

CONSERVATION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

DATE: Wednesday, July 5, 2023
TIME: 9:00 a.m.
LOCATION: Wood County Courthouse – Room 114

1. Call meeting to order
2. Declaration of Quorum
3. Public Comments (*brief comments/statement regarding committee business*)
4. Review Correspondence.
5. Consent Agenda.
 - a. Approve minutes of previous meetings
 - b. Approve bills
 - c. Receive staff activity reports
 - d. Receive committee reports
6. Review items, if any, pulled from Consent Agenda.
7. Risk and Injury Report
8. Land & Water Conservation Department
 - a. Review and approve Keuffer permanent pasture and fencing project (bid)
 - b. Discuss and take action to increase Non-Metallic Mining (NMM) and Financial Assurance (FA) fees effective January 1, 2024.
9. Private Sewage
10. Land Records
11. County Surveyor
12. Planning & Zoning
 - a. Consider zoning amendment resolution for the Town of Marshfield.
13. Economic Development
 - a. Project Close-Out report from Point Basse Economic Development Outdoor Shelter project.
 - b. Project Close-Out report from Village of Port Edwards Kayak Put-ins project.
 - c. Update from Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce and consider release of 2023 Economic Development funds in the amount of \$25,000.
 - d. Update from Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry and consider release of 2023 Economic Development funds in the amount of \$25,000.
 - e. Discuss increase funding request of \$6,000 for Central Wisconsin Junior Fair for 2023.
 - f. Review/Approve CEED grant funding one-page semiannual “Progress Report” and one-page final “Project Summary with pictorial documentation” forms.
14. Extension
 - a. General Office Update
 - b. 2022 Annual Report
15. Requests for per diem for meeting attendants
16. Schedule next regular committee meeting
17. Agenda items for next meeting
18. Schedule any additional meetings if necessary
19. Adjourn

Join by phone

+1-408-418-9388 United States Toll
Meeting number (access code): 2487 987 7187

Join by WebEx App or Web

<https://woodcountywi.webex.com/woodcountywi/j.php?MTID=mdeb45a2fe6080a0ebc3b419d29cdb2a2>
Meeting number (access code): 2487 987 7187
Meeting password: 070523

MINUTES
 CONSERVATION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
 WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 2023
 WOOD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ROOM #114, WISCONSIN RAPIDS WI

Members Present: Bill Leichtnam, Dave LaFontaine, Tom Buttke, and Laura Valenstein

Members Excused: Carmen Good & Jake Hahn

Staff Present:

Planning & Zoning Staff: Jason Grueneberg & Victoria Wilson

Land & Water Conservation Staff: Shane Wucherpennig & Barb Peeters (via WebEx)

UW Extension Staff: Jeremy Solin and Kayla Rombalski

Others Present (for part or all of the meeting): Dennis Polach, Jeff Penzkover, Bill Clendenning, Lance Pliml (via WebEx), Jeffrey Gaier, Mark Bowie, Ken Hastreiter, Dale Christenson, Josh Ostermann, Josh Schoemann

1. **Call to Order** Chairperson Leichtnam called the CEED Meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.
2. **Declaration of Quorum** Chairperson Leichtnam declared a quorum.
3. **Public Comment** None.
4. **Review Correspondence** None.
5. **Consent Agenda** The Consent Agenda included the following Items: 1) minutes of the May 3, 2023 and May 23, 2023 CEED meetings, 2) bills from Planning & Zoning, Land & Water Conservation and UW Extension and 3) staff activity reports from Planning & Zoning, Land & Water Conservation and UW Extension offices.
 - a. Approve minutes of previous meeting. No additions or corrections needed.
 - b. Approve bills. No additions or corrections needed.
 - c. Receive Staff Activity Reports. No additions or corrections needed.

Motion by Laura Valenstein to approve the minutes from the May 3rd and May 23rd committee meetings. Second by Dave LaFontaine. Motion carried unanimously. Motion by Tom Buttke to approve the bills from Planning & Zoning, Land & Water Conservation and UW Extension, and staff activity reports as presented. Second by Dave LaFontaine. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **Review items, if any, pulled from Consent Agenda** None.
7. **Risk and Injury Report** None.

With the approval of the committee, item #13 was moved up on the agenda.

8. Land & Water Conservation Department

- a. Discuss and possible action on designating supervisor as Wood County representative on North Central Land & Water Conservation Association
 Shane Wucherpennig talked about the designation of a representative for NCLWCA. Dave LaFontaine expressed interest and Shane shared information with him about this role. Dave LaFontaine has agreed to fill this role.

Motion by Tom Buttke to approve Dave LaFontaine as the Wood County representative on North Central Land & Water Conservation Association. Second by Bill Leichtnam. Motion carried unanimously.

- b. Discuss and possible action to establish rate per acre for permanent pasture for prescribed grazing.
Shane gave an overview of the need for an established flat rate per acre for permanent pasture for prescribed grazing. He recommends a rate of \$230 per acre.

Motion by Dave LaFontaine to approve the \$230 rate per acre. Second by Laura Valenstein. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Private Sewage-information in packet.

10. Land Records-information in packet.

11. County Surveyor-no update.

12. Planning and Zoning

- a. CEED Tour date, discuss and select.
The consensus of the committee is to hold the CEED Tour on Friday September 29th.

13. Economic Development

- a. Presentation on Uniquely Wisconsin marketing campaign by Discover Mediaworks.
Josh Schoemann and Josh Ostermann presented a marketing product provided by Discover Mediaworks that promotes counties in Wisconsin and the people that live in those counties. The videos they provide require an economic development component, vision for the future and a tourism component. The videos define the heart and the culture of the counties. The cost for this product is \$60,000. Questions and answers took place. Consensus from the committee is to move as quickly as possible on this project.

Motion by Dave LaFontaine to move forward with the marketing campaign with Uniquely Wisconsin for Wood County using economic development funds. Second by Laura Valenstein. Motion carried unanimously.

- b. Update from C2 Makerspace and consider release of 2023 Economic Development funds in the amount of \$10,000.
Mark Bowie and Ken Hastreiter presented the progress that has been made at the C2 Makerspace. Questions and answers took place.

Motion by Laura Valenstein to release \$10,000 in funding to C2 Makerspace. Second by Dave LaFontaine. Motion carried unanimously.

- c. Update from Marshfield Municipal Airport and consider release of 2023 Economic Development funds in the amount of \$15,000.
Jeff Gaier presented information on the activity at Marshfield Municipal Airport.

Motion by Tom Buttke to approve release \$15,000 in funding to Marshfield Municipal Airport. Second by Laura Valenstein. Motion carried unanimously.

- d. Update from Central Wisconsin State Fair and consider release of Junior Fair grant funds in the amount of \$32,000.
Dale Christenson presented information and needs of the Central Wisconsin State Fair, specifically the Junior Fair. Dale is requesting \$38,000 in funding due to increased costs to run the fair. Discussion took place on the additional \$6,000 in funding.

Motion by Dave LaFontaine to release \$32,000 in funding to Junior Fair. Second by Tom Buttke. Motion carried unanimously.

e. Discuss inquiry to place wind turbines on Wood County property.

Jason Grueneberg spoke to the committee about a request from Alliant Energy to use Wood County owned property as part of a wind turbine farm. Jason asked the committee for direction on whether to move forward with the request from Alliant. There is potential for revenue to Wood County from this project. The consensus from the committee was for Jason to continue conversations with Alliant on this project.

14. Extension

a. General Office Update

Jeremy Solin gave a general office update. He shared that UW Extension 4H is hosting Animal Science Day at the fairgrounds on Friday June 9th and invited everyone to stop by and check it out.

He further shared that the funding for the Natural Resources Education (NRE) position was inadvertently left out of the DNR budget request. Because of this, 3.5 water-focused NRE positions (including Anna James' position) would be eliminated unless there is a way to address this. State leadership and UW Extension are working on this.

A verbal offer has been accepted for the Healthy Communities Coordinator position. The new person will start in two weeks.

An issue was brought forward about calls not reaching the UW Extension office. This was investigated but there is not a clear answer as to what is causing this issue. Jeremy will continue to investigate.

b. Clean Sweep

Kayla Rombalski shared a flyer and information on the September Clean Sweep event.

Discussion took place on whether to hold this event in the spring rather than the fall. Further discussion included holding the event in both the spring and fall and in Marshfield as well as Wisconsin Rapids. Kayla will look into information and funding avenues for this.

15. Requests for per diem for meeting attendants None.

16. Schedule next regular committee meeting

Wednesday July 5, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

17. Agenda items for next meeting

- a. Increased funding of \$6,000 for Central Wisconsin Junior Fair for 2023.

18. Schedule any additional meetings if necessary

None

19. Adjourn

Chair Bill Leichtnam declared the CEED Meeting adjourned @11:32 a.m.

Minutes by Victoria Wilson, Planning & Zoning Office and in draft form until approved at next meeting.

Committee Report

County of Wood

Report of claims for: Extension Wood County

For the period of: June 2023

For the range of vouchers: 30230070 - 30230080

Voucher	Vendor Name	Nature of Claim	Doc Date	Amount	Paid
30230070	UW MADISON EXTENSION	4-H Summer Academy Fees	06/06/2023	\$1,400.00	P
30230071	US BANK	June Statement	06/20/2023	\$29.72	
30230072	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	4H Summer Camp Supplies	06/20/2023	\$17.02	P
30230073	EAST TROY RAILROAD MUSEUM INC	4H Discover WI Charter	06/20/2023	\$600.00	P
30230074	UW MADISON ACCOUNTING SERVICES	Educator Fees Jan-June	06/27/2023	\$148,187.82	
30230075	CARATTINI JACKIE	June Expenses	06/27/2023	\$247.59	
30230076	JAMES ANNA M	June Expenses	06/27/2023	\$210.65	
30230077	JONJAK ALLISON	June Expenses	06/27/2023	\$564.63	
30230078	LIPPERT MATTHEW	June Expenses	06/27/2023	\$543.50	
30230079	ROMBALSKI KAYLA-ROSE	June Expenses	06/27/2023	\$205.47	
30230080	TOMSYCK KARLI	June Expenses	06/27/2023	\$23.51	
Grand Total:				\$152,029.91	

Signatures

Committee Chair:

Committee Member:

Committee Member:

Committee Member:

Committee Member:

Committee Member:

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Committee Member:

Committee Member:

Committee Report

County of Wood

Report of claims for: Land & Water Conservation Dept

For the period of: June 2023

For the range of vouchers: 18230094 - 18230097

Voucher	Vendor Name	Nature of Claim	Doc Date	Amount	Paid
18230094	STAPLES ADVANTAGE	Office Supplies	06/02/2023	\$29.76	P
18230095	STERNITZKY JON	NMFE Class Reimbursement	06/07/2023	\$524.00	P
18230096	ARMAGOST RICHARD C JR	Cost Share - Permanent Pasture	06/08/2023	\$8,395.00	P
18230097	US BANK	Drill parts-tree gel-stakes	06/19/2023	\$1,098.01	
Grand Total:				\$10,046.77	

Signatures

Committee Chair: _____

Committee Member: _____

Committee Member: _____

Committee Member: _____

Committee Member: _____

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Committee Member: _____

Committee Report

County of Wood

Report of claims for: Planning & Zoning

For the period of: June 2023

For the range of vouchers: 38230009 - 38230011 22230034 - 22230043

Voucher	Vendor Name	Nature of Claim	Doc Date	Amount	Paid
22230034	INDUSTRY SERVICES DIVISION	PS-May Permits	06/01/2023	\$600.00	P
22230035	BOYER KEVIN	SU-Servcies per contract June	06/01/2023	\$833.00	P
22230036	NORTH CENTRAL WI REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION	PL-Bike & Ped Plan	04/30/2023	\$5,700.00	P
22230037	WI DEPT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	PL-Office Supplies	06/06/2023	\$20.00	P
22230038	US BANK	LR/PL Payables June 2023	06/19/2023	\$7.11	
22230039	WISCONSIN COUNTY SURVEYOR ASSOCIATION INC	Su-Dues	01/01/2023	\$100.00	P
22230040	AEGIS CORPORATION	PS-Subs, Pubs & Dues	06/16/2023	\$30.00	P
22230041	WOOD COUNTY CLERK OF COURTS	PS-Fines & Forfeitures	06/28/2023	\$40.00	
22230042	OPPORTUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTER	PL-Office Supplies	06/21/2023	\$75.00	
22230043	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	PL-Office Supplies	06/06/2023	\$27.43	
38230009	MARSHFIELD AIRPORT	ED-2023 Grant Funding Mfld Air	06/08/2023	\$15,000.00	P
38230010	CENTRAL WI STATE FAIR ASSOC	ED-2023 Grant Funding Jr Fair	06/08/2023	\$32,000.00	P
38230011	CITY OF PITTSVILLE TREASURER	ED-REDI Funds	06/15/2023	\$35.00	P
Grand Total:				\$54,467.54	

Signatures

Committee Chair:

Committee Member:

Committee Member:

Committee Member:

Committee Member:

Committee Member:

Committee Member:

Committee Member:

Committee Member:

Extension Wood County staff led, delivered, planned or collaborated on all of the following activities:

4-H POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Laura Huber, 4-H Program Educator

Jasmine Carbajal, 4-H Associate Educator (Marathon & Wood Counties)

- An 8-week educational series called Tools to Thrive where Latinx youth in 9th-12th grades met to learn about mental health topics, strategies for dealing with stress, and discussed navigating two different cultures in their family setting and their school setting. The goal of this series was for Latinx English Language Learners (ELLs) at a local high school to have a safe space to learn and talk about topics in their native language (Spanish) to help with long-term positive outcomes like more engagement in school, more positive relationships, and better grades.
- An interactive outreach Family Night event with Marshfield Unified School District Latinx families where the goal was to inform families of local resources available to them in their community
- An interactive outreach event called Healthy Kids Day where the goal was to have Wood County families learn about ways to stay active during the summer and get ideas on healthy snacks.
- A one-time interactive outreach community event where youth in middle school and high school explore various careers and learn about Extension work. The goal was to encourage youth to learn about Extension and increase their knowledge of Wisconsin trivia.
- A fun interactive activity where youth in K-13 explored what sparked them and what possible careers align with their interests. The goal of this activity was for youth to identify their interests.



AGRICULTURE

Matt Lippert, Agriculture Educator

- Planning for a small ruminant management program for goat producers, typically members of plain faith communities so that they may improve their production practices, profitability and sustainability of their goat management programs.
- Planning for a pasture walk program to provide pasture management information for dairy and livestock producers so that they can produce better pasture-based forages to improve the profitability and environmental quality of their farms.
- Working with a group of dairy producers cattle were selected and presented at the Area Animal Science Days program for 4-H youth so that they could improve their skills at dairy cattle evaluation.
- A newsletter for farmers and agribusiness professionals where they learned about upcoming programs and topics including potassium and nitrogen in pasture management, single gene inherited traits in dairy cattle,

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managing transition cows on small farms and pest management on vegetable farms. The purpose of this effort is to work collaboratively to provide timely education for improving agricultural production with multiple county farmers and stakeholders.

- *The Extension Central News is released quarterly and goes to households involved in agriculture across Central Wisconsin. In the news timely animal husbandry topics, farm management topics, vegetable and crop management topics are presented. Notice of upcoming field days and workshops is also provided.*
- A research-based educational article for farmers, managers, employees, and agri-business professionals, where they will learn about utilizing a forage test to determine forage stability for dairy farms. The goal of the article is to help producers learn how reading a forage test can help determine how stable their stored forages are to increase business viability and environmental sustainability.
- Planning for development of factsheets/articles, longer publications, and videos on nutrition, genetics, & reproduction topics. The goal of this effort is to increase farmer, nutritionist, veterinarian, and other agribusiness professionals understanding of management of these topics to help improve farm sustainability and economic viability.
- A newsletter for farmers and agribusiness professionals where they learned about upcoming programs and topics including pricing standing hay, PEAQ stick to determine harvest quality of alfalfa, single gene traits in dairy cattle, fly control for cattle, growing degree calculation and upcoming meetings. The purpose of this effort is to work collaboratively to provide timely education for improving agricultural production with multiple county farmers and stakeholders.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Kayla Rombalski, Community Development Educator

- A series of two roundtable discussions [one in Marshfield, one in Wisconsin Rapids] for local businesses where they had the opportunity to discuss their workforce challenges with one another. The Employer Roundtables were designed to give employers a chance to share what is going well and what is not about their employee recruitment and retention. A key issue is child care and employers were able to learn from each other and share best practices for how to support employees with a child care benefit.
- A presentation to a local [South Wood County] funder [Legacy Foundation] on a submitted funding proposal to support child care access and affordability in the area. The purpose of the presentation was to supplement the written grant application and provide further details to the funding committee.
- A monthly meeting for economic development organizations in Wood County where representatives share updates from their organization and review the strategic goals of the Wood County REDI plan. This meeting keeps the community connected about economic development initiatives and allows for synergy and collaboration among organizations.
- Planning for a strategic planning workshop for a local nonprofit [JusticeWorks, Ltd.] where the nonprofit's board members will determine the organization's future direction. Having an outside facilitator support their work to set the vision and mission of the organization will help them focus and plan for sustainment of the organization.



CRANBERRIES

Allison Jonjak, Cranberry Educator

- A Cranberry Crop Management Journal (36.3) was published, providing grower observations, an update on the EPA's registration work on re-evaluating currently approved fungicides which may impact some growers, and an introduction to Dr. Shinya Ikeda, food scientist with the USDA-ARS who will be working with cranberries.
- An insecticide trial testing the efficacy of several registered and not yet registered modes of action were applied to a production cranberry marsh in central Wisconsin, to discover best practices for use patterns for growers needing to protect crops from the Blunt Nosed Leaf Hopper, as well as to assist with the EPA registration process.
- Three fungicide trials evaluating crop safety and spectrum of control of new modes of action of fungicides were applied to a production cranberry marsh in central Wisconsin, to discover best practices for use patterns for growers, as well as to assist with the EPA registration process.
- An herbicide trial evaluating crop safety and spectrum of control of pre-emerge products was applied to a new cranberry planting in central Wisconsin, to discover best practices for use patterns for growers, as well as to assist with the EPA registration process.
- A Cranberry Virtual Brown Bag Lunch meeting was hosted enabling growers to learn about current field observations, the late season pest *Systema frontalis*, and nematode control trials for *Systema frontalis* larvae.
- Small plot field research exploring the use of a new class of fungicides in concert with familiar registered fungicides, allowing cranberry growers to control disease while preventing fungicide resistance by using multiple modes of action, was developed.
- A large scale field research project studying the efficacy of registered and experimental chemistries against cranberry flea beetle in cranberry marshes was developed. This will enable growers to control the pest while maintaining crop health and safety.
- A research project studying the efficacy of registered and experimental chemistries against blunt-nosed leafhopper adults (the vector of an incurable disease), in cranberry marshes was developed. This will enable growers to control the pest and prevent transmission of the disease.
- A research project studying the efficacy of registered and experimental chemistries against blunt-nosed leafhopper nymphs (the vector of an incurable disease), in cranberry marshes was developed. This will enable growers to control the pest and prevent transmission of the disease.

