

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

DOOR COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

A. Mission Statement:

The Door County Soil and Water Conservation Department is created under the authority of Chapter 92 of Wisconsin Statutes. Chapter 92 gives the SWCD the responsibility for the administration of the County soil and water conservation program and the authority to exercise the powers granted to the Land Conservation Committee. The legislative declared policy of the State in Chapter 92 is to halt and reverse the depletion of the State's soil resources and pollution of its waters. The mission of conservation and environmental advocacy is the standard by which SWCD programs are developed and implemented.

B. Summary of Responsibilities:

The SWCD has a responsibility, and directive under Chapter 92, to promote land uses and programs which advance conservation and the protection of Door County's natural resources, and meet the goals and objectives established in the [2021-2030 Land and Water Resource Management Plan](#).

C. Program Summary:

Agricultural Performance Standards and Animal Waste Storage: SWCD administers Door County Code Chapter 23 which establishes minimum standards for agricultural operations to protect ground and surface water quality and permit requirements for animal waste storage facilities.

Conservation practices: SWCD uses federal, state, and local funding sources to provide technical and cost share to landowners/operators for a wide range of conservation practices to protect and improve ground and surface water quality such as buffers, grassed waterways, nutrient management, manure storage, barnyard and feed storage runoff control systems, and well abandonment.

Invasive Species: SWCD maintains a lead role in the Door County Invasive Species Team (DCIST), a collaboration of natural resource professionals, community leaders and interested citizens who seek to halt the invasion of exotic non-native plants.

Nonmetallic Mine Reclamation: SWCD administers Door County Code Chapter 36 to ensure nonmetallic mining sites will be properly reclaimed in accordance with State Administrative Code and Statutes.

Technical Assistance: SWCD maintains staff with diverse expertise in natural resources who provide technical reviews and onsite inspections of proposed projects for the Land Use Services Department as well as other technical assistance to the public.

Water Quality Protection and Improvement: SWCD works cooperatively with a variety of partners to protect and improve ground and surface water quality including identification of pollution sources at beaches (with Public Health), restoration of Dunes Lake (multiple partners), drawdown of the Forestville Millpond (with Facilities and Parks), surface water quality monitoring (multiple partners), private well testing program (with Public Health), and watershed planning (multiple partners).

Wildlife Damage Abatement & Claims: Landowners who experience wildlife damage to crops can enroll in the program to be eligible for assistance, claim payments, and/or abatement reimbursements.

Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative/Farmland Preservation Program: SWCD ensures participants in this program meet state conservation standards to remain eligible for tax credits and inspects operations once every four years.

D. Goals / Objectives Achieved in 2022:

- Purchased a No-Till drill for buffer and pollinator conservation plantings.
- Targeted outreach on 23 linear miles of the Ahnapee watershed for new Conservation Reserve and Enhancement Program (CREP) enrollment.
- Promoted water quality and natural resource protection through multiple programs. The following are examples of completed activities in 2022, not an exhaustive list:

2022 Accomplishments	
4	Compliance notifications under Ch. 23, Door County Code
3	Animal waste permits issued
64	Operation and maintenance inspections of installed agricultural practices
14	New agricultural practices cost shared and installed (such as feed storage runoff control, manure storage, grassed waterway, well abandonment)
251	Acres of cover crops cost shared
130	Acres of soil depth to bedrock verifications
94%	Cropland acres under nutrient management plans
20	Audits of cropland fields during manure spreading
14,186	Acres monitored for priority, early detection, and other invasive species
440	Acres of priority invasive species inventoried
549	Acres of invasive species controlled
1.5	Acres of early detection invasive species controlled
578	Landowner contacts for invasive species
53	Nonmetallic mine inspections under Ch. 36, Door County Code
48	Land disturbance, Storm Water and Impervious Surface Plan reviews and approvals for Land Use Services Dept
456	Private wells sampled for bacteria and nitrate
54	Private wells sampled for special DATCP pesticide detection program
7	Enrollments in the wildlife damage abatement program
36	Deer donated
3	Inspections for the farmland preservation program
24	Certificates of compliance issued for the farmland preservation program

E. Knowledge Sharing 2022:

- One-on-one visits with landowners and operators to identify management and conservation practices to meet minimum agricultural standards and prohibitions and go beyond to protect ground and surface water quality.
- Outreach and education to the public about invasive species included: 200 hours of Clean Boats Clean Waters at priority boat launches providing inspections for 486 boats, 9 educational press releases and interviews, 28 media posts, 8 educational presentations/training sessions, 3 volunteer days, 3 pollinator and native shoreline workshops, 448 one-on-one contacts and 3025 direct mailings to landowners.
- Several educational presentations about SWCD programs and natural resource issues in Door County to a wide variety of audience ages from high school students through learning in retirement.

F. Department Budget Status

	2021	2022
Approved Budgeted Expenditures	\$1,401,933.00	\$1,541,434.00
Actual Expenditures	\$1,000,072.99	\$969,946.56
Budgeted Revenues	\$930,647.00	\$1,010,221.00
Actual Revenues	\$525,025.07	\$495,906.31
Actual Levy Appropriation	\$475,047.92	\$474,040.25

Grants Used in 2022:

DNR Aquatic Invasive Species – LMPN	\$12,371.23
DNR Aquatic Invasive Species – CBCW	\$3,448.00
DNR Aquatic Invasive Species - Control	\$2,704.77
DNR Aquatic Invasive Species – Plan Update	\$1,965.20
DATCP Soil & Water Resource Management Staffing	\$176,843.00
DATCP Land & Water Resource Management	\$62,906.82
DNR Wildlife Damage Claims Program	\$13,467.74
US Forest Service GLRI 2020 (Invasive Species)	\$21,691.04
US Forest Service GLRI 2022 (Invasive Species)	\$8,384.75
Michigan State MNFI (Invasive Species)	\$5,167.34
NFWF SOGL (Invasive Species)	\$79,263.30
US Fish & Wildlife Service – Pollinator	\$25,924.98
WI Coastal Management Grant	\$23,055.00
WI Coastal Management Grant – Translation	\$234.35

Revenue from Reserve Accounts:

Nonmetallic Mine Program	\$32,737.19
Water Pollution	\$1,260.00
Vehicle Replacement Fund	\$20,228.00

Donations Used in 2022:

Invasive Species	\$1,201.13
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G. Other Accomplishments: N/A

H. Issues, Concerns and Restraints:

- Program demands and natural resource protection needs continue to expand while fiscal and staffing resources remain limited. Two resignations and two new hires occurred in 2022. One existing staff promoted to Department Head. Employee retention remains an issue in the SWCD.
- SWCD has successfully pursued grants to provide cost share to landowners and fund staff. However the short term nature of 2-3 year grants requires a continual investment of time to apply for and manage multiple programs, each with a unique set of requirements and reporting expectations.

I. Goals and Objectives for 2023:

- Follow the 2021-2030 Land and Water Resource Management Plan, available online at: <https://www.co.door.wi.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2900/Door-County-Land-and-Water-Resource-Management-Plan-2021-2030>
- Continue to control non-native *Phragmites*, targeting 85% of known populations on private properties, using ARPA funding. A contract with a professional contractor to cover the duration of the five-year project has been secured.
- Partner with Door County Public Health, and other relevant entities to finalize the sampling design and begin landowner outreach for the screen of “emerging” contaminants in groundwater samples collected from private wells.
- Continue Spring and Fall private well monitoring program.
- Continue surface water monitoring on the Geisel Creek and Anhapee River systems.