



# Land & Water Conservation 2022 Annual Report

## 2022 WORKPLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

By: Land & Water Conservation Department staff

- Secured funding of \$165,490.00 from Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) for staff salaries and support, and training expenses.
- Received \$54,500 in Bond money and \$54,000 in SEG money from DATCP to implement the Wood County Land and Water Resource Management Plan. Funds were used to cost share conservation practices.
- Received \$44,410.42 from point sources for water quality improvements.
- Received \$3,235 from the county board to pay area and state membership dues.
- Received \$110,323.92 from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Large-Scale TRM grant for the Mill Creek Watershed.
- Held the 2022 Wildlife Tree and shrub sale, selling 14,775 trees and shrubs to approximately 156 landowners.
- 7 landowners purchased prairie grass/wildflower seeds.
- Tree shelters and generic gel were made available for sale through the Land and Water Conservation Department.
- Received \$44,340 for staff and support from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WiDNR) to administer the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program.
- Received \$117,791.61 from Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WiDNR) for materials, construction, venison processing and bear abatement.
- Enrolled 21 landowners in the Wildlife Damage Abatement program.
- Inspected 15 deer fences for compliance with the Wildlife Damage Abatement Program.
- Completed construction of two wildlife fences for cranberry growers. Fences totaled 15,102' in length and 6,095' in length.
- Completed 55 crop damage appraisals with damage claims paid out totaling \$15,050.
- Administered the 2022 venison donation program - 337 pounds of ground venison was donated to three pantries throughout Wood County.
- The Conservation, Education and Economic Development Committee (CEED) held 12 regular meetings and 7 special meetings. All cooperating agency staff received meeting notices and minutes.
- Certified reclamation and closing of two large non-metallic mine sites.
- Approved one new mine site and approved permit modification for expansion of a mine site.
- Received \$43,250 in reclamation permit fees under the Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Program.
- Held \$2,606,595 in financial assurance for nonmetallic mining reclamation.
- Inspected 53 nonmetallic mine sites for reclamation progress and active acres - created maps for each mine
- Issued 10 exemptions to non-metallic mining for new ponds.
- Conducted a transect survey to determine soil erosion rates in Wood County.
- Administered the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP); we had no new enrollments this year, the 1,187.04 acres enrolled in CREP in Wood County provide the following benefits:
  - \* At least 1,956 lbs. of phosphorus loss to waterways prevented per year.
  - \* At least 1,022 lbs. of nitrogen prevented from entering waterways per year.
  - \* At least 1,065 tons of sediment prevented from entering waterways per year.
- Assisted two new farmers with rotational grazing systems on their property. Roughly, 120 combined acres will be put into rotational grazing systems. Cost-share assistance for perimeter fencing and watering systems for both grazing operations will be provided.
- Updated conservation practices data on Arc Map.
- Coordinated the local, Conservation Poster Contest; judging 10 posters for the 4-6 grade category. Prizes were issued to the top three participants.
- Presented on-line through email - the importance of "One Water" to poster contest participants.
- Conducted stream flow monitoring at six sites once per month for eleven months as part of a six county-wide monitoring project. Reported data to DNR's Surface Water Integrated Monitoring System.
- Issued three Animal Waste and Manure Management permits.

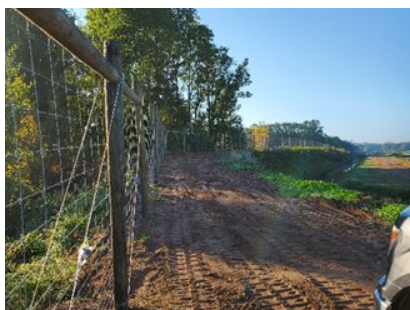
Accomplishments continued on page 2

Accomplishments continued from page 1

- Worked to get maximum number of nutrient management plans turned in, which came to 92. These 92 plans covered 58,096 acres of farmland.
- Kept wild parsnip map current by taking reports from the public and field mapping. Treated wild parsnip at four locations, covered 11 miles. five new spots were found.
- Received \$1,900.84 in staff support for assisting with the Nutrient Management Farmer Education (NMFE) classes.
- Partnered with Marathon, Clark, Lincoln, and Taylor counties to hold multiple courses that qualify farms to write their own nutrient management plan called the NMFE class. Six area farmers covering 3,390 acres and multiple farmers from surrounding counties attended the Wisconsin Rapids class. Provided assistance to past/present attendees to keep up their plan.
- As a part of the 9-Key Element Plan, surface water samples were tested for total phosphorus and total suspended solids at four locations throughout the Mill Creek Watershed once per month from May to October.
- The 10' Great Plains no-till drill in its third season of use was used consistently throughout the growing season. The drill was used by 26 landowners covering 555.18 acres.
- Eight farmers participated in no-till and/or cover cropping in Wood County or within the Mill Creek Watershed on 140 fields covering 2,489 acres, with funding coming from MDV or LWRM or 9-key funds. A total estimate of 3,573 lbs. of phosphorus and 3,476 lbs. of sediment were reduced.
- Three farmers participated in creating a nutrient management plan in Wood County or within the Mill Creek Watershed on 63 fields covering 775 acres, with funding coming from LWRM or 9-Key funds.
- Expanded the educational prairie/pollinator garden outside the River Block building by 64 plants and 8 new species.
- Provided no-cost well water nitrate testing to 36 Wood County residents.
- Helped coordinate the virtual "Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo."
- Completed and cost-shared one waste transfer and heavy use protection facility.
- Completed and cost-shared four well closures.
- Completed and cost-shared one manure storage facility and waste transfer.
- Completed and cost-shared two waste storage facility closures.
- Completed and cost-shared one streambank protection.



