

Thursday, January 8, 2026  
8:30 a.m.

**LAND CONSERVATION  
COMMITTEE**

Door County Government Center  
Chambers Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
421 Nebraska St, Sturgeon Bay, WI

Oversight for Soil & Water Conservation Department and Extension Door County

**AGENDA**

Page

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Establish a Quorum**
3. **Adopt Agenda / Properly Noticed**
4. **Correspondence**
5. **Public Comment** (Maximum agenda item of 30 minutes with a maximum of three minutes per speaker)
6. **Supervisor Response**
- 2-3 7. **Approve Minutes:** 11/13/25 LCC Minutes
- 4-7 8. **Extension**
  - 8.1. Educator Report – Aerica Bjurstrom, Regional Dairy Educator
  - 8.2. Educator Report – Paul Salm, Human Development & Relationships
  - 8.3. Educator Report – Candis Dart, 4-H Program
  - 8.4. Educator Report – Laura Apfelbeck, Extension Educator, Becky Wiepz, Manager of DC Peninsular Agricultural Research Station, and Adam Peronto, Facilitator of the DC Food Pantry Coalition, Report on the Big Apple Project
  - 8.5. Director's Report – Liliana Ramirez
9. **Soil & Water Conservation Department**
  - 9.1. Ground Water Monitoring – UWO Fall Sample Results
  - 8-15 9.2. Tiling
10. **Area and State Association**
  - 16 10.1. Lake Michigan Area Association BOD Planning & Budget Meeting – January 9, 2026
  - 17-23 10.2. WI Land + Water 2026 Conference – March 4-6, 2026, Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells
11. **Sustainability Matters to be Considered**
12. **Legislative Matters to be Considered**
  - 12.1. WCA Resolutions update
13. **Matters to be Placed on a Future Agenda or Referred to a Committee, Official, or Employee**
14. **Next Meeting Date:** March 12, 2026, 8:30 a.m. – Regular LCC Meeting
15. **Adjourn**

This meeting will be conducted by teleconference or video conference. Members of the public may join the meeting remotely or in-person.

To attend the meeting via computer:

Go to:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81592547351?pwd=gycSB2cibt1bhVeZNsqWByH3vTHw4e.1>

To connect via phone:

Call: 1-312-626-6799

Webinar/Meeting ID: 815 9254 7351

Passcode: 305052

*Deviation from the order shown may occur*

**MINUTES**

Thursday, November 13, 2025

**LAND CONSERVATION  
COMMITTEE**

*Door County Government Center  
Chambers Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
421 Nebraska St, Sturgeon Bay, WI*

*Oversight for Soil & Water Conservation Department & UW-Extension*

1. **Meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.** by Chair Todd Thayse.
2. **Establish a Quorum - Roll Call**  
Present: Todd Thayse, Jacob Brey, Claire Morkin, and Morgan Rusnak (virtual).  
Absent: Roy Englebert and Vinni Hancock.  
Others present: Greg Coulthurst, Beth Hanson, Tim Dahl, Hunter Papham, Jason Miller – SWCD, Liliana Ramirez, Aerica Bjurstrom, Paul Salm, Candis Dart and Laura Apfelbeck (virtual) – UW Ext. and members of the public.
3. **Adopt Agenda / Properly Noticed:** Motion by Brey, seconded by Morkin, to adopt the agenda as posted. Motion carried.
4. **Correspondence:**
  - DATCP LWCB approved minutes of August 5, 2025 meeting approving Door County LWRM 5-Year Review.
  - Email from Gwen Graboyes
5. **Public Comment:** none
6. **Supervisor Response:** none
7. **Approve Minutes:** Morkin made a motion, seconded by Brey, to approve the September 11, 2025 Land Conservation Committee meeting minutes. Motion carried.
8. **Extension**
  - 8.1. Aerica Bjurstrom reported a CAFO update meeting is scheduled for 1/27/26 at Tundra Lodge and a project happening this winter is calculating the cost of raising heifers, goal is to gather information from approximately 40 farms.
  - 8.2. Paul Salm explained two virtual programs available this winter: “We Cope” and “Planning Ahead”; partnering with ADRC to provide a series of in-person programing include: Cyber Security, On-line Shopping Safety, Identity Theft, and Keeping Children and Grandchildren Safe; and continuing curriculum with aging coalition of what to do in an emergency on how to create their own action plan.
  - 8.3. Candis Dart reported there is currently 160 youth enrolled in 4-H and expect more to enroll, last year ended with 180 youth. Recent and upcoming events include club officer training, awards & recognition celebration, communication contest, Super Saturday program, foods workshop, poultry and rabbit showmanship workshops, and a volunteer is willing to start a shooting sports/archery program.
  - 8.4. Liliana Ramirez, Interim Area Extension Director, introduced herself and provided background information. Liliana reported on a survey regarding area extension roles, the changes that are happening due to cuts in budget, reducing the number of area offices in the state, the Foodwise program had the budget cut but there are some Snap carry-forward funds available to fund some educators in Wisconsin through the end of the fiscal year.
9. **Soil & Water Conservation Department**
  - 9.1. Chapter 36 Nonmetallic Mine Reclamation  
Hunter Papham explained that the nonmetallic reclamation annual fees are reviewed annually to maintain a static operating balance for a self-sustaining program. SWCD completed this budget analysis and is

proposing a one-year fee reduction for 2026 of 55%. Morkin made a motion, seconded by Brey, to approve a one-year fee reduction of 55% for 2026. Motion carried.

**9.2. Ground Water Monitoring**

Greg Coulthurst reported the fall groundwater sampling took place in October, there were 335 that signed up, with just over 300 taking the test with only one E.coli test result. Results will be presented at the December 9, 2025 forum at Crossroads.

Greg Coulthurst reported that the Emerging Contaminant Study collected samples in October for PFAs on 29 wells in the area of previous hits near Mathey Road and Cty TT; 16 wells for arsenic and other metals near Clark Lake; and 13 wells for nitrate on Ledge Road in Union.

**9.3. Invasive Species**

Jason Miller provided an update on the Phragmites treatments, contractor treated ~108 acres and results have been mixed with areas currently showing little kill or no treatment at all. Miller spoke with the contractor who explained they used both Glyphosate and Imazapyr, so unsure what is going on. A reassessment will be conducted in spring and if it appears there is a problem the contractor will be asked to retreat free of charge.

**9.4. Soil & Water Resource Management Grant Program**

Tim Dahl reviewed the cost-share agreement with Mike & Jamie Henschel for an updated manure storage facility for an aging system, explained that SWCD is waiting for a transfer of funds from another County for the final amount of cost-share available for the project, and requested the committee provide pre-approval for the cost-share agreement. Morkin made a motion, seconded by Brey, to provide cost-share agreement approval for the SWRM cost-share agreement with Mike & Jamie Henschel for an updated manure storage facility. Motion carried.

**9.5. SWCD Water Pollution Abatement Cost-share Program – Policy Amendment**

Brey made a motion, seconded by Morkin, to approve an amendment to the SWCD Water Pollution Abatement Cost-share Program policy removing the cap of \$10,000 per year for an individual applicant. Motion carried.

**10. Area and State Association**

- 10.1. Greg Coulthurst reported on the Lake Michigan Area Land & Water Conservation Association Tour on October 24, 2025 in Kewaunee County. Tour included stops at Augustine Farm and Heim Hillcrest, topics included the Rain 360 land drone to apply manure, manure from one farm is processed through a coop digester, new construction to include in floor heat, program to track humidity, a drone program to spray crops, and a maternity pen that has AI cameras.
- 10.2. Morkin made a motion, seconded by Brey, providing authorization to purchase a silent auction item for the annual conference in the amount of \$50. Motion carried.
- 10.3. Lake Michigan Area Association BOD Planning and Budget Meeting will be January 9, 2026 in Green Bay.

