



# Land & Water Conservation 2015

## 2015 WORKPLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

By: Shane Wucherpennig, County Conservationist

- Secured funding of \$125,982 from Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) for staff salaries and support, and training expenses.
- Received a \$198,701 conservation grant from DATCP to implement the Wood County Land and Water Resource Management Plan. Funds were used to cost share conservation practices.
- Approval of Wood County Land & Water Resource Management Plan and Work Plan.
- Approval of Wood County Farmland Preservation Plan.
- Received \$2,024 from the county board to pay area and state membership dues.
- 210 landowners purchased 20,100 trees and shrubs through the wildlife tree and shrub sale.
- Seven landowners purchased prairie grass and wildflower seeds.
- Received \$155,558 from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to administer the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program. Assisted 27 landowners.
- Inspected 33 deer fences for compliance with the Wildlife Damage Abatement Program; erected four fences.
- Completed 57 crop damage appraisals.
- Tree shelters and generic gel were made available for sale through the Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD).
- Staffed a booth at the Lincoln High School Agriculture Day, Marshfield Farm Show, and at area dairy breakfasts to inform and educate residents and visitors of Wood County about the quality of surface waters and about assistance provided by the LWCD.
- The Conservation, Education and Economic Development Committee (CEED) held 12 regular meetings and five special meetings. All cooperating agency staff received meeting notices and minutes.
- Issued seven animal waste storage facility ordinance permits.
- Conducted a fall conservation tour to educate CEED members, agency staff, and the public about various conservation practices applied in Wood County.
- Received \$26,795.83 in reclamation permit fees for 83 mines administered under the Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Program.
- Conducted a transect survey to determine soil erosion rates in Wood County.
- Offered scholarships to Trees for Tomorrow and Conservation Camp.
- Administered the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).
- Updated conservation practices data on Arc Map.
- Coordinated the Local Speaking Contest, State Speaking Contest and Envirothon.
- Continued a research program with Pittsville High School to trap invasive Rusty Crayfish.
- Continued the Rusty Wranglers program at North Wood County Park to remove invasive Rusty Crayfish.
- Stream flow monitoring at 15 sites as part of a six county-wide monitoring project.
- Conducted five acoustic bat surveys throughout Wood County.
- Issued 14 Animal Waste and Manure Management permits.
- Held a three session nutrient management farmer certification/training class; seven farmers attended.

# WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FORESTRY ASSISTANCE TO PRIVATE WOODLAND OWNERS

By: Steve Grant and Brian Luebke

The Department of Natural Resources provides forestry assistance to private landowners throughout the State. Here in Wood County we have two foresters, Steve Grant and Brian Luebke. Brian recently assumed the position vacated when Kris Wimme transferred over to Portage County. Brian will cover the eastern half of the county while Steve handles the western half. Our goal is to help private landowners sustainably manage their forests for not only wood products to sustain our industry base, but also for wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities and a whole host of other environmental issues associated with forested lands.

One of our larger workloads comes from administration of the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program. The MFL program continues to grow and change with periodic legislative changes occurring on a regular basis. In Wood County we have just over 50,000 acres enrolled in the MFL program, around 20% of the privately owned woodland. By far our most time-consuming task with this program is ensuring that harvesting takes place as scheduled in the management plans. We work closely with our industry and independent consulting foresters to help landowners complete their required harvests.

Providing assistance to the other 80% of the landowners who own forest land is another major goal for our Private Forestry Assistance program.

Assistance from DNR foresters is available to forest landowners at no cost. Give us a call to learn more about the MFL program, grant programs we administer or any other forestry concerns. Call Steve at (715) 421-7819 or Brian at (715) 421-7823 for more information or to set up an appointment.



(L-R) Steve Grant, Forester and Brian Luebke, Forester

## CONSERVATION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CEED) COMMITTEE



Back Row (L-R) Harvey Petersen, Kenneth Curry, Gerald Nelson, and Bill Leichtnam. Front Row ((L-R) Hilde Henkel, and Robert Ashbeck

## LAND & WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT STAFF



(L-R) Adam Groshek, Engineering Technician; Shane Wucherpennig, County Conservationist; Lori Ruess Administrative Support; Tracy Arnold, Conservation Program Specialist



FARM SERVICE AGENCY  
FARM LOAN PROGRAMS REPORT

Wisconsin continues to be a leader in direct and guaranteed loan making, processing 1944 loans totaling \$392,867,665.

Farm Loan Programs provides credit to farmers that are unable to obtain their credit needs through commercial credit sources.

