

November 2026

Soil and Water Resources Management (SWRM) Grants

- The approved 2027 Final Joint Allocation Plan is available on the SWRM Grant Resources webpage.
- To improve efficiency, speed, and protection against lost or stolen checks, SWRM will be transitioning all counties to an approved secure electronic (Automated Clearing House or ACH) payment method for the 2027 allocation year. An email from your program contact with further information and current electronic payment (ACH) options for your county will be sent out in January.
- Refer to policies and procedures, example reimbursement requests, Cost-Share Contract Change Order, and the 2.2 Cost Share Funding Source Table as they contain updated content. Please make sure you are submitting and using the newest versions of these documents.

Nutrient Management Updates

- The 2025 Annual Nutrient Management Report is now available on DATCP's Nutrient Management homepage. If you have any questions, please contact Cody.Calkins@wisconsin.gov.

- An optional office hour for the 2026 Annual Nutrient Management Survey & Calculator will be hosted on November 10 from 10-11 a.m. via Microsoft Teams. Please refer back to previous email sent to LCD staff on Wednesday, October 14 for the event link.

- DATCP is hosting a Quality Assurance Team Meeting with a select group of LCD staff and professional nutrient management plan writers on November 11. During this meeting, participants will have an in-depth discussion on what quality assurance and control are, as well as how to best identify and fix problems in and around nutrient management planning and implementation. If you were not initially invited, you will have an opportunity to fill out an optional survey at a later date to provide feedback.

- A statewide online Nutrient Management Farmer Education class will be held on March 2, 2027. The target audience for this training is farmers who are looking to be certified to write their own Nutrient Management Plan, but anyone interested in learning about nutrient management planning is welcome to attend. The class will run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Please feel free to share the registration link: https://uwmadison.zoom.us/meeting/register/7FV6xPi-QBWYT__3o-PYJQ.

DATCP Drainage Program

- The Wisconsin Association of County Drainage Boards (WACDB) in cooperation with DATCP has completed four educational outreach meetings. The results of the educational outreach meetings will be presented and discussed at the WACDB annual meeting in November. Thank you to all of you who participated. If you have a topic that you would like to discuss or would like to be included on the WACDB contact list, please contact Richard Gumz, WACDB Chair, richard@gumzfarmsllc.com or Nancy Christensen, WACDB Administrative Assistant, christnjc@hotmail.com. The date and location of the WACDB meeting is:

    - Annual WACDB Meeting
      Monday, November 9, 2026
      Portage Best Western
      2701 S. CX, Portage

  Please note that Wisconsin law requires that the board file with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP); the town board or town zoning committee; the city council, plan commission, or plan committee; and the county zoning administrator, in which district territory is located, a separate report, for the preceding fiscal year, on each drainage district under the board's jurisdiction. Unless the board selects a different fiscal year and notifies DATCP of the selection, the board's fiscal year begins on September 1 and ends the following year on August 31. If you have any questions please contact Bart Chapman, State Drainage Program Manager, at barton.chapman@wisconsin.gov or (608) 216-6433.

Cover Crop Insurance Premium Rebate Program

- $800,000 will be available for up to $5 per acre premium rebates for cover crops planted in 2026 and subsequently planted with a 2027 insurable cash crop. The application will become available beginning December 1, 2026, on a first-come, first-served basis and will remain open until January 31, 2027 or until program funding is exhausted.
- 2025-2026 verified land units and eligible applicants will be credited by USDA-RMA on their 2026 crop insurance bill. Further program information is available at covercroprebate.wi.gov.

Land and Water Conservation Board-LWRM Plans

- The December 1 meeting of the LWCB will include 10-year revisions from Brown, Kenosha, and Trempealeau counties. Additional meeting information can be found on the LWCB webpage.

Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program (NOPP)

- The RFP for the 2027-2028 application period will open on October 15, 2026. Documents are available for preview on the DATCP's Commercial Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Grant Program webpage. If you have a project idea, reach out to the NOPP team to discuss prior to applying. More information can be found on the NOPP webpage.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- County Annual Cost Reporting 2026
  Counties should report their CREP administrative costs to DATCP by no later than Friday, December 4, 2026. The county contributions to administer CREP count toward Wisconsin's overall match requirements for federal CREP funds and are important for meeting statewide CREP program requirements reported to FSA by the end of the year. Please report any in-kind contributions, including staff time spent promoting the program, completing CREP state contracts/transfers/cost-share/buyouts, or monitoring visits and reporting. The county CREP annual report form (LWR-282) is

on the DATCP's CREP website. Completed reports should be sent as a PDF via email to Brian Loeffelholz at Brian.Loeffelholz@wisconsin.gov.

- Agreement Submittal Deadline is 11/13/2026 for Payments in 2026
  Friday, November 13, 2026, is the deadline for submitting completed CREP agreements (LWR-283) to DATCP enrolled by FSA for FFY2026 (sign-up 65) to ensure they make it through processing for state payments before the end of the calendar year. Agreements submitted to DATCP after that date may be processed and paid after January 1, 2027. If a landowner wants to claim their state CREP payment on 2026 taxes, it will need to be paid prior to December 31, 2026. Completed CREP agreements should be submitted via the secure CREP SFTP site following the guidance on bottom of Page 2 of the LWR-283 instructions form.

- New W-9 and New Supplier Forms need for All Payment Requests
  DATCP finance is now requiring that a new W-9 and a New Supplier Form (DOA-6460) be submitted with all CREP payment requests. A blank copy of the W-9 can be found on the CREP For Counties webpage.

- FSA Update on FFY2027 Enrollment Authority:
  Currently, there is no authority to accept new offers. With the expiration of the latest extension to the 2018 Farm Bill, FSA will need a new Farm Bill or another extension to grant authority for a CREP/CRP signup. For land not currently enrolled in CREP/CRP, FSA would not be able to accept a new offer, perform a site visit, or do any conservation planning. Local FSA offices would be able to answer questions and take contact information for interested landowners. FSA local offices will continue to service already enrolled contracts as normal.

Conservation Engineering

- The Conservation Engineering section is happy to share that Sarah Hovis has accepted our offer for the Environmental Specialist position in the North Area. Sarah has been with DATCP since 2024 in our project position and is excited to move into this permanent position with DATCP that will give her the opportunity to keep working with county conservation staff to implement our conservation projects.

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

- The priority deadline to submit farmland preservation agreement applications for new or re-enrollments for tax year 2026 was October 1, 2026. Applications submitted after October 1, 2026 are not anticipated to be processed in calendar year 2026. Applications not processed in 2026 will be added to the 2027 processing queue.
- All agreement applications (new, re-enroll, or amendment) must be submitted to DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov before August 1, 2027 and will be prioritized for processing before the end of calendar year 2027.

Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant (PLWPG) Program

- The 2027 Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant application period has closed. The review process is underway and award decision letters are going out later this month. If you have any questions, please contact Dani Heisler at dani.heisler@wisconsin.gov.

Staffing Updates

- Salvador Vega joined the bureau on October 19 as an LTE Environmental Analysis and Review Specialist supporting our Agricultural Impact Statement Program.

Salvador graduated last year from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside with a degree in Environmental Studies with a concentration in geography and a GIS certificate. He previously completed a few internships, including one at the City of Racine clerk's office as a GIS intern primarily working with voter and election data. Last year, he completed a transportation planning internship at the Minnesota Department of Transportation in St. Paul.

In his free time, Salvador enjoys reading, especially history and sci-fi (always looking for book recommendations!); hiking; baking; and vegetable gardening. We're looking forward to having Salvador in the bureau!