Nonmetallic mining	22

Table 4: Planned outreach and education activities

Activity	Number
Tours	1
Field days	0
Trainings/workshops	5
School-age programs (camps, field days, classroom)	2
Newsletters	0
Social media posts	NA
News release/story	2

**Sawyer County 2026 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

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

Staff/Support	Hours	Costs
<i>Assistant Conservationist</i>	2040	\$74,632
<i>Conservation Specialist</i>	2040	\$68,514
<i>ZAC Administrator</i>	1020	\$43,303
Cost Sharing (can be combined)		
<i>Structural</i>	N/A	\$26,000 (+ additional \$55,229 carry over from 2025)
<i>SEG</i>	N/A	\$8,000

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM _____ **State of Wisconsin**

DATE: February 3, 2026

TO: Land and Water Conservation Board (“LWCB”) Members and Advisors

FROM: LWCB Advisory Committee on Research (“Committee”) and Jenn Chakravorty, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

SUBJECT: Recommendation to the LWCB to Add Feedback Questions to LWRM Plan Review and Update Questionnaires

RECOMMENDED ACTION: This is an action item. The Committee recommends the Board adds two new questions in the planning documents for Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) plan reviews and updates:

- A. A question edited by DATCP and University of Wisconsin (UW) staff to reflect what counties are currently doing for research on L+W conservation issues
- B. A question edited by DATCP and UW staff to reflect the counties desire for new and diverse research and education.

For the Committee, the addition of these questions signifies the completion of its duty to create and implement a sustainable and long-lasting process for engagement with soil and water conservation stakeholders, namely Wisconsin counties, to document soil and water conservation needs across Wisconsin. To the LWCB, an updated LWRM plan questionnaire sets the course for the Board to meet its duty to advise the University of Wisconsin-System on needed research and educational programs relating to soil and water conservation through advising UW staff who serve as advisors to the LWCB.

Jenn Chakravorty, DATCP program manager for LWRM planning, shares potential language that addresses both of the questions suggested above, workshopped with Amber Radatz, UW-Extension and advisor for the LWCB:

“What do you observe as gaps in understanding or research that hinder conservation progress or water quality improvement?”

Part of the LWCB’s duties is to advise the University of Wisconsin system on needed research and education programs relating to soil and water conservation. The answer to this question will be used in research and outreach efforts by the University of Wisconsin. In your answer, consider sharing research and best management techniques you currently utilize to address land and water conservation issues and highlight where additional research would support your work.”

The Committee recommends that the LWCB consider the addition of at least one question that works in the spirit of recommendation A and B noted above and charge DATCP and UW staff who help support the LWCB to determine final wording for these new questions.

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 3, 2025

TO: LWCB members and advisors

FROM: Ian Krauss, Farm Service Agency

SUBJECT: FSA Program Updates for February LWCB Meeting

- Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP)
 - The American Relief Act provides more than \$16 billion in disaster relief payments to producers who suffered revenue, quality or production losses to crops, trees, bushes, or vines due to qualifying disaster events in calendar years 2023 and 2024.
 - Stage 1: Application period for producers with indemnified losses. Stage 1 leverages existing Federal Crop Insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) data as the basis for calculating payments.
 - Stage 2: Application period for producers with non-indemnified (including shallow losses), uncovered (uninsured), and quality losses. Stage 2 covers eligible crop, tree, bush and vine losses.
 - Open through April 30th, 2026.
- Dairy Margin Coverage
 - The Dairy Margin Coverage program is a voluntary risk management tool for dairy producers. It offers financial assistance when the margin between the all-milk price and average feed cost falls below a coverage level chosen by the producer.
 - The deadline to enroll into DMC is February 26, 2026.
- Farmer Bridge Assistance
 - Payment rates have been announced and are available on the FSA website. Anticipate pre-filled applications beginning the last week of February.
 - More details to come on the application process and timeline.

