



Land & Water Conservation 2019 Annual Report

2019 WORKPLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

By: Land & Water Conservation Department staff

- Secured funding of \$132,364 from Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) for staff salaries and support, and training expenses.
- Received \$58,513 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 \$10,967.53 from point sources for water quality improvements.
- Received \$2,619 from the county board to pay area and state membership dues.
- 225 landowners purchased 18,700 trees and shrubs and 12 landowners purchased prairie grass/wildflower seeds through the wildlife tree and shrub sale.
- Received \$42,200 from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to administer the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program.
- Enrolled 21 landowners in the Wildlife Damage Abatement program.
- Inspected deer fences for compliance with the Wildlife Damage Abatement Program; began construction on one fence 11,850 feet in length—to be completed in 2020.
- Completed 67 crop damage appraisals with claims.
- Administered the 2019 venison donation program - 284 pounds of ground venison was donated to four pantries throughout Wood County.
- 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 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 14 special meetings. All cooperating agency staff received meeting notices and minutes.
- Received \$45,145 in reclamation permit fees for 59 mines administered under the Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Program.
- Held \$2,767,709 for nonmetallic mining reclamation financial assurance.
- Inspected 63 nonmetallic mine sites for reclamation progress and active acres—created maps of each mine (4 mines re-claimed/closed).
- Conducted a transect survey to determine soil erosion rates in Wood County.
- Offered scholarships to Wisconsin Land + Water Conservation Camp and Sand Lake Conservation Camp.
- Administered the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP); worked with one new landowner to enroll 39 new acres. Also renewed 35.5 acres and newly enrolled 23.7 acres from existing CREP landowners. The 1021 acres enrolled in CREP in Wood County provide the following benefits:
 - * At least 1430 lbs of phosphorus loss to waterways prevented per year.
 - * At least 771 lbs of nitrogen prevented from entering waterways per year.
 - * At least 750 tons of sediment prevented from entering waterways per year.
- Completed spot checks on 73 acres of existing CREP for continued compliance.
- Updated conservation practices data on Arc Map.
- Coordinated the local, poster contest, with one contestant receiving second at the Area contest.
- Continued a spring research program with Pittsville High School to trap invasive Rusty Crayfish.
- Stream flow monitoring at five sites as part of a six county-wide monitoring project.
- Presented at schools about importance of future conservation and pollinators.
- Issued seven Animal Waste and Manure Management permits.

Accomplishments continued on page 2

Accomplishments continued from page 1

- Worked to get maximum number of nutrient management plans turned in, which came to 92. According to DATCP, 43% of ag land was covered by a nutrient management plan.
- Presented at MSTC's ag students on nutrient management and planning software.
- Kept wild parsnip map current by taking reports from the public and field mapping. Reported results to EDDMapS, an invasive tracker widely used. Chemically treated wild parsnip at 7 mapped locations.
- Applied for Nutrient Management Farmer Education (NMFE) grant funds and reimbursed farmer costs to attend course.
- 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. Six Wood County farmers attended covering 3,140 acres. Provided assistance to past/present attendees to keep up their plan.
- Completed a 9-Key Element Plan for the Mill Creek Watershed and assisted with the 14-Mile 9-Key Element Plan.
- As a part of the 9-Key Element Plan, surface water samples were tested for phosphorus at 5 locations throughout the Mill Creek Watershed once per month from May to October.
- Purchased a 10' Great Plains no-till drill after multiple years of seeking donations and budgeting. The drill was used by 9 landowners covering 208 acres. The drill was also used for educational purposes at the Auburndale School and for cover crop plot demonstrations for the Mill Creek farmer group.
- 27 farmers participated in no-till and/or cover cropping in Wood County or within the Mill Creek Watershed. 2,445 acres were no-tilled or had cover crops. Wood County partnered with UW-Extension to cost-share a portion.
- Expanded the prairie/pollinator garden outside the River Block building by 25 plants and 6 new species.
- Coordinated a new well water sampling for nitrates program. Handed out sample bottles and collected samples at set dates and times throughout the County multiple times. As a result, 232 wells were tested for nitrates at no cost.

**LAND & WATER CONSERVATION
DEPARTMENT STAFF**



(L-R) Shane Wucherpennig, County Conservationist, Rod Mayer, Conservation Program Coordinator, Lori Ruess, Administrative Services, Emily Salvinski, Conservation Specialist, Adam Groshek, Engineering Technician.