FOODWISE

Hannah Wendels, FoodWise Nutrition Educator

Mallory McGivern, FoodWise Administrator

- Each month, FoodWise partners with the ADRC and United Way of South Wood/Adams County at FOCUS Food Pantry to provide a free "Stockbox" pickup of commodity food from the Hunger Relief Federation. When available, FOCUS Food Pantry provides fresh produce with the "Stockbox" and the Housing



Authority of Wisconsin Rapids delivers the boxes to home-bound individuals. The program happens once per month and provides a free box of food to 90+ seniors and continues to grow each month.

- A 4-week series of nutrition education lessons for adults (Nutrition for Healthy Living), where participants learn about the benefits of making healthy choices and about nutrition needs as one ages. Participants engage in conversation based learning techniques, activities, and have a recipe demonstration to enjoy during class.
- A once-per-month nutrition lesson held at FOCUS food pantry in Wisconsin Rapids for adults and older adults, where participants learn about the food groups, making healthy dietary choices, and reading nutrition labels to help make healthier choices. These lessons are designed to create a positive experience with food and nutrition and help participants make healthier choices now and in the future.

HORTICULTURE

Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator

- A community of practice for horticulture educators where we explore strategies and resources to expand horticulture education and outreach to underrepresented audiences. The goal of participating in this group is to dig into ways we can locally continue to grow and enhance our horticulture programs to reach more diverse audiences.
- Planning for the creation of a repository of existing horticultural resources in multiple languages for home/community gardeners of all abilities. The goal of this effort is to make this repository accessible on the Horticulture Topic Hub.
- Developing informal learning communities utilizing the Horticulture Program's social media for all Wisconsin gardeners, including underserved populations. The goal of this effort is to provide accurate, practical and up-to-date information to the public primarily through the topic hub in order to bolster educational outreach efforts in support of addressing the Horticulture Program objectives.
- A presentation for members of the Wood County Chapter of Stonecroft, where participants learned ornamental container cultivation techniques, including cultivar selection, planting and maintenance, supporting lifelong learning, healthy wellbeing, and positive socialization.
- An interview for WFHR where the Wisconsin Rapids area listening audience learned how to keep landscape plants healthy during dry conditions. This effort is designed to increase awareness of resources to address environmental contamination and pollution due to overuse of horticulture chemicals in urban and suburban environments.
- A therapeutic horticulture lesson for FOCUS (Feeding Our Communities with United Services) clients, where participants learned flower container cultivation and design techniques, including cultivar selection and planting and maintenance. This effort is designed to support lifelong learning, healthy wellbeing, and positive socialization.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS

Jackie Carattini, Human Development and Relationships Educator

- A Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) suicide prevention training for the WUCMAA Suicide Prevention Project where they learned to recognize the warning signs of suicide, how to offer help, and how to get help

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and save a life. This effort was designed to save lives and reduce suicidal behaviors by providing innovative, practical and proven suicide prevention training.

- A 7-session course that helps adults of all ages to make end-of-life financial, healthcare, and final wishes decisions in order to reduce the stress experienced by survivors and to ensure that their wishes are honored.
- An interactive outreach Family Night event with Marshfield Unified School District Latinx families where the goal was to inform families of local resources available to them in their community.
- Two online workshops ("Rent Smart" in the Wood County Jail) per month where participants gain knowledge and skills essential for a successful renting experience. This effort is designed to encourage safe and sober housing stability.
- Financial coaching sessions with residents where we support them in setting and developing financial goals, designed to assist clients in developing the skills to meet basic needs.
- A series of monthly, in-person workshops (Rent Smart) for renters where participants gain knowledge and skills essential for a successful renting experience. This effort is to encourage safe and sober housing stability.
- An online program (Money Matters) for participants who want to improve their financial knowledge, where they complete 1-12 modules on different financial topics. The goal of the Money Matters modules is to increase participants' knowledge on topics such as credit scores and reports, making a spending plan, what to do when you can't pay your bills, and identifying financial strengths so that participants can apply these skills in the future.
- An online 6-session course for renters where participants learn how to find and apply for rental housing, understand their responsibilities as a renter, how to communicate effectively with their landlords, and manage housing expenses. Through this, homeless populations and those who have negative rental records are able to increase their ability to find and keep safe affordable housing, thereby increasing their stability and decreasing their reliance on public supports.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Anna James, Natural Resources Educator

- A 6-session summer camp course for youth, where they learned about symbiotic relationships in local ecosystems through a variety of hands-on activities and guided exploration. The goal of this course is to broaden youth's understanding of local ecosystems and the importance of symbiotic relationships, while also building courage to explore the natural environment.
- A social indicator survey for producers in the 10-Mile and 14-Mile Watersheds where producers participate in one on one interviews to share perspectives on water quality, details of production systems, and implemented conservation practices. The goal of this effort is to gain information about awareness, attitudes, constraints, capacity, and behaviors that are expected to lead to water quality improvement and protection.



LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

Activities Report for Barb Peeters - June 2023

- Answered phones, replied to emails and processed incoming and outgoing LWCD mail.
- Reviewed payroll reports and payroll registers.
- Processed 4th quarter 2022 Wildlife reimbursement from WI DNR (\$132,462.70) (received 6/5/23 for 2022 revenue).
- Worked with Human Services staff to arrange daily pick-up of LWCD mail from courthouse to eliminate duplication of duties by county staff.
- Attended June 7th CEED meeting via WebEx.
- Attended ArcGIS-Program training in Planning & Zoning dept.
- Submitted government charge form to establish account with Menard's store in Marshfield.
- Compiled LWCD payroll percentages and forwarded to Finance prior to June 1st, June 15th and June 29th payrolls.
- Assisted with orientation of UWSP summer intern.
- Processed no-till drill and crimper-roller payments.
- Assisted with the mailing of wildlife damage fence inspection letters.
- Researched and selected tree and shrub species for the 2024 Tree, Shrub & Seed sale.
- Attended the Badger Crop Connect "Special Droughts" WebEx.
- Attended NACD "Advocating for LCDs and Districts Nationally as One Voice" WebEx.
- Completed wellness coaching.
- Ordered office supplies and processed invoice(s).
- Completed May sales tax report and forwarded to finance.
- Updated LWCD newsletter mailing list.
- Assisted customers with water samples for nitrate testing.
- Processed 1st quarter 2023 Wildlife reimbursement from WI DNR.
- Assisted customers via phone & email with questions regarding annual tree/shrub sale. Numerous inquiries about when annual tree sale is held and whether there are currently any trees for sale.
- Processed Nutrient Management Plan Farmer Education class reimbursements.
- Calculated sale price for tree root gel and updated signage and pricing for 4 oz. & 1 lb. bags.
- Assisted with mailing of non-metallic mining inspection letters.
- Processed sales of tree shelters.
- Assisted with room reservation(s) for July 20, 2023 RC&D meeting at River Block.
- Submitted cost-share reimbursements to landowners for establishing permanent pasture.
- Typed cost-share contract for well closure.
- Attended June 29th staff meeting(s) and typed minutes.
- Processed department invoices/check requests.
- Electronically submitted staff reports and packet materials to the County Clerk's office for CEED packet.
- Organized County Board packet and electronically submitted to the County Clerk's office.

Staff Report for June

Caleb Armstrong

- Brought our intern along on a grazing tour for the UWSP students, where I taught along with others the importance of nutrient management in a rotational grazing system.
- Worked with Roth's Golden Acres on interseeding rye into existing alfalfa ground.
 - Had to help calibrate the drill for planting.
 - Also helped them with seeding rates for clovers for another field they no-tilled.
- Attended an ArcPro training with the rest of the staff with Paul Bernard on getting to know and use the new system.
- Worked on wild parsnip spraying and mapping throughout Wood County and parts of Portage County.
- Worked on Luke Kueffer and Rick Armagost rotational grazing fences and getting the appropriate cost-sharing need to get the fences designed and operational come fall.
- Worked with Dustin Albert on the roller crimper and working on our research plots where we are roller crimping different species of rye into soybeans and trying to convert to planting green.
- Attended a special WebEx on drought conditions in Wisconsin and how farmers can maintain and adjust to it.
- Worked with Jere Hamel on roller crimping his rye and planting soybeans and corn into it on his land in southern part of Wood County.
- Working on an outline and guideline for new employee that will be taking over my job once the hiring process is complete.
- Was gone for an extended amount of time on a vacation to Canada.

June Staff Report

Clinton Sabers – Summer Intern

- Moved grain drill from farm to farm
- Performed maintenance on grain drill
- Surveyed with Engineering Technician
- Participated in grazing tour at TreeHaven
- Helped with crop damage assessments
- Arc Pro training
- Streamflow and water sampling
- Completed transect of the county
- Prepared bags of seedling root gel

Activities Report for Kyle Andreae – June, 2023

- June 1 – Schill site stakeout
- June 2 – Schill site stakeout
- June 5 – Schubert site visit/ design
- June 6 – Grass Waterways Training
- June 7 – Keuffer Site visit/ design modification
- June 8 – ArcGIS Pro Training, Digitizing easements, Armagost Site visit, Keuffer Design modification
- June 9 – Keuffer Design modifications, Keuffer Site visit, No till drill relocation, Schill Site visit
- June 12 – Keuffer Design modifications complete sent for review. Roller Crimper moved. Schill site visit.
- June 13 – Contractor coordination, Keuffer Site visit
- June 14 – Schill site visit, Transect survey
- June 15 – Move Crimper, Transect Survey, Schill site visit
- June 16 – Schill Construction
- June 19 – Schill Construction
- June 20 – Schill Construction
- June 21 – Keuffer drone flight/ solar repair, Schill construction
- June 22 – North East Area Technician Tour
- June 23 – Schill site visit, Schill as-built
- June 26 – Schill as-built, Schill site visit, CREP Inspections
- June 27 – Gust site visit, Schill as- built
- June 28 – Schill as-built
- June 29 – Schill as-built, Schill site visit
- June 30 – Gust site visit

Activities Report for Rod Mayer – JUNE 2023

- Reviewed/approved/processed Totten pond build from NMM reclamation permitting – letter, spreadsheet, DNR correspondence, emails, application.
- Processed Knuth wildlife enrollment (part as managed with appraisals and part as Act 82 with permits only) – updated DNR database, maps, acre calculations and breakdown, sent to DNR.
- Completed fence inspection processing – letters, inspection forms, maps/comments, file form, DNR database updates, spreadsheet, file copies, binder updates, etc.
- Pond build info sent to Niehaus.
- Appraised Knuth 1st crop alfalfa field work and processed. Calculations, maps, acres, forms updated, database updates, scans, file updates, etc.
- Pond build info sent to Krause.
- Worked on listing of all non-metallic mine sites that are active for a records request. Included mine name, contact info, and material being mined.
- Attended ArcPro GIS presentation in courthouse.
- Documented and sent to Paul (GIS specialist) listing of maps that I need and use in my job – ideas to build into ArcPro going forward.
- Reviewed legislative bills sent from DNR in regards to NMM. DNR still reviewing to determine any affects to the program.
- Worked on GIS info for Paul – listing of maps needed most, ideas, listing for NMM including fields to attach, listing of mined materials, layers needed for mapping, sent explanations to how acreage works for different calcs. Involved with fees and financial assurance, exemptions, etc. Ongoing brain storming – correspondence for building GIS system for non-metallic mine site mapping.
- Looked into two NMM complaints for sites not permitted (on cranberry marshes). Contact with DNR. Prepared and sent letters to landowners.
- Met with landowner for info to add fields to existing WM-40 wildlife enrollment. Prepared maps, contact with DNR for process, calculated added acres, prepared enrollment and permit forms, delivered to landowner for signatures.
- Meeting in office with Paul to go over GIS possibilities when switch over.
- GPS handheld updates – testing.
- Correspondence with operator for procedure to make an inactive mine site active. Fee amounts, financial assurance requirements, scanned and sent existing plan to follow, informed DNR storm water for their requirements on this site, etc.
- Completed Marti Farms 2nd crop alfalfa field appraisals – (7 fields).



Activities Report for Shane Wucherpennig – June, 2023

- **June 1** – Virtual meetings, Site visits
- **June 2** – Database updates
- **June 5** – Virtual meetings, Webinar
- **June 6** – NMM fees and F.A. evaluation with neighboring Counties
- **June 7** – CEED Meeting
- **June 8** – Arc Pro Training with Paul Bernard and LWCD Staff
- **June 9** – Landowner project designs, Virtual meeting, phone correspondence, project updates
- **June 12** – Database management updates, Summer intern correspondence
- **June 13** – Virtual meetings
- **June 14** – Virtual meeting, project updates, phone correspondence
- **June 15** – Field work, Database updates
- **June 16** – Database updates
- **June 19** – Virtual meetings, County Board, Landowner project designs
- **June 20** – Field visits
- **June 21** – Drone flight Keuffer farm
- **June 22** – NR151 Cost-share rate correspondence with DATCP, Project updates, R.O. system field visit
- **June 23** – Database updates, Virtual meetings, field visit
- **June 26** – Staff report, Database updates
- **June 27** – NT Drill pickup and evaluation
- **June 28** – NT Drill Parts pickup and repair, field visits
- **June 29** – Staff meeting, virtual meeting
- **June 30** – Health Coaching, field visits



Wood County WISCONSIN

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ZONING

TO: Conservation, Education & Economic Development Committee

FR: Jason Grueneberg, Planning & Zoning Director
Vacant, County Planner
Paul Bernard, Land Records Coordinator
Jeff Brewbaker, Code Administrator
Brad Cook, Code Technician
Victoria Wilson, Program Assistant
Kayla Rautio, Program Assistant

RE: Staff Report for July 5, 2023

1. **Economic Development (Jason Grueneberg)**

Department Staffing – Filling vacant positions in the Planning & Zoning Office has been going well. On Monday, June 19th the new Code Technician, Bradley Cook started his employment with Wood County. He is off to a great start and I feel he will be a great addition to Wood County. The Planner position has been filled as well and will begin on August 14th.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission – The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission recently released their 2022 Annual Report. The report is included as an attachment.

Economic Development/REDI Roundtable – On June 8th Wood County facilitated an economic development roundtable meeting at the McMillan Memorial library. Kayla Rombalski, UWEX Community Development Educator has been doing an outstanding job facilitating these meeting in the past few months and notes from the meeting are included as an attachment. A highlight from this most recent roundtable meeting was a tour of the maker space at McMillan Memorial Library.

Competitive Wisconsin Rural Resurgence – On June 12th I attended the Competitive Wisconsin Rural Resurgence event. Topics discussed included economy diversification, securing and protecting what we have, workforce, and rural resurgence strategies.

Wood County Economic Development Grants – This past month I have been talking with many organizations about applying for Wood County economic development funding to assist in implementation of the County Economic Development Strategy. Grant applications are due July 7th and will be reviewed by the CEED Committee on July 25th.

Uniquely Wisconsin – At the June CEED Committee meeting, the committee approved working with Discover Media Works to complete Uniquely Wisconsin media stories in the next few months. Given the tight timeline, an agreement has been reviewed and signed and a team created to move this project forward so that work is complete by the 2023 Wisconsin Counties

Association Annual Conference in September. The project team met for the first time on June 26th with the Discover Media Works staff to discuss process, timeline and possible stories to feature for Wood County.

2. Planning& Zoning (Vacant)

3. Land Records (Paul Bernard)

- Parcel Mapping as needed
- Addressing as needed
- NG911 Implementation
- New Layer Created – Airport Height Restriction Zones
- ESRI Licensing Admin – getting cost agreements from other departments
- Working with Kayla Rautio on a new and exciting project digitizing historic surveys

4. Code Administrator (Jeff Brewbaker)

5. Office Activity (Victoria Wilson)

- a. Monthly Sanitary and Well Permit Activity – There were 18 sanitary permits, 2 shoreland, and 13 well permits issued in June 2023.
- b. TRIP Payments – Our office received \$1600.50 in TRIP payments for June of 2023.
- c. ArcGIS Pro Software Project – Victoria continues to assist Paul with Point of Interest projects. Kayla continues to assist Paul with various GIS mapping projects.
- d. Historical Scanning Project – We will continue to scan historical sanitary permits as time allows. At this time, years 1978, 1979, 1980 and 1981 have been scanned for public viewing. 1970-1977 Remain to be done.
- e. Attended the following meetings/trainings & activities:
 - i. June 7th CEED meeting (VW)
 - ii. June 19th Citizen's Groundwater Group (VW)

Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Roundtable Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 8, 2023 from 9:30-11:30 at McMillan Library



Attendance:

- **Angel Whitehead** - Centergy
- **Denise Sonnemann** - Marshfield Area Chamber
- **Jason Grueneberg** - Planning & Zoning
- **Kaelie Gomez** - Main Street Marshfield
- **Karen Olson** - Marshfield Area Chamber
- **Kayla Rombalski** - Extension Wood County
- **Kelly Borchardt** - Childcaring, Inc
- **Maggie Marquardt** - CREATE
- **MaryAnn Lippert** - MaryAnn Lippert Consulting
- **Patrick Gatterman** - SBDC
- **Sam Wessel** - NCWRPC
- **Tari Jahns** - United Way of S. Wood & Adams

Minutes:

I. **Introductions** were shared.

II. **REDI Strategy Group Updates**

- **Broadband:**
 - Hosting Digital Equity Solutions Team (DEST)/Broadband [Kickoff Meeting](#) on June 15. That team will be working on an RFI process from ISPs in August.
- **Entrepreneurship:**
 - Sam Wessel from the Regional Plan Commission gave an overview of the Regional Entrepreneurship Analysis and Strategy Project. Find his slides here:
 - [Entrepreneurship Assessment & Strategy Slides.pdf](#)
 - The survey will identify trends in entrepreneurship. Target survey audience is entrepreneurs themselves. Chambers are important partners in this survey. Survey will help to identify resources that businesses need or would use and understanding technology that is needed/requested.
 - Patrick shared that SBDC has done a similar survey and can share their questions/data.
 - Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Steering Committee will have a kickoff meeting (just like the broadband one) soon.
- **Child Care Task Force:**
 - [2023-04-06 Child Care Task Force Minutes](#)
 - [2023-06-08 Child Care Task Force Minutes](#)
 - Selected for the Dream Up! Child Care Supply Building Grant Program. Will be led through a strategic planning process with First Children's Finance. Held employer roundtable events in WR and MF. Good turn out and conversation around business needs at each.
- **Branding & Outdoor Recreation:**
 - MaryAnn asked about the status of the NCWRPC bike pedestrian plan. It is not done yet. The contact at RPC is Fred Heider. On hold with staff vacancy in P&Z. Will reconvene the group in the next few months and have a finished project by the end of calendar year - that is the hope.
- **Housing:**
 - NCWRPC assisting with county-wide housing project. Coming soon.

