



Land & Water Monthly

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,
Trade and Consumer Protection
BUREAU OF LAND AND WATER RESOURCES

October 2024

Soil and Water Resources Management (SWRM) Grants

- The 2025 Final Joint Allocation Plan will be presented to the Land and Water Conservation Board at the October 1, 2024 meeting. The plan can be accessed via the [SWRM webpage, Section 6 webpage](#). The new practices included in ATCP 50 are available for contracting as of June 1, 2024. DATCP staff have guidance available to help you implement and offer cost sharing in accordance with the new rule standards, which can be found here: [ATCP 50 Practice Specific Information](#).
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- For questions about practice cost sharing, review Table 2.2 on the [SWRM Resources webpage](#). As always, reach out if you have further questions and we can help you find answers.
- 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. **We will be switching to using only these forms in 2025.**
- Requests to transfer cost share funds between counties are due to DATCP by December 1, 2024.

ATCP 50 Update

- ATCP 50 updates went into effect on June 1, 2024. Final rule language can be reviewed on the Wisconsin Legislature's [website](#). The Bureau has information on our [website](#) and will be hosting informative webinars in October. 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.
- **This fall, DATCP is hosting ATCP 50 Office Hours** related to non-structural practice updates. Each Office Hour will include a technical primer of the practice, a short discussion of the soil health benefits, and applicable SWRM cost-share requirements. Please send question ahead of time to DATCPLandWater@wisconsin.gov or join to ask questions during the session. All [Office Hours](#) are planned to be recorded and available for future viewing.

Nutrient Management News

- **NEW!** - We have restocked **Runoff Risk Advisory keychains and magnets!** Please reach out to datcpsoilandwatershedmanagement@wisconsin.gov to request magnets and or keychains. When reaching out, please include how many of each you would like, as well as an address to mail them to.
- **Second annual Nutrient Management Regional Meetings: Thank you to everyone who was able to attend. We truly appreciate the participation and feedback!** During the webinar session, we recorded Cody Calkins' DATCP Nutrient Management Update presentation and the SnapPlus V3 Demo. Both are now available for viewing here:
 - SnapPlus V3: <https://wisconsinlandwater.org/members-hub/on-demand-training/nm-snapplusv3-demo-2024>
 - DATCP NM Update: <https://wisconsinlandwater.org/members-hub/on-demand-training/nm-swrn-and-nutrient-management-updates-2024>
- Nutrient Management Farmer Education classes are beginning to be scheduled. Please email datcpsoilandwatershedmanagement@wisconsin.gov to request a DATCP NM staff to assist with your training. Please let us know the dates, timeline, and what you would like us to present on.
- Be on the lookout in the next week regarding the 2024 Annual Nutrient Management Survey and Calculator. There will also be an Office Hour to follow.
- 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.
- Previous SnapPlus trainings can be found here: [Nutrient Management Trainings](#).
- The 2024 Annual NM Reporting Survey and Assistant Calculator was sent out to county staff. An Office Hour will be held on October 3 from 10-11 a.m. for those that need some work time or have questions.

Land and Water Conservation Board-LWRM Plans

- At the October 1, 2024 LWCB meeting, Bayfield, Calumet, and Portage counties will be presenting five-year LWRM plan reviews.

Conservation Engineering

- Hydrologic restoration field visit/trainings that were initially slated for this fall will be moved to 2025. We are currently working on additional trainings that will help inform and prepare for the field visits.
- **Reminder for those in the DATCP Engineering Practitioner Certification and/or NRCS Job Approval Authority programs:** this is the final year of the three-year cycle for obtaining your 30 professional development hours (PDHs). The deadline for completing the 30 PDHs is December 31, 2024. Reach out to your area engineering contact if you have questions or need to find trainings for PDHs.

DATCP Drainage Program

- DATCP is in the process of updating the Drainage Program website. In an effort to provide the most accurate and up-to-date information, DATCP is requesting that all counties with active drainage districts provide contact information for each drainage board member. Please send the following information to Barton T. Chapman, P.E., Drainage Program Manager, at Barton.Chapman@Wisconsin.gov.

