



Land & Water Conservation 2021 Annual Report

2021 WORKPLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

By: Land & Water Conservation Department staff

- Secured funding of \$148,041 from Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) for staff salaries and support, and training expenses.
- Received \$59,250 in Bond money and \$54,000 in SEG money from DATCP to implement the Wood County Land and Water Resource Management Plan. Funds were used to cost share conservation practices.
- Received \$36,686.27 from point sources for water quality improvements.
- Received \$2,642 from the county board to pay area and state membership dues.
- Received \$56,193.48 from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Large-Scale TRM grant for the Mill Creek Watershed.
- Held the 2021 Wildlife Tree and shrub sale, selling 25,850 trees and shrubs to 245 landowners.
- 12 landowners purchased prairie grass/wildflower seeds.
- Tree shelters and generic gel were made available for sale through the Land and Water Conservation Department.
- Received \$40,101 from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WiDNR) to administer the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program.
- Enrolled 22 landowners in the Wildlife Damage Abatement program.
- Inspected 20 deer fences for compliance with the Wildlife Damage Abatement Program.
- Completed construction of two wildlife fences for cranberry growers. Fences totaled 4,500' in length and 2,500' in length.
- Completed 53 crop damage appraisals with damage claims paid out totaling \$15,290
- Administered the 2021 venison donation program - 197 pounds of ground venison was donated to three pantries throughout Wood County.
- The Conservation, Education and Economic Development Committee (CEED) held 12 regular meetings and 5 special meetings. All cooperating agency staff received meeting notices and minutes.
- Certified reclamation and closing of one large non-metallic mine site.
- Received \$44,300 in reclamation permit fees under the Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Program.
- Held \$2,616,765 in financial assurance for nonmetallic mining reclamation.
- Inspected 55 nonmetallic mine sites for reclamation progress and active acres - created maps for each mine
- Conducted a transect survey to determine soil erosion rates in Wood County.
- Administered the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP); worked with one new landowners to enroll 34.96 new acres. The 1187.04 acres enrolled in CREP in Wood County provide the following benefits:
 - * At least 1956 lbs. of phosphorus loss to waterways prevented per year.
 - * At least 1022 lbs. of nitrogen prevented from entering waterways per year.
 - * At least 1065 tons of sediment prevented from entering waterways per year.
- Updated conservation practices data on Arc Map.
- Coordinated the local, Conservation Poster contest, with one contestant receiving third place in the grades 4-6 category at the North Central Area division.
- Presented on-line through email - the importance of Healthy Soil for Healthy Life to poster contest participants.
- Conducted stream flow monitoring at nine sites once per month for five months as part of a six county-wide monitoring project. Reported data to DNR's Surface Water Integrated Monitoring System.
- Issued three Animal Waste and Manure Management permits.
- 10 new pond build exemptions to non-metallic mining issued in 2021
- 7 ponds from 2020 completed/inspected through the exemption applications in 2021.

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Accomplishments continued from page 1

- Worked to get maximum number of nutrient management plans turned in, which came to 83. These 83 plans covered 50,729 acres of farmland.
- Kept wild parsnip map current by taking reports from the public and field mapping. Reported results to EDDMapS, an invasive tracker widely used. Treated wild parsnip at 36 locations. 9 new spots were found.
- Received \$1,482.27 in staff support for assisting with the Nutrient Management Farmer Education (NMFE) classes.
- Partnered with Marathon, Clark, Lincoln, and Taylor counties to hold multiple courses that qualify farms to write their own nutrient management plan called the NMFE class. Seven area farmers attended covering 5,646.5 acres. Provided assistance to past/present attendees to keep up their plan.
- As a part of the 9-Key Element Plan, surface water samples were tested for phosphorus at 8 locations throughout the Mill Creek Watershed once per month from May to October.
- The 10' Great Plains no-till drill in its second season of use was used consistently throughout the growing season. The drill was used by 18 landowners covering 449.24 acres. The drill was also used for cover crop plot demonstrations by the Mill Creek farmer group.
- 13 farmers participated in no-till and/or cover cropping in Wood County or within the Mill Creek Watershed on 171 fields covering 3,343 acres, with funding coming from MDV or LWRM or 9-key funds. A total estimate of 12,326 lbs. of phosphorus and 6,742 lbs. of sediment were reduced.
- Expanded the educational prairie/pollinator garden outside the River Block building by 32 plants and 4 new species.
- Provided no-cost well water nitrate testing to 63 Wood County residents. Updated results map in GIS. Contributed data in shapefile form to larger central sands groundwater monitoring project.
- Helped coordinate the virtual "Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo."
- Installed a 364 ft. stream crossing.
- Installed 6,040 Ln. Ft. of 4-Wire High Tensile Electric Fence and 12 gates for cattle grazing.
- Completed and cost-shared one waste storage facility Closure
- Completed and cost-shared six well closures



Reber Mine Site reclaimed



6-M Cranberry Wildlife fence build



BudzNBudz Cranberry Wildlife fence build



Soybean deer damage



Stream Crossing



2021 Tree & shrub sale

MEET THE LAND & WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT STAFF AND CEED COMMITTEE

LWCD Staff



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

CEED Committee



(L-R) Robert Ashbeck, Jake Hahn, Dave Lafontaine, Ken Curry, Carmen Good, and Bill Leichtnam