UW Extension

Ag Water Quality Webinar series begins today, February 3 and runs through February and March on Tuesdays at noon. For more information and to register:

<https://agwater.extension.wisc.edu/webinars/>

WI Water and Soil Health Conference was a success for its third year. We had 300 attendees and two days worth of content on the intersection between agronomy, conservation, soil health and water quality. Look for increased scholarship opportunities for conservation advisors for the 2026 conference in December.

Here's a recent article featuring some take home points from the science assessment work that we have partnered with Dr. Steven Hall and Dr. Hava Blair on during the past year and a half. These results will be summarized and reported as part of the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy efforts mentioned in the DNR materials.

<https://www.farmprogress.com/crops/9-take-aways-for-reducing-phosphorus-surface-runoff>

Thank you!

Amber



Land & Water Monthly Newsletter

BUREAU OF LAND AND WATER RESOURCES

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,
Trade and Consumer Protection

February 2026

Joint Allocation Grants and Reporting

1. Soil and Water Resources Management Grants
[Application Guidance](#)
[Staffing, Cost-Share, and Innovation Application](#)
Due 4/15/2026 to datcpswrm@wisconsin.gov
2. Nutrient Management Farmer Education Grants
[Application Guidance](#)
[Application](#)
Due 4/15/2026 to datcpsoilandwatershedmanagement@wisconsin.gov
3. Reporting
[2026 Annual Workplan template](#)
Due 4/15/2026 to Jennifer.Chakravorty@wisconsin.gov

Co-op Training Opportunity

- DATCP is hosting a series of webinars for co-op staff to learn more about our programs and ask questions so they can better serve their customers. Each webinar is scheduled from 10-11:15 a.m. and will be recorded. CEUs will be available, and registration is required to attend. The dates and topics are below:
 - February 3 – Soil and Water Resource Management Grant, Commercial Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program, and Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grants – Register [here](#)
 - February 10 - Manure storage ordinances, Livestock Siting, and local ordinances – Register [here](#)

Land and Water Conservation Board-LWRM Plans

- The Land and Water Conservation Board will meet February 3, 2026. Register for the meeting [here](#). Crawford and Sawyer counties will present LWRM Plan Revisions during this meeting.

Nutrient Management Updates

- [Reimbursement requests](#) for extended 2024 funds and non-extended 2025 NMFE grant funds are due February 15, 2026 to datcpsoilwatershed@wisconsin.gov.
- 2025 NMFE final reports are due February 15, 2026 to datcpsoilwatershed@wisconsin.gov. There are different reports for [Tier 1](#) and [Tier 2](#) projects. Tier 1 grants also require a [participant list](#) to be submitted.
- Don't forget to submit your survey response with your SnapPlus V3 User Group Name and associated email. You can fill out the survey [here](#).
- The SnapPlus V3 magazine is now available online! It can be found here:

<https://datcp.wi.gov/Documents2/SnapPlusV3Magazine.pdf>.

- Are you interested in knowing when and where Nutrient Management Farmer Education (NMFE) classes are offered? Check out our new NMFE class schedule! If you have a farmer or new agronomist who is interested in learning more about nutrient management and you don't host a NMFE class in your county, please check out [this spreadsheet](#) to look for upcoming NMFE classes nearest you!
- DATCP staff and the UW-Extension NPM team are hosting a live online Nutrient Management Farmer Education Class on March 13 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is a DATCP approved class that allows farmers to be eligible to write their own nutrient management plan. Registration is free. Register here: www.go.wisc.edu/OnlineNMTraining.