**11. Sustainability Matters to be Considered:** None

**12. Legislative Matters to be Considered:** Greg Coulthurst reported on resolutions regarding data centers.

**13. Matters to be Placed on a Future Agenda or Referred to a Committee, Official, or Employee:** Tiling

**14. Next Meeting Date:** January 8, 2026 at 8:30 am – Regular LCC Meeting

**15. Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn by Brey, seconded by Morkin at 9:26 am. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Beth Hanson, SWCD Administrative Assistant



## Agriculture

- An Extension Badger Dairy Insight webinar on Right Way, Right Time: A Guide to Cull Dairy Cattle Management for dairy farmers, where participants learned how lifetime cow care, timely culling decisions, and proper fitness-for-transport practices affect animal welfare and carcass value, to improve market outcomes, reduce losses and risks, and reinforce responsible dairy stewardship across the industry.
- An Extension-led online resource hub for Wisconsin dairy producers and agricultural professionals, where educators curated and centralized timely, science-based guidance, biosecurity tools, and official state and federal HPAI resources, to support informed decision-making, improve preparedness, and reduce the risk of highly pathogenic avian influenza impacting dairy herds and the broader agricultural community.
- A Welfare Wednesday post for dairy producers and calf managers, where we highlight how calf lung ultrasonography can be used to detect respiratory disease early—even before clinical signs appear—to support more timely treatment decisions, improve calf health outcomes, and strengthen long-term herd productivity.
- A series of videos for dairy farmers and agribusiness professionals, where viewers increased their knowledge on effective heat abatement practices on dairy farms to increase their knowledge in keeping dairy cattle comfortable and profitable.
- A statewide survey for dairy producers, where participants shared detailed records on inputs, management practices, and expenses associated with raising replacement heifers to generate updated benchmarks and highlight cost-saving opportunities, to support more informed decision-making and improve the economic sustainability of dairy operations.



**Growing leaders. Growing dairy.**

# VITAL

*Valuably Informed Thriving Agriculture Leader*

A day to learn, network, and grow for dairy & industry peers

Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center, Manitowoc, WI

**Friday, March 6, 2026**



**To register and see the full agenda, scan the QR code**

Know someone who should join us? Refer a friend and get entered into our giveaway!



The University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming in compliance with state and federal law.



## Milk Quality from the Udder World Trainer Certification Program

A program that builds confident, effective trainers who can lead their teams to apply best practices. Participants learn how to explain the why behind each step of the milking routine, coach teams to work consistently, and develop the skills needed to prevent mastitis and produce high-quality milk.

- Feb 18, 2026 (English)
- Feb 19, 2026 (Spanish)

Kewaunee County Fairgrounds  
Luxemburg, WI

Questions?  
Contact Aericia Bjurstrom  
(920) 388-7138

Aericia.Bjurstrom@wisc.edu



Learn more & Register

[go.wisc.edu/MQUEvents](https://go.wisc.edu/MQUEvents)

SCAN ME



## Community Development

- The Lighthouse Launch Business Pitch Event as part of the NEW North NEW Launch Competition. Local entrepreneurs presented concise business pitches to a panel of judges and an audience, gaining experience in effectively communicating their business ideas and learning how to attract potential customers and investors.
- Facilitated conversation with nonprofit leaders in Northeast Wisconsin on the role of artificial intelligence in human resource activities. Participants explored current and potential applications of AI in areas such as payroll and benefits, hiring processes, and recruitment of employees and volunteers to support their organization's mission.
- Facilitated conversation with Northeast Wisconsin nonprofit leaders on strategies for communicating organizational continuity alongside new funding needs, program changes, and shifts in partner support. The goal of this effort is to help them retain employees, volunteers, supporters, and participants to sustain their mission.

## Crops and Soils/Nutrient Management

- Chris Clark attended the Northcentral Extension Soil Fertility Conference in Des Moines, IA. Nov 18, 19-20 with the UW research faculty- Dr. Matt Ruark, Dr. Natasha Rayne.
- Nov 21 Nitrogen Optimization pilot program (NOPP) the statewide seven farm manure project wrap up meeting and Jeremy Heim will do a bonus year 3 Chris Clark is the UW extension staff working with him on the project. Chris Clark Submitted a NOPP project idea for Kewaunee Co Farmer- N rate on Italian Rye grass (forage).
- Chris was in Manitowoc Dec 1 for an agronomist focused SnapPlus nutrient management software training- 38 plan writers or county staff attended from surrounding counties. We collected survey information about the event and will gather more at the upcoming Agribusiness Classic and Land and Water training on the planner/county perspective of barriers to nutrient management vs the farmer perspective. The agronomist barriers are perceived as: the highest barriers the respondents identified as a major or minor barrier to implementing an NMP: Yield: 80.8%, Financial: 72.4%, Weather: 69.6%, Regulations: 63.6%, Rented Land: 60.9%, Equipment: 60%, Applicator comm.: 56.5%, Agron comm.: 56.5%, SnapPlus: 47.8%
- Chris Clark attended the Dec 4 Badger Crop Update meeting at Fox Valley Technical College there were 99 people virtually and 65 in person.
- Chris Clark provided presentations on soil testing and potassium, and helped 22 farmers complete their 2026 nutrient management plans at the Shawano County nutrient management farmer education training on Dec 8
- Dec 9 Chris Clark was a UW Extension representative at the DNR Nutrient Reduction stakeholder meeting-Plover.
- The Wisconsin Water & Soil Health Conference was in Wisconsin Dells on Dec 16 and 17. There were 288 attendees and Chris Clark organized the sponsors for the event, the trade show booths, was the leader for the phosphorus breakout session and the "Keeping Manure and Nutrients Out of the Soil" session which included a spotlight on northeast Wisconsin with Reports from Davina Bonness on the county well water testing, Lee Kinnard on the clean water facility on his farm and Kevin Erb and UWGB Intern Ashley Muench on a survey of less brown water events since NR 151 standards for manure have been implemented in our local counties. Very well received.

## Health and Well-Being

- Planning and piloting a collaborative effort to increase the reliable availability of fresh produce to food pantries in Manitowoc, Kewaunee, and Door Counties. The goal is to identify a local supplier of fresh potatoes available at an affordable price and organize logistics to deliver regularly to rural food pantries so as to increase the supply of fresh, local produce and simultaneously assist local growers.



# The Big Apple Project: Strengthening Local Food Systems Across Northeast Wisconsin

## From Orchard to Table

On a crisp fall morning, workers load bins of apples at the Door County Peninsular Agricultural Research Station (PARS), fruit that in prior years was sold for deer bait because the research station lacked staff, harvesting vests, and bins needed to collect and sort apples for human consumption. Thanks to local coordination led by FoodWise Coordinator Laura Apfelbeck, those apples found a new purpose.

Last winter, Apfelbeck began calling local growers to learn what they did with their unsold produce. That simple outreach sparked a new partnership. Working with FoodWise, the team connected PARS with food pantries, schools, and community meal programs across Northeast Wisconsin. FoodWise educators provided recipes and food safety information to accompany the deliveries, helping families make the most of the fresh fruit.

What began as a small pilot quickly became a regional success. The Big Apple Project aimed to bring locally grown apples to five food pantries. Interest grew far beyond that goal. Within weeks, the project included 12 food pantries, 3 school districts, and 5 nonprofits in Door, Kewaunee, Brown, and Manitowoc Counties.



Richard & Joan Swigert, pantry managers at Resurrection Lutheran Food Pantry in Brown Co



Mark Janiak from Kewaunee Co Food Pantry in Algoma

## Building Local Food Connections

The Big Apple Project shows what can happen when communities connect their resources and creativity. Those refrigerated trucks carried more than fresh fruit; they carried a new approach to local food distribution.

Grow it Forward, a Manitowoc-based nonprofit, coordinated deliveries to multiple counties, while Sullivan Family Farm provided transport support. Pantries shared storage and coordinated pickup schedules, strengthening relationships that continue today.

“There is so much appreciation for fresh produce and so little available in pantries.

— Laura Apfelbeck, FoodWise

The collaboration of Health & Well-Being programs like FoodWise, PARS researchers, and community organizations improved healthy food access and reduced waste. Apples that once baited deer now nourish families and children, fresh from the tree and full of flavor.

## Looking Ahead

Now that PARS has the equipment and workforce needed to harvest its crops, including macrobins, bushel bins, and additional harvesting vests, and Grow it Forward has the bins to transport produce, the project can continue sustainably.

PARS sold the apples to pantries at the same price they once sold them for deer bait, allowing workers to be paid while keeping the fruit in the human food supply chain.

To sustain the effort, Grow it Forward is creating apple butter and other value-added products sold through its Harmony Café, reinvesting proceeds into community food access programs. This blend of practical problem-solving and local partnership represents the best of Wisconsin’s community spirit, turning abundance into access and neighbors into collaborators.

## What Partners Are Saying

“Beyond providing nutritious food, the project has encouraged pantries to collaborate more closely, exploring ways to increase local participation. Initiatives like the Big Apple Project do more than put food on shelves, they help strengthen relationships with local partners and build locally sourced food networks.