**Loan Activity for Fiscal Year 2015 (10/1/14 – 9/30/15)**

24 direct loans were closed for \$1,714,600 for **Wood** County; this includes 6 microloans at \$60,034.  
6 guaranteed loans were closed for \$3,405,100 for **Wood** County.

There were a total of 261 loan applications for our service area with 181 closed for \$13,568,746.

As of September 30, 2014 outstanding principal and interest for FSA direct loans in **Wood** County was \$4,579,889 from 36 borrowers with 61 loans. There was also \$107,352 from 6 borrowers with microloans. As of the same date there was \$8,038,687 in guaranteed loans outstanding with 26 loans to **Wood** County producers.

We look forward to serving the farmers of **Wood** County in the years to come.

Covering Clark, Taylor, Price,  
Wood and Marathon Counties



**Clark County Farm Loan Team: (L-R)**

Julie Rasmussen, Farm Loan Officer  
Kaye Ewoldt, Program Technician  
Jeanne Opelt, Program Technician  
Jeff Speth, Farm Loan Officer  
John Erickson, Farm Loan Manager

Covering Langlade, Lincoln, Portage, and  
Marathon Counties



**Marathon County Farm Loan Team: (L-R)**

Beth Zimmerman, Farm Loan Technician  
Christine Ewer, Farm Loan Officer

USDA is an Equal  
Opportunity Provider  
and Employer



## WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

The goal of the Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD) and the Land and Water Resource Management Plan implementation 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.

### 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) & 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 \$ 1,040,463 to cost share best management practices in the last sixteen years. Landowners county-wide are eligible for these funds. In 2015 the Wood County LWCD secured \$20,020 for nutrient management and \$ 178,681 to install selected practices. On an annual basis, the LWCD selects landowners and practices to be funded from those that express an interest and have resource concerns.

Practices installed in Wood County and reimbursed by DATCP in 2015 include:

- 2 Barnyard Settling Basins
- 7 Waste Transfer Systems to Long Term Storage
- 4 Earthen Waste Storage Facility Structures
- 5 Concrete Waste Storage Facility Structures
- 2 Waste Storage Facility Closures

- 1 Slurry-Store Facility
- 2 Roof Runoff Systems
- 2 Wells Decommissioned
- 2 Underground Outlets
- 11 Nutrient Management Plans



Pictured above is a newly constructed concrete lined waste storage system and waste transfer pipe which pumps waste & wastewater from a newly constructed free-stall to a long-term waste storage facility. The long-term storage will eliminate the need to winter spread manure on frozen ground. This practice needs to be permitted through the Wood County Animal Waste Storage, Nutrient Management & Groundwater Protection Ordinance.

#### The following landowners installed Best Management Practices in 2015

Heather & Trent Schmitt  
Kay & Steve Zimmerman  
Wayerski Dairy, LLC  
D & B Sternweis Farms, Inc.  
Larry A. Gilbertson  
George & Jill Gilbertson  
Dexter & Vikki Niskanen  
Fred Miller  
Weiler Dairy, LLC  
Raymond Fait  
John Pankratz  
Scott Breu  
Marti Farms, LLC  
DQ Farms, LLC  
Flying Dollar Cattle, LLC  
Brian Vruwink



Pictured above is a precast tank being installed to receive manure & wastewater from a flow channel which will pump manure to an earthen long-term waste storage facility. This channel makes scraping a free-stall building more labor efficient. Virtually no mechanical parts to service.



Pictured to the far left is a roof runoff drip-line system and underground outlet system which conveys clean roof water runoff away from the farmstead production areas through underground piping to a diversion ditch keeping clean water clean. The practice is relatively inexpensive and does a great job keeping the site dry & roads in good shape.

## FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Jake Bourget, CED

Well, 2015 is a mixed emotional year. Great for production, terrible for price in most categories. Our Margin Protection Program (MPP) though has a good concept, it didn't match up well with Wood County dairy operations. If you are buying all your feed for your cows then you saw the drop in feed costs to match the drop in milk prices so the "margin" didn't change a lot; but for the 99.9% of us that grow our own feed, we only saw the drop in the milk price and it's hard to understand why the program didn't pay. Moving on to the commodity base program, the Agricultural Risk Coverage – County Option (ARC-CO) Program, we saw fairly hefty per acre base payments due to the low commodity prices in 2014. We'll see what the 2015 payments look like after the 2015 marketing year ends in August, 2016. So for the questions, "Can we expect a "normal" Spring this year?" What about the summer growing season? Well, we were on target for an El Nino drought but it appears the jet stream is pushing the weather patterns to the north, so what does that mean for us? Whatever it does, I'm sure the goal is the same as any other Spring, just get it planted!