III. **Roundtable Updates**

- **MaryAnn Lippert:** Pittsville Family Foods is open in the old Baum's Mercantile. They have fresh fruit and veggies, cold deli, hot deli coming in September. Owners Andy Cveykus and Gordie Rundle also own Stratford Family Foods. Gearing up for Pittsville's 4th of July celebration. [Heart and Sole](#) event on the evening of the 3rd. Pittsville downtown market opened for the season yesterday.
- **Sam Wessel - NCWRPC:** Stay tuned for more with the entrepreneurial survey, Wood County housing plan, comprehensive plan, and bike & ped plan

- **Angel Whitehead** - *Centergy*: Developer Tour is coming up and Wood County is hosting. Agenda is finalized. 10 developers are coming from outside the region. Centergy is hosting the first ever JUNE 20 Regional economic development meeting. Already at 40! Centergy has a full agenda. Chatting about Certified Sites. Have a regional roundtable. Re: broadband - facilitating BEAD funding. Regional plan to be submitted later this month. Also working on strategic planning, new directives, entrepreneur support.
- **Kelly Borchardt** - *Childcaring, Inc*: A lot of advocacy happening at the state level - Child Care Counts supports child care programs. Funding is less each month. Kelly and Childcaring are a resource to help folks find child care. United Ways in both communities have funding to help parents pay for child care. There is also a WI Shares subsidy program. Even with these programs the supply of child care programs slowly continues to dwindle.
- **Denise Sonnemann & Karen Olson** - *Marshfield Area Chamber*: Looking forward to the Developer Tour coming up. DairyFest this past weekend was successfully pulled together in just 7 weeks! Great job MACCI! Working on business visit plans. Lots of good things happening and activities.
- **Kaelie Gomez** - *Main Street Marshfield*: Supporting entrepreneurship initiatives happening in the region. Marketing grant downtown is in its third year. Program provides in-kind marketing services to businesses. Six slots available. [Hub City Days](#) is at the end of July.
- **Jason Grueneberg** - *Planning & Zoning*:
 - County just put \$50,000 towards a feasibility study for an Exposition Center at the Central Wisconsin State Fairgrounds in Marshfield. If it comes to fruition that space could be used for expos, conferences, etc. which is needed in Marshfield area.
 - The deadline for [County Economic Development grants](#) is July 7. The committee will review and make funding decisions on July 25. Last year had 19 applications, 13 approved fully or partially and 6 were denied. Application is simple. County is trying to get a sense for ROI. Economic Development partner, not private sector. Staff can share past applications. What people are proposing, what's been successful, etc.
 - CEED Committee approved moving forward with [Uniquely Wisconsin](#). Once we sign on and it's official the crew will move forward pretty quickly. Will be looking at how we structure the team that works on it. Possible focus on entrepreneurship.
- **Maggie Marquardt** - *CREATE*: Launched [Surge](#). The initial deadline was May 31. Only 10 applicants all of whom are in Portage County. Will guarantee those 10 applicants their spots and try to recruit for the two spots remaining. Patrick is organizing how to pitch training, etc. Working to promote the region, add to the bank of storytelling. Surge venue is not picked out. Want to replicate similar events held previously at Eron's Event Barn, Golden Eagle Log Homes. \$10,000 is the main prize, \$2,000 for audience choice. Work continues after the strategic doing workshop in Merrill. Pathfinder projects are in the works. Rural Innovation Network is mapping out resources for entrepreneurship, Quality of Place in the region. Looking at building out an inclusive tech culture.
- **Patrick Gatterman** - *SBDC*: Working with Create on Surge and pitch training. Surge is not for infancy ideas - it's for a business product. Offering Entrepreneurial Training Program (ETP) in Wood County and wanted to offer in-person. 20 of the participants who applied are not from Central Wisconsin. 2 are from Marshfield. Everyone wants virtual. An ETP class in River Falls is held quarterly and gets lots of in-person attendance. It's the space they hold it in that attracts people. Looking at that as an opportunity. Seeing a huge influx of new businesses - 7+ a day, compared with 2-3 a day on average previously. Bringing on more help for SBDC. Push programming and consulting to different regions and have consultants in places where folks are already working. SBDC has a staff of 3.
 - Of clients, 67% are women owned businesses. Lots of consulting businesses. Of the clients almost everyone wants to do it full time at some point. 97% of people have opened. Number of refugees, LGBTQ, Spanish speaking businesses - challenges because of other reasons. Lots of businesses. Why aren't they wanting to apply? For an existing business - I want to grow/add/etc - add a project, service, different arm. Tinkerers, makerspacers, etc. Want to see more tech. Solution concept. Consulting. Need a project to go forward. If you're an existing business and I gave you \$10,000

could you scale up. Pitch competitions up North - not many would like to scale for the region.

- **Tari Jahns** - *United Way of S. Wood & Adams*: ALICE Report presentations are June 22 and 27. S. Wood saw an increase of 32% up to 40% for those under the survival budget threshold. For a S Wood County family of 4, a combined hourly wage of \$30.73 is needed for living wage. That doesn't take into effect an emergency fund, any sort of savings. This is today, not looking to the future at all. Report does not include unemployed people. This is underemployed and seniors. Uptick could be due to the senior side. This change is despite the economic impact payments during Covid. Inflation in the last six months is also not included. This is 2021 data. At a minimum, it helps all of us practice empathy skills. Community support is more important now than ever. United Way is gearing up for summer events with a focus on family engagement.
- **Betsy Wood** - *Incourage Community Foundation* (updates received via email): Zoo Programs are today at Helen's Zoo House. Noelle Tarrant with ZooZort has been a licensed animal educator for over 20 years, so kids will be able to interact with, learn about, and even get a chance to hold or pet some animals she will have there. Shows are at 11:00 and 1:00 and open to the community. We just completed our Scholarship season with 172 scholarships awarded this year totaling \$194,000. This week our annual audit is in process. We have updated our feasibility study for the Tribune Building project and are in the midst of next step meetings and hope to have additional updates in the next six months we can share publicly. Thank You to Kyle Kearns and Meredith Klekker for being part of the information gathering meetings we held for this study.

IV. Adjourn. Next meeting is Thursday, July 13, 2023 from 9:30-11:30AM at [Powers Bluff](#) County Park

Upcoming Meetings:

Second Thursday from 9:30-11:30 AM. / August 10 at TBD / September 14 / October 12 / November 9 / December 14

FYI: [Wood County REDI Plan FINAL April 2021.pdf](#)

Submitted by K. Rombalski, Wood County Extension

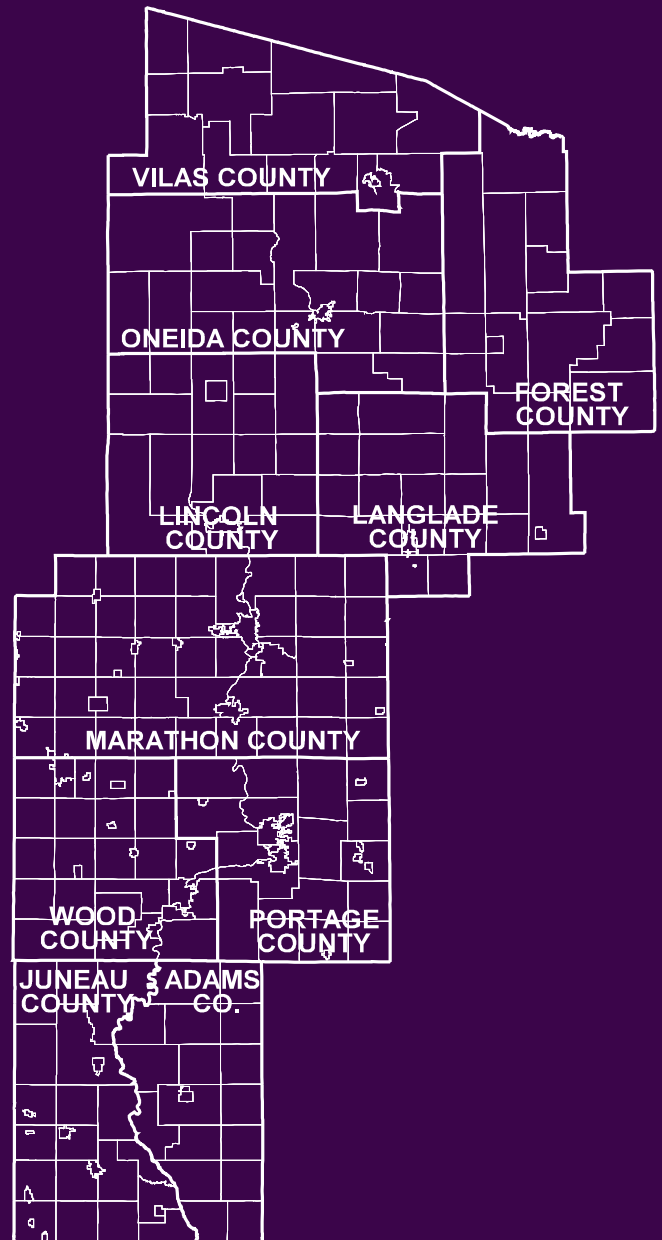
**North Central Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission**



Area Served →

Membership

→ 10 counties
22 cities
41 villages
196 towns
4 tribal nations



Regional Facts

→ 450,400 2022 population (DOA estimate)
9,325 square miles

NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

210 McClellan Street, Suite 210, Wausau, Wisconsin 54403
Telephone: (715) 849-5510 Fax: (715) 849-5110
Web Page: www.ncwrpc.org Email: staff@ncwrpc.org



SERVING ADAMS, FOREST, JUNEAU, LANGLADE, LINCOLN, MARATHON, ONEIDA, PORTAGE, VILAS AND WOOD COUNTIES

Dear North Central Wisconsin:

It is our pleasure to present the **2022 Annual Report** for the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC). Throughout the *Annual Report* you will see many regional and local level projects we completed this past year.

Two major efforts included administration of the Main Street Bounce Back grant program and a Regional Business Park Study. These along with over 80 other regional and local level projects are identified in the report.

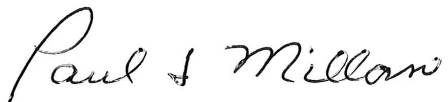
The *Annual Report* is prepared to provide interested local, state, and federal officials as well as citizens with an overview of the activities undertaken by the NCWRPC over the last year. The report highlights our five core work areas:

- Economic Development,
- Geographic Information Systems,
- Intergovernmental Cooperation,
- Land Use, and
- Transportation.

In addition, the report meets the requirements as outlined in Wisconsin Statute 66.0309(8)(b) for annual report preparation. This is our 49th *Annual Report*.

With your continued support, we look forward to another successful year in 2023. Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions regarding the *Annual Report*.

Respectfully Submitted,



Paul Millan
Chairperson

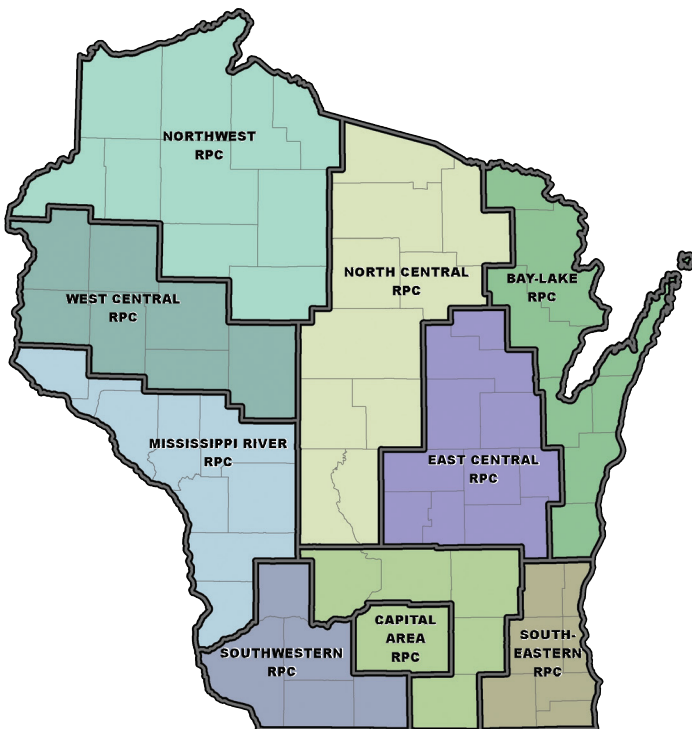


Dennis Lawrence, AICP
Executive Director

Purpose and History:

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) was created in 1973 under Wisconsin Statute 66.0309 by the ten counties of Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas and Wood as a voluntary association of governments with the purpose of preparing plans for the physical development of the Region and its communities; to conduct research; to serve as a data center; and serve as a forum for communication, cooperation and coordination among federal, state, regional, and local interests; and to provide technical assistance.

Regional planning commissions provide assistance throughout the state. NCWRPC is one of nine regional planning commissions serving Wisconsin, while nationwide there are about 500 similar type regional organizations.



Organizational Goals:

NCWRPC maintains and regularly updates a Strategic Plan, as well as other related plans. Some of the goals from these plans are to:

- Provide cost-effective planning services to our members,
- Assist communities comply with state and federally required plans,
- Communicate benefits of regional and local planning,
- Advance sustainable and resilient growth in the Region, and
- Leverage state and federal dollars for the Region.

Mission Statement

In an advisory capacity to local units of government and tribes, the NCWRPC offers cost-effective, specialized planning services and expertise that support responsible development of the Region's economic, social, natural, and human-built environments. The NCWRPC also provides leadership and a regional forum for the creation of cooperative responses to shared opportunities and the challenges facing the counties and communities of the ten-county Region.

State and Federal Relationships

NCWRPC is an independent area-wide planning agency created by state statute that is governed by an appointed board, called a Commission, and serves the counties, towns, villages, cities, and tribes within the Region. In addition, there are two long-standing relationships with the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and the federal U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), that support planning.

In 1975, NCWRPC was designated as a rural transportation planning region by the WisDOT. As such, the NCWRPC receives a planning grant annually to provide transportation planning assistance to support the state transportation work program throughout the Region. In 1980, the NCWRPC was designated as an economic development district by EDA. The NCWRPC also receives an annual economic development planning grant to provide local economic development assistance and prepare a regional report called a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which helps maintain eligibility for EDA grants.

Types of Assistance

NCWRPC is a regional planning and economic development agency, which provides assistance to local governments throughout the ten-county Region in the areas of economic development, geographic information systems (GIS), inter-governmental cooperation, land use planning, and transportation. The NCWRPC supplements existing staff or takes the lead where there is no staff. The goal is to not duplicate efforts but rather provide an effective system of planning to fit each community's needs.

The NCWRPC undertakes both regional and local planning projects. Regional accomplishments are highlighted on pages 6 and 7, while Local Assistance projects by county are highlighted on pages 8 through 9.

Publications

NCWRPC annually prepares and publishes several planning documents. The NCWRPC also prepares a quarterly newsletter, NCWRPC NEWS, which is provided to over 1,100 people, including county supervisors, chief-elected officials, clerks and many other interested parties throughout the Region, state, and nation. Numerous special alerts and updates are prepared as well. A list of plans, reports and other information is available at the newly redesigned NCWRPC website. See www.ncwrpc.org.

Program Areas:

NCWRPC provides assistance both regionally and locally in the following five areas:

ED

Economic Development

NCWRPC annually prepares a regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that analyzes the economy and identifies potential economic development projects. This report maintains the Region's eligibility for U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration public works programs. Other federal and state programs utilize this plan as well. NCWRPC also prepares EDA grant applications, among others, to bring funding into the Region.

NCWRPC provides local communities with assistance in a variety of other economic development related studies, including preparing detailed economic development plans that examine the local economy, assess local trends, and identify strategies to spur development. In addition, the NCWRPC provides grant writing and administrative assistance to communities that are seeking funds from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, as well as a variety of other grant programs, including WEDC, DNR, WisDOT, and USDA-Rural Development.

GIS

Geographic Information Systems

NCWRPC is a depository for a variety of demographic information for the area, including U.S. Census, American Community Survey, Economic Census, State Employment and Labor Information, and other specialized data sets. We maintain a Regional GIS database and computerized mapping system, including digital orthophotography. In addition, we assist with preparing County Land Information Plans and various grant applications for digital imagery. NCWRPC also coordinates efforts related to securing regional and statewide orthoimagery.

NCWRPC maintains an extensive digital mapping database for local mapping. Custom data sets and maps can also be created for communities on request or as part of larger planning efforts. County Profiles are also prepared and updated as needed. Also, in partnership with WEDC, NCWRPC prepares quarterly economic development reports for each county in the Region using Lightcast (EMSI), specialized economic development analysis software. In addition, the NCWRPC provides redistricting assistance throughout the Region.

LU

Land Use

NCWRPC is responsible for the development of a regional comprehensive plan for the ten-county Region. The Regional Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2004, the first regional comprehensive plan in the state under the new planning law and was last updated in 2015. A five-year mid-plan review of that document was prepared in 2020. NCWRPC also prepares other regionally focused plans from time to time.

NCWRPC prepares a variety of plans for local communities, including outdoor recreation plans, all hazard mitigation plans, land and water resource management plans, sewer service area plans, wellhead protection plans, and wildfire protection plans, among others. In addition, the NCWRPC assists local governments in the preparation of comprehensive plans under Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law, as well as assistance with zoning and land division ordinances that implement local plans.

IGOV

Intergovernmental Cooperation

TR

Transportation

NCWRPC prepares regional transportation plans including highway corridor studies, long-range urban area plans, parking studies, county-wide bicycle planning, Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plans, and grant writing for various WisDOT funding sources. The NCWRPC also provides on-going assistance to the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

NCWRPC assists local governments in a variety of areas, including the preparation of local road improvement programs. These road plans provide a capital improvement schedule for upgrading local roads and help local units obtain Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) funding for road reconstruction projects. Pavement rating and other assistance with the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) program is also available.