Soil and Water Resources Management (SWRM) Grants

- 2025 reimbursement requests are due February 15, 2026 to datcpswrm@wisconsin.gov.
- 2027 Joint Grant Application due April 15 to datcpswrm@wisconsin.gov.
 - [Application Guidance](#)
 - [Staffing, Cost-Share, and Innovation Application](#)

Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant (PLWPG) Program

- [Reimbursement requests](#) for extended 2024 funds and non-extended 2025 funds will be due February 15, 2026 to datcpprodled@wisconsin.gov.
- 2025 [Annual Reports](#) and [Conservation Tracking forms](#) are also due February 15, 2026 to datcpprodled@wisconsin.gov.
- Registration for the Producer-Led Annual Workshop is now open! If your group received funding in 2025, you are required to have at least one farmer and one collaborator attend. The workshop will be February 24 at the Food + Farm Exploration Center in Plover, WI. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. with the program beginning at 9:15 a.m. The agenda includes an introduction to the new Producer-Led Dashboard, presentations on the Collaborative Demonstration and Research Project, and a keynote presentation on building community. Register here: [Producer-Led Annual Workshop Registration](#).

Conservation Engineering

- *Funding opportunity:* The application period for the 2026 Engineering Reserve Fund is open! This year, the fund has \$300,000 available. If you have a project that needs funding, reach out to your DATCP Area Engineering contact for additional details and to complete the needed materials for the submittal. Applications are due by **Friday, March 27, 2026**.

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

- Counties that are working on updating or amending their farmland preservation plan in 2026, 2027, and 2028 are encouraged to apply for the farmland preservation planning grant. This grant may reimburse up to 50% of a county's cost to prepare a farmland preservation plan or update, up to a maximum grant of \$30,000. Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Grant applications are due by March 27, 2026. For a copy of the application or questions about the grant, please email DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov.
- Farmland Preservation Agreement applications (new and re-enrollments) that are submitted to the department by Thursday, October 1, 2026 will be prioritized for processing for 2026 tax credit eligibility. Landowners who are interested in applying for a Farmland Preservation Agreement are encouraged to apply early. We will continue to process agreements throughout the end of the year, but agreements submitted to us after October 1 may not be processed (drafted and sent to the landowner for

signature) before the end of the taxable year.

As you work with landowners this field season, encourage them to apply early so they can claim the tax credit for 2025. Completed agreement applications should be submitted to DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov.

- The Farmland Preservation Agreement application has been updated. The new application now includes an area on the form to indicate that the application is to re-enroll lands under an expiring agreement. The new form can be located [here](#). All agreement applications submitted after January 1, 2026, must use the new agreement form. Any applicants who submit agreement applications on the old form after this date will be asked to resubmit using current form.

DATCP Drainage Program

- DATCP, in cooperation with the Wisconsin Association of County Drainage Boards, will be scheduling a series of statewide training events for the upcoming year. If you have suggested topics, please contact your county drainage board.
- All activities within drainage districts are managed and administered by a county drainage board. Contact information can be found on the [Drainage Program website](#) or by contacting Barton T. Chapman, P.E., Drainage Program Manager, at Barton.Chapman@Wisconsin.gov.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- FFY2025 Achievements Reported to FSA Washington
The FFY2025 annual CREP report was submitted to FSA Washington in January 2026. The report summarizes all the great work that LCD staff have done with CREP over the prior year, including enrollments, payments, monitoring, and conservation planning. Wisconsin had 3,410 active CREP contracts on 39,433 acres as of October 1, 2025. Two short periods were opened for CREP enrollment in FFY2025. During those periods, 79 CREP contracts totaling 533 acres were enrolled, with 40 new contracts (234 acres) along with reenrollment of 39 existing contracts (299 acres). Federal CREP CRP1s expired on 121 contracts (1,090 acres) in FFY2025. Of those, eight were originally established as perpetual easements, keeping 142 acres under perpetual conservation practices administered by the state and counties.

Wisconsin is authorized \$28 million in funding for CREP. In FFY2025, the state processed over 230 CREP payment requests to landowners totaling \$199,000. As of October 1, 2025, there were 13,792 incentive and cost share payments to landowners for a total of \$22.5 million. Counties reported \$125,000 of in-kind contributions to administer CREP in FFY2025 that combine for \$4.7 million since 2001.