Bohn-Pies reclaimed mine site



WI River Cranberry Company  
fence build



Glacial Lake Cranberry -  
Wilderness fence build



Vegetative Transect  
mine site reclamation



Cashen/Lang Streambank  
restoration project



2022 Tree & shrub sale

## MEET THE LAND & WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT STAFF AND CEED COMMITTEE



(L-R) Kyle Andrae, Engineering Technician, Caleb Armstrong, Conservation Specialist, Rod Mayer, Conservation Program Coordinator, Emily Salvinski, Conservation Specialist, Shane Wucherpennig, County Conservationist, Lori Ruess Conservation Administrative Specialist.



### Conservation, Education, and Economic Development Committee (CEED) Members

(L-R) Dave LaFontaine, -Vice Chair, Carmen Good-Farmer Representative, Laura Valenstein, Jake Hahn, Tom Buttke, Bill Leichtnam-Chair

## NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

By: Roy A. Diver, District Conservationist

The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment. NRCS Mission: Helping People Help the Land.

In 2022 workload and landowner interest in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) remained high. The CSP and EQIP obligated \$525,619 to 24 landowners in Wood County, to plan and apply new conservation practices on their land, over 50 applications were received with over a million dollars in funds being requested. The CSP and EQIP in 2022, had 48 active contracts managed that cover over 22,000 acres of Cropland, Farmstead, Associated Ag Land, and Forestland, to continue to protect existing farm resources and implement additional conservation enhancements, all CSP payments for 2022 were processed, and additional funds were paid to landowners through the EQIP and for various conservation practices applied from previous year contracts.

Wisconsin Rapids NRCS staff, Andy Richardson, Resource Conservationist, Tristyn Forget, Soil Conservationist, Russ Biebl, Soil Conservation Technician, Pat Murphy, Retired ACES, Roy A. Diver, District Conservationist (stationed in Stevens Point).

The following is a partial list of landowner accomplishments completed with NRCS assistance from October 2021 through September 2022:

Conservation Plans Written	5,399 acres
Cover Crop Applied	514 acres
Brush Management Applied	80 acres
Pasture and Hayland Planting Applied	93 acres
Fence (Prescribed Grazing) Applied	10,145 feet
Prescribed Grazing Applied	137 acres
Grassed Waterway Applied	850 feet
Livestock Pipeline (Grazing) Applied	427 feet
Monarch Butterfly Habitat Applied	3 acres
Irrigation Pipeline Applied	936 feet
High Tunnel System Applied	1 applied
Early Successional Habitat Development Applied	10 acres
Forest Stand Improvement Applied	32 acres
Wildlife Habitat Improvement Applied	624 acres
<b>Brief Technical Assistance</b>	<b>575 landowners</b>
<b>Estimated Soil Erosion Reduction</b>	<b>18,897 tons</b>

## WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

The goal of the Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD), the Land and Water Resource Management Plan implementation, the Mill Creek 9-Key Element plan and Multi-Discharger Variance is to improve and protect water quality by reducing pollutants from urban and rural nonpoint sources. Nonpoint source pollution comes from a diverse number of activities in our daily lives including, runoff from over fertilized lawns and crop fields, constructing buildings and roads, and plowing our fields for crops. Nonpoint pollution is the leading cause of water quality problems in Wisconsin. The LWCD staff would like to say “thank you” to all who have installed practices. We appreciate your efforts to protect the natural resources of Wood County and beyond.

### Land and Water Resource Management Plan Implementation & Other Programs

Starting in 2000, the Land & Water Conservation Department began securing state funds from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to fund local conservation practices on an annual basis. The selected conservation practices are outlined as priorities in the Land & Water Resource Management Plan that was written for Wood County.

DATCP has provided Wood County Land & Water (LWCD) \$1,783,213 to cost share best management practices over the last twenty-three years. Landowners countywide are eligible for these funds. In 2022, the Wood County LWCD secured \$54,000 for nutrient management and \$54,500 to install selected practices.