NCWRPC is available to conduct specialized studies on request. Over the years, a wide range of studies have been completed on subjects such as merging ambulance services, community consolidation, economic impact analysis, and boundary agreements. Many of these projects include a regional focus because they involve multiple units of government. The NCWRPC also maintains a website and produces a regular newsletter to provide information and other resources. In addition, four quarterly meetings are held to discuss various issues in the Region.

Regional Accomplishments

NCWRPC prepares, undertakes and manages several regional efforts.

Below are some of the highlights of these efforts:

- Secured an additional \$3.5M for a total of \$5.6M for the regional Main Street Bounce Back (MSBB) program to promote business recovery following the pandemic. Provided 435 \$10,000 grants in 2022 directly to businesses throughout the Region. See page 11.
- Prepared a multiyear Regional Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant application to WisDOT to fund our regional program to improve walking and biking conditions for schools throughout the Region.
- Working with CREATE Portage County to expand Create Your Community an entrepreneurial network and establish local innovation/idea centers to encourage new start-ups throughout the Region.
- Staff represent the Region on two state level boards appointed by the Governor, one related to broadband and another related to 911 Emergency Communications.
- Maintained the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to continue the Region's Economic Development District designation, as defined by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA).
- Adopted two new chapters for inclusion in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy - one related to Recovery and the other related to Resiliency.
- Developed a Region-wide business park inventory. First comprehensive review of all 69 business parks in the Region.
- Maintained designation as a rural transportation planning region by WisDOT to coordinate transportation strategies on a regional basis, as well as assist local governments prepare and submit required road ratings.
- Continued implementation of our Regional Livability Plan, as a framework for county and local comprehensive planning efforts.
- Continued implementation of our Regional Bike Plan, which stems from our Regional Livability Plan, as a framework for county and local level bike and pedestrian planning efforts.
- Maintained and developed a Regional Mapping Information System, Census and Demographic Information, and a Planning Library for the Region.
- Continued a partnership with WEDC to provide Lightcast/EMSI economic development modeling tools to communities within the Region. Prepared regional reports.
- Provided organizational support to various entities within the Region, including: Centergy, NCWDC, NEWCOM, NCWSC, NRTC, and WROC. See the next page.

NCWRPC is involved in various other regional efforts throughout the year that are not mentioned here.

On-going Regional Organizational Support:

NCWRPC provides assistance to a variety of organizations to support or complement planning efforts throughout our region.

Centergy

Provide staff support to Centergy, a regional economic development organization serving Adams, Lincoln, Marathon, Portage and Wood Counties. Centergy strives to leverage the collective economic power of its five counties to unite efforts to attract talent and development to the area.

North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC)

Provide management assistance for a revolving loan fund operated by the North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation, which provides gap financing to businesses throughout the Region. The Regional Development Fund was funded by a federal program and is in the process of being phased down. Only two active loans remain.

Northcentral Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition (NCWSC)

Provide staff support to the NCWSC. The Northcentral Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition is a group of 13 municipalities that coordinate education and outreach efforts to improve water quality in the Central Wisconsin River watershed.

North East Wisconsin Public Safety Communication (NEWCOM)

Provide staff support to NEWCOM to manage and coordinate the organization to promote better emergency service communication throughout a 16-county Region.

Northwoods Rail Transit Commission (NRTC)

Provide staff assistance to the NRTC. The mission of the Northwoods Rail Transit Commission is to sustain and enhance safe, reliable, and efficient rail service critical to the businesses, communities and economies in northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Wisconsin Regional Orthophotography Consortium (WROC)

Began as a regional effort in 2005 and now spans the entire state of Wisconsin. This is a collaborative effort to gather orthoimagery for various applications from addressing to 911 to planning. The effort is conducted every five years and covers over 56,000 square miles of aerial imagery. A variety of state and federal partners are involved in this effort as well as over 100 local units of government.

Selected Accomplishments by County 2022

Reflected below are some projects completed or underway within our ten-county Region. Note the Main Street Bounce Back Program (MSBB) reference in each County.

Adams County

- ✓ County Outdoor Recreation Plan underway
- ✓ Town of Quincy Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Census Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS)
- ✓ County Economic Development Strategy Data support
- ✓ Maintain Online County Records System
- ✓ Town of Easton Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports
- ✓ MSBB Awards to 12 Businesses

Forest County

- ✓ County Comprehensive Plan underway
- ✓ County Parcel Mapping Assistance
- ✓ State Parcel Submission
- ✓ County Land Use Update
- ✓ EDA Application with Mole Lake
- ✓ Census Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS)
- ✓ County DOT 5304 Needs Assessment Application
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports
- ✓ MSBB Awards to 2 Businesses

Juneau County

- ✓ Town of Clearfield Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Juneau County Sales Tax Data Report
- ✓ Village of Necedah Comprehensive Plan underway
- ✓ JCEDC Conference Assistance
- ✓ Census Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS)
- ✓ Village of Camp Douglas Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports
- ✓ MSBB Awards to 20 Businesses

Langlade County

- ✓ County GIS and Land Records Assistance
- ✓ Maintain Online County Records System
- ✓ Village of White Lake SRTS grant
- ✓ Census Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS)
- ✓ State Parcel Submission assistance to DOA per state statutes
- ✓ City of Antigo Fire Department Maps
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports
- ✓ MSBB Awards to 36 Businesses

Lincoln County

- ✓ City of Tomahawk Bike & Pedestrian Plan
- ✓ City of Merrill Outdoor Recreation Plan
- ✓ County All Hazard Plan FEMA grant
- ✓ Town of Russell Road Management Plan
- ✓ County Housing Summit Assistance
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports
- ✓ MSBB Awards to 30 Businesses

Marathon County

- ✓ County All Hazard Mitigation Plan
- ✓ Town of Eau Pleine Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ County Highway Study
- ✓ Town of Rib Mountain Outdoor Recreation Plan
- ✓ City of Schofield Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Wausau Metro Housing Assessment
- ✓ City of Mosinee Interactive on-line Zoning Map
- ✓ Town of Rib Mountain Incorporation Mapping Assistance
- ✓ City of Schofield Outdoor Recreation Plan
- ✓ Wausau Safe Routes to School Planning underway
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports
- ✓ MSBB Awards to 119 Businesses

Oneida County

- ✓ County All Hazard Mitigation Plan
- ✓ Town of Cassian Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Maintain Online County Survey Records System
- ✓ Town of Pine Lake Park Analysis & Layout
- ✓ City of Rhinelander EDA Grant Assistance
- ✓ Town of Stella Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Census Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS)
- ✓ City of Rhinelander Outdoor Recreation Plan
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports
- ✓ MSBB Awards to 64 Businesses

Portage County

- ✓ County Sewer Service Area Plan
- ✓ SPRINT Grant with CREATE Portage County
- ✓ County wide Business Park Inventory
- ✓ Partner with MSTC EDA Grant Application Assistance
- ✓ County Land Use Update
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports
- ✓ MSBB Awards to 61 Businesses

Vilas County

- ✓ County Outdoor Recreation Plan underway
- ✓ Lac du Flambeau Tribe EDA Grant Application Assistance
- ✓ County All Hazard Mitigation Plan underway
- ✓ Town of Conover Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ County Land Use Update
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports
- ✓ MSBB Awards to 38 Businesses

Wood County

- ✓ Town of Seneca Comprehensive Plan
- ✓ Wisconsin Rapids EDA Redevelopment Planning Partner
- ✓ County Land Use Update
- ✓ Town of Saratoga Outdoor Recreation Plan
- ✓ Marshfield Area Commuting Patterns Data
- ✓ Town of Saratoga Planning Assistance
- ✓ County Bike & Pedestrian Plan underway
- ✓ Quarterly Economic Reports
- ✓ MSBB Awards to 53 Businesses

Staff also attend various meetings, respond to inquiries, provide assistance to a variety of departments, agencies, and organizations, and completes numerous projects throughout the region not mentioned above.

2022 Audited Financial Statements:

Each year the NCWRPC engages an independent auditor to provide an examination of financial operations. A copy of the complete 2022 Audit Report and Management Communications Letter is available for review at the NCWRPC Office. Below is the December 31, 2022 Statement of Net Position:

ASSETS		
Current Assets	1,903,241	
Receivables	102,127	
Prepaid Items	15,399	
Noncurrent Assets	621,050	
Other Assets-Net Pension	187,520	
Capital Assets	<u>77,786</u>	
TOTAL ASSETS		\$2,907,123
TOTAL DEFERRED OUTFLOWS:		\$426,522
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities	810,285	
Long-Term Liabilities	<u>271,724</u>	
TOTAL LIABILITIES		\$1,082,009
TOTAL DEFERRED INFLOWS:		\$455,076
Net Invested Capital Assets	(1,542)	
Restricted	187,520	
Unrestricted	<u>1,610,582</u>	
TOTAL NET POSITION:		<u>\$1,796,560</u>

Annual Levy Rate

By state statute the membership charge or levy rate to local governments cannot exceed 0.003% of equalized real estate value. At its highest, the rate was set at 0.00275% in 2000, but has since been reduced multiple times. By 2022, that rate was reduced to 0.000635%, which is well less than one third of the statutory limit! In addition, to level out the wide range of member counties total valuations, the NCWRPC established a cap level. The NCWRPC continually seeks other revenue sources to minimize costs to our members.

Leveraging Funds

To keep membership contributions low, additional funds are secured from other sources to operate the organization. A simple Return on Membership (ROM) analysis shows that every membership dollar provided to the NCWRPC leverages additional dollars. In 2022, for every 1 dollar the NCWRPC received from membership it directly leveraged over 16 dollars from grants, local projects, and other sources.

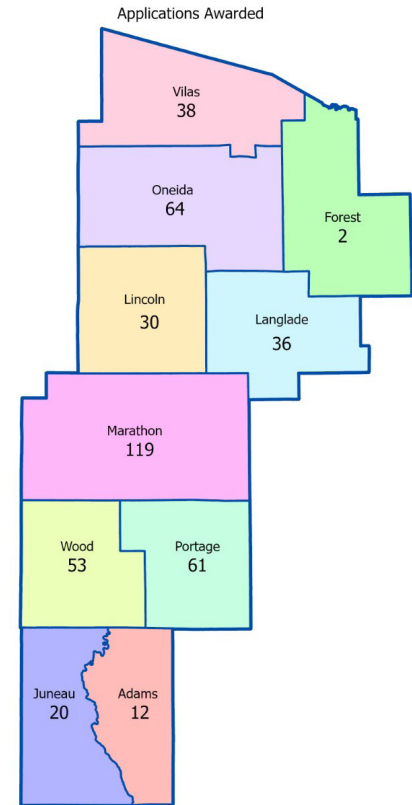
Project Highlights

Main Street Bounce Back Grants

In our continued effort to help the North Central Wisconsin economy recover, especially the downtowns and commercial corridors, the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission partnered with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to continue the Main Street Bounce Back (MSBB) Grant Program. New and existing businesses were eligible for the Main Street Bounce Back Grant Program if they were moving or expanding their business into vacant commercial space. Eligible businesses received \$10,000 that they could use to help cover various expenses such as rent, operating expenses, building repairs, and improvements.

An additional \$3.5M was added to the previous \$2.1M for a total allocation of \$5.6M to our Region to support local businesses. In 2022, 435 MSBB grants were awarded in addition to the 125 awarded in 2021. Combined a total of 560 businesses were awarded. See the map for the distribution of the grants by county for 2022.

Main Street Bounceback Grant Applications



Regional Industrial Park Study

NCWRPC inventoried all 69 industrial parks in the 10-county Region and projected the rate at which vacant industrial land is being developed. Using air photos from 2000, 2010, and 2020, staff were able to measure how many acres per year, on average, were developed for each park individually and for each county in the region. Overall, most areas in the region have a sufficient supply of vacant land. For example, a prospective business park tenant who needs a large tract may have limited choices, and not every business park has the utilities and infrastructure that some tenants need.

Of the 69 industrial parks, 20 of them have fewer than 10 acres available, and 10 of them are full. Therefore, these parks may benefit from expansion. Some parks develop more quickly due to their proximity to infrastructure or a skilled workforce. For example, nearly one-third of the region's acres per year developed since 2000 have occurred in Marathon County, and at least another one-third of the region's acres per year have been developed in Portage and Wood Counties combined. The full report is available on our website.



2022 North Central Region Industrial Park Inventory, Absorption, and Needs Study



Prepared by North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
210 McClellan St #210, Wausau, WI, 54403

Our Staff

Dennis Lawrence, AICP, EDFP, Executive Director

Dennis became the Executive Director in 1997. He has a bachelor's degree in public administration from UW-La Crosse and a master's degree in urban planning from UW-Milwaukee. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and is also certified as an Economic Development Finance Professional (EDFP). Dennis provides overall management to the organization and works in all areas of planning.

Andrew Faust, GISP, Senior GIS Analyst

Andy has worked with the NCWRPC since 1995. He has a bachelor's degree in urban and regional studies from UW-Oshkosh. He is also certified as a Geographic Information System Professional (GISP). Andy works in the areas of GIS and land use.

Fredrick Heider, AICP, Planner

Fred has worked with the NCWRPC since 2004. He has a bachelor's degree in natural resources and land use from UW-Stevens Point and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). Fred works mainly in the areas of land use and transportation.

Dawn Johnson, Office Assistant

Dawn started working with the NCWRPC in 2021. She has an associate degree in accounting from Northcentral Technical College and is certified by the National Association of Public Bookkeepers. Dawn provides program support, staff support, and general office assistance.

Darryl Landeau, AICP, Senior Planner

Darryl has worked with the NCWRPC since 1993. He has a bachelor's degree in natural resources from UW-Stevens Point and a master's degree in urban studies from Mankato State University. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). Darryl works mainly in the areas of land use and transportation.

Eric Sonnleitner, Planner

Eric has worked with the NCWRPC since 2017. He has a bachelor's degree in natural resources and land use from UW-Stevens Point. Eric works mainly in the areas of community development, GIS, land use, and transportation.

Samuel Wessel, AICP, Senior Planner

Sam started in 2022. He has a bachelor's degree from Wisconsin Lutheran College, a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin at Madison and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). Sam works in the areas of community development and land use.

Commissioners:

An appointed commission oversees the activities of the executive director and the organization. As detailed in Wisconsin statutes, three commissioners from each member county govern the NCWRPC. One is selected directly by the County (C), one directly by the Governor (G), and the third is a Joint (J) selection between the County and Governor. Term ending is also displayed; however, note that all serve until reappointed or replaced. Commissioners listed are current as of December 31, 2022.

NCWRPC officers are Paul Millan, Chairperson; Loretta Baughan, Vice-Chairperson; and Ron Nye, Secretary – Treasurer.

Adams County

Rocky Gilner, C (6/24)
Jami Gebert, G (6/28)
Rick Pease, J (6/26)

Forest County

Bill Chaney, C (1/26)
Paul Millan, G (1/24)
Cindy Gretzinger, J (1/28)

Juneau County

Betty Mason, C (6/25)
Kenneth Winters, G (6/23)
Jerry Niles, J (6/27)

Langlade County

Ronald Nye, C (1/25)
Angela Close, G (1/28)
Reinhardt Balcerzak, J (1/25)

Lincoln County

Eugene Simon, C (6/25)
Loretta Baughan, G (6/27)
Hans Breitenmoser, J (6/23)

Marathon County

David Oberbeck, C (6/27)
Daniel Guild, G (6/23)
Craig McEwen, J (6/25)

Oneida County

Steve Schreier, C (1/26)
Ted Cushing, G (1/28)
Harland Lee, J (1/24)

Portage County

John Pavelski, C (1/29)
Larry Raikowski, J (1/27)
Allen Haga, Jr., G (1/25)

Vilas County

Robert Hanson, C (1/25)
Jay Verhulst, G (1/23)
Vacant, J (1/27)

Wood County

Jason Grueneberg, C (6/23)
Doug Machon, G (6/27)
Dave LaFontaine, J (6/25)

In addition, per Wisconsin Statute, the Secretary of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) - Missy Hughes - is an ex-officio officer of the NCWRPC.



49th Annual Report

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
210 McClellan Street, Suite 210 • Wausau, Wisconsin 54403
Phone: 715-849-5510 • Fax 715-849-5110
www.ncwrpc.org



WOOD COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDING PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

REDI Implementation Funding

Economic Development Grant

Budget Year: 2023 Funding Release Date: 2/2/2023

Project Name: **Point Basses Outdoor Shelter**

Grant Amount Requested: \$32,500 Grant Amount Approved: \$32,500

Project Completion Date: 8/1/2023

Summary of completed project:

Cement, and Poles were done in the fall; Rafters were up before snow fly in late fall; we had to wait for the weather the warm up to do the rest. We were able to put sheeting and tar-paper on the roof before our Pioneer Festival in June. We were able to use it for the first time during the festival. We are in the process of putting the composite roofing on, (the material is there and the roofer has his trailer there so I think it will be this week.) The photos are what it looks like right now.

Once the roof is on we will begin the electrical work (weather dependent on when it will be done). Once that is completed it will truly be done.

This was an amazing opportunity for our organization. It provides shelter, picnicking area, and a place to rest if someone is hiking the trails or fishing.

Thank You to the Wood County Development Committee for choosing our project.

Date report received(Office Use Only):







Wood County Planning & Zoning Office
Courthouse - 400 Market Street
P.O. Box 8095
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-8095
Phone: 715-421-8466

2023 Wood County Economic Development Funding Request

*Questions regarding eligible funding or this application should be directed to:
Jason R. Grueneberg, Director at 715-421-8478 or jgrueneberg@co.wood.wi.us*

All applications are due by 4:30pm on Friday July 8, 2022.

Completed Applications should be emailed to Victoria Wilson at vwilson@co.wood.wi.us

Applicant Organization: Historic Point Basse
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 295 Nekoosa WI 54457
Street Address (if different): Wakely Road
Web Site: info@historicpointbasse.com
Organization Telephone: 715-459-1722
Contact Person/Title: Tina Krummel
Contact Person Telephone: 715-325-5840 Email: krummtin@gmail.com

Request Overview - Provide a summary overview of your program or project and explain how it is consistent with and supports the *Wood County Wisconsin Rural Economic Development Plan*. The Plan can be found at

<https://wood.extension.wisc.edu/files/2021/04/Wood-County-REDI-Plan-FINAL-April-2021.pdf>

(If you require additional space, attach separate sheet.)