Water quality conservation practices are the majority of enrollment in Wisconsin CREP, with 71% of practices installed within the Riparian Project area. Filter strips (CP21) comprise 47%, followed by riparian forest buffers (CP22) with 15% for the most commonly installed practices. Wetland restorations (CP23) under active CREP agreements or easements in the state comprise just over 7% of the acres.

LCD estimated total annual runoff reduction provided by CREP practices enrolled in FFY2025 amount to 2,181 lbs. phosphorus, 1,177 lbs. nitrogen, and 1,014 tons of sediment. This annual runoff reduction is the result of over 23 miles of shoreline being buffered this year by conservation practices installed through CREP.

LCDs, along with DATCP CREP intern assistance, completed monitoring on 44 perpetual easements across 17 counties in FFY2025. The percentage of sites found in compliance this year is consistent with the prior year's monitoring findings at 77%. Of these, 53% were considered in compliance with maintenance needed. Violations were found on 22% of easements monitored this year. In FFY2025, LCD staff and DATCP worked together with landowners to update conservations plans to help address

compliance issues on seven easements in four counties.

- **Farm Bill Extended to 9/30/2026 - CREP Enrollment 2026**

The Farm Bill was extended reauthorizing CRP until September 30, 2026 as part of the “Continuing Appropriations, Agriculture, Legislative Branch, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Extensions Act, 2026.” The FSA National Office is working on a notice to provide guidance that restores CRP authority along with CREP, meaning that landowners may have an opportunity to sign up for CREP in 2026. We will keep you posted on details as formal guidance is posted in the coming months.

Soil Health Program

- **REMINDER: Soil Health User Group** – Whether it’s questions about using or building your soil health assessment kit or implementing ATCP 50 practices with soil health as a resource concern, DATCP is looking for feedback on how we can better support soil health initiatives. Please contact Randy Zogbaum at randall.zogbaum@wisconsin.gov if you have any feedback to share and/or would be interested in participating in a Soil Health User Group.

Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program (NOPP)

- Applications for the 2026-2027 cycle were due January 17. Awards will be announced in late February.

Cover Crop Insurance Premium Rebate Program

- The application period ended January 30. Eligible applicants and verified land units will be credited on their spring crop insurance bill.
- Program information is available at covercroprebate.wi.gov.

Administrative Rule Updates

- ATCP 52’s permanent rule update related to Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grants, the Commercial Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program, and the Crop Insurance Premium Rebates for Planting Cover Crops was approved by the Governor and sent to the Legislature on December 2, 2025. Updates include general rule cleanup and the incorporation of the two newer programs. Documents relating to this rule can be found here: [CR 25-057](#).
- **Emergency Rule 2515 (EmR2515)** for [Providing Crop Insurance Premium Rebates for Planting Cover Crops](#)
- **Emergency Rule 2516 (EmR2516)** for [Commercial Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program](#)

DATE: Jan. 16, 2026

TO: LWCB members and advisors

FROM: Joe Baeten, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

SUBJECT: DNR Update, December 2025 - January 2026, for February LWCB meeting

Surface Water Grant Program Update

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Surface Water Grant Program has reviewed and ranked approximately 275 final grant applications and finalized the funding list for FY26 surface water grant recipients. Additionally, the program has received and funded 8 Healthy Lakes and Rivers, 4 AIS Early Detection and Response, 153 Clean Boats, Clean Waters and 39 Lake Monitoring and Protection Network noncompetitive grants. The Lake Monitoring and Protection Network has a continued presence in 70 of 72 counties.

Overall, the program received over \$7.4 million in requests, resulting in an oversubscription of approximately \$1.2 million. The rivers category received approximately \$545,000 in requests, with only \$289,000 in state funds available; the lakes category received over \$2.4 million in requests, with only \$2.1 million in state funds available; and the AIS category received over \$4.4 million in requests, with only \$3.7 million in state funds available.

Grant awards will be announced at the beginning of February 2026, with the priority funding list posted to the DNR's [Surface Water Grant website](#).