— Adam Peronto, Door County Food Pantry Coalition Chair

## By the Numbers

**12,000+** pounds of apples distributed across **4** counties

**12** food pantries **3** school districts & **5** nonprofits served

**3x** the partners originally planned

**12** total delivery trips completed

**800** apple bags donated by Manitowoc Festival Foods

**\$8,000** contributed by The West Foundation



## Human Development and Relationships

- Planning for an Emergency Preparedness Program for older adults in collaboration with the Aging Coalition of Door County. The goal is to introduce older adults to the resources required to develop an individualized action plan in the case of a weather emergency. This program prepares older adults and the organizations that supply emergency resources to better withstand a weather emergency.
- Ongoing support and facilitation for the Aging Coalition of Door County. The goal of the coalition is to make Door County an aging-friendly community
- A virtual, 7-week, mental health program called WeCope for caregivers and older adults living in Door County. The goal of the program is to teach caregivers and older adults strategies to cope with life stress during the holidays. WeCope reduces stress and depression and increases positive affect.
- 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.
- Planning for a 5-series, consumer protection program for older adults in collaboration with The Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP), The ADRC of Door County, and The Door County Sheriff's Department. The goal is to equip older adults with the knowledge needed to prevent financial, internet fraud.

## Natural Resources

- A study to better understand the impact of recent changes to the NR151 code (Silurian Targeted Performance Standards) that change manure spreading rules in eastern Wisconsin. Results from this study will help DNR determine if the rule changes are effective in reducing the pathogen load to groundwater.

## Positive Youth Development

- A joint 4-H Youth Officer Training for Door and Kewaunee County youth officers, where youth learned about 4-H Club Officer positions and information that they can share with their Clubs and leaders.
- Collaboration with area colleagues on National 4-H Week television segment.
- Monthly meetings of the Door County 4-H Adult Leaders Association where the volunteer members are provided with support, updates, and oversight from the Door County 4-H Program Educator.

# Guide for tile drainage regulation compliance in Wisconsin

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March 2020



Thank you to Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the WI Department of Agricultural Trade and Consumer Protection for reviewing and contributing to this publication.

**Tile drainage systems** are a common management tool in agricultural crop production. Tile drains are used to control soil moisture and alleviate wet soil conditions to create optimal moisture levels for plant root growth and to improve timeliness and accessibility for field operations. They have the potential to improve crop yields and soil conditions in poorly drained areas. Tile drainage can be found throughout the state of Wisconsin, however, it is most commonly found in eastern and southern Wisconsin where soils and topography prevent adequate drainage.

Although there are many benefits of tile drainage systems, there are rules and regulations for the installation and modification of tile drains. Tile drainage systems change the hydrology of a landscape which can impact the watershed beyond the field they are located in. If you are considering installing or repairing a tile drainage system, be sure that you are in compliance and aware of regulations. Failure to comply with local, state and federal requirements may have negative implications and penalties.

Compliance is required through multiple entities when you are installing or repairing tile drainage systems in Wisconsin including; the [Natural Resources Conservation Service \(NRCS\)](#), the [Department of Natural Resources \(DNR\)](#), the [Army Corps of Engineers](#), and in some areas, [Drainage Districts](#).

*NRCS, DNR, Army Corps of Engineers and Drainage Districts all have different jurisdictions and regulatory authority for tile drainage systems. These requirements can vary by county, so it is important to understand and be in communication with your local agency contacts before doing any tile drainage work.*

**The Department of Natural Resources (DNR)** is an agency of the state of Wisconsin charged with conserving and managing Wisconsin's natural resources. To comply with DNR regulations, a wetland determination under DNR's standards may be required in the area where tile drainage work will be done. Activities regulated by DNR and best management practices you can incorporate into your project design to avoid the state wetland permitting process are included in ***Installing Tile Drains: Knowing Regulations***.

A copy of the project area map developed for NRCS should also be provided to your area DNR water management specialist. They will determine if your project is subject to state wetlands permitting requirements. To find the DNR water management specialist covering the county where the project will occur, please use the DNR staff directory at: <https://dnr.wi.gov/staffdir/newsearch/contactsearchext.aspx> and search for "Water Management Specialist-

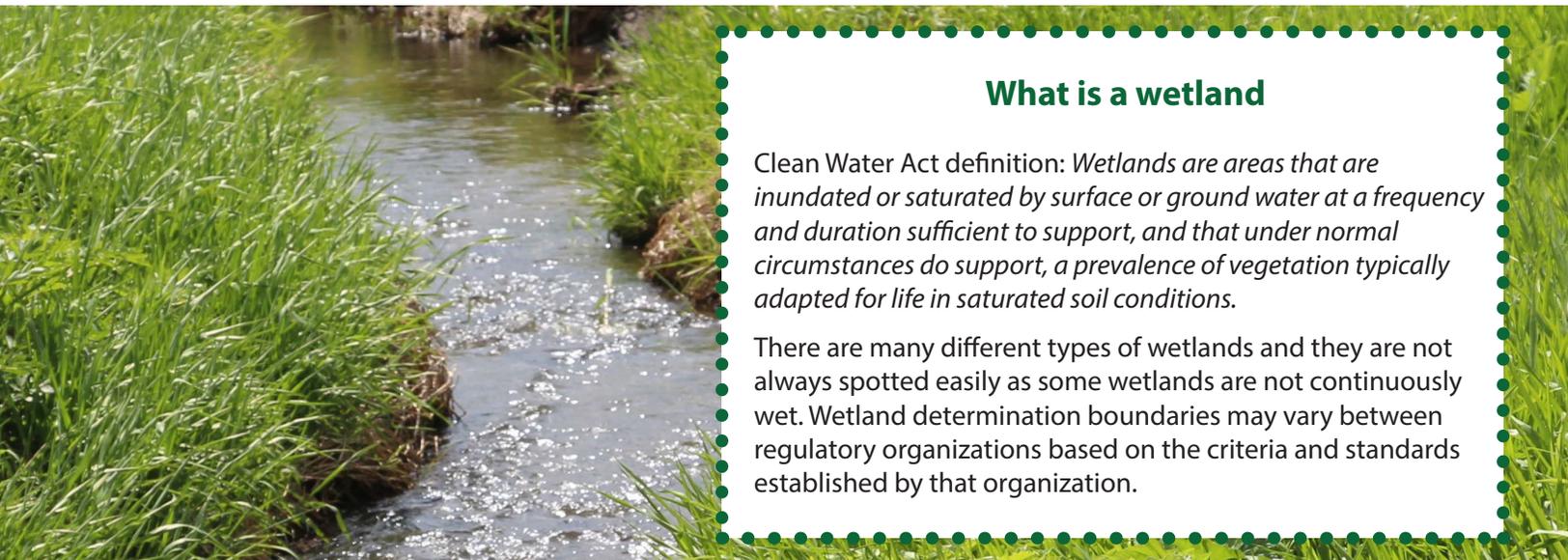
Wetland Team". It is important to note that DNR does not recognize NRCS's prior converted designation. DNR wetland designation supersedes NRCS prior converted designation if they conflict.

**(no discharge of dredge/fill material = no DNR authority)** Prior to installing tile near a wetland boundary, contact the local zoning authority to determine if shoreland-wetland zoning requirements apply.

When repairing or replacing existing tile, if the grade, depth, diameter and type (solid, perforated) of new pipe is identical to the existing system, no approval from DNR is needed. If a system is being modified, such as splitting the distance between laterals, installing a larger main, or expanding into additional area, DNR will need to assess if the planned installation will impact the wetland.

**Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** is an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that provides technical and financial assistance to farmers and other private landowners.

If you are a USDA farm program participant, visit your local USDA/FSA office and fill out a form AD-1026 (highly erodible land conservation and wetland certification form) prior to installing, modifying or repairing tile drainage systems. The form asks if anyone has or will be doing any installation, improvement, modification or maintenance of tile drainage systems or other land modification activities on land that has not been evaluated by NRCS. Please contact your local FSA and/or NRCS office for further information.



### What is a wetland

Clean Water Act definition: *Wetlands are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.*

There are many different types of wetlands and they are not always spotted easily as some wetlands are not continuously wet. Wetland determination boundaries may vary between regulatory organizations based on the criteria and standards established by that organization.

**Drainage Districts** are local governmental entities organized under a county drainage board for the primary purpose of draining lands for agriculture. Roughly 10 percent of tile drained land in Wisconsin is located in a drainage district. County drainage boards govern these districts and are regulated by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Compliance regulations do not vary by district. The county drainage board is required to ensure that all drainage districts under its jurisdiction comply with the standards in the drainage rule (Ch. ATCP 48. Wis. Admin. Code) and statute (Ch. 88, Wis. Stats). To see if your tile drainage system is within a drainage district, see this interactive map <https://datcpgis.wi.gov/maps/?viewer=dd>.



## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

is a federal agency under the Department of Defense.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has federal regulatory authority over specific activities proposed in waters of the United States, which may include wetlands. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulates activities in these waters pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and activities in federally navigable waters pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act.

It can be challenging to determine whether or not a federal permit is required for tile projects proposed in waters of the United States, but should a permit be required, it must be secured prior to starting work.

Persons proposing drainage tile projects which may occur in wetlands or waters are encouraged to contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in advance to discuss if a federal permit is required.



## Guidance for installation and repair management practices

**Create and provide maps and a plan for the area where you will be performing tile drainage work.** This will aid in the wetland determination process if necessary. Be as detailed as possible when providing information on your map including if and where current drainage systems are located. Include size, slope, layout, and outlet locations for existing drainage systems as well as plans for new drainage piping. If a drainage system exists, include the year(s) it was installed.

**Work with an engineer or experienced installer.** An experienced professional will help you create a detailed installation plan in order to address your specific drainage needs and set you up for success. Proper engineering design is vital for both new and modified tile drainage systems to ensure proper operation. Crop rotations, soil type, topography and hydrology of the installation or repair site should be thoroughly considered in the plan. Here are a few places to contact when looking for a tile drainage professional: <https://datcp.wi.gov/Documents/DrainageEngineerList.pdf>

**Keep detailed records of the installation locations and adequately mark tile outlets.** This is a good housekeeping practice for all new or existing drainage systems to assist in maintenance, troubleshooting or emergency spill response. Tile system mapping should be conducted when new tiles are installed and when new information becomes available from existing systems. Records should be stored in a safe and accessible location. Mapping tile drainage systems is important for incorporating management practices on tile drained land, to protect water quality and to share location records with the next land owner or manager. Vents and outlet locations should be included on the maps and permanently marked with stakes so they are not hit by farm equipment and can easily be found for routine inspection and maintenance.

**For more guidance see: *Tile Drainage in Wisconsin* at [www.uwdiscoveryfarms.org](http://www.uwdiscoveryfarms.org).**

# Decide who to notify for tile drainage installations or repairs

Follow the decision boxes to determine which agencies and organizations you will need to interact with before performing tile drainage work in Wisconsin.

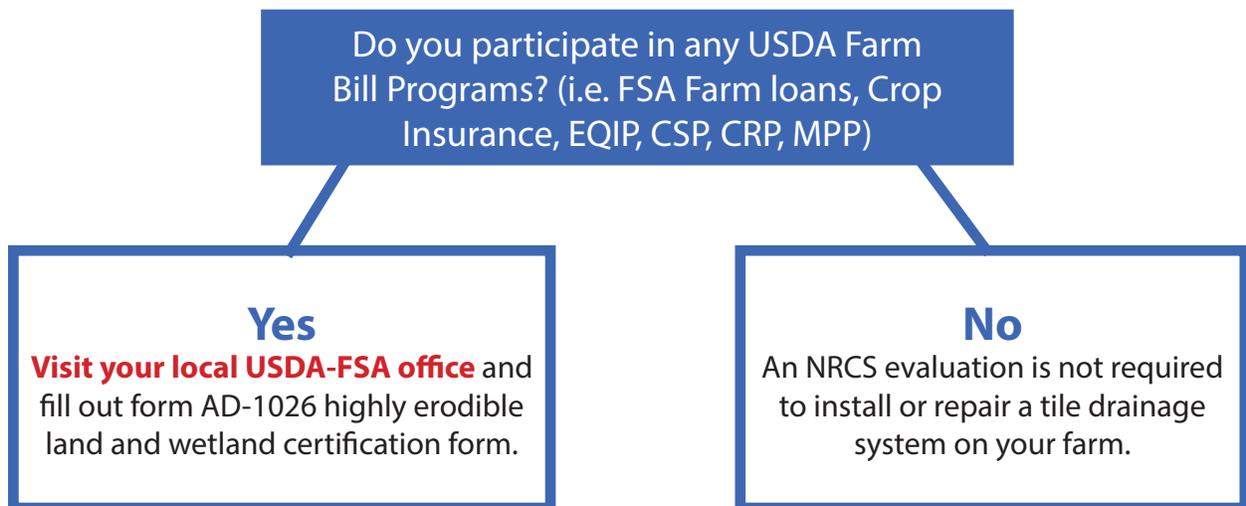
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Activities regulated by DNR and best management practices you can incorporate into your project design to avoid the state wetland permitting process can be found in Installing Tile Drains: Knowing Regulations See last page for more information.

**Find your local DNR Office:** <https://dnr.wi.gov/Contact/officelocations.html>

2



**Find your NRCS local service center:** <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/wi/contact/local/>

### 3

Does your proposed work cross an aquatic resource or outlet into an aquatic resource?

#### Yes

Pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulates discharges of dredged and fill material in waters of the United States, which includes many wetlands and waterways. It can be challenging to determine if a permit is required absent discussion with the Corps, so if your proposed work would cross an aquatic resource, or if tile outlets into an aquatic resource, **contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in advance of construction.**

#### No

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers does not regulate work in uplands, or aquatic resources not considered waters of the United States. If you are not sure of the status of the area you will be performing tile work, it is best to work with the nearest U.S. Army Corps of Engineers office.

Information about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and contact information are available at <https://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory>

### 4

Is the land where you are performing tile work in a Drainage District?

#### Yes

**Your county Drainage District Board needs to be contacted prior to tile system installation, modification or maintenance.** Cost-sharing for the tile system repair might be available through the drainage board.

#### No

If the land where you will be doing tile work is not in a Drainage District, there will be no drainage board to contact.

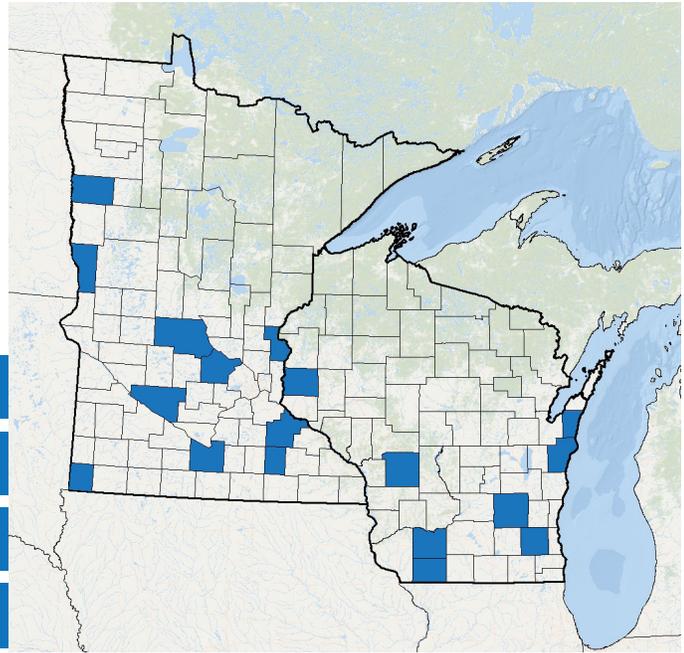
To determine if your tile system resides in a drainage district, visit the **Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Drainage District Program** at: [https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs\\_Services/DrainageDistricts.aspx](https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/DrainageDistricts.aspx)

**Remember to always contact Diggers Hotline by dialing 811 on a cell phone prior to any excavations for tile repair or installations.**

# Controlling Nutrient Loss in Tile Systems

November 2016

Discovery Farms programs in Minnesota and Wisconsin have collected edge-of-field water quality information from 45 fields on 24 working farms starting in 2002. A total of 112 site years of surface runoff data and 47 site years of tile flow have been collected at the various locations. This large dataset allows for review and analysis of important water quality topics, including an examination of the differences between surface runoff and tile flow and the factors that impact losses in tile systems.



24 Farms

45 Fields

112 Surface Site Years

47 Tile Site Years

## Quantity and timing of tile flow is different from surface runoff.

There is typically more water that comes through tile lines (known as tile flow) than runs off the surface on an annual basis. There are also differences between the timing and intensity of surface runoff and tile flow.

Tile flow is relatively consistent throughout the year, whereas surface runoff is often inconsistent. Tile drainage has many more days of flow and generally occurs at a different time of year than surface runoff.