We have been planning since 2003 to build a outdoor shelter. It will be open walls (20' x 40' x 8'), with a cedar shingle or metal roof depending on what we can afford. We have been harvesting trees for the poles and we are planning on pouring cement for the flooring. With the average age of our working membership being between 65 and 75 years of age, we are forced to hire people to help with the hard labor, (i.e. pouring cement, roofing and electrical). Estimates are as follows: concrete slab poured professionally \$7000. Lighting/wiring installed \$2500. Roof (similar to the House) material and installation \$23,000. (To be period appropriate) Cedar Shingles (short life span) or a metal roof would be between \$16,000 and \$12,000.

Return on Investment - Explain how the proposed program or project will provide a Return on Investment (ROI) to Wood County. Please be as specific as possible. *e.g. County funding allowed us to conduct 25 business prospects leading to the establishment of 2 new local businesses creating 10 full time jobs; County funding contributed to funding an entrepreneurial boot camp that led to the development of 12 business plans and the creation of 2 businesses employing 6 people.*

(If you require additional space, attach separate sheet.)

Since we have partnered with the Town of Saratoga in the creation of the Blue Water Landing, this outdoor shelter will provide a covered shelter area for people who visit our site and the Landing, to rest and enjoy the day. It will also provide a better shelter, from the sun and rain for our School Groups that come during the school year. We had over 670 students visit our site this last school year alone. We have had members of the community come to our site to take photos, walk our trails, and generally enjoy being outside in a clean, quiet space. Other organizations have come to our site to use the picnic area for meetings and family gatherings. The Outdoor shelter will add to their enjoyment of Historic Point Basse Site.

Funding Request Summary – Program/Project

(If you require additional space, attach separate sheet.)

	Requested Funding	Total Organization Budget	Other Funding – e.g. grants, volunteers, donations
Wages & Benefits	0	0	This is the total budgeted revenue for
Office Supplies & Expenses	0	500.00	The site for the entire year and all of the
Professional Services	0	5425.00	Activities and programs
Misc. or Other	32500.00	8485.00	
Total	32500.00	15475.00	21450.00

Project Reporting Requirement - As a reporting requirement of receiving a Wood County Economic Development Grant, a 1-page summary program or project report will be prepared and presented to the Wood County Conservation, Education, and Economic Development Committee in 2022. Funding will not be released to the applicant prior to the reporting requirement being met.

This reporting requirement can be coordinated by contacting **Jason R. Grueneberg, Director at 715-421-8478** or jgrueneberg@co.wood.wi.us



Wood County Planning & Zoning Office
Courthouse - 400 Market Street
P.O. Box 8095
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-8095
Phone: 715-421-8466

2023 Wood County Economic Development Funding Request

Questions regarding eligible funding or this application should be directed to:
Jason R. Grueneberg, Director at 715-421-8478 or jgrueneberg@co.wood.wi.us

All applications are due by 4:30 pm on Friday, July 8, 2022.

Completed applications should be emailed to Victoria Wilson at vwilson@co.wood.wi.us

Applicant Organization: Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce
Mailing Address: 1120 Lincoln Street
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
Street Address (if different): [Click here to enter text.](#)
Web Site: wisconsinrapidschamber.com
Organization Telephone: 715-423-1830
Contact Person/Title: Angel Whitehead, President
Contact Person Telephone: 715-422-4861 Email: president@wisconsinrapidschamber.com

Request Overview - Provide a summary overview of your program or project and explain how it is consistent with and supports the *Wood County Wisconsin Rural Economic Development Plan*. The Plan can be found at

<https://wood.extension.wisc.edu/files/2021/04/Wood-County-REDI-Plan-FINAL-April-2021.pdf>

(If you require additional space, attach a separate sheet.)

Please see attached #1

Return on Investment - Explain how the proposed program or project will provide a Return on Investment (ROI) to Wood County. Please be as specific as possible. *e.g. County funding allowed us to conduct 25 business prospects leading to the establishment of 2 new local businesses creating 10 full-time jobs; County funding contributed to funding an entrepreneurial boot camp that led to the development of 12 business plans and the creation of 2 businesses employing 6 people.*

(If you require additional space, attach a separate sheet.)

Please see attachment #2

Funding Request Summary – Program/Project

(If you require additional space, attach a separate sheet.)

	Requested Funding	Total Organization Budget	Other Funding – <i>e.g. grants, volunteers, donations</i>
Wages & Benefits	\$0.00	\$100,000.00*	\$100,000.00*
Office Supplies & Expenses	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
Professional Services	\$8,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$12,000.00
Conferences & Dues	\$2,500.00	\$17,600.00	\$15,100.00
Marketing	\$8,500.00	\$21,000.00	\$13,000.00
Misc. or Other	\$500.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,500.00
Total	\$19,500.00	\$170,600.00	\$151,600.00

Project Reporting Requirement - As a reporting requirement of receiving a Wood County Economic Development Grant, a 1-page summary program or project report will be prepared and presented to the Wood County Conservation, Education, and Economic Development Committee in 2023. Funding will not be released to the applicant before the reporting requirement is met.

This reporting requirement can be coordinated by contacting *Jason R. Grueneberg, Director* at 715-421-8478 or jgrueneberg@co.wood.wi.us

Attachment #1 - Request Overview

Through partnerships and coordinated efforts, the Heart of Wisconsin Incubator (Foundation) and the Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce respectfully request \$19,500.00 to continue to enhance the economic development mission for Wood County. The goal of a developed, diverse, and sustainable economy in Wood County aligns with the mission of the Heart of Wisconsin.

Our mission at the Heart of Wisconsin is to strengthen the economy and enhance quality of place. We promote and encourage growth in the southeast area, which includes many communities such as Nekoosa, Grand Rapids, Biron, Saratoga, Port Edwards, Wisconsin Rapids, Pittsville, and others totaling twelve municipalities. The efforts of the Heart of Wisconsin continue to grow to address the needs of the County. These initiatives have the organization working with local, regional, and state programs that engage in education, businesses, and the communities to retain and attract skilled talent to the County.

Additionally, these efforts are propelled by marketing, promotions, and advertisements for tourism. The additional collaborative efforts, with the Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Visit Marshfield, and the Wisconsin Rapids Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, work on maximizing the benefits to all of Wood County. This year with the guidance of the REDI Grant we are focusing on childcare, entrepreneurial ecosystems, broadband, and promotion for county-wide assets.

2022 South/East Wood County Funding Request

Attachment #2 – Return on Investment

Business & Entrepreneurial Support

In partnership with the Marshfield Chamber, the Heart of Wisconsin will continue previous efforts and focus on goals that directly relate to the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem. Additionally, these organizations offer support to all businesses in the Wood County area.

Establish an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Wood County through support, communication, and collaboration.

- Facilitate, promote, and develop growth in businesses through access to Revolving Loan Funds for local entrepreneurs.
- Continue to facilitate information for ALL businesses in the area.
- Provide counseling, training, forums, and programs to entrepreneurs to assist with business formation and growth within the county.
 - Specific sessions on business issues such as Human Resources, Transportation, and Housing with local and state elected officials.
 - Host and facilitate Women-Owned Business Group, Human Resource Roundtable, and Safety Roundtable.

Additional Business Support Activities

- Investigate the opportunity to reestablish Hatch Events in partnership with the SBDC, a community-based start-up pitch platform that encourages entrepreneurs to launch or grow new companies in Central Wisconsin. This platform exposes entrepreneurs to the local communities and allows them to receive cash prizes for winners to expand or start their businesses.
- Continue to lead and facilitate Business Retention and Expansion Visits with new software. These visits include learning and assessing business needs and growth within Wood County.
 - Develop and execute a single Business Retention and Expansion program with Chambers in Wood County. This includes the software, EDC Forge.

- Host local Leads Group. The Leads Group consists of local businesses that shared leads with other members and expose information on their businesses. There are currently 25 members.
- Continue to host network development events to continue the promotion and growth of local businesses.
- Facilitate the Economic Development Roundtable with Wood County to coordinate initiative communications.

Key Metrics for 2023

Assist 40 entrepreneurs resulting in new business start-ups.

ROI – New businesses increase the tax base and retain quality business professionals in the area.

Visit 25 local businesses to better understand key issues driving business decisions and provide them with resources for growth.

ROI – Businesses stay in Wood County and continue to do business.

Provide 12 training events resulting in 100 Wood County residents reporting increased knowledge on training topics.

ROI – Wood County residents increase knowledge to produce a higher quality workforce to support the growing industries.

Execute a minimum of four Economic Roundtables in partnership with Wood County.

ROI – Growth of economic activities as a collaborative group for Wood County.

Workforce Development

It is essential to have a stable workforce active in Wood County. Providing collaborative programs to the youth, entry-level, and senior workforce is crucial to engaging in Wood County. Many of these efforts align with the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem as well.

Development of Workforce in Wood County.

- Continue the growth with K-12 educators and influencers to develop career opportunities to encourage businesses to engage with post-secondary education.
- Coordinate career awareness programs through the local area schools with local businesses in attendance.
 - Facilitate Student Bus Tours that are geared toward local businesses to have the youth develop a better understanding of industries that give them opportunities within the community.
 - Promotion of job shadowing opportunities and apprenticeships with local high schools and Mid-State Technical College. Students receive opportunities to view the community and make decisions that allow them to gain the skills necessary to contribute to our local economy in the future.
 - Develop a new partnership with local school districts to assess needs in schools and communities, including broadband.
 - Host Teen Leadership Program for the development of leaders in the community.
- Continue to partner with post-secondary educators to address issues within the area regarding workforce needs.
 - Promote Mid-State Technical College programs that feature local manufacturers and local industry needs in the business community including Culinary, Manufacturing, and Nursing.
 - Promote Certificate programs with Mid-State Technical College
 - Assist with Broadband Strategy within the REDI Grant for developing infrastructure.

- Collaborate with Workforce Development, Higher Education & Business Leaders in the area to promote new career opportunities and learning as needed in the area businesses from Business Retention and Expansion visits.
 - Evaluate current workforce initiatives. Current initiatives include the development of childcare access, human resource development, and regional marketing.
 - Contribute/host job fairs and information sessions that attract and retain quality workers.
- Promote and participate in the Regional Central to Success initiative. The premise of Central to Success is to coalesce fragmented talent attraction efforts throughout the region and state to address the deep shortage of a skilled workforce by identifying candidates from outside of Wisconsin to fill open positions here and to retain skilled workers who are in our region.

Key Metrics for 2023

Assist in the development of the technology infrastructure with collaboration on the task force and at minimum one grant opportunity.

ROI – Individuals will have the needed resources to live and do business in Wood County.

Bring awareness to 400 area students and 100 teachers of careers available in the region and community.

ROI - These programs promote the local business community to students and the opportunity for work and a place to make their home.

Assist in the collaborative efforts on childcare sustainability in Wood County.

ROI – Having available childcare will increase participation in the workforce in Wood County.

Marketing/Promotion/Advertising

Implement strategic economic development marketing and supporting branding efforts within the service area by leveraging existing local, regional, and state marketing assets and developing new initiatives.

- Marketing activities include collaboration with regional and state entities such as Centergy, Wisconsin Economic Development Association, Wisconsin Paper Council, and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) with newly launched websites, marketing toolbox, social media, print, and others. The goal is to promote the region, attract businesses, retain, and develop talent.
- Continue partnership with Marshfield Area Chamber Commerce & Industry and other organizations to arrange for the exposure of Wood County properties to national retailers with Locate In Wisconsin and local real estate agents.
- Promote and produce area quality of life events videos and materials that give exposure not only to the businesses but attract potential new residents, all of which help continue growth in the county.
- Attend and represent the County with conferences such as Entrepreneur event, WEDA's Governor's Conference, FBLA and Legislative Days, and Centergy regional events such as Central Wisconsin Days, Broadband, and Opportunity Zones.
- Continue to develop targeted campaigns including ads and flyers, website enhancements, and social media to attract new or relocating businesses, as well as promote activities happening in the Wood County area.
 - Host Dive into the Rapids show to showcase local businesses in the Wisconsin Rapids area.
 - Host community tours for the potential workforce to relocate to Wood County.
 - Promote and produce the local quality of life events that give exposure not only to the businesses but the continued growth in the community.
 - Respond and connect site selectors, local businesses, and RFI requests.
 - Provide in-office hours for community members to acquire area maps, snowmobile maps, information on trails, chamber gift certificates, and much more.

- Participate with local media sources and outlets to develop material that promotes South Wood County which includes personal invitations from the organization to the County for participation with local media such as interviews on the local news station, invitations to exclusive information releases, ribbon cuttings, and more.
 - Ads and featured articles in publications such as the Business News and others.
 - Develop video content that markets Wood County.
- Speak on economic development with groups such as Rotary, Young Professional groups, Community Leadership Program, etc.

Key Goals for 2023

Increase visits to digital platforms representing Wood County by 15% resulting in the attraction of 35 qualified workers to Wood County employers.

ROI - The tax base is increased by the population growth with increased spending from visitors.

Provide support for the marketing toolkit in a collaborative effort.

ROI – Visitors and Residents will spend dollars locally.

Regional & County Development

- Continue collaborative work with the local, county, and regional stakeholders to align and coordinate economic development strategies. This includes the utilization of TIF/TID, Opportunity Zones, Housing Incentives, and state grant programs.
- Assist and coordinate efforts regarding broadband and opportunities with partners.
- Help facilitate and attend, in conjunction with Centergy, MACCI, WEDA, and local businesses with pro-Wood County issues that are discussed with local, state, and federal representatives and agencies. Specific events include Central Wisconsin Days and Legislative Day.
 - Key topic issues are broadband, childcare, and housing.
- Support additional funding at the state level for educational systems
- Host Legislative Breakfast to facilitate communication between elected officials and citizens.
- Continue partnerships with WEDC on marketing and growing local businesses and promote the county within the supply chain program.
- Produce marketing material that grows the state marketing efforts to attract new talent to Wisconsin, Central Wisconsin, and finally to Wood County.
- Continue support for the Rural Economic Development Fund and state budget support for the Broadband coverage expansion.
- Collaborate with the State of Wisconsin, and regional and county partners to enhance broadband coverage,

Key Metrics for 2023

Have 80 residents, businesses, and municipal representatives from Wood County participate in Central Wisconsin Days and Legislative Breakfast to discuss pro-Wood County issues.

ROI – Wood County is promoted as a business-friendly community that is actively supporting business and community needs.

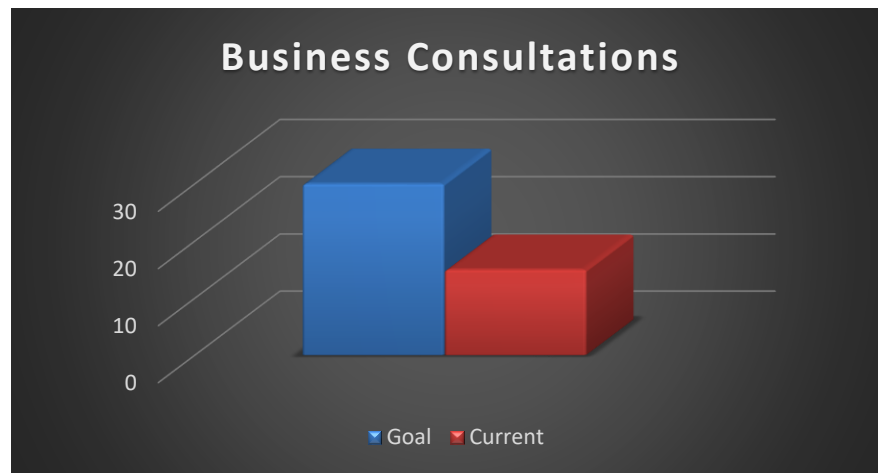
This summary highlights just some of the many efforts that the organization is involved in. We would appreciate the continued support for economic development in the Southeast portion of Wood County as we provide economic development services to this area. We have also been involved with the REDI Grant Process to align our initiatives with the County's new direction.

This report is for the Wood County CEED committee for the economic development update. These key updates are from the Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce (Chamber).

Business & Entrepreneurial Support

Key Metrics for 2023

Assist 40 entrepreneurs resulting in new business start-ups or grow current business.



- The Chamber President has currently consulted with **15 entrepreneurs**.
- Additionally, as funding becomes available from the Federal and State agencies, the Chamber continues to support promotions and assistance for these funding opportunities. This ranges from support letters on proof of business and application training, to full meetings on available resources. **Over \$420,000 in grants have been supported in 2022.**
- Promotion and execution of the Revolving Loan Fund Programs continue. This program is currently being utilized by **three individual businesses**. **There is \$70,000 currently being loaned** to local businesses in the County. There have been several requests for information.

Visit 25 local businesses to better understand key issues driving business decisions and provide them with resources for growth.

- The Chamber staff has communicated with over **20 businesses** on issues impacting operations.
- The Chamber facilitates Business Retention and Expansion Visits for a more detailed meeting. This is currently on hold until 2024 due to entire team turnover. Training sessions on EDC Forge have taken place.
- **Promoted a SURGE event** - This event encourages entrepreneurs' ideas and gives them additional online resources.

Provide 12 training events resulting in 100 Wood County residents reporting increased knowledge on training topics.

- There were **4 training sessions** hosted virtually and in person with over **100 people in attendance**. These sessions are also available as a recording online for additional resources to the community. There will be a total of 11 sessions throughout the course of the year.

Sample Sessions

4 Simple Tools to Retain Your Key Employees
Meeting Workforce Challenges through Employee Development
One Region; One Voice
Legislative Update and State Budget Review

Workforce Development

Key Metrics for 2023

Bring awareness to 400 area students of careers available in the region and community.

- The Chamber has had many meetings with area school districts and school partners. The consensus is that student bus tours don't provide the needed involvement for the students. We will be transitioning from student bus tours into providing a job shadowing program to connect area students to business opportunities around our community and in the fields they are interested in. We want this program to also provide the needed resources for students to excel in a professional setting so we will be looking into workshop options within the program. Some examples of this are "Dress to Impress" and "Communication training for the young professional in the workplace".
- The Teen Leadership Program is being completely redesigned for the 2023/2024 year. This program will be more structured and geared towards teens to include tours of local businesses each session that are based within the clusters on Mid-State offerings. We are also looking into partnering with Mid-State to include a 1 credit accreditation for leadership through the technical college upon completion of the program. This program will also follow DPI assessment credentials. We will have 25 teens participating between 5 school districts for the 2023/2024 year program.

