



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](#)