Category	Tile Flow	Surface Runoff
Annual range (inches)	1.8 to 6.5	1.3 to 4.2
Average annual days of flow	195	10
Average intensity of flow (inches per day of flow)	0.03	0.38
Typical timing of flow	Early spring through summer	Snowmelt and from planting to crop canopy

## Soil and phosphorus are generally lost from the soil surface, not tile lines.

Soil and phosphorus losses are typically five times higher from the surface compared to tile. Most often, soil and phosphorus loss is controlled by adopting management strategies that reduce erosion. However, there are certain cases when soil and phosphorus losses are higher from tile sites than from surface sites. These scenarios suggest that updating and maintaining tile systems and managing soil test phosphorus levels can help prevent such high losses.

## Nitrogen is transported in tile lines.

Nitrogen losses are typically five times higher from tile lines compared to the surface. Nitrogen loss is controlled by adopting management strategies that reduce leaching into tile systems. On average, for every inch of tile flow, 5 lb/ac of nitrogen is lost. Nitrogen losses can be reduced by decreasing the amount of tile flow or the concentration of nitrogen.

## Maintain tile systems to prevent soil and particulate phosphorus loss.

Tile monitoring sites with higher concentrations of soil were older cement or clay tile systems with surface intakes or tile collapses. Sites with corrugated plastic had almost no soil loss (left side of graph) compared to sites with cement or clay (right side of graph). Also, particulate phosphorus concentrations increased as soil concentrations increased.

### Modernize old cement or clay tile systems with corrugated plastic pipe.

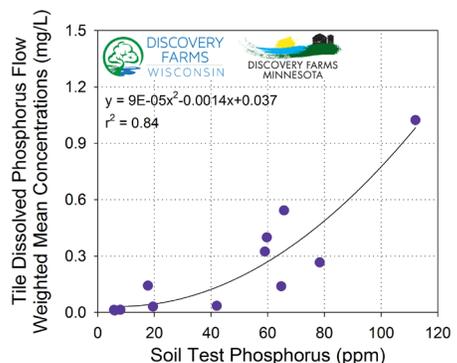
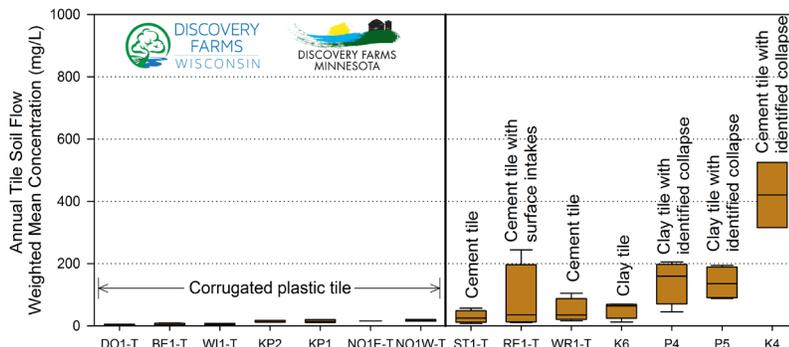
Gaps at the connections of cement and clay pipes are larger than the perforations in modern corrugated plastic tile and allow more soil particles to pass through.

### Remove the need for surface intakes.

Surface intakes allow more soil to enter the system because they are directly connected to the surface.

### Prevent collapse.

Collapses can create direct conduits to the soil surface. Check for degradation over time, inadequate venting, outlet blockages, and animal burrows. Adequately size mains and use proper joints to prevent collapse.



## Check soil test phosphorus levels to reduce dissolved phosphorus loss.

Dissolved phosphorus concentrations increased as soil test phosphorus levels increased. Routine soil testing and following University recommendations for phosphorus fertilizer applications will effectively manage soil test phosphorus levels and reduce dissolved phosphorus losses.

## Consider timing and rate of nutrient application to reduce nitrogen loss.

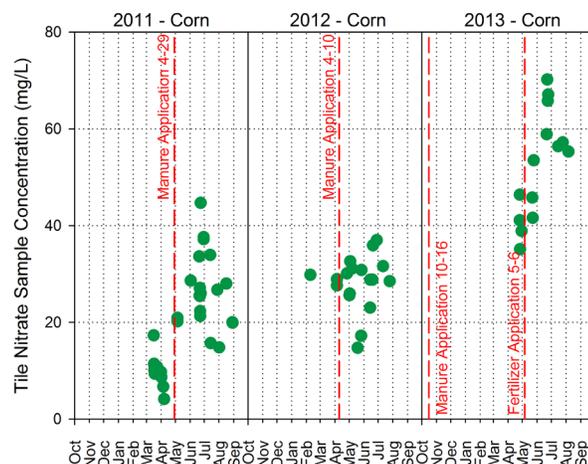
The graph displays tile nitrate concentrations from 2011-2013 at a Discovery Farms location in Central Minnesota. In 2011 and 2012, spring manure applications were made and resulted in little change in tile nitrate concentrations. In 2013, manure was applied in the fall and resulted in higher nitrate concentrations in the tile flow the following spring. An additional fertilizer application was made in the spring and further increased the nitrate concentrations.

### Determine nitrogen rates based on crop need, previous crop, soil texture, and organic matter content.

Applying the proper rate of nitrogen is essential to reduce nitrogen losses through tile systems. Many studies show that nitrate concentrations in tile flow decrease as nitrogen fertilizer rates decrease.

### Time application as close to crop need as possible.

Timing of application has a large impact on water quality. Switching nitrogen applications from fall to spring has the most potential to limit losses because the time between application and crop uptake is decreased. If still applying in the fall, wait until soil temperatures are below 50 F or use a nitrification inhibitor to reduce the potential for losses.



# TILE MONITORING

Shawano, Brown, Manitowoc,  
Door and Kewaunee Counties



In 2017, UW Discovery Farms and Discovery Farms Minnesota began monitoring tile drainage systems in northeastern Wisconsin and Minnesota as part of a Conservation Innovation Grant awarded by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The goal of the project is to understand how farming practices and management systems influence tile water quality. We are monitoring flow rates and collecting water samples to analyze nutrient and soil concentrations.

**In Wisconsin, we are monitoring 24 sites at three different levels of monitoring.**

**11 basic sites** have bi-weekly flow measurements and water samples taken at tile outlets by Discovery Farms staff.

**9 intermediate sites** continuously monitor flow and have bi-weekly water samples taken by Discovery Farms staff.

**4 intensive sites** have 24/7 monitoring equipment that continuously measure tile flow rates and automatically take water samples.

Aaron Wunderlin, Senior Research Specialist at Discovery Farms, is responsible for the bi-weekly sampling and data collection at all of the tile sites in northeastern Wisconsin.

Every 2 weeks, all sites are visited to measure flow and take a water sample. Notes are also taken about the site and visit. At the intermediate sites, data from the depth probes (Levelogger) are downloaded periodically. Site maintenance is done periodically as well.

Aaron delivers the data back to farmers each year. He said, "Farmers are very receptive to the results of the data. They are really interested in how different seasons and events on their fields show up in the data. All the farmers are thankful they have an opportunity to see what's in their tiles regardless of the results."

When asked what he has learned from sampling, Aaron replied, "After nearly three years of site visits, I've come to understand each site. While tile flow at some sites seem somewhat understood and predictable, others are not. There are times when flow or lack thereof isn't what I expect given current conditions and recent weather. But now I know this about these sites, so it isn't a surprise anymore."

Sampling for the tile monitoring project will conclude at the end of the 2020 water year. The next steps will be to analyze final results and write a final report of the three years of monitoring data.

[www.uwdiscoveryfarms.org](http://www.uwdiscoveryfarms.org)

**See real time data:**

[www.uwdiscoveryfarms.org/usgs-real-time-data](http://www.uwdiscoveryfarms.org/usgs-real-time-data)



# LAKE Michigan Area Land & Water Conservation Association

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## Lake Michigan Area Land & Water Conservation Association Annual Planning and Budget Meeting Brown County STEM Innovation Center 2019 Technology Way Green Bay, WI January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026

1. Call Meeting to Order 9:30 a.m.
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Previous BOD Minutes Oct 24<sup>th</sup> 2025 Kewaunee County
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Impacts of NR151 and Well Water Report – Kevin Erb UWEX
7. WI Land+Water / Tiling Subcommittee Report Review and Discussion
8. WLWCA Reports: Board of Directors Representatives, Committee Reports and Other
9. Area Coordinator's Updates and Information – Ken Dolata Oconto County
10. 2026 Activity Schedule
11. 2026 Annual Budget
  - a. Review 2025 Budget and Actuals
  - b. 2026 Budget Preparation and Adoption
10. Agency Reports
11. Other Information
12. Adjourn