- Name, title (i.e. Chairperson, Secretary, Member, Attorney, etc.), address, phone number, email address, and year of appointment
- The Wisconsin Association of Drainage Boards (WADB) will be holding their annual meeting in October. Meeting logistics have not been finalized. DATCP will provide this information once the meeting has been scheduled.
- All activities within drainage districts are managed and administered by a County Drainage Board. Contact information can be found on the Drainage Program website [here](#) or by contacting Barton T. Chapman, Drainage Program Manager, at Barton.Chapman@Wisconsin.gov.

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

- FP Program staff from DATCP and DOR will be hosting a webinar for county staff to discuss the farmland preservation tax credit. The presentation will cover updates to the tax credits, different forms used by claimants, what to do if a landowner receives a notice from DOR, and what happens to the DOR Participant Spreadsheet after it is submitted. Pre-registration is required. To register click the following link: [Farmland Preservation Tax Credit Updates with DOR](#). This meeting will be recorded.
- Any new farmland preservation agreement applications must be turned in by November 15, 2024 to be guaranteed to be processed for tax year 2024. FP staff will continue to process all applications submitted after that date, but we cannot guarantee that it will be processed and eligible for tax year 2024. The application can be found at the following webpage: [Farmland Preservation Agreement Application](#). Completed application packets can be sent to datcpworkinglands@wisconsin.gov.
- The 2024 Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) petition cycle closed August 2, 2024. Committee recommendations will be shared to the petitioners following that meeting. For information about the 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)

- DATCP CREP Agreement Submittal Deadline is November 8, 2024. FSA accepted new CREP enrollment offers up to September 30, 2024 for federal fiscal year 2024 (Sign up 61). Please contact your local FSA office to see if there are any pending CREP CRP1s that still need the state/county CREP agreement (LWR-283) completed. Friday, November 8, 2024 is the deadline to submit the completed CREP state/county agreement to DATCP to ensure state payment by December 31, 2024 for the 2024 tax year.
- Farm Bill Update: No updates are available for the Farm Bill. With the expiration to the extension of the 2018 Farm Bill, authority to take new CREP enrollment offers will be on hold until there is a new extension or new Farm Bill.
- County CREP Annual In-Kind Cost Reporting: Counties are asked to report their CREP administrative costs to DATCP by no later than December 6, 2024. 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. The reporting form ([LWR-282](#)) is on the CREP website. Completed reports should be sent as a pdf via email to Brian

Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant (PLWPG) Program

- The 2025 application period for Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grants closed. Please reach out to Dani Heisler at dani.heisler@wisconsin.gov if you have questions about the application.

Soil Health Program

- Soil is the vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans. Soil health is about restoring that capacity to provide five crucial soil system functions: regulating water, sustaining plant and animal life, cycling nutrients, providing physical stability and support, and filtering and buffering potential pollutants. Healthy soil systems are created by incorporating the five soil health principles: maximize soil cover (think cover crops and no-till), maximize living roots in the soil (think cover crops, diversifying crop rotation, perennial crops), maximize crop/plant diversity (think cover crops, diversifying crop rotation, perennial crops), integrate livestock (managed grazing, proper manure management), and minimize soil disturbance (no-till, reducing chemical fertilizer, reducing pesticides, i.e. nutrient management).

Soils can be broken down to their three primary properties – chemical, physical, and biological. Soil health recognizes that soil biology drives most of the soil functions in a soil system. Incorporating the five soil health principles creates the environment for soil biology to thrive. (in a gram [~1 teaspoon], there are about 7-11 billion organisms). Soil health has proven to be a great motivator for our producer-led groups, helping to reach new farmers. DATCP hopes to build a common understanding of what soil health is, to facilitate statewide coordination on soil health topics and initiatives, and to provide support to conservation partners and farmers in transitioning to a soil health system.

- The new online Soil Health curriculum is now 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. Module 4 focuses on applying soil health in Wisconsin cropping systems. The curriculum incorporates both traditional and citizen science to demonstrate the mindset necessary to be successful as a soil health farmer. The primary audiences are LCD staff, other Agriculture Professionals in Wisconsin, and Wisconsin farmers. For questions regarding this training or the soil health program contact Randy Zogbaum at randall.zogbaum@wisconsin.gov.
- Soil health is the systems thinking approach to agriculture implemented by incorporation of the five Soil Health principles as described on [DATCP's Soil Health webpage](#). The revised version of ATCP 50 has incorporated several practices to give counties new tools to address the five Soil Health principles. Each of the ATCP 50 New Practice Office Hours trainings provide an overview of the Soil Health systems thinking approach and how the practice meets the soil health principles, with the final training session in the series (November 12) focusing on soil health.

Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program (NOPP)

- TENTATIVE PLANS: Cycle 3 of the NOPP grants will be opening mid-October. All research plans must be pre-approved by Monica Schauer, the UW research director for NOPP. Email your ideas to her at mschauer2@wisc.edu for approval by December 1. The full application being due January 31, 2025.

Cover Crop Insurance Rebate Program

- Application closed until December 2024. To qualify, cover crops must be planted in the fall of 2024 on fields to be cropped in spring of 2025. The acres cannot receive cover crop funding support during this same time. Please retain your FSA-578 for the application process.

Legislation Updates

- The 2023-2024 Legislative Session ended in mid-March.

Staffing Updates

- We filled three vacancies this past month! Please welcome Sarah Hovis, who started as an Environmental Specialist on September 9; Jonathon Lisowe, who started as an Environmental Specialist on September 23; and Alex Elias, who will start as the Agency Liaison on October 7, to their new roles!

- **Sarah Hovis – Environmental Specialist Northern Area**

- Sarah received her undergraduate degree in Plant and Soil Sciences and her Master of Science degree in Agricultural Sciences with a focus on Soil and Water Quality from Tennessee State University. After working for a year at the university as a Research Associate, she moved back to her hometown of Kewaunee and began her career in the Conservation Engineering field with an internship in Kewaunee County Land Conservation Department and as a contracted employee for Kewaunee County Natural Resource Conservation Service. She briefly worked as a Soil Conservationist in Spokane Valley, WA with NRCS and spent two years reviewing CAFO permits for the Tennessee Department of Ag before accepting a position as a Conservation Technician with Iowa County, where she stayed for five years. She spent the last year as an Engineering Technician with Brown County, which not only exposed her to different practices in her professional life but enabled her to buy her childhood home.

In her spare time, she enjoys being outdoors and hiking with her three dogs, traveling to new places, attending concerts, and completing home improvement projects. She is also actively involved with White Paws German Shepherd Rescue as a foster home, co-managing the fundraising team and creating t-shirt designs for fundraising campaigns. She has worked closely with state, federal and county colleagues over the years and looks forward to continuing to collaborate towards our common goal of resource conservation!

- **Jonathan Lisowe – Environmental Specialist Southeast Area**

- Jonathan received his undergraduate degree from UW-Oshkosh in Environmental Studies Resource Management. He started his career working for a non-profit in Fond du Lac, collecting water samples; helping write nutrient management plans; and testing how gypsum affected soil health, haylage growth, and water runoff nutrient loads. After the grant funding ending for that position, he started his new career as Calumet County Land and Water as a Conservation Project Technician. Jonathan built a lot of practices during his time at LWCD, ranging from two staged stream banks, grade stabilization structures, cattle crossings, manure pit expansion, and recently a trout stream realignment project that included lunger structures, root wads, and rock riffles.

Outside of work he likes to bow and gun deer hunt, kayak, and relax at his cabin with family in Shawano County. He is looking forward to continuing to learn from others and help others in our conservation world.

- **Alex Elias – Agency Liaison**

- Alex grew up in New Jersey and received her B.S. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and Political Science from University of Michigan and graduated with an M.S. in Urban and Regional Planning from University of Wisconsin-Madison. She moved to Madison in 2014 and has loved living in Wisconsin. Alex started her resource management career at

the Wisconsin DNR in the Division of Forestry as the Associate Planner LTE and Urban Forestry Grants Manager LTE. Prior to accepting the Agency Liaison position, Alex was the Program and Policy Analyst in the Bureau of Land and Water Resources at DATCP for the past four years.

Outside of work, her toddler, husband, dog, and two cats keep her busy. In her free time, Alex enjoys checking out different playgrounds, traveling, and playing Dungeons and Dragons. She's excited to work with partners in this new role while continuing to support conservation across Wisconsin's farms.