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



Back row (L-R) Harvey Petersen, Ken Curry, Dave LaFontaine
Front row (L-R) Bill Leichtnam, Mark Holbrook, Robert Ashbeck



Farm Service Agency, Farm Loan Programs Annual Report for Wood County Land Conservation

Wisconsin continues to be a leader in direct and guaranteed loan making, processing 1,566 loans totaling \$335,517,682.

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

Loan Activity for Fiscal Year 2019 (10-1-2018 to 9-30-2019)

7 direct loans were closed for \$319,526 for Wood County producers; this includes 2 microloans at \$23,776. 10 Guaranteed loans were closed for \$1,743,250 for Wood County farmers.

There were a total of 149 direct loan applications for our service area which includes Wood, Marathon, Portage, Clark, Taylor, Price, Lincoln and Langlade Counties, with 81 closed for \$7,310,196.

As of September 30, 2019 outstanding principal and interest for FSA direct loans in Wood County was \$5,265,336 from 37 borrowers with 64 loans. As of the same date there was \$13,941,882 in Guarantee loans outstanding with 53 loans to Wood County producers.

We look forward to serving the farmers of Wood County in the years to come. Contact Farm Service Agency, 4 Boon Boulevard, Neillsville, WI 54456 or phone 715 743-3164 for more information.

Covering Clark, Taylor, Price, Wood,
Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon and Portage Counties



Clark County Farm Loan Team:

Kaye Ewoldt, Credit Analyst
Jeff Speth, Farm Loan Officer
Brenda Dowiasch, Farm Loan Officer Trainee
Julie Rasmussen, Farm Loan Manager

Marathon County Farm Loan Team:

Beth Zimmerman, Farm Loan Officer
Yee Thao, Program Technician

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) & 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 \$1,513,093 to cost share best management practices in the last twenty years. Landowners countywide are eligible for these funds. In 2019 the Wood County LWCD secured \$54,000 for nutrient management and \$58,513 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 2019 include:

Cover crops single species	28.8 acres
Cover crops multi species	34.7 acres
Nutrient management	588.3 acres
Residue management	258.12 acres

Waste storage facility closure	2
Waste storage facility construction	2
Waste transfer systems installed or repaired	2
Wells decommissioned	1
Streambank protection projects	2



Above: Pankratz Farms, LLC expanded their existing clay-lined manure storage lagoon to allow 7-8 months worth of storage capacity. Concrete agitation pad ramps allow agitation equipment a place to operate without damaging the clay liner.

Below: Robert & Evelyn Wilson had 150' of streambank riprap installed along a sharp curve on their property to prevent further erosion & creek sediment loading.



The following landowners installed Best Management Practices in 2019:

- Todd Bores
- Gary & Mary Hamm
- Charles Dorshorst
- Gary & Mary Hamm
- Jackie Hoffman
- Otter Creek Farms
- Pankratz Farms LLC
- Robert & Beverly Peaslee
- Glen Peplinski/Pep Acres
- Robert & Evelyn Wilson
- Martin Wolf/Cheryl Schulman



Above: Martin Wolf/Cheryl Schulman abandoned this pre-ordinance manure storage pit that no longer was being used. All manure remains were removed and disposed of properly and the site was graded to serve as an area for future ag education purposes.

Below: Jagodzinski Properties, LLC installed a manure transfer channel and tank for waste management of their new organic farming freestall barn.



NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE 2019 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 2019 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 \$784,395 to 33 landowners in Wood County, to plan and apply new conservation practices on their land, in total 70 applications were received with over a million dollars in funds being requested. The CSP and EQIP in 2019, 101 active contracts were managed that covers over 20,820 acres of cropland and forestland, with \$1,159,611 in funds available to continue to protect existing farm resources and implement additional conservation practices and enhancements, all CSP payments 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 2018 through September 2019:

Conservation plans applied	2,874 acres
Prescribed grazing practice applied	350 acres
Nutrient management applied	405 acres
Cover crop planned	1,836 acres
Brush management applied	58 acres
Conservation crop rotation applied	1,935 acres
Fence (grazing) installed	5,168 feet
Irrigation water management planned	50 acres
Heavy use area protection applied	7,322 sq. ft.
Livestock pipeline (grazing) applied	3,728 feet
Irrigation pipeline applied	720 feet
Monarch Butterfly habitat applied	7 acres
Conservation cover applied	23 acres
Watering facility applied	4 applied
Forestry/grazing plans written	6 applied
Wildlife habitat practices applied	30 applied
Underground outlet planned	1,378 feet
Brief Technical Assistance	774 landowners
Estimated Soil Erosion Reduction	14,370 tons



L-R Roy A. Diver, District Conservationist;
Russ Biebl, Soil Conservation Technician
Not Pictured: Meagan Hoffmann, Soil Conservationist and Becky Brathal, Farm Bill Biologist

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 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.