DNR has provided \$182,320.17 to cost share best management practices through the Mill Creek TMDL grant over the past three year period. In 2022, Wood County issued \$110,323.92 in cost-share received through the Mill Creek TMDL grant. Landowners in the Mill Creek watershed are eligible for these cost-share funds.

The Land & Water Conservation Department received a total of \$78,538.71 to cost share best management practices from 2019 - 2022 through the Multi-Discharger Variance (MDV) Program. In 2022, Wood County received \$28,866.77 to cost-share best management practices in the Castle Rock, Lake Dubay and Black River HUC 8 watersheds.

#### Practices installed in Wood County and reimbursed by DATCP, DNR & MDV in 2022 include:

Cover crops	1,138 acres
Nutrient management	775 acres
Residue management	1,351 acres
Streambank & Shoreland Protection . . . . .	1
Waste storage facility closure . . . . .	2
Wells decommissioned. . . . .	4
Waste transfer and heavy use protection . . . . .	1

On an annual basis, the LWCD selects landowners and practices to be funded from those that express an interest and have resource concerns.

#### The following landowners installed Best Management Practices in 2022: Cost Shared through the SWRM Program

- ◆ Dustin Albert
- ◆ Richard Armagost, Jr.
- ◆ Joe & Sandy Behlen
- ◆ Kirby and Karen Cashen
- ◆ Charles Dorshorst
- ◆ George Gilbertson
- ◆ Kevin Heeg
- ◆ Ron & Linda Hilgart
- ◆ Jackie Hoffman
- ◆ Carol Kobza
- ◆ Laurie Kobza and Peter Oppeneer
- ◆ Paul Lippert
- ◆ Marson Farms LLC
- ◆ James Wiernik

#### The following landowners installed Best Management Practices in 2022: Cost Shared through the Multi-Discharger Variance (MDV)

- ◆ Kirby & Karen Cashen
- ◆ Susan Lang
- ◆ Jeff Wiernik
- ◆ Kevin Heeg

#### The following landowners installed Best Management Practices in 2022: Cost Shared through the Mill Creek TMDL

- ◆ Tyler Bulgrin
- ◆ James Wiernik
- ◆ Glen Peplinski
- ◆ Roth Golden Acres
- ◆ Barry Richardson

## **UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON DIVISION OF EXTENSION WOOD COUNTY**

Extension Wood County assists the Wood County Land & Water Conservation Department by providing educational support for county conservation programs.

Extension educators provide information relating to the development of soil, water, wildlife, livestock, crops and other related resources. Matt Lippert, Agriculture Agent, provides information related to the development of soil, livestock, crops, and other related resources. In addition to conservation, Matt educates about marketing, livestock and crop budgets, integrated pest management, grazing, land rent, farm management, family farm transfers and farmstead design.

Extension also utilizes its regional and statewide network of UW-Madison specialists and area educators to assist with nutrient and pest management and assisting producers to develop their own nutrient management plans. Richard Halopka, Clark County Crops and Soils Agent, and Dan Marzu, North Central Wisconsin Nutrient & Pest Management Outreach Specialist work closely with the Wood County Land and Water Conservation Department.

Anna James, Natural Resource Educator, provides resource support to local farmer-led watershed groups and develops educational programming on conservation land management practices. Anna has taken up planning and facilitation for the “Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo,” an annual event modeled after the “Healthy Soil, Healthy Water” program. As part of her regional responsibilities, she assists citizen led watershed and lakes groups with curriculum development and facilitation. Wood County is the top cranberry-producing county in North America so it is a natural fit to have Cranberry Outreach Specialist, Allison Jonjak, home based with Extension Wood County. Her efforts are focused on improving grower education in cranberry production practices and aligning researcher focus with grower needs. Allison started with Extension in 2020, and has hosted virtual and in-person events focusing on nutrient use efficiency, water use and quality, profitability, and integrated pest management. The Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers’ Association has awarded Allison the Education Advocate award, and cranberry growers appreciate wetlands-specific management decision support and guidance.

Extension also provides educational programs in Horticulture, 4-H and Youth Development, Human Relationships and Development, Community Development, Natural and Environmental Resources and Nutrition Education through the FoodWise program.

Stop by the Extension Office for plat books, farm record books, soil sample information, water quality and radon test kits.



### ***Extension Wood County Staff:***

Top (left to right): Jeremy Solin (Area 7 Extension Director), Mallory McGivern (Area 7 FoodWise Administrator), Matt Lippert (Agriculture Educator), Kayla Rombalski (Community Development Educator)

Middle (left to right): Janell Wehr (Horticulture Educator), Wendy Young (Administrative Support), Jennifer Swensen (Wisconsin 4-H Regional Program Manager)

Bottom (left to right): Laura Huber (4-H Program Educator), Hannah Wendels (FoodWise Educator), Jasmine Carbajal (4-H Associate Educator)

*Staff not pictured:* Anna James (Natural Resources Educator), Karli Tomsyck (Administrative Support)