



# Land Conservation 2014 Annual Report

## 2014 WORKPLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

By: Jerry Storke, County Conservationist

- Secured funding of \$120,227 from Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) for staff salaries and support, and training expenses.
- Received a \$90,000 conservation grant from DATCP to implement the Wood County Land and Water Resource Management Plan. Funds were used to cost share conservation practices.
- Received \$1,896 from the county board to pay area and state membership dues.
- Completed 14 Farmland Preservation Program status reviews.
- 252 landowners purchased 22,650 trees and shrubs through the wildlife tree and shrub sale.
- Five landowners purchased prairie grass and wildflower seeds.
- Received \$48,983 from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to administer the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program. Assisted 26 landowners.
- Inspected 33 deer fences for compliance with the Wildlife Damage Abatement Program.
- Completed 68 crop damage appraisals.
- Tree shelters and generic gel were made available for sale through the Land Conservation Department (LCD).
- 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 LCD.
- The Conservation, Education and Economic Development Committee (CEED) held 12 regular meetings and three 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 \$19,790 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.
- Launched the Rusty Wranglers program at North Wood County Park to remove invasive Rusty Crayfish.
- Stream flow monitoring for 15 sites as part of a six county-wide monitoring project.
- Conducted seven acoustic bat surveys throughout Wood County.

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

By: Steve Grant and Kris Wimme

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 Kris Wimme, who work with landowners. Kris covers 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 values associated with forested lands.

One of our larger workloads comes from administration of the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program. We have approximately 45,000 acres enrolled in the MFL program in Wood County, 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 emerging goal for our Private Forestry Assistance program. To further this goal, we participated in landowner workshops in conjunction with UW – Extension. The workshops were held in the Marshfield area and gave forest landowners information on a variety of forestry and wildlife topics. DNR forestry also began an outreach program to landowners in a 30 mile radius of Marshfield. Interested landowners were connected to DNR foresters for field visits to their woodlands. Work on this effort continues into 2015.

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 Kris at (715) 421-7843 for more information or to set up an appointment.



(L-R) Kris Wimme, Forester and  
Steve Grant, 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 CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT STAFF



(L-R) Tracy Arnold, Conservation Program Coordinator;  
Lori Ruess, Administrative Support; Jerold Storke, County  
Conservationist; Shane Wucherpfennig, Engineering  
Technician



# Farm Service Agency

## Farm Loan Programs Report



**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 Clark, Taylor, Price,  
Wood and Marathon Counties



**Marathon County Farm Loan Team: (L-R)**  
Beth Zimmerman, Farm Loan Technician  
Christine Ewer, Farm Loan Officer

Covering Langlade, Lincoln, Portage,  
and Marathon Counties

Wisconsin continues to be a leader in direct and guaranteed loan making, processing 1,830 loans totaling \$313,221,665.

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

**Loan Activity for Fiscal Year 2014 (10/1/13 – 9/30/14)**  
16 direct loans were closed for \$1,641,970 for **Wood** County; this includes 3 microloans at \$63,200. 8 guaranteed loans were closed for \$2,799,391 for **Wood** County.

There were a total of 281 applications for our service area with 241 closed for \$28,835,482.

As of September 30, 2014 outstanding principal and interest for FSA direct loans in **Wood** County was \$4,519,967 from 34 borrowers with 57 loans. There was also \$65,781 from 5 borrowers with microloans. As of the same date there was \$9,342,232 in guaranteed loans outstanding with 31 loans to **Wood** County producers.

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



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and Employer

# WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

The goal of the Land Conservation Department (LCD) 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 LCD 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 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 \