Other Workforce Items

- **Hosted a Job, Resource & Transfer Fair at Mid-State Technical College** – Over 90 attendees participated in the event in person. There were over 105 vendors at the event.
- **Three community tours were facilitated by Chamber staff.**
- The Chamber has also participated in **broadband expansion** in the rural areas of the County.
- The Heart of Wisconsin **continues to facilitate a Human Resources Roundtable and a Safety Roundtable** to address issues in local businesses.
- The Heart of Wisconsin is also looking into additional roundtables to include an executive roundtable and an entrepreneur roundtable.
- The Heart of Wisconsin is also participating in **two groups working on childcare** in the community. These groups include the Dream Up Grant and the Childcare Taskforce.

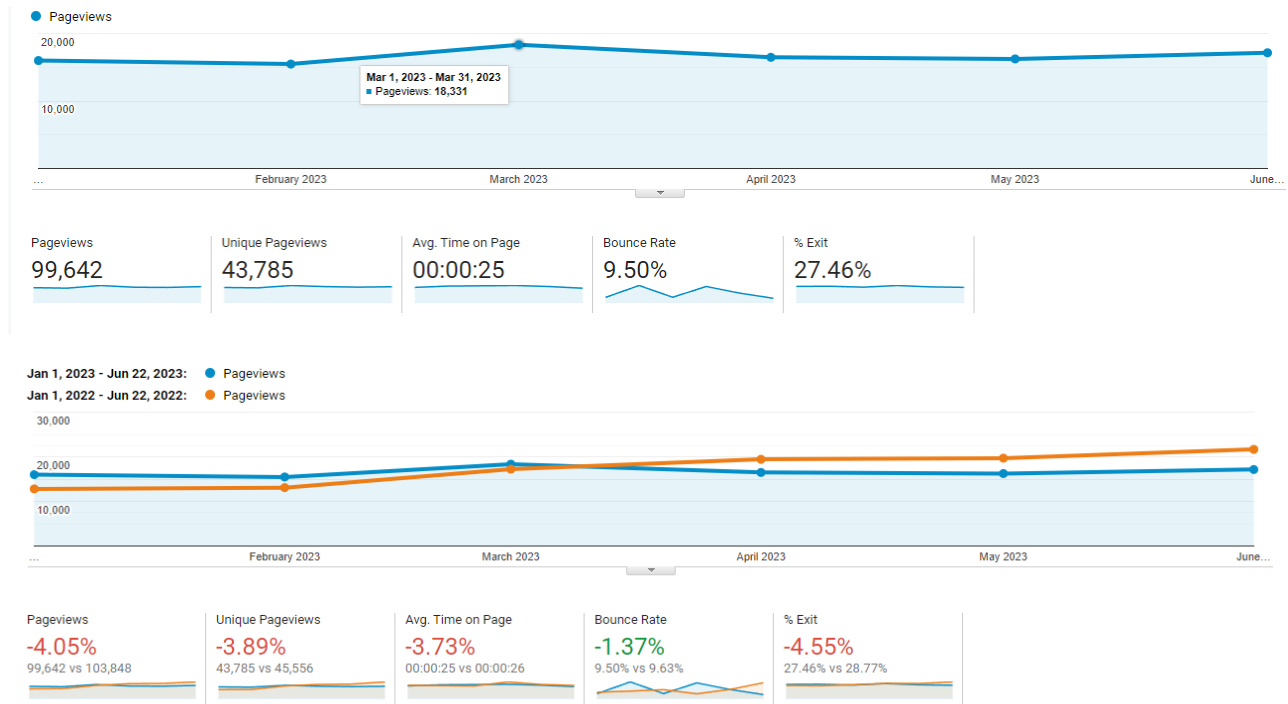
Marketing/Promotion/Advertising

Key Goals for 2023

Increase visits to the regional website by 15% resulting in the attraction of 35 qualified workers to Wood County employers.

- The Heart of Wisconsin has been partnering with many organizations in continued promotions of Wood County. Just a few of these items are listed below.
 - **Community Guide** and Area Maps This guide is for promoting local businesses and communities. <http://novoprint.com/heartofwiezbook.html>
 - Will be hosting the **2023 American Express Shop Local Campaign.**
 - Sip, Shop, Support Campaign. **35 businesses participated with over \$5,000 in local dollars spent.**
 - Distributed **200+ Relocation Packets**
 - Ads and articles for the workforce and economic development include The Business News, Wisconsin Rapids City Times, Daily Tribune, Channel 7, and others.
 - Attend state conferences as a vendor to **grow awareness of Central Wisconsin.** Conferences include Wisconsin Paper Council, Future Business Leaders of America, WMC Business World, and WEDC Economic Development Conference (Sept).
 - The Heart of Wisconsin Chamber will be redesigning its website in late 2023 for ease of use and to attract and promote spending in local businesses.

The information listed is regarding wisconsinrapidschamber.com
 This site links to County, Centergy, and other partners.
 Top pages visited – Business Directory, Events, and Jobs



Regional & County Development

Key Metrics for 2023

Have 80 residents, businesses, and municipal representatives from Wood County take part in Central Wisconsin Days and Legislative breakfast that discuss pro-Wood County issues.

- Spring Legislative Breakfast – **37 attendees** with three candidates speaking.
- The next Legislative Breakfast **will be hosted in October.**
- Central Wisconsin Days **was held with over 100 people in attendance.** The Chamber staff was present for the day and a half event at the Capitol.
- Wisconsin Rapids Mill Reuse, and Redevelopment, Pittsville Business Group, and more.
- The Heart of Wisconsin assisted with the Senior Open that was held at SentryWorld in Stevens Point. Chamber staff was there to promote the Central Wisconsin region.
- The Developer Tour was held in Wood County. Chamber staff assisted with the facilitation of key community leaders to participate in promoting our county for growth opportunities. Chamber staff was present for the tour.

Thank you for taking the time to review the Heart of Wisconsin update. We hope that this information shows the economic development services that we help provide and the continued engagement we deliver to the communities within Wood County.



Wood County Planning & Zoning Office
Courthouse - 400 Market Street
P.O. Box 8095
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-8095
Phone: 715-421-8466

2023 Wood County Economic Development Funding Request

Questions regarding eligible funding or this application should be directed to:
Jason R. Grueneberg, Director at 715-421-8478 or jgrueneberg@co.wood.wi.us

All applications are due by 4:30pm on Friday July 8, 2022.

Completed Applications should be emailed to Victoria Wilson at vwilson@co.wood.wi.us

Applicant Organization: Marshfield Area Chamber Foundation Inc.
Mailing Address: 700 South Central Avenue
Marshfield WI 54449
Street Address (if different): [Click here to enter text.](#)
Web Site: www.marshfieldchamber.com
Organization Telephone: 715-384-3454
Contact Person/Title: Scott Larson, Executive Director
Contact Person Telephone: 715-384-3454 Email: larson.scott@marshfieldchamber.com

Request Overview - Provide a summary overview of your program or project and explain how it is consistent with and supports the *Wood County Wisconsin Rural Economic Development Plan*. The Plan can be found at

<https://wood.extension.wisc.edu/files/2021/04/Wood-County-REDI-Plan-FINAL-April-2021.pdf>

(If you require additional space, attach separate sheet.)

Please refer to attachment #1

Return on Investment - Explain how the proposed program or project will provide a Return on Investment (ROI) to Wood County. Please be as specific as possible. *e.g. County funding allowed us to conduct 25 business prospects leading to the establishment of 2 new local businesses creating 10 full time jobs; County funding contributed to funding an entrepreneurial boot camp that led to the development of 12 business plans and the creation of 2 businesses employing 6 people.*

(If you require additional space, attach separate sheet.)

Please refer to attachment #2

Funding Request Summary – Program/Project

(If you require additional space, attach separate sheet.)

	Requested Funding	Total Organization Budget	Other Funding – <i>e.g. grants, volunteers, donations</i>
Wages & Benefits	\$0.00	\$125,000.00	\$125,000.00
Office Supplies & Expenses	\$0.00	\$5,750.00	\$5,750.00
Professional Services	\$8,000.00	\$14,000.00	\$14,000.00
Conference & Dues	\$2,500.00	\$9,000.00	\$6,500.00
Marketing	\$8,500.00	\$17,000.00	\$8,500.00
Misc. or Other	\$500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,000.00
Total	\$19,500.00	\$172,250.00	\$160,750.00

Project Reporting Requirement - As a reporting requirement of receiving a Wood County Economic Development Grant, a 1-page summary program or project report will be prepared and

presented to the Wood County Conservation, Education, and Economic Development Committee in 2022. Funding will not be released to the applicant prior to the reporting requirement being met.

This reporting requirement can be coordinated by contacting *Jason R. Grueneberg, Director at 715-421-8478 or jgrueneberg@co.wood.wi.us*

2023 North/West Wood County Funding Request

Attachment #1 – Request Overview

Through coordinating efforts with northern and western Wood County economic development partners, the Marshfield Area Chamber Foundation in collaboration with the Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry requests \$19,500 to continue to support Wood County's economic development mission of fostering a business friendly environment with a skilled workforce, maintaining and enhancing our quality of life, creating awareness of recreation opportunities and promoting the county as a tourism destination. This year's efforts will continue to have a prominent focus on workforce, broadband, housing and marketing.

These efforts promote and encourage growth in the northern and western Wood County area, which includes the communities of Marshfield, Auburndale, Hewitt, Milladore and Pittsville, just to name a few. Specifically, these initiatives foster the mission through the organization working with local, regional, and state programs that engage in education, businesses, and the communities to retain and attract skilled talent to the county.

Additionally, collaborative efforts with the Heart of Wisconsin Chamber Foundation/Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce, Visit Marshfield and the Wisconsin Rapids Area Convention & Visitors Bureau are supporting marketing, promotions, and advertisements for tourism benefits to all of Wood County.

2023 North/West Wood County Funding Request

Attachment #2 – Return on Investment

(1) Talent Development

The prosperity of the workforce and talent attraction efforts are critical to the county's economic well-being. In a rapidly changing economic landscape, talent is quickly becoming recognized as the top resource for economies of all scales. Talent is needed to fill job openings and is essential for supporting business expansion and for spurring business growth within the county. Throughout Central Wisconsin and Wood County, there are currently several issues regarding talent, such as, a lack of access to broadband, access to childcare and adequate workforce housing supply.

Providing collaborative programs to the youth, entry level, and incumbent workforce are crucial to offer in Wood County. In addition, many of these efforts align with the REDI grant's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem.

- Continue the growth with K-12 districts to develop career opportunities to encourage businesses to engage along with post-secondary education.
 - Facilitate youth developing a better understanding of local businesses and the opportunities available through either student bus tours or virtual programming.
 - Promotion of job shadowing opportunities and apprenticeships with local high schools and Mid-State Technical College. Students receive opportunities to view and make decisions that allow them to gain the skills necessary to contribute to our local economy. Programming such as:
 - DWD Youth Apprenticeship - available to high school juniors and seniors to gain vocational experience.
 - Health Career Connections - available to high school juniors and seniors to gain experience in healthcare careers.
 - Reality Store - program exposes 8th grade students to real-life work scenarios and the expenses that go along with those scenarios.
 - Construction Day Tour – available to high school students to gain experience career opportunities in the construction and trade industries.
 - Career Expo – exposes high school sophomores to explore various career clusters through hands-on activities to help open their minds to the potential career of their future.
 - Power of Ag Tour – exposes high school sophomores to gain agricultural careers experiences (especially non-traditional careers). Conducted in conjunction with the Career Expo.
 - Continue to partner with CWIMA to grow Heavy Metal Tour in the Wood County area.
- Continue to collaborate with area universities and technical colleges to develop and enhance workforce development programs and incumbent worker training opportunities
 - Support the partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, MSTC and industry to develop an innovation center (C2 Makerspace) promoting STEM.
 - Promote Mid-State Technical College's Advanced Manufacturing Engineering Technology and Apprenticeship Center to encourage students to pursue careers in STEM-related fields.
 - Evaluate current workforce initiatives.
 - Contribute/host job fairs and information sessions that attract and retain quality workers.
- Promote and participate in the Regional Central to Success initiative. The premise of Central to Success is to coalesce fragmented talent attraction efforts throughout the region and state to address the deep shortage of a skilled workforce by identifying candidates from outside of Wisconsin to fill open positions here, and to retain skilled workers already in our region.

Key Metrics for 2023

Bring awareness to 600 area students of careers available in region and community.

ROI - These programs promote the local businesses community to students and the opportunity for work and a place to make it their home.

Engage 50 employers in the participation of vocational programs.

ROI – These programs promote the career opportunities available from local employers, helping to create an employment pipeline.

(2) Marketing/Promotion/Advertising

Implement strategic economic development marketing and supporting branding efforts within the service area by leveraging existing local, regional, and state marketing assets and developing new initiatives.

- Continue partnership with Heart of Wisconsin Chamber and other organizations to arrange for the exposure of Wood County properties to national retailers with Locate In Wisconsin and local real estate agents.
- Marketing activities include collaboration with regional and state entities such as Centergy, and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) with newly launched websites, marketing toolbox, social media, print, and others. The goal is to promote the region and county to attract businesses, retain, and develop talent.
 - Promote and participate in the regional Central to Success initiative. The premise of Central to Success is to coalesce fragmented talent attraction efforts throughout the region and state to address the deep shortage of a skilled workforce by identifying candidates from outside of Wisconsin to fill open positions here, and to retain skilled workers already in our region.
 - Promote broadband expansion efforts.
 - Promote childcare access expansion.
 - Promote workforce housing developments.
- Continue to develop targeted campaigns including ads, flyers, videos, website enhancements and social media posts to attract new or relocating businesses, as well as promote activities happening in northwestern Wood County area.
 - Promote and produce area quality of life events videos and materials that give exposure not only to the businesses but attract potential new residents, all of which help continue growth in the county.
 - Develop video content that markets Wood County.
 - Continue SHOP LOCAL BUY LOCAL efforts to help promote the small businesses by hosting small business Saturday event and shopping promotions.
 - Respond and connect site selectors, local businesses, and RFI requests.
 - Provide access points for community members & visitors to acquire area visitor guides, maps to attractions, snowmobile & ATV trail maps and much more.
- Attend and represent the County with conferences such as ICSC, Entrepreneur events, WEDA's Governor's Conference, Centergy regional events; such as, Central Wisconsin Days and developer familiarization tours.
 - Create and distribute economic profile, which includes local and regional collected data.
 - Personal invitations to the County for participation with local media such as interviews on the local news station, invitations to exclusive information releases, ribbon cuttings and more.
 - Ads and featured articles in publications such as the Business News and others.
- Speak on economic development with groups such as Rotary, Young Professional groups, Community Leadership Program, etc.

Key Goals for 2023

Increase visits to digital platforms representing Wood County by 10% resulting in the attraction of 35 qualified workers to Wood County employers.

ROI - The tax base is increased by the population growth with increased spending from visitors.

Provide support for one recreation marketing video in a collaborative effort.

ROI – Visitors and Residents will spend dollars locally.

(3) Business & Entrepreneurial Support

In partnership with the Heart of Wisconsin Chamber, the Marshfield Chamber Foundation will continue previous efforts and focus on goals that directly relate to Entrepreneurial Ecosystem. Additionally, these organizations offer support to all businesses in the Wood County area.

Establish an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Wood County through support, communication, and collaboration.

- Facilitate, promote, and develop growth in businesses through access to grants and revolving loan funds for local entrepreneurs.
- Continue to facilitate information for ALL businesses in the area.
- Provide counseling, training, forums, and programs to entrepreneurs to assist with business formation and growth with the county.
 - Specific sessions on business issues such as Broadband, Human Resources, Transportation, and Housing with local and state elected officials.
 - Customer Experience Training
- Coordinate data collection and analysis through the use of tools like DWD's Wisconomy economic and labor market information website.
 - Develop general economic profile data.
 - Specific data available upon request
- Continue to facilitate local youth entrepreneurs with programs and funding opportunities
 - Develop curriculum opportunities in the K-12 schools.

Additional Business Support Activities

- Collaborate and participate in the development of community-based start-up platforms that encourage entrepreneurs to launch or grow new companies in Wood County. This platform exposes entrepreneurs to training, feedback and incentives.
- Continue to lead and facilitate Business Retention and Expansion Visits. These visits include learning and assessing business needs and growth within Wood County.
 - Continue the implementation and population of the Business Retention and Expansion program, EDC Forge, with chambers in Wood County.
- Continue to host network development events to continue the promotion and growth of local businesses.
- Help grow and expand the Economic Development Roundtable with Wood County to coordinate initiative communications.

Key Metrics for 2023

Assist 50 local and 250 regional entrepreneurs start or expand businesses in Central Wisconsin SCORE district.

ROI – New Businesses start in Wood County and existing businesses continue to grow increasing tax base.

Visit at least 20 local businesses to better understand key issues driving business decisions and provide them with resources for growth.

ROI – Businesses stay in Wood County and continue to do business, maintaining tax base.

Provide at least 4 training events resulting in 100 Wood County residents reporting increased knowledge on training topics.

ROI – Wood County residents increase knowledge to produce a higher quality workforce to support the growing industries.

(4) Regional & County Development

- Continue collaborative work with local, county, and regional stakeholders to align and coordinate economic development strategies.
- Assist and coordinate efforts regarding broadband opportunities.
 - Participate in the formation of a Digital Equity Solutions Team (DEST)
 - Participate in the identification of infrastructure gaps and learn from and implement successful community service expansions.
- Assist and coordinate efforts regarding childcare opportunities.
 - Participate in the development of more childcare availability.
 - Participate in the process to address the high costs of childcare.
 - Participate in the process to address the low wages for childcare workers.
- Assist and coordinate efforts regarding the development of housing opportunities.
 - Participate in the process to create additional housing stock to meet demand.
 - Participate in the exploration of public-private partnerships for the development of workforce housing.
 - Participate in the utilization of Opportunity Zones, Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), Workforce Tax Increment Finance Districts (TID), land banks and land trusts where appropriate.
- Help facilitate and attend, in conjunction with Centergy, HOW, WEDA, and local businesses with pro-Wood County issues that are discussed with local, state, and federal representatives and agencies. Specific events include Central Wisconsin Days and Legislative Day.
- Facilitate communication between elected officials and citizens.
- Continue partnerships with WEDC on marketing and growing local businesses and promote the county within the supply chain program.
- Produce marketing material that grows the state marketing efforts to attract new talent to Wisconsin, Central Wisconsin, and ultimately Wood County.