# 2026 Conference At-A-Glance

Wednesday, March 4

Thursday, March 5

Friday, March 6

Pre-Conference Activities (before 11am)					
9:00-11:00	Youth Speaking Contest SNAP Plus training				
8:30am-11:00am	WI Land+Water Board Meeting	6:30am-8:00am	Breakfast Buffet	6:30am-8:00am	Breakfast Buffet
		7:00am-8:00am	LCC Breakfast		
9:30am-Noon	Silent Auction Item Drop-off	7:00am-6:00pm	Conference Registration	7:30am-10:30am	Conference Reg.
9:00am-4:30pm	Conference Registration		Silent Auction/ Exhibits/ Poster Judging Open		Pick Up Auction Items
11:00-Noon	Lunch Buffet	<b>8:00am-9:15am</b>	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	<b>8:00am-9:00am</b>	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>
11:30-1:30pm	Welcome/Winning Youth Speeches/Keynote	9:15am-9:45am	Refreshment Break	<b>9:15am-10:15am</b>	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>
1:30pm-7:00pm	Silent Auction/Exhibits/ Poster Judging Open	<b>9:45am-11:00am</b>	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	10:15am-10:45am	Refreshment Break
<b>1:45pm-2:45pm</b>	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	11am-12:45pm	Luncheon with Serge		Business Meeting Registration
2:45pm-3:15pm	Refreshment Break	<b>1:15pm-2:30pm</b>	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	10:45am-11:45am	Business Meeting Raffle Drawing
<b>3:15pm-4:15pm</b>	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	2:30pm-3:00pm	Refreshment Break		
4:15pm-5:00pm	Area Assoc. Meetings	<b>3:00pm-4:15pm</b>	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>		<b>ADJOURN. LUNCH ON YOUR OWN.</b>
4:15pm-7:00pm	Social	4:15pm-6:00pm	Social/Exhibits, 50/50 Raffle, End of Silent Auction and Poster Judging		
<b>DINNER ON YOUR OWN / BUS TO WI DELLS</b>					
6:30-8:00pm	Conservation Trivia	6:00pm-8:15pm	<b>Dinner Banquet &amp; Awards</b>		

**2026 WI Land+Water Conference Breakout Sessions**  
**Continuing Education Units (CEUs) will be noted when approved.**

Wednesday, March 4, 1:45-2:45pm	
<p><b>Shifting Ground: Navigating Updates to Nutrient Management Planning.</b> Nutrient management planning in Wisconsin is entering a new phase with updates and changes that will impact planning and compliance. This session will cover key updates regarding the P Index, NRCS SURGO data, RUSLE2 in SnapPlus and compliance considerations moving forward. We will additionally touch on differences in county-to-county implementation, working effectively with agronomists, NMP submission deadlines, the transition to SnapPlus Version 3 and updates to the 590 Checklist. Whether you're writing plans or reviewing them, you'll leave with a clearer understanding of what's changing — and how to stay ahead of it. <i>Presenter: Andrea Topper, DATCP.</i></p>	<p><b>Watertown Waterways Improvement Program: A Local Water Quality Trading Program.</b> The City of Watertown and Jefferson County LWCD developed a local water quality trading program to adhere to the city's Department of Natural Resources stormwater permit. The Watertown Waterways Improvement Program relies on the county's expertise and established relationships with property owners to design, model, implement and inspect conservation practices to reduce pollutant discharge to the Rock River and tributaries. The program will be explained: intergovernmental agreement, outreach, conservation practices, payment structure, and inspection. Information on the first successful trades will be shared as well as how the program is beneficial to the city and county. <i>Presenters: Patricia Cicero and Dave Hoffman, Jefferson County LWCD; and Maureen McBroom, City of Watertown.</i></p>
<p><b>Ho-Chunk Nation DNR Projects and Opportunities for Collaboration.</b> An inside look at projects Ho-Chunk DNR is involved with that affect both tribal and non-tribal lands and resources. Topics to be discussed include elk reintroduction efforts, prairie management, wolf management/advocacy, oak savanna restoration and many more. Learn about ways that your organization can work collaboratively with the Ho-Chunk Nation and other tribal governments. <i>Presenter: Brandon Bleuer, Executive Director, Ho-Chunk Nation DNR.</i></p>	<p><b>Thinking like a Prairie – Strategies for Advancing Perennial Conservation.</b> Do Wisconsin prairies sequester soil carbon? How can prairies inform conservation in Wisconsin? What conservation practices are dominant in the state and why? What does it take to transform agroecosystems? Join panelists to explore these questions and consider strategies for advancing perennial conservation. <i>Panelists: Mia Keady, PhD, Research Associate, UW-Madison; Serge Koenig, Conservation Technician, Sauk County; Alex Steussy Williams, Outreach Specialist, Grassland 2.0 Academy.</i></p>
<p><b>Artificial Intelligence Policies and Elements of Governance.</b> As artificial intelligence tools become more common in public service, counties face new opportunities—and new challenges. This session will explore key considerations for developing clear, practical AI policies that support innovation while protecting data privacy, ensuring transparency, and maintaining public trust. Learn foundational elements of effective AI governance, examples of emerging county approaches, and steps to help your organization prepare for thoughtful and responsible AI adoption. [generated using ChatGPT]. <i>Presenter: William L. Oemichen, J.D., Professor of Practice-Law/Local Government Law Educator, University of Wisconsin - Madison Division of Extension.</i></p>	

Wednesday, March 4, 3:15-4:15pm	
<p><b>Building Knowledge on Cover Cropping in Wisconsin through Farmer Led Citizen Science.</b> In 2020, a collaborative effort was launched to gather fall cover crop biomass with the goal to provide better guidance on the effects cover crops have on soil erosion and nutrient loss. In 2022, farmers were asked to collect samples to analyze tissue nutrient uptake and forage value. A web-based dashboard was developed for users to review the data collected at each site. Join us as we summarize 5 years of data gathered from over 220 fields. We will demonstrate how to use the dashboard while engaging with farmers about the potential outcomes of incorporating cover</p>	<p><b>Not Just for Pretty Pictures: Drone Uses in Ecological Restoration.</b> Drones are all over the news from annoying homeowners, invading countries, and invading our privacy. But how can drones actually be used for good? Join us to learn about how drones are doing good work restoring habitat via imagery, spraying, and seeding. We will discuss the laws that govern drone uses for both imagery and spraying and the technologies that pair with drones to provide thermal, LiDAR, multispectral, and automated analysis. We will also discuss our experiences using a spray drone to manage invasive species, lessons learned, and how to set up for a successful treatment.</p>

<p>crops. <i>Presenters: Dan Marzu, Northcentral Region Outreach Specialist, UW-Madison Extension Nutrient &amp; Pest Management; Dr. Nicole Tautges, Research Director, Michael Fields Agricultural Institute; and Mrill Ingram, Participatory Action Research Scientist, Michael Fields Agricultural Institute.</i></p>	<p><i>Presenter: Samantha Loutzenhiser, CERP, Project Manager, KCI TECHNOLOGIES INC.</i></p>
<p><b>Managing Water Demand: Tools and Considerations for Local Decision Makers.</b> As counties and communities evolve and grow, they may encounter proposals for new industries — including the emerging trend of data centers — that require resources, including water. Can the local area support these increased demands, both now and into the future? This presentation explains how these questions can be evaluated through the regulatory framework, statewide water use information, and planning tools that support informed decision making. <i>Presenter: Adam Freihoefer, Water Use Section Manager, DNR.</i></p>	<p><b>What I’ve Learned, Where I’m Going: Career Pathways in Conservation.</b> Sponsored and presented by the <b>Young Conservation Professionals Network</b>, this interactive session explores the real stories, lessons, and turning points that shape careers in conservation. Experienced staff and mentors will share insights, career do’s and don’ts, and the skillsets that helped them grow in an evolving field. Participants will engage with real-world “career scenario” challenges and reflect on their own next steps. Whether you’re new to conservation or looking to chart your future path, you’ll leave with inspiration, practical ideas, and a strengthened sense of community.</p>
<p><b>Permitting Hydrologic Restoration Projects.</b> With the new Hydrologic Restoration General Permit now available, DNR staff will share which types of projects qualify, what is required for a permit application, and examples of projects already underway. <i>Presenters: Tom Nedland and Crystal Von Holdt, DNR. 1 Engineering PDH.</i></p>	