As in every year in the past, we at the Portage/Wood County FSA Offices have enjoyed working with the very people that fill our grocery stores every day. We are here to help you with FSA programs in every way we can; please never hesitate to call us, as there is no question that you have that is not important to us. We appreciate all the patience from our customers out there. With limited staff travelling back and forth between the Portage and Wood County offices it is a continuous project keeping appointments, files, and information organized and available between the offices. Thank you!

For the year 2015, FSA distributed the following program dollars here in Wood County:

Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP)	\$ 79,196
Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)	\$ 5,127
2015 CRP, CREP, SAFE & Continuous CRP Annual Payments	\$ 111,904
Grassland Reserve Program	\$ 425
Agricultural Risk Coverage Program (ARC/PLC)	\$ 2,013,202
Margin Protection Program (MPP)	\$ 13,439
Total Economic Boost from FSA to Wood County	\$ 2,223,293

Thank you to each and every one out there for your hard work and dedication to the great American farming industry, and your commitment to keep this country well fed. We are looking forward to another year of working with you.

### The Portage/Wood County FSA Staff



(L-R) Jake Bourget, County Executive Director; Lindy Pastaka, Program Technician; Donna Roth, Program Technician

# NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

## 2015 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 2015 workload and landowner interest in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) remained high. The EQIP obligated \$35,715 to one landowner in Wood County to plan and apply new conservation practices on his land, in total 29 applications were received with over a million dollars in funds being requested. The CSP in 2015 resulted in eight new five year contracts that covered 2717.3 acres of cropland to continue to protect existing farm resources and implement additional conservation enhancements. An additional \$564,905 was paid to landowners through the EQIP and CSP for various conservation practices applied from previous year contracts. The following is a partial list of landowner accomplishments completed with NRCS assistance from October 2014 through September 2015:

Conservation Plans Developed	2,985 acres
Prescribed Grazing Practice Applied	225 acres
Nutrient Management Planned	525 acres
Nutrient Management Applied	1,939 acres
Trails & Walkways Applied	1,750 feet
Brush Management Applied	35 acres
Conservation Crop Rotation Applied	1,806 acres
Fence (Grazing) Installed	19,521 feet
Access Road Applied	774 feet
Heavy Use Area Protection Applied	2 applied
Diversion Applied	16 feet
Livestock Pipeline (Grazing) Applied	4,802 feet
Forage and Biomass Planting Applied	28 acres
Roof Runoff Structure Applied	8 applied
Seasonal High Tunnels Applied	1 applied
Grassed Waterway Applied	1 acre
Subsurface Drain Applied	800 feet
Underground Outlet Installed	1,245 feet
Waste Storage Facility (Dairy) Applied	3 applied
Waste Transfer Applied	2 applied

Water Facilities (Grazing) Applied	5 applied
Well Decommissioning Applied	1 applied
Wetland Restoration Applied	1 acre
<b>Brief Technical Assistance</b>	<b>565 landowners</b>
<b>Estimated Soil Erosion Reduction</b>	<b>10,448 tons</b>



L-R Roy A. Diver, District Conservationist;  
Russ Biebl, Soil Conservation Technician

## WOOD COUNTY UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERVICE

UW Extension assists the Wood County Land & Water Conservation Department by providing educational support for county conservation programs. UW Extension agents can provide information relating to the development of soil, water, wildlife, livestock, crops and other related resources. In addition to conservation, the Agricultural Agent, Matt Lippert educates about marketing, livestock and crop budgets, integrated pest management, grazing, land rent, farm management, family farm transfers and farmstead design.

Other educational programs are provided in Horticulture, 4-H and Youth Development, Home and Family Living, Small Business Management and Natural and Environmental Resources.

Stop by the Extension Office for farm record books, soil sample and water quality testing and plat books.



Back Row (L-R) Sarah Siegel, Family Living Educator; Megan Wecker, 4-H & Youth Development Educator; Kyli Brown, 4-H Program Advisor; Allison Henke, Administrative Support; Wendy Young, Administrative Support; Jodi Friday, WNEP Nutrition Educator; Front Row (L-R) Christopher Viau, 4-H & Youth Development Agent; Teri Lessig, Horticulture Educator; Matt Lippert, Agricultural Agent; Peter Manley, Community Resource & Development Agent; Amanda Darr, Administrative Support