Key Metrics for 2023

Have 20 residents, businesses, and municipal representatives from Wood County participate in Central Wisconsin Days and Legislative Breakfast to discuss pro-Wood County issues.

ROI – Wood County is promoted as a business-friendly community that is actively supporting business and community needs.

This summary highlights just some of the many efforts that the organization is involved. We would appreciate the continued support for economic development in the Northwestern portion of Wood County as we provide economic development service to this area. We continue to be involved with the REDI Grant Process to align our initiatives with the County's new direction.



WOOD COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDING PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

☐ Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Grant

☐ Economic Development Grant

Budget Year: [Choose an item.](#) Funding Release Date: [Click or tap to enter a date.](#)

Project Name:

Grant Amount Requested: Grant Amount Approved:

Project Completion Date: [Click or tap to enter a date.](#)

Summary of completed project:

Please include a photo of the completed project if applicable.

Date report received(Office Use Only):



WOOD COUNTY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT FUNDING
PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

☐ Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Grant

☐ Economic Development Grant

Budget Year: _____ Funding Release Date: _____

Project Name: _____

Grant Amount Requested: _____ Grant Amount Approved: _____

Project Completion Date: _____

Summary of completed project:

Please include a photo of the completed project if applicable.

Date report received(Office Use Only):

ANNUAL SUMMARY



Throughout 2022, Wisconsin Extension Master Gardeners contributed over **99,000 hours of service**, showcasing their unwavering dedication to the Wisconsin Idea. Additionally, we are proud to report that over **30,000 hours of continuing education** were recorded, highlighting Wisconsin Extension Master Gardeners' commitment to staying up-to-date on research-based information.

A big part of the Master Gardener Program is to **educate the people of Wisconsin** in environmentally sound gardening practices. This is done through:



Staffing information booths at events such as farmers' markets **3,400 hours**



Answering the public's gardening questions **3,900 hours**



Direct teaching **4,900 hours**

Together we can improve lives and communities through gardening.

The Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program supports a network of individuals dedicated to horticulture education, service, and lifelong learning. Through unbiased university research-based horticulture training they are equipped to address needs and opportunities in their community and throughout the state.

Master Gardeners are motivated individuals who use gardening to make a difference in their communities. The Master Gardener Program provides plant-related continuing education opportunities to grow their gardening know-how. Local organizations benefit from the garden-related volunteer activities and education provided by Master Gardeners.

Volunteer hours

Continuing education hours

Total Master Gardener participants

Statewide outreach hours related to pollinators

5,600

Total organizations served by Master Gardeners

Statewide hours spent gardening native plants, pollinator habitats, managing invasive species, & more

53,000

THE WISCONSIN IDEA

One of the longest and deepest traditions surrounding the University of Wisconsin, the **Wisconsin Idea** signifies a general principle: that **education should influence people's lives beyond the boundaries of the campus.**

Synonymous with Wisconsin for more than a century, this "Idea" has become the guiding philosophy of university outreach efforts in Wisconsin and throughout the world.

Over the past year, Master Gardeners have been hard at work providing a variety of gardening-related outreach activities to our Wisconsin communities through volunteer service to over 700 Wisconsin nonprofits and other organizations that benefit the public good. From answering individual gardening questions to educating large groups through workshops and displays, Master Gardeners have been dedicated to helping individuals grow their knowledge and skills. In addition, they have engaged in physical gardening tasks and provided expert administration and support to ensure the success of programs across the state. The Extension Horticulture and Master Gardener Programs are proud of the progress made and look forward to continuing to serve our communities in the coming year.



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
HORTICULTURE PROGRAM

An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requirements.



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
WOOD COUNTY



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension Wood County

400 Market Street | Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
715-421-8440 | wood.extension.wisc.edu | info@extension.wisc.edu

UW-MADISON EXTENSION

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES *with* THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Supporting Wisconsin's Agriculture Industry »

Whether on the farm or in the field, we're on the front lines of modern agriculture, helping producers build stronger and more productive food systems. From managing livestock to crops to strategic financial planning for farms, our educators and researchers help solve challenges that Wisconsin producers face.

Fostering Civic & Economic Leadership »

From educating elected officials to training the next generation of local leaders, we're committed to empowering citizens to make positive, transformative change in their communities.

Empowering Health & Well-Being »

We provide individuals, families, and communities the tools and guidance they need to reduce stress, improve nutrition, and support physical activity. We work with community partners to increase access to healthy affordable food, create environments that promote well-being, and address access to quality health care.

Promoting Healthy Relationships »

We embrace the philosophy that each stage of life is unique, exciting and filled with potential. Our programs promote aging-friendly communities, coach parents and help families put technology, mindfulness and financial awareness into everyday use.

Enhancing Resilient Natural Resource Systems »

We work with partners across the state to ensure that our diverse natural resources remain resilient and productive. From water and forestry programming to conservation training and youth environmental education, our educators and researchers navigate complex issues, facilitate challenging conversations, and help develop innovative solutions.

Supporting Positive Youth Development »

Our research-based youth enrichment programs give young people the hands-on experiences they need to grow into the global leaders of tomorrow. From youth governance to Wisconsin 4-H clubs, we provide diverse educational opportunities to prepare youth for success in Wisconsin and beyond.



Agriculture

Matt Lippert, Agriculture Educator

Quality Forage is Key for Dairy Profitability

New systems such as summer annual forage mixtures, winter cover crops harvested as feed and old stand byes such as corn silage have all been featured in efforts for dairy and livestock producers to feed their animals more economically with greater production.

In 2022 Farm Technology Days was held locally and provided a great opportunity to focus on forage production topics. Display plots featured a range of forages ranging from traditional alfalfa, to annual legumes, grasses and blends of warm season and cool season annual grasses and fast establishing annual legumes.

Data was collected locally as part of a state-wide collaboration to establish potential yields, quality and cow performance on winter forage and summer cocktails. Zoom webinars on these topics were presented, articles in state magazines, and fact sheets on the Extension Topic Hub are still being completed as this effort is ongoing.

A pasture walk was held and focused on improved forage quality in pastures utilizing summer annual mixtures to compliment perennial grass and legume systems.



Extension Grazing Specialist Jason Cavadini discusses the economics of grazing summer annuals.

Robot Milking, Automated Milking Systems (AMS) Have High Producer Interest



A block of six robots in a grazing system.

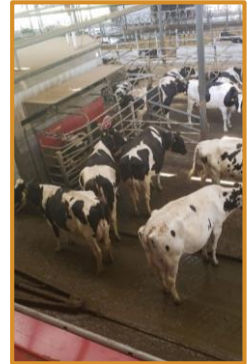
As hired and family labor become increasingly scarce on dairy farms, and also more expensive, dairy producers have turned to robotic milking systems to get the cows milked. Robotic milking came to Wisconsin and the US first in 2000 but the interest has increased nearly exponentially in recent years. Service networks, improved systems, increased reliability and greater awareness by producers of robotic milking as an alternative have aided the increased adaptation of robots. Robots are considered a size-neutral technology, meaning that small producers may implement this new technology as easily as large producers. Robotic technology is very capital intensive, trading labor for money, this is a barrier for many producers; however with few options to get the cows milked, installation of new systems remains strong.

In 2022 Extension Wood County hosted an open house to tour a robotic milking facility so producers could “kick the tires” and network with other producers that already own or are considering robotics. Extension also included articles about dairy automation in newsletters, discussed automation on radio programs, and discussed the importance of the technology with many producers and industry partners.



Agriculture

Expensive concentrate feeds are utilized to encourage cows to voluntarily show up to the robot to be milked. This may increase the cost to feed a robot milked herd compared to a traditionally milked herd. During 2022 and 2023, Extension Agent Matt Lippert is working with others on the Dairy Program team to survey producers and get more concrete answers to how producers manage feeding costs on robotic dairies.



Cows adjust well to the robotic routine and report to the robot when they need to be milked.

Animal Husbandry and Producing High Value Beef-Dairy Crossbred Calves Featured at Farm Technology Days



Matt Lippert provides a television interview at 2022 Farm Technology Days in Clark County.

Other topics of emphasis this year included paired calf housing, beef x dairy beef crossbred calves and humane dehorning practices. All of these topics were covered at Farm Technology Days. The use of paired housing to help calves socialize was demonstrated with beef-dairy crossbred calves at Farm Technology Days. Information on humane dehorning practices were also provided. 46,000 people attended the show, our reach was extended by being included on the evening news covering the event.

Partnerships, Webinars and Articles Extend Our Reach

Badger Dairy Insight, a webinar covering dairy topics during the winter was continued from 2021. Matt Lippert presented topics on corn silage and genetic selection. A statewide Extension Dairy Program e-newsletter featured several articles from Matt Lippert. Lippert also was a regular contributor to the Extension Central Ag Newsletter, Wisconsin Agriculturist, Wisconsin State Farmer and Midwest Forage Council Newsletter.



Community Development

Kayla Rombalski, Community Development Educator

Clean Sweep Event Takes in 7,800+ Pounds of Hazardous Wastes



Wood County Health Department employees assisting with Clean Sweep

Wood County's annual Clean Sweep event was held from 8 AM-Noon at the Marshfield Agricultural Research Station South Campus on Saturday, September 10. Clean Sweep is a voluntary program for the legal and safe disposal of hazardous waste from homes, farms and businesses. Chemicals that are improperly stored or disposed of can pollute lakes, rivers and drinking water.

Despite a dreary, rain-filled morning, Wood County residents were lined up before 8:00am to safely dispose of items that may have been taking space in a garage or barn.

Extension facilitated the Clean Sweep event with the support of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP).

2022 CLEAN SWEEP HIGHLIGHTS

151

Vehicles Participated

5,715

Pounds of Household Hazardous Waste Collected

2,123

Pounds of Agricultural Waste Collected

Scientific Discoveries Abound at Science By The River

Science By The River, an official Wisconsin Science Festival event, was held on Saturday, October 15. From meeting a muskellunge to guessing does it sink or float, community members of all ages had the opportunity to connect to the Wisconsin River while engaging with science and technology.

Approximately 60 people attended the interactive walking trail, stopping at activity stations along the way. Partners included the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools, Mead and Sandhill Wildlife Areas, and Extension Wood County.

The event also included two "Tap Talks" at B's Tap House in Wisconsin Rapids. Scott Provost, Water Resources Specialist with the WI DNR presented "A Water Quality Journey of the Big Wisconsin," sharing the history and importance of preserving the Wisconsin River. A presentation on "The Science of Brewing" was also given and attendees had the chance to tour and learn all about the brewing operations at Two Doors Down Brewing Company.



'Sink or Float' activity at Science by the River



Community Development

Task Force Tackles Child Care Crisis

In June 2022, after seeing the impact of the lack of affordable, high-quality child care options in our community the Wood County Child Care Task Force was formed. In September, Kayla joined the Task Force as a facilitator and one of 19 individuals representing 13 stakeholder organizations.

Child care access and affordability is a significant economic development issue across the state and the nation. By examining data and following best practices, the Task Force has identified a few potential strategies, including stipends and support to new and existing child care providers, support for behavioral interventions at child care centers, and businesses subsidizing child care costs for their employees. Extension's involvement in this issue connects resources from UW-Madison to the local community and aims to positively impact child care access and affordability.



A young child enjoying an activity at day care.

In 2012, there were 145 providers in Wood County with 2,993 child care slots. Today (in 2022) there are only 58 providers with 2,228 slots. That is a 60% decrease in the number of providers in 10 years! As of February, 36% of Wood County zip codes are considered a child care desert. About 5.4% of Wood County's population is under the age of 5. Thirteen percent of children in Wood County live in poverty, which is two percentage points higher than the state average of 11%.

Creating A Community Economic Development Action Plan in Pittsville

In August, the Pittsville Area School District (PSD) applied to and was selected for the Community Economic Analysis for Rural Wisconsin Communities (CEA-RWC) Initiative. This pilot program is in partnership with Extension and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). Pittsville Area School District is one of five rural communities selected.

A community leadership team of PSD stakeholders began working with Extension in October to develop a strategic economic development plan for the area.

A series of strategy sessions focused on:

- Reviewing economic and demographic data unique to Pittsville,
- Conducting Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) analysis of the Pittsville area, and
- Discussing potential priorities and areas of opportunity.

These sessions have centered on economic development and entrepreneurship, housing, community building, civic leadership development, marketing and communications, and outdoor recreation infrastructure. In the next session, the community leadership team will continue to narrow these focus areas, creating actionable strategies for each priority that will positively impact the Pittsville Area School District.



Cranberries

Allison Jonjak, Regional Cranberry Educator

- January's cranberry outreach & education summit is Cranberry School, which was held virtually for 2022. Nearly more than 400 growers attended to learn about the research conducted the prior year, and to discuss current best practices to implement on their marshes.
- Through the months of February, March, May, June, July, November and December, growers participated in Virtual Brown Bag lunches, showcasing ongoing research, discussing timely issues (such as 2022's spring hailstorm, which was unlike any memorable hail events in that it struck before vines had set their fruit, and consequently growers needed extra information to support full recovery), and sharing field observations. Each Brown Bag spotlighted 2-3 researchers from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and most included a crop consultant report to foster conversation.
- The Spring Mini-Clinic, held in mid-April, gave growers their first chance to meet in person for pre-season planning since the 2020 pandemic.



The "Weed Zoo": an abandoned cranberry bed where spectrum of control herbicide screening programs are conducted.

Addressing grower feedback ("we like face to face exchange with other growers and researchers, but we don't like driving 4+ hours to do it"), the Spring Mini Clinic in 2022 was offered at one "live" site with researchers present (Wisconsin Cranberry Research Station in Jackson County), and three "satellite" locations (Whittlesey Cranberry Co in Wood County, Bartling's Manitowish Cranberry Co in Vilas County and the Spooner Agricultural Research Station in Washburn County). All growers were able to attend an in-person meeting with direct contacts, but with maximum 1 hour's drive each way. Growers appreciated this format and voted to continue it for future years' Mini-Clinics.

SUPPORTING WISCONSIN CRANBERRY GROWERS

521

Copies of the Cranberry Crop Management Journal were distributed April through September

770

Attended Virtual Cranberry Educational Events

585

Attended 3 in-person Cranberry Educational Events

10

Product Screening Research Trials Conducted with Grower Cooperators



Cranberries

- May through September, Allison conducts screening trials for timing, rate, and chemistry choices available to growers, and in support of registrations for new chemistries. Conducting 10 trials in 5 counties across multiple timings results in a busy summer season, but growers are grateful for the knowledge gained.
- At the August Summer Field Day, 500+ growers gathered at the Wisconsin Cranberry Research Station in Jackson County, and saw fungicide research plots, herbicide research plots, phosphorus solubilizing microorganism cultures collected from cranberry marshes, new cranberry breeding trials, and lined beds for water quality testing--in person. More than 80% of growers had not been to the Research Station previously, and all feedback reported positive experience gained and increased understanding.
- After September and October's busy harvest season, growers congregate for the November Research Round Table, where researchers listen to growers, breakout discussions are held, and surveys taken to understand growers' research priorities for the coming year. The round table ensures that research done at the University of Wisconsin is relevant, and that growers are eager to use results once they become available. The tight feedback loop provided by this connection, but at the Research Round Table and all year long, is what helps Wisconsin's cranberry industry remain best in the world. Allison is proud that her work tightens this bond and helps growers and researchers achieve common goals.



Growers line up to take a "Mini Clinics on the Marsh" bus tour, with 5 stops curated to discuss current field research.



Spore Traps collect pathogens during cranberries' susceptible period, so that growers can understand which disease vectors are present in their crops. June 2022, Jackson County.



Dr. Jyostna Mura and three of her graduate research assistants showcase their work on the sunny Summer Field Day.



Health & Well-Being

Hannah Wendels, Nutrition Educator

Mallory McGivern, Program Administrator



Healthy Choices, Healthy Lives

FoodWise is federally funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). We advance healthy eating habits, active lifestyles and healthy community environments for Wisconsin residents with limited incomes through nutrition education at the individual, community and systems levels.

Community Impacts In 2022

- Delivered nutrition education to 622 learners in a variety of settings (early care and education centers, K-12 school settings, food pantries, etc).
- Implemented the Harvest of the Month campaign in the Wisconsin Rapids School District, reaching students, parents & caregivers with messages in English & Spanish to promote eating Wisconsin-grown fruits & vegetables.
- \$200K USDA grant was utilized to hire Wood County-based Farmers Market Regional Coordinator and research and develop business plans that will support FoodShare/EBT access at farmers markets in Central Wisconsin.



Stockboxes for Seniors

After two monthly distributions in 2021, the Stockbox program took off running in 2022! This free program provides 30lb boxes of food to low-income seniors once per month.



63%

of population lives in census tracts that are low income & have low access to healthy foods



36%

of adults have obesity



10%

of individuals are food insecure



20%

of households receive SNAP benefits



Health & Well-Being

FoodWise, the ADRC of Central Wisconsin, United Way of South Wood and Adams County, FOCUS Food Pantry, and the Wisconsin Rapids Housing Authority came together to sustain this program each month.

Each month, around 90+ seniors receive a box. The moment folks arrive for their box of food, the social impact of the program really shines through. Each person wants to share a story about their day, or tell you how they prepared the foods from last month's Stockbox. For some seniors, this may be one of the few times they leave their homes and interact with people. You can see and feel that they are coming for more than just a box of nutritious foods to benefit their health, they are coming for socialization which is so vital to a person's overall well-being.



FoodWise Educator Hannah Wendels with a Stockbox volunteer

Stockbox recipients also benefit from the array of community partners involved. This is a great opportunity to ask questions and get connected to other resources in our community. When someone pulls up to receive their box of food for the month, they receive more than just that. They receive connection to people, resources, and so much more.

Education Reconnection

Extension staff reconnected with River Cities High School in 2022 to create relevant programming for all students enrolled in the alternative high school.

- Nutrition Educator Hannah Wendels and Human Development & Relationships Educator Jackie Carattini collaborated to teach nutrition and life skills.
- This collaborative education began as a 10-month series in September 2022 that will carry on throughout 2023.
- Students learned about food preparation, cooking, budgeting, finance, and mindfulness activities to better prepare them for their future and living on their own.

Achieving More Together

UW-Madison Division of Extension works alongside the people of Wisconsin to deliver practical educational programs where people live and work – on the farm, in schools and throughout urban and rural communities. In Wood County, FoodWise partners with schools, school garden programs, Head Start programs, ADRC, YMCA, farmers markets, and food pantries to help make the healthy choice the easy choice in our communities.