Front to Back (L-R): Laura Huber, 4-H Program Coordinator; Karli Tomsyck, Administrative Support; Jennifer Swensen, Wisconsin 4-H Assistant Program Manager; Jason Hausler, Area Extension Director; Matt Lippert, Agriculture Agent; Jackie Carattini, Human Development & Relationships Educator; Nancy Turyk, Community Development Educator; Wendy Young, Administrative Support
Not pictured: Kelly Hammond, FoodWise Nutrition Coordinator; Hannah Wendels, FoodWise Nutrition Educator; Rachael Whitehair, Natural Resources Educator

FARM SERVICE AGENCY
Jake Bourget, CED
The Portage/Wood County FSA Staff

Unfortunately 2019 is a year we would probably just like to move on from here in FSA. And unfortunately many in the farming community would like to as well. The Spring of 2019 started with massive winterkill on alfalfa throughout the county and it started wet and stayed wet for the whole year. Many acres of prevent plant and what was planted yielded low test weights and high moistures. Very little improvement in milk prices triggered payments in the Milk Margin Protection Program and with the continued imposed tariffs the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) came to be. Below we've listed some of the active programs we had here in Wood County for 2019. I remind everyone to at least make a crop report each year when finished planting. Many were not eligible for the MFP program this last year, simply because they did not make a free crop report by July 15th of the previous year. Call us for an appointment when done planting!

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. 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 2019, FSA distributed the following program dollars here in Wood County:

2019 CRP, CREP, SAFE & Continuous CRP Annual Payments	\$ 119,499
Grassland Reserve Program	\$ 425
Agricultural Risk Coverage Program (ARC/PLC)	\$ 1,363,207
Market Facilitation Program (MFP)	\$ 4,048,326
Margin Protection Program (MPP)	\$ 1,154,601
Total Economic Boost from FSA to Wood County	\$ 6,686,058

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

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
OUR WORK WITH PRIVATE WOODLAND OWNERS

By: Todd Pulvermacher and Andy Neveln

Did you know the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides forestry assistance to private landowners throughout the State? Whether their goals are sustainably harvesting wood products, improving wildlife habitat, developing recreational opportunities, or just trying to ensure their forests are healthy – we try our best to help them accomplish it. Since there are a variety of needs of Wood County landowners may have two foresters available, Todd Pulvermacher and Andy Neveln, and our specialties are split as follows:

- Andy handles all duties associated with Managed Forest Law and Forest Crop Law.
- Todd works with all non-tax law landowners who are looking for services ranging from tree planting, to cost sharing opportunities, as well as management planning.

While one of our best-known programs is the Managed Forest Law (MFL) which encompasses a bit over 50,000 acres in Wood County it is certainly only one facet of the services we provided in 2019. Forest landowners both enrolled in MFL and not in MFL met with DNR foresters throughout the year to get guidance on how to combat invasive plant species, learn the process to establish a timber sale, have forest health concerns evaluated, and develop plans ranging from planting trees to forest stewardship plans. It has always been a pleasure to meet and provide these services in our County and we look forward to continuing it in the future.

One sizable task we continue to work through from last year was in the form of storm damage that impacted both Wood County and the state as a whole. While we've met with a lot of forest landowners so far to provide expertise on post storm forest health concerns, salvage harvesting, planning updates, and more there are still folks out there that likely have questions and we would be happy to help answer them.

Assistance from DNR foresters is available to forest landowners at no cost - including an opportunity to walk through your property. Give us a call or email to learn more about the services we can offer, or any other forestry concerns we can help you address. Reach Todd at (715) 697-3791 & todd.pulvermacher@wisconsin.gov or Andy at (715) 216-0287 & andrew.neveln@wisconsin.gov for more information.