



New Conservation Cost-Sharing Available in Lafayette County

Release Date: 8/29/17

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MADISON – Some landowners in Lafayette County will be eligible for new cost-sharing dollars to help them adopt conservation practices, under a public-private project led by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

Landowners in the Pecatonica and Southwest Lead Mine agricultural enterprise areas are eligible for funding under the new partnership to adopt or install practices including cover crops, nutrient management, prescribed grazing, grassed waterways, forest management. Other practices will also be considered.

For information, farmers and other landowners who want help with conservation projects in 2018 should contact the USDA-Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) office in Lafayette County, 608-776-4028, by Sept. 18. Beginning farmers and farmers who are military veterans are especially encouraged to apply.

The funding is available as part of a five-year project under the NRCS Resource Conservation Partnership Program. DATCP and 12 partner agencies and non-government organizations received \$600,000 for the Lafayette County Agricultural Enterprise Area Water Quality Project. The area encompasses many waterways within the Pecatonica River watershed that are listed as impaired or priorities for phosphorus and nitrogen reduction. The goal is to build a network of landowners and farmers to work on conservation issues in the watershed, reducing runoff of excess nutrients and sediment from agricultural lands while maintaining profitability and keeping agriculture vital for future generations.

By pooling their resources and expertise, the 13 partners will more than double the federal investment and reduce redundancies. They will offer workshops and field days. Nonfarmers will be able to participate in water quality monitoring.

Besides DATCP and NRCS, partners in the project are Lafayette County Land Conservation Department, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association, Southwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Southwest Badger Resource Conservation and Development Council, Driftless Area Land Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, Blanchardville Woman's Club, Lafayette County Farm Bureau, Wisconsin Farmers Union and Dairy Business Association.

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