Horticulture

Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator

Horticulture is the art and science of growing plants, including flowers, fruits, vegetables, trees, and lawns. Research shows that plants have a positive impact on people and communities by providing economic and environmental benefits, increasing access to food, and improving personal and community well-being.

Wood County is facing many environmental challenges such as pollinator decline, climate change, and environmental contamination & pollution due to overuse of horticulture chemicals in urban and suburban environments. Proper plant selection can reduce invasive plant species and provide habitat for native pollinators. Properly sited plants around homes and buildings can also decrease energy consumption thus reducing carbon emissions that lead to climate change. Proper pest management techniques can lead to less fertilizer and pesticide use leading to reduced likelihood for environmental contamination and pollution. We know that when our audiences gain knowledge, understanding, or experience a change in attitude, that a proportion of them will implement that knowledge or understanding or attitude change into new behaviors or practices.

Horticulture Inquiries

- Using the IPM framework which emphasizes reducing chemical applications to when only necessary and general plant health, Master Gardeners and the horticulture educator Janell Wehr answered over 80 inquiries from Wood County residents in 2022. To accomplish this, Janell coordinated the Wood County Master Gardener Volunteers, including selection, orientation, and training.
- Participated in the Wisconsin Horticulture Update, a series of weekly meetings for Master Gardener Volunteers to connect with county based educators and state specialists to help ensure research-based guidance is provided to residents with gardening questions.
- Taught 12 week in person introductory horticulture course to potential Wood County Master Gardener Volunteers. 5 participants.

Public Outreach Programs

- *Extension Wellness Series:* A virtual and in-person weekly educational series for Central WI residents where participants learn a variety of topics to improve overall well-being and health.
- *Learning is ForEver, Continuing Education, UWSP- Spring and Fall Programs:* Lifelong learning program that engages participants from the geographic area of all three UWSP campuses.



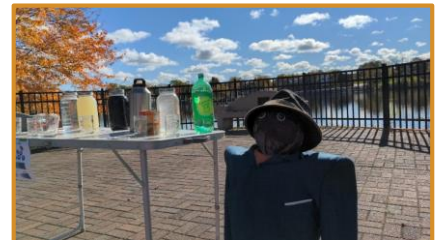
Horticulture

Media Outreach

- Media outreach through interviews for WFHR in Wisconsin Rapids, WDLB in Marshfield, and Garden Talk with Larry Meillor on WPR.
- The state level Social Media Team works together to provide timely and relevant information to gardeners through engaging and educational social media posts, using the Extension Horticulture Facebook and Instagram channels. The team also evaluates this effort using data from Meta and Google Analytics. Over the course of 2022, 102 posts were made to Facebook and Instagram to educate the public about timely and relevant horticulture topics throughout the year. Posts include educational information and links to articles on the Horticulture Topic Hub and upcoming events such as statewide webinars, classes and activities (i.e. Pollinator Week).
- Overall, from Facebook Meta Analytics, Facebook posts on the Extension Horticulture page reached 1,037,221 people with 10,772 engagements (combined total of link clicks, shares and comments). This is a significant increase from the previous year where there was little activity on the Extension Horticulture Facebook page. The majority of Facebook posts directed people to the Extension Horticulture Topic Hub website. Additionally, posts may direct people to other university-based information. Using Google Analytics for the Horticulture Topic Hub website, we had 15,696 users on the website from Facebook posts and activities and acquired 13,365 new users on the website.

Youth Outreach

- *Science by the River*: An educational science event for Wood County families, where attendees engaged in science demonstrations in order to spark curiosity and an interest in science and STEM fields.



Inspector Cabbage at Science by the River



Human Development & Relationships

Jackie Carattini, Human Development & Relationships Educator

A Path to Stable Housing

Increased rental costs, reduced rental availability and lingering effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the workforce and economy have led to record numbers of individuals and families struggling to find affordable, safe and sober housing in Central Wisconsin.



In 2022, Carattini responded by increasing the number of local partnerships and monthly offerings of the Rent Smart program. Rent Smart is a free 6-hour curriculum that focuses on the knowledge and skills essential for a successful renting experience. It challenges participants to know and understand their rights and responsibilities as a tenant, as well as those of their landlord. Establishing a positive rental history is much like having a positive credit report and sets Rent Smart participants on the right path for success.

Rent Smart strives to guide and inform participants so they may:

- Learn new skills to build positive relationships with landlords and neighbors.
- Gain confidence in their ability to find and maintain affordable housing.
- Understand the application and screening process used by landlords.
- Learn the responsibilities and rights of tenants and landlords.

Who is our target audience? Rent Smart is designed to help those individuals who have little to no rental experience and those who have had difficulty obtaining rental housing in the past.

In Wood County, community partners reported increased difficulty from individuals with prior evictions, convictions and poor credit history. Rent Smart has been offered in Wood County consistently since 2018. In 2022, Carattini surveyed partners to determine the best way to increase participation and work with their programs and referrals. For the entire year, Carattini offered monthly Rent Smart classes at both McMillian Memorial Library in Wisconsin Rapids and at the Everett Roehl Public Library in Marshfield. The libraries were chosen as safe locations and easily accessible for those who may have transportation barriers. Having monthly set dates allowed partners to refer clients according to their program needs.

Another need that was identified was helping individuals find safe and sober housing. Individuals who are in recovery may have made choices in their past that make it difficult to find housing. Several partners are working to help these individuals. Starting in the fall of 2022, Carattini partnered with the Wood County jail to offer the Rent Smart program virtually in the jail. Participants are screened and approved to participate. The program is set-up to alternate with females and males every other month. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Extension began offering Rent Smart as a statewide virtual program on a monthly basis to meet the needs throughout Wisconsin. Carattini taught one of the monthly sessions each month during 2022.



Human Development & Relationships

Lastly, Carattini has partnered with the River Cities Alternative High School to offer the Rent Smart curriculum during the 22-23 school year to all of their students, in hopes of preparing them as future tenants.

Pre/post survey results show that 100% of participants of all the local Rent Smart programs showed an increase in and "strongly agree" that they:

- Understand the importance of building a positive relationship with their landlord.
- Understand how finances affect getting or keeping rental property.
- Understand how landlords screen applicants.
- Understand the responsibilities of both the landlord and the tenant.
- Feel confident they can communicate their rental needs with their landlord.
- Feel that they have the tools and ways to manage their monthly expenses.
- The importance of using a "check-in/check-out" form to protect myself.

When asked what is the most important new idea that they learned in the Rent Smart program, some responses were:

- What are renters' rights and the landlords' rights.
- What to check for before moving in, so I know what needs to be fixed before signing the lease.
- Learning about renting safely and smartly, so as to not be taken advantage of.
- How to properly budget to figure out what kind of rent I can really afford and be able to maintain.
- To fully read my next FULL rental agreement and lease and if I have any questions or concerns with it, bring them up to the landlord before signing.
- Learning how to properly budget has really opened my eyes alot.
- What the landlord can and cannot do in an eviction process. How to prevent evictions.

When asked what they would do differently when renting going forward due to the Rent Smart program, some responses were:

- Fully read the rental agreement and lease before signing.
- Call past utilities on the place i am interested in to see what the utility costs are throughout the winter.
- Have copies of all legal documents and important papers in a safe and easy to access place.
- Building a relationship with the landlord that's strictly professional.
- Get everything in writing!
- Have a budget to know what I can afford!
- Do a check-in/check-out list before renting.
- Getting, keeping and maintaining a rental unit... don't screw it up.

In addition to monthly trainings for participants, Carattini is a trainer in the Train-the-Trainer Rent Smart training that occurs twice a year in July and December. This training is offered at no cost to community partners and agencies throughout WI and the United States.



Natural Resources

Anna James, Regional Natural Resources Educator

Newly Appointed Natural Resources Educator

In October of 2022, Wood County and UW-Madison Division of Extension appointed Anna James as the Regional Natural Resources Educator for Wood County and the surrounding Central Sands Region. In her role, Anna will develop and support water quality improvement efforts, as well as producer led watershed initiatives focused on water quality and soil health. She works with county land and water conservation staff, state agency staff, and others to fulfill goals focused on reducing nonpoint source pollution impacts to groundwater and surface water.



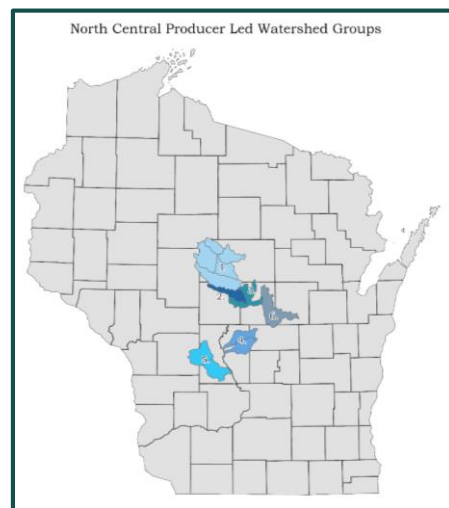
A Unique Approach to Improving Soil and Water Quality

Since 2016, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has been funding producer-led watershed groups that focus on nonpoint source pollution abatement activities through the Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant Program. Six producer-led watershed groups have since formed in Central Wisconsin and now make up the North Central Region of Producer Led Groups. Each of these six groups have a unique way of improving the soil and water quality within their watersheds but share the common goal of improving Wisconsin's soil and water quality through producer-led solutions.

Throughout the year, groups within the North Central Region delivered cost share programs for implementing conservation practices, hosted on-farm demonstration and research projects, and created education and outreach efforts on conservation systems and practices that improve water quality. The events hosted by these groups were well attended by a diversity of stakeholders within the watersheds which generally included members of the agricultural and non-agricultural communities and conservation professionals. For example, Farmers of the Roche-A-Cri hosted their 2022 kick-off event: Precision Agriculture & Its Effects on Soil Health which saw over 60 attendees.

While each group's unique approach to improving soil and water quality should be well recognized, it is imperative to celebrate the diversity of production systems represented by members of each group. Of the six groups in the North Central Region, there is representation from dairy, cash grain/forage, managed grazing, canning crop, fresh market crop, potato, and cranberry farming operations. The region is rich in its diversity of farming systems, and the producer-led watershed groups are a wonderful example of those systems coming together to improve Central Wisconsin's soil and water quality.

1	Eau Claire Partnership for Integrated Conservation	4	Farmers of the Roche-A-Cri
2	Farmers of Mill Creek	5	Farmers of the Lemonweir Valley
3	Central Wisconsin Farmers' Collaborative	6	Farmers for Tomorrow





Natural Resources

Wood County has a total of 7,250 acres of surface water (lakes, rivers, and streams) and a total of 389.7 miles of streams and rivers. These numbers represent well known water features like the Wisconsin River, Lake Wazeecha, and Nepco Lake which provide an array of outdoor recreational opportunities for community members. What some might not know is that many of the pleasurable aspects of these lakes and rivers depend on healthy, well-vegetated shorelines.

Natural shorelines are home to diverse mixtures of native grasses, flowers, shrubs, and trees which provide a multitude of benefits to lake, river, and stream ecosystems. Natural shorelines can help reduce many water quality concerns that are present in our cherished waterbodies as they will trap and filter sediments and debris from runoff events like rainfall and snowmelts. The plants can help reduce the amount of excess nutrients, such as phosphorus and nitrogen, from entering waters and causing events like blue green algae blooms.



Photo from Wisconsin Healthy Lakes & Rivers

Well-vegetated shorelines also provide many benefits to aquatic and terrestrial (land dwelling) wildlife. Most game fish in Wisconsin are sight feeders and do best in clean water, meaning that they also benefit from cleaner water filtered through natural shorelines. The leaves, twigs, and other organic matter from shoreline vegetation are food resources and breeding grounds for aquatic insects. These insects in turn feed many others up the food chain and can even be pollinator species.

Without natural shorelines many of us would not be able to enjoy the beloved water resources that Wisconsin is so well known for. The next time you're enjoying a lake, river, or stream find a well-vegetated area of the shoreline and try to identify some of its benefits to the water!

Future Programming and Research for 2023

The Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo: In March of 2023, Wood County Land and Water Conservation will host the Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo, in partnership with UW-Madison Extension, Petenwell & Castle Rock Stewards, and Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association. The Expo promotes farming by building resiliency, diversifying farming operations, reducing inputs, and increasing farmer return on investments.

AgriVenture Farm Camp: In June of 2023, 60 youth from grades 3-6 will have the opportunity to attend the 2023 AgriVenture Farm Camp hosted by Memory Lane Farm in Marshfield, WI. Students will rotate between 5 program areas which include gardening, natural resources, farm animals, woodworking, and arts and crafts. Anna will be leading the natural resources program where students will learn about symbiotic relationships and how to identify these relationship in local ecosystems.

14 & 10 Mile Social Indicator Survey: Anna, along with colleague Guolong Liang, will be interviewing producers in the 10 Mile and 14 Mile Watersheds as part of a social indicator survey that they developed. The survey data will provide information about awareness, attitudes, constraints, capacity, and behaviors that are expected to lead to water quality improvements and protection. A similar survey will be created for lake front property owners in the 14 Mile Watershed.



Wisconsin 4-H

Laura Huber, 4-H Educator; Jasmine Carbajal, Associate Educator

Wisconsin 4-H Fall Forum Helps Youth Thrive

The success of 4-H across the state is due to powerful partnerships between staff, adult volunteers, and youth 4-H members. Every November, Wisconsin 4-H hosts Fall Forum, a special conference that highlights and strengthens this partnership. Youth in grades 7-13, adult volunteers, and Extension staff come together to learn and to practice new skills. They meet others from across the state to share ideas and build their network of friends.

In 2022, Wood County 4-H helped host Fall Forum right here in Wisconsin Rapids! Over 300 youth and adults from all across the state spent the weekend at the Mead Hotel & Conference Center. Over the weekend, they were able to participate in workshops and interactive programs. They learned about the 4-H Thriving Model, and how they can help youth succeed to be the very best adults they can be. Saturday evening was highlighted by the Wisconsin 4-H Hall of Fame Induction ceremony.

One of the most powerful pieces of the weekend was, in part, thanks to a powerful partnership with the McMillan Memorial Library. The Library, its MakerSpace and staff, opened up workshop possibilities that no Fall Forum has ever been able to offer before. The program offerings reinforced the Fall Forum theme "Together Towards Tomorrow."



Fall Forum participants visit the recording studio in the McMillan Library MakerSpace.



Fall Forum participants visit the recording studio in the McMillan Library MakerSpace.

Wood County 4-H members and volunteers showed statewide leadership throughout the weekend. A Youth-Adult partnership team from Badger 4-H Club led a workshop on leading 4-H programs for youth in kindergarten - third grade.

555

youth members in grades K-13

113

adult volunteers

15

4-H clubs

3

project-based 4-H groups

8,983

Hours of volunteer service

\$285,659.40

Value of volunteer time*



UW-MADISON EXTENSION
WOOD COUNTY

*Source: www.independentsector.org



Wisconsin 4-H

Laura Huber, 4-H Educator; Jasmine Carbajal, Associate Educator

The same group helped participants create 4-H shrinky dinks during the interactive programs. Another Youth-Adult partnership team from Webster 4-H club led a rock painting activity. The Wood County Youth Llama Project taught about llamas during the interactive program. An adult volunteer helped everyone relax by teaching yoga. Jasmine Carbajal, Wood County 4-H Associate Educator, teamed up with a volunteer from H2N teamed up to teach how to make tamales and how to work with LatinX communities.

Laura Huber, Wood County 4-H Program Educator, helped coordinate and provide leadership for the whole event with help from the Wisconsin 4-H Leadership Council. It was so exciting to bring this statewide hands-on learning opportunity to Wood County!

Providing Latinx Students with Tools to Thrive

According to Mental Health America, 18.3% of the U.S. population is estimated to be Latinx. Of those, over 16% reported having a mental illness in the year 2021. The Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health 2022 Annual Report showed that there is an increase in the number of youth with feelings of sadness or hopelessness. This same report stated that participation in extracurricular activities has a range of positive outcomes like improved resilience, social skills, connection to school, and academic performance. Kids who are connected to their schools, and feel they belong, have a much better mental health. Tools to Thrive was not an extracurricular activity, however, eight ELL (English Language Learner) Latinx youth participated in the weekly series from February through May 2023. The series was created due to the collaboration between the School District of Marshfield and Extension Wood County 4-H. In the 2022-2023 academic year the School District of Marshfield had an increase in their Latinx student enrollment, particularly in ELL students.

Tools to Thrive created a space for the ELL students to learn information in their native language, Spanish. Topics covered included: cultural differences, communication skills, health habits, education in their future, stress management, and goal setting. Six of the eight participants filled out an end of series evaluation. 67% of participants reported learning about stress and ways to cope with it. 83% stated they learned about different emotions and ways to communicate them. 67% found the sessions useful. The goal of these sessions was to help the ELL students engage more in their school, increase positive relationships at home and school, and increase their academic success.



Jasmine teaching Tools to Thrive



4-H Associate Educator, Jasmine Carbajal, led the weekly sessions using three main 4-H curricula: Mindful Mechanics, Your Thoughts Matter: Navigating Mental Health, and Juntos.

The teachers of the ELL students saw the difference in engagement and Jasmine has been invited to return in the 2023-2024 academic year to lead two more series of Tools to Thrive (one in the fall and one in the spring) and potentially adding a series with middle school students. The sessions also opened the door to more opportunities for local Latinx families to be involved with the school district. Post the eight-week series, a Latinx Family Night was organized and held at the Marshfield High School. Many families attended and stated how happy they were to get resources on how to stay more connected to their children's school.

Juntos

Another program that started in Wood County in 2022 for Latinx families is Juntos (means *together* in Spanish). Juntos is a six-week bilingual educational series where Latinx high school students and their families learn tools and resources to help students achieve high school graduation and post-secondary academic success, which is the goal of the program.



Extension Staff with Juntos participants

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the overall status dropout rate in 2020 for Latinx students was 7.4%. The status dropout rate "represents the percentage of 16- to 24-year olds who are not enrolled in high school and who lack school credentials". When looking closer, Latinx born outside the U.S. and first-generation students have a higher dropout rate than second generation or higher students.

Juntos was offered in partnership with First Presbyterian Church in Marshfield, WI in October through December 2022. One family graduated from the program. The topics covered included

making education a family goal, school communication, graduation requirements, post-secondary options, financing higher education, and goal setting. The high school student that participated in Juntos grew significantly and one of the parents stated at the end of the program that Juntos staff "were the pioneers to giving us the light to get through the tunnel to help with our daughter's education".

Extension Wood County 4-H is excited to keep offering Juntos and see it grow in the coming years.

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