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Thursday, March 5, 8:00-9:15am</b></p>	
<p><b>Follow the Leader: Untapping Core Leadership Competencies.</b> This session highlights the essential skills great leaders use to drive performance, trust, and accountability. Participants will explore key leadership competencies, identify common mistakes—like unclear expectations and avoidance of tough conversations—and leave with practical strategies to lead with clarity, purpose, and confidence. <i>Presenter: Brad Gingras, Superior Strategies.</i></p>	<p><b>Advocating for Conservation.</b> At a time when partisanship dominates much of our political discourse, county conservation is a topic that has bipartisan support. <i>Join former state legislators and current members of the Rock County Land Conservation Committee Debi Towns and Janis Ringhand for a discussion on how to be effective advocates for conservation at the county and state levels, how to work "across the aisle," and how we might arrive at a Wisconsin that features well-managed and productive farms, and clean water. WI Land+Water contract lobbyist Shawn Pfaff will moderate.</i></p>
<p><b>Streambank Protection – Design and Documentation.</b> Planning and design documentation for the NRCS Conservation Practice Standard <i>580 Streambank Protection</i> can be extensive and confusing at times. This session will go through the main components and important aspects of the design spreadsheet, what qualifies as a “critical site,” and what type of planning and design documentation is needed and when. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask the panel of presenters questions and discuss scenarios at the end as time allows. <i>Presenters: Taylor Smagacz and Dennis Marquardt, Jr., DATCP; and Wes Kotila, Outagamie County LCD. 1 Engineering PDH.</i></p>	<p><b>Grazing in Action: Insights from Wisconsin Grazing Specialists.</b> Join grazing specialists for an engaging session on practical strategies for pasture and livestock management. Speakers will cover grazing principles, common challenges in Wisconsin systems, and tools to support producers through on-the-ground technical assistance. This session will also highlight the launch of the Grazing Academy and how it will strengthen statewide capacity for conservation-minded grazing. This session offers actionable insights you can bring directly to your work with landowners. <i>Presenters TBA.</i></p>
<p><b>Accessing Extension Groundwater &amp; Geologic Resources for County Staff and Local Officials.</b> In this session, presenters will share how Extension is working with local communities to protect and improve groundwater. You’ll see how easy it is to learn about private well water quality in your area and explore maps of the water table and local geology. Many people are surprised by just how much information is already available! For communities that want to dig deeper, presenters will also show ways to build</p>	

stronger well water quality datasets or even create county-specific maps that highlight areas more vulnerable to groundwater issues. The session will feature hands-on demonstrations of the new and improved WI Well Water Quality Viewer and WGNHS Mapping Status Portal, giving you practical tools to better understand and manage water resources in your community. Presenters will also highlight recently completed and ongoing groundwater mapping efforts in counties across Wisconsin. *Presenters: Sue Swanson, Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey and Cayla Cavey, Center for Watershed Science and Education.*

**Thursday, March 5, 9:45-11:00am**

**What to do when things go wrong.** An interactive workshop providing participants with an opportunity to explore finding solutions when implementing conservation practices does not go according to plan. Presenters will share real-world situations – stream crossings, embankment pipes, grassed waterways and concrete work – and participants will have the chance to work with small groups to find solutions. *Presenters: Ketty Clow, Chippewa County; Travis Buckley, Kelli Neitzel, Taylor Smagacz, and Peter Wuzer, DATCP. 1 Engineering PDH*

**Make an Impact with Classroom Presentations.** Step into the classroom! This interactive session features four hands-on stations where you'll explore creative ways to teach students about conservation topics like groundwater, watersheds, soil health, and more. Get inspired, gather resources, and spark new ideas for your next presentation. *Presenters: Haillie Passow, Trempealeau County DLM; Kim Warkentin, WI Land+Water; Alexis Faul and Amber Cannon, Fond Du Lac County LWCD; Olivia Fischer, Green Lake County LCD; and Laura Grunwald-Rentmeester, Sheboygan County PC.*

**Understanding Shoreline Riprap.** Hear from DNR biologists and water regulations staff about the history and permitting of shoreline riprap. The session will explore its impacts on water quality, habitat, and aquatic life, and will discuss alternative approaches to shoreline protection. *Presenters (TBD) DNR lakes biologists and water regulations staff.*

**Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) Benefits: For New and Mid-Career Employees.** Are you a new employee or someone who still has at least 5 years to go before you can retire? It's never too early to start planning for a secure retirement. Learn how to maximize your WRS benefits.

**Strategies for Silvopasture: Adding Shade, Timber, Nuts & More.** Discover practical, proven ways to integrate trees into pasture systems for greater resilience and profitability. This session goes beyond practice standards to showcase three real-world silvopasture models that deliver shade, timber, and nut production—without sacrificing forage performance. Yes, tree protection methods will also be revealed! Learn how strategic tree integration can unlock new revenue streams, strengthen livestock comfort, and elevate the value of the farms you support. *Presenter: Julie Hager, Agroforestry Technical Assistance Provider & Grazing Specialist, Savanna Institute.*

**Thursday, March 5, 1:15-2:30pm**

**Taking Your Partnership to Light Speed Returns!** This popular session is back and better than ever! Successfully navigating a conservation department through the asteroid field of today's funding shortfalls and resource concerns requires respect, collaboration, and communication (even when you speak different languages). Hear lessons learned from experienced and savvy "pilots" in this stellar session on strengthening the LCC/LCD partnership. *Panelists: Tracy Arnold, Portage County LWCD; MaryJo Gingras, Ashland County LWCD; Scott Frank, Shawano County LCD; Meg Turville-Heitz, Jefferson County LCC; Mike Hofberger, Calumet County LWCC; and Brian Holt, Walworth County LCC.*

**Advancing NPS Land Conservation Goals through Effective State Partnerships.** Learn how state programs and partnerships can advance county land conservation goals in this interactive session. Attendees will be invited to ask questions, share feedback, and will leave with helpful reference materials in-hand. Following an overview of DATCP and DNR Nonpoint Source programs, a cross-organizational panel will answer common questions, address hot topics, and highlight real world examples. Panelists will include DNR Nonpoint Source staff, DATCP staff, and Dunn County Conservationist Chase Cummings. This session is well suited for recent hires and seasoned professionals alike – please join us for an engaging discussion about how we can work better together! *Moderators/panelists: Alex Elias, Agency Liaison, DATCP; Jess Schoen, Nonpoint Source Program Coordinator, DNR; and more TBA.*

<p><b>Developing Joint Development Agreements.</b> Why are we seeing fast growth in utility scale solar and wind projects in Wisconsin? What are counties’ options for responding? In this session we’ll discuss why renewables are growing and then do a deep dive with a panel of county staff who have developed and negotiated solar joint development agreements (JDAs) including who to involve, topics to include, what specific JDA content is proving helpful and problematic, and enforcement. We’ll also introduce a newly created summary of solar JDAs around the state as a resource for you if a solar project comes your way. <i>Presenter: Lynn Markham - Center for Land Use Education - UW-Madison Division of Extension.</i></p>	<p><b>Edge of Field Practices/Innovative Conservation.</b> This presentation showcasing phosphorus removal systems, agriculture storm water capture strategies that reduce peak flows to streams and improve water quality. Highlighting innovation through watershed modeling, nutrient-capturing media, drain tile treatment systems and water quality benefits. This session to discuss irrigation opportunities that complement conservation goals for landowners that enhance drought resilience, collaboration with farmers and landowners, permitting partners, and staff to streamline implementation, funding, and long-term maintenance. <i>Presenters: Wes Kotila and Jeremy Freund, Outagamie LCD; Matt Woodrow, DATCP; and Moderator Sam Welch, Outagamie LCD. 1 Engineering PDH</i></p>
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**REAL Talk: Refine, Engage, Adapt, and Land Your Message.** Ready to put your conservation messaging to the test? This interactive workshop hosted by the *WI Land+Water Outreach Committee* will bring communicators face-to-face with their audience—farmers, landowners, and community members—to practice their pitches in a live setting. Using proven frameworks like values-based messaging, you'll craft your message, then deliver it to our panel for honest feedback. Whether you're seeking funding, building partnerships, or promoting a practice, this is your chance to refine your approach with the people who matter most. Leave with a stronger message and the confidence to deliver it.