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

By: Roy A. Diver, District Conservationist

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

In 2021 workload and landowner interest in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) remained high. The CSP and EQIP obligated \$837,263 to 23 landowners in Wood County, to plan and apply new conservation practices on their land, over 65 applications were received with over a million dollars in funds being requested. The CSP and EQIP in 2021, has 90 active contracts managed that cover over 22,000 acres of Cropland, Farmstead, Associated Ag Land, and Forestland, to continue to protect existing farm resources and implement additional conservation enhancements, all CSP payments for 2021 were processed, and additional funds were paid to landowners through the EQIP and for various conservation practices applied from previous year contracts. The following is a partial list of landowner accomplishments completed with NRCS assistance from October 2020 through September 2021:

Conservation Plans Applied	10,509 acres
Grazing Systems Applied	295 acres
Water Quality Enhancements Applied	1,044 acres
Cover Crop Planned	1,847 acres
Forest Land Improvements Applied	249 acres
Conservation to Improve Environmental Quality Applied	1,292 acres
Fence (Grazing) Installed	20,065 feet
Irrigation Efficiency Improvements Applied	4,158 feet
Heavy Use Area Protection Applied	1,240 sq. ft.
Livestock Pipeline (Grazing) Applied	8,745 feet
Monarch Butterfly Habitat Applied	16 acres
Soil Health Practices Applied	590 acres
Watering Facility Applied	5 applied
Wildlife Habitat Improvement Applied	1,839 acres
Brief Technical Assistance	623 landowners
Estimated Soil Erosion Reduction	26,272 tons



L-R Roy A. Diver, District Conservationist;
Russ Biebl, Soil Conservation Technician
Not Pictured: Patrick Murphy, retired NRCS.

WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

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

Land and Water Resource Management Plan Implementation & Other Programs

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

DATCP has provided Wood County Land & Water (LWCD) \$1,728,713 to cost share best management practices over the last twenty-two years. Landowners countywide are eligible for these funds. In 2021, the Wood County LWCD secured \$54,000 for nutrient management and \$59,250 to install selected practices.

DNR has provided \$71,996.25 to cost share best management practices through the Mill Creek TMDL grant over the past two year period. In 2021, Wood County issued \$28,466 in cost-share received through the Mill Creek TMDL grant. Landowners in the Mill Creek watershed are eligible for these cost-share funds.

The Land & Water Conservation Department received at total of \$49,671.94 to cost share best management practices from 2019 - 2021 through Multi-Discharger Variance (MDV) Program. In 2021, Wood County received \$23,846.08 to cost-share best management practices in the Castle Rock, Lake Dubay and Black River HUC 8 watersheds.

Practices installed in Wood County and reimbursed by
DATCP, DNR & MDV in 2021 include:

Cover crops	1,724 acres
Nutrient management	316 acres
Residue management	2,086 acres
Streambank & Shoreland Protection	1
Waste storage facility closure	1
Wells decommissioned.	6

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

The following landowners installed
Best Management Practices in
2021:
Cost Shared through the SWRM
Program

- ◆ Dustin Albert
- ◆ Jason Behrend
- ◆ Anthony Clementi
- ◆ Nathan Konopacki
- ◆ Luke Keuffer
- ◆ Cory Leigh
- ◆ Barry Richardson
- ◆ Roth Golden Acres
- ◆ Craig Vitort

The following landowners installed
Best Management Practices in
2021:
Cost Shared through the
Multi-Discharger Variance (MDV)

- ◆ LeRoy Altmann
- ◆ Tyler Bulgrin
- ◆ Russ Haffenbredl
- ◆ Kevin Heeg
- ◆ Josh Meissner

The following landowners installed
Best Management Practices in
2021:
Cost Shared through the
Mill Creek TMDL

- ◆ Charlie Dorshorst
- ◆ Glen Peplinski
- ◆ Barry Richardson
- ◆ Roth Golden Acres
- ◆ Craig Vitort

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON DIVISION OF EXTENSION WOOD COUNTY

Extension Wood County assists the Wood County Land & Water Conservation Department by providing educational support for county conservation programs. Extension agents provide information relating to the development of soil, water, wildlife, livestock, crops and other related resources.

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

Rachael Whitehair, Natural Resource Educator, provides resource support to local farmer-led watershed groups and develops educational programming on conservation land management practices. Rachael has taken up planning and facilitation for the "Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo," an annual event modeled after the "Healthy Soil, Healthy Water" program. As part of her regional responsibilities, she assists with curriculum development and facilitation at annual Conservation Partner Meetings.

Wood County is the top cranberry-producing county in North America so it is a natural fit to have Cranberry Outreach Specialist, Allison Jonjak, home based with Extension Wood County. Her efforts are focused on improving grower education in cranberry production practices. Allison started with Extension in 2020, and has hosted virtual and in-person events focusing on nutrient use efficiency, water use and quality, profitability, and integrated pest management. Cranberry growers appreciate the wetlands- specific management decision support.

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

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



Extension Wood County Staff:

(L-R back to front) Hannah Wendels (FoodWise Educator), Laura Huber (4-H Educator), Jackie Carattini (Human Development & Relationships Educator), Wendy Young (Administrative Support), Matt Lippert (Agriculture Educator), Jason Hausler (Area Extension Director)

Not pictured: Allison Jonjak (Cranberry Outreach Specialist), Jennifer Swensen (Wisconsin 4-H Assistant Program Manager), Karli Tomsyck (Administrative Support), Janell Wehr (Horticulture Educator), Rachael Whitehair (Natural Resources Educator)