Nonpoint Source Pollution Grant Program Updates

Grant applications for DNR's Targeted Runoff Management (TRM), Notice of Discharge (NOD) and Urban Nonpoint Source & Storm Water Construction (UNPS & SW) programs are due April 15, 2026. These competitive grant programs provide cost-share reimbursement for the control of nonpoint source (NPS) pollution to eligible applicants. Prospective applicants are encouraged to work closely with their [DNR regional nonpoint source coordinator](#) when developing application materials for TRM and NOD grants.

More information is available about each grant program, eligibility criteria and resources for prospective applicants on the following DNR webpages:

- [TRM Grant Program](#)
- [NOD Cost-Share Grants](#)
- [UNPS & SW Grant Program](#)

Please note that Urban Nonpoint Source & Storm Water Planning grant applications will not be solicited in 2026, but will be solicited again in 2027.

DNR CAFO Workshops

The 2026 Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) Workshops will be held at the end of January and February. The DNR conducts these workshops in partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension to provide useful information for Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permitted CAFO owners and managers,

nutrient management plan writers and engineers. There will be seven workshops throughout the state and one virtual option.

- Green Bay: Tuesday, Jan. 27, noon – 4 p.m.
- Fond du Lac: Wednesday, Jan. 28, noon – 4 p.m.
- Manitowoc: Thursday, Jan. 29, 8 a.m. – noon
- Darlington: Wednesday, Feb. 4, noon – 4 p.m.
- Jefferson: Thursday, Feb. 5, 8 a.m. – noon
- Mauston: Wednesday, Feb. 11, noon – 4 p.m.
- Chippewa Falls; Thursday, Feb. 12, 8 a.m. – noon
- Virtual: Thursday, Feb. 19, 8 a.m. – noon

There will also be two technical engineering sessions before the regular CAFO workshops in Green Bay and Mauston. The topics for the workshops and technical engineering sessions are listed on the website.

- Green Bay: Tuesday, Jan. 27, 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- Mauston: Wednesday, Feb. 11, 9 to 11:30 a.m.

There is time before, during, and after the sessions for networking and one-on-one time with DNR staff.

Registration for the workshops is available online: <https://go.wisc.edu/CAFO2026>. The registration fee is \$46. Only one registration fee is required if you plan to attend both the technical engineering session and the general session. The meal is included with registration for the CAFO Workshops and/or the technical engineering sessions. There will be no meal provided with the virtual CAFO workshop.

NR151 Progress & Resource Analysis

The NR151 Progress & Resource Analysis (NPRA) is a collaborative effort through partnership between the DNR, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and Wisconsin Land & Water. The NPRA will estimate compliance rates across the state with agricultural performance standards and prohibitions, quantify state and county resource needs to achieve compliance and identify barriers to better implementation of performance standards and prohibitions. Preliminary project outreach to county stakeholders is underway, with further stakeholder outreach planned in the coming months as data collection begins. The University of Wisconsin has been contracted to assist with data analysis. Project findings are projected to be complete in October of 2026.

Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy Update

On Dec. 9, 2025, nearly 150 farmers, agricultural industry representatives, conservation organization members and government leaders gathered at the Agriculture & Conservation Roundtable to identify priority actions and strategies to reduce the loss of nitrogen and phosphorus from agricultural land to ground- and surface-water. The event was hosted by the Interagency Water Quality Workgroup at the Food + Farm Exploration Center in Plover and marks a key milestone in the development of a new Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (NLRS) for Wisconsin.

Participants explored themes that emerged from nearly 100 interviews conducted throughout 2025 with key stakeholder groups representing agriculture, government and conservation. Themes included farmer networks, trust and communication, funding and economic opportunities, technology and research and consistency and accountability in developing and implementing rules and regulations.

For each theme, participants identified both near-term actions to jump-start progress and long-term strategies to guide the 2026 NLRS update. The ideas and strategies developed at the roundtable will directly inform Wisconsin's 2026 NLRS, aligning research, funding, policy and outreach across agencies and partners to deliver greater impact and accountability.