



March 2025

Soil and Water Resources Management (SWRM) Grants

- Reimbursement requests for 2024 SWRM funds were due February 15, 2025. This includes SWRM cost-share, staffing, NMFE, and cooperator grants.
- The 2026 SWRM Grant Application is available on the [SWRM webpage](#). Applications are due April 15, 2025.
- **NEW FORMS REQUIRED!** Many of the SWRM forms have been updated with new content and new numbers. Please refer to [Section 3 of the SWRM Grant Resources](#) webpage to access these forms.
- ****SWRM Master Contract NOTICE**** The SWRM master contracts will be updated this year. These five-year contracts will require an authorized county signature this spring. IF THE COUNTY CONSERVATIONIST IS NOT AN AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY FOR THE COUNTY, please contact Kim or Hailey with the correct name and email address. This master contract will update the 2017 master contract and will be updated every five years. In the intervening years, you will need to acknowledge approval of the Schedule of Awards as in past years.

Nutrient Management News

- A **NEW** Nutrient Management Farmer Education (NMFE) self-paced course is now available! The Nutrient and Pest Management Team at UW-Extension has built an updated NMFE course through UW Canvas. For more information on how to obtain access to the Canvas course, click here: [Nutrient Management Farmer Education Grants](#).
- **NEW** Nutrient Management Farmer Education curriculum materials can be found here: [Nutrient Management Farmer Education Curriculum – Crops and Soils](#).
- The 2026 Nutrient Management Farmer Education Grant application period is open January 31-April 15. Request for Applications and the application can be found on the NMFE webpage here: [Nutrient Management Farmer Education Grants](#). Please direct any questions to Andrea Topper at Andrea.Topper@wisconsin.gov.
- [2025 Virtual Nutrient Management Training for Farmers](#) - This training provides both the basics of nutrient management and an introduction to SnapPlus. The same training will be offered on two dates. Participants only need to attend one training date to be certified as an eligible farmer plan writer.
 - Dates: March 14. Times: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
 - [Register here](#)

- Counties that would like some assistance on Nutrient Management Quality Assurance Reviews should email Cody Calkins at cody.calkins@wisconsin.gov. We are looking at providing assistance this year to at least three counties.

Conservation Engineering

- *Engineering Reserve Fund*: DATCP will once again be offering funds in 2025 for projects that address a resource concern. Projects that address a farm discharge will be prioritized, but other conservation practices that address nutrients and/or soil erosion will be considered as well. If you have a project that needs funds, or needs additional funding to complete, watch for more information coming soon from your DATCP area engineering contact. Deadline to submit applications is **Friday, March 28**.
- If you are considering funding a composting facility with SWRM funds, please see the [Compost Facility Flowchart](#) to see what qualifies. The flowchart is found on the SWRM Resources Policies and Procedures webpage found [here](#) in Section 2.13.

Land and Water Conservation Board-LWRM Plans

- On March 4, 2025, the LWCB Advisory Committee on Research convened on Teams.
- At the April 1, 2025 LWCB meeting, Marathon and Jefferson counties will be presenting LWRM plan five-year reviews to the board. Lafayette County will present a plan revision.

DATCP Drainage Program

- The DATCP Drainage Program is developing the Winter 2025 quarterly newsletter. The intent of the newsletter will be to highlight successes and challenges facing drainage districts and County Drainage Boards throughout the State. The newsletter is part of the Department's overall effort to improve the effectiveness and efficiencies for all stakeholders involved with Wisconsin Drainage Law. The Department is seeking input for the quarterly newsletter. If you have a project or information that you would like to highlight, please send your ideas to Barton T. Chapman, P.E., Drainage Program Manager at Barton.Chapman@Wisconsin.gov.
- The Wisconsin Association of Drainage Boards (WADB), in cooperation with DATCP, will be holding regional educational outreach meetings throughout the state in 2025. Meeting logistics will be shared as they become available.
- 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, Drainage Program Manager, at Barton.Chapman@Wisconsin.gov.

Agricultural Impact Statement (AIS) Program

- The AIS program published [AIS 4623](#) for the Emerald Substation Project in St. Croix County.
- You can find more information about the AIS program at agimpact.wi.gov. You can also contact DATCPAgImpactStatements@wisconsin.gov with questions regarding any active AIS statement or the AIS program.