**Thursday, March 5, 3:00-4:15pm**

<p><b>Why Culverts Matter: Designing for Fish, Floods, and the Future.</b> Poorly designed culverts threaten both Wisconsin’s stream ecosystems and public safety, but practitioners from across the state are using proven techniques and publishing new resources for building flood resilient and fish friendly culverts. <i>Presenter: Chris Ester, US Forest Service. 1 Engineering PDH</i></p>	<p><b>US Fish and Wildlife Service Partnership Program.</b> Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program staff will provide an overview of the Service’s private lands program, including current priorities and partnership opportunities. The session will feature case studies and project highlights from across the state. <i>Presenters: USFWS staff.</i></p>
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<p><b>Investigating Compliance with Ag Runoff Rules (NR 151).</b> The red, yellow, and green flags are making a comeback! Practice investigating NR 151 compliance in a no-pressure atmosphere. Participants will be divided into groups to navigate made-up scenarios. Experienced, new, and all staff in between are encouraged to join the conversation. Watch for a special emphasis this year on <b>cropland performance standards</b> and <b>cost sharing eligibility</b>. <i>Presenter: Ben Uvaas, DNR.</i></p>	<p><b>Beyond the Clipboard: Creative Approaches to Citizen Science.</b> From selfie stations to stream monitoring, volunteers are powering conservation efforts across Wisconsin. Panelists will share what makes their citizen science programs thrive and how you can turn volunteer enthusiasm into actionable data. Learn creative strategies to engage your community, discover how to tap into existing datasets for management decisions, and share your own experiences. Whether you host a trail camera, coordinate volunteers, or want to learn more—bring your stories and questions. Come ready to swap strategies, successes, and lessons learned. <i>Presenters: Christine Anhalt-Depies and Mackenzie Glasford, Snapshot Wisconsin; Katy Bradford, Water Action Volunteers, and Elise Theiler, Chippewa County WAV Coordinator.</i></p>
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**Protecting What We Can’t See: Municipal–Farmer Partnerships Drive Conservation and Wellhead Protection.** Municipal wellhead protection excels when communities and producers work together to protect and improve the groundwater resources they share. This session highlights how conservation practices—such as perennial grasses, prairie strips, cover crops, buffers, and soil-health driven systems—can be strategically implemented within wellhead protection areas to improve groundwater quality

and strengthen local water security. Participants will hear examples of successful collaborations between municipalities and farmers, explore tools for identifying priority protection zones, and learn practical approaches for engaging agricultural partners in voluntary conservation efforts. From small towns to rapidly growing communities, the session illustrates how integrating land-use planning, hydrogeologic data, and on-the-ground conservation practices creates a proactive, cost-effective defense for public water supplies. Attendees will leave with actionable strategies for building relationships, navigating local governance, and designing conservation programs that align municipal water goals with the realities of working farms. *Presenters: Kirstie Heidenreich, County Conservationist, and Marathon County Conservation staff; and Andrew Aslesen, Source Water Specialist, Wisconsin Rural Water Association.*

**Friday, March 6, 8:00-9:00am**

**Solar Watering Systems, Design, and Implementation.**

Providing power to remote areas can be challenging and cost prohibitive. This presentation will go into designing reliable solar systems where connection to the power grid is unfeasible. Covered material will include pump sizing, water system sizing, solar panel sizing, electrical storage, and pump house design. *Presenter: Kyle Andreae, Wood County LWCD, and moderated by Ketty Clow, Chippewa County LCFMD. 1 Engineering PDH*

**Supporting the ecological and economic opportunities of dairy heifer grazing.**

Dairy heifer grazing presents a real opportunity to get more continuous living cover deployed on the land, reducing nutrient run off and erosion and building soil health. Well managed grazing systems can produce quality animals for milking herds and importantly support solid farm enterprise economics. This session will detail the watershed benefits and lay out the technical assistance, both forage and animal production, as well as business enterprise development available to support dairy heifer grazing. *Presenters: Sarah Lloyd, UW-Madison, Grassland 2.0; Sara Walling, Clean Wisconsin.*

**Enhanced wakes: understanding ecosystem impacts, and local management approaches.**

Enhanced wakes from watercraft are an issue of growing concern for many waterfront communities, and local governments. In this session, *Dept. of Natural Resources staff* will present the scientific background on some of the ecosystem impacts from enhanced wakes, and counties will share real-world approaches that have been utilized to balance wake-enhancing watercraft operation with natural resources protection.

**Caring for the Land and for Yourself.**

Full description forthcoming. We know that this is a challenging time to be a conservation professional. We're excited to welcome back Dr. Emily Walz to lead another breakout session covering mental health, climate change, and conservation. *Presenter: Emily Walz, MD, Psychiatrist, Sixteenth Street Community Health Center.*

**What is Soil Health Anyway? How Do We Use It, and How Do We Measure Change?** Our soil is a vital, living ecosystem. As the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) states, soil health is defined by "the continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans." Healthy soil gives us clean air and water, bountiful crops and forests, productive grazing lands, diverse wildlife, and beautiful landscapes. But what exactly is soil health? How do we apply soil health concepts in our work as conservationists, and how do we know if we are making a difference? Join *Randy Zogbaum, DATCP Soil Health Program Manager*, for an engaging exploration of these questions and more.

**Friday, March 6, 9:15-10:15am**

**Soils Investigations for Engineering Conservation Practices.**

Soil borings? More like soil excitings! Let's dig into soil investigations. When are they needed? Who is qualified to review them? What forms do I need? Representatives from DATCP and NRCS will provide an overview of various soil sampling efforts while covering the ins and outs of each. *Presenters: Jeremy Zeigler (NRCS), Jae Sutherland (NRCS), Krista Bryan (NRCS) – full list TBD. 1 Engineering PDH*

**Own the Room: Practical Public Speaking Skills for Conservation Professionals.**

Public speaking doesn't have to mean standing behind a podium. In this interactive session, you'll explore how to connect with your audience, manage nerves, and communicate with confidence and authenticity. Through real-world examples and practical strategies, you'll learn to read the room, tailor your message on the fly, and own your presence as a speaker, whether you're leading a meeting,

	<p>giving a presentation, or talking to a community group.  <i>Presenter: Michael Hook, WI Land+Water.</i></p>
<p><b>Tree-Ring Perspectives on Wisconsin Water Resources: Oaks, redcedars, and 1200 years of climate history.</b> Come learn about the emerging network of tree-ring data that spans the past millennium and is now providing annually-resolved insights on a suite of hydrologic variables, from drought and groundwater elevations in southwest Wisconsin, to rainfall over the Corn Belt, to a nascent gridded drought reconstruction that will span the Great Plains. Within the information about past climates carried by these trees are woven the influences of shifting culture and landuse, with implications for how we approach land and water conservation in the Midwest.  <i>Presenter: Evan Larson, Ph.D., UW-Platteville.</i></p>	<p><b>Making Headlines: Connecting with the Media.</b> Full description forthcoming, but don't miss this chance to connect with scientist turned journalist, Caitlin Looby. Before landing in Wisconsin covering the Great Lakes and environment for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Caitlin taught science communications at the University of Minnesota. You'll get practical advice for building stronger relationships with journalists and learn how to make your stories stand out by centering the people at the heart of your work. <i>Presenter: Caitlin Looby, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.</i></p>
<p><b>Securing cranes, and so much more: a 10-year vision for cranes, wetlands, and communities.</b> For 50 years, crane conservation has been a beacon of hope in a fractured world that has lost 3 billion birds and millions of acres of wetlands and grasslands. Cranes are revered by many cultures on each of the five continents where they live. They serve as sensitive indicators for the health of wetlands where they breed and feed, and the surrounding watersheds that nourish them. They are powerful flagships for creating protected areas that support a rich diversity of lesser-known species. They are global ambassadors uniting people for conservation action across borders and political divides.</p> <p>The International Crane Foundation's new 10-Year Strategic Vision (2025–2035) is an ambitious plan to secure all 15 crane species through integrated approaches that blend biodiversity conservation with community development and climate-resiliency. Our vision is about much more than cranes—it is about revitalizing wild and working lands in partnership with the people who depend on these landscapes. We'll explore lessons learned from the past 50 years of conservation action and scan the horizon for emerging challenges and opportunities in the decade ahead.</p> <p>We'll share stories from crane conservation projects worldwide through which we learn, adapt, and scale-up our impact. Safeguarding cranes and other wildlife through water tanks, mattresses, and mushroom farming for some of the poorest communities of East Africa. Employing local communities in every aspect of wetland management—invasive species control, scouting patrols, rotational grazing, field research and more—to restore the most important floodplain in southern Africa. In Vietnam, linking the reintroduction of Sarus Cranes to new protected areas with organic rice agriculture buffer zones. Testing One Health strategies for people, wildlife, and our environment to mitigate the global spread of avian influenza. For endangered Whooping Cranes, managing wetlands, water, powerlines, and shootings to secure every link in the chain of migration from northern Canada to the Texas coast. Finding innovative solutions for crop damage by Sandhill Cranes in Wisconsin that reduce human-wildlife conflict with farmers worldwide. <i>Presenter: Dr. Richard Beilfuss, International Crane Foundation.</i></p>	