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

- For information about the AEA petition process, including application materials, visit the [Petitioning for AEA Designation webpage](#). Please contact Wednesday Coye at wednesday.coye@wisconsin.gov with any questions you have about the AEA program.
- The [DATCP Home Farmland Preservation Tax Credits](#) webpage has been updated with additional

information to help landowners and tax preparers choose the correct tax schedule when filing for an FP tax credit. If you receive any questions from landowners or tax preparers regarding questions related to tax credit claims or tax credit denials, please contact Wednesday Coye at wednesday.coye@wisconsin.gov. Landowners who have received a denial letter have a limited amount of time to file an appeal with Department of Revenue; timely action is critical.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- **Farm Bill Extended to 9/30/2025:** On December 21, 2024, the federal government passed another extension of the 2018 Farm Bill on that runs until September 30, 2025. DATCP is waiting to hear from our FSA partners for details when CREP will be opened again for enrollment. Hopeful it will be in early 2025. DATCP will provide updates as soon as we receive more details.
- **Submit Outstanding Items to DATCP for Completion:** If you submitted a request to DATCP for processing but were contacted by State CREP staff requesting additional items for processing, please submit those items as soon as possible. Also, continue to submit any CREP agreements from last year that DATCP has not year received.

Soil Health Program

- In 2025, we will work on completing module 4 of the online Soil Health Training focusing on applying soil health principles in Wisconsin cropping systems. Stay tuned for opportunities to be involved in this training.
 - As we implement these practices, we know that this work is improving soil health. This can further be demonstrated using [NRCS Soil Health Assessment Techniques](#). Stay tuned in 2025 for more on this initiative.
- Reminder that the new online Soil Health curriculum is live and available on our soilhealthtraining.wi.gov website. The purpose of this curriculum is to develop a common definition and understanding of Soil Health and develop some guideposts of how to implement soil health systems on Wisconsin Farms. Modules 1-3 establish a common language of Soil Health in Wisconsin agriculture.
- The ATCP 50 office hours touch on how the soil health principles can guide our conservation planning by looking at the whole farm with systems approach. Review the ATCP 50 update below for the recorded ATCP 50 office hours.
- A new soil health module has been added to the NMFE curriculum if you are looking for resources on soil health.

For questions regarding these trainings or the Soil Health Program, contact Randy Zogbaum at randall.zogbaum@wisconsin.gov.

Cover Crop Insurance Rebate Program – Apply Now!

- Program application was available from December 2, 2024 to January 28, 2025 and received over 224,000 acres to review for premium rebate eligibility on a first come first served basis. Thanks for helping to spread the word about this opportunity to your farm operators. Eligible producers will see a rebate credit on their spring crop insurance premium billing statement.

Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program (NOPP)

- Cycle 3 of the NOPP grants closed on January 17, 2025. The NOPP team will be reviewed and scored by the NOPP Review Team. Awards should be announced in late February.

Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant (PLWPG) Program

- 2025 was the most competitive year yet for the Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant. We received applications from **49 producer-led groups**, for a total funding request of over **\$1.6 million**. With a

program budget of \$1 million, the grants review committee had to make extremely difficult decisions. Priorities were to fund new viable groups while also providing the highest level of funding merited to as many existing groups as possible.

ATCP 50 Update

- ATCP 50 updates went into effect June 1, 2024. Final rule language can be reviewed on the Wisconsin Legislature's [website](#). The Bureau has rule information on our [website](#). **This fall, DATCP hosted ATCP 50 Office Hours** related to non-structural practice updates. Each Office Hour included a technical primer of the practice, a short discussion of the soil health benefits and applicable SWRM cost-share requirements. All [office hours](#) were recorded and available for future viewing [here](#). If you have any questions, email datcplandwater@wisconsin.gov.
- **NEW PRACTICE INTRODUCTION:** Conservation Cover (ATCP 50.663). This SEG-funded conservation practice allows for the establishment and maintenance of permanent vegetative cover in an agricultural setting to reduce erosion, improve water quality, and better soil health. Available for lands covered with a nutrient management plan. It requires the county to commit to 10-year minimum planning and monitoring period for this practice. SWRM cost-share will cover the initial installation and the creation of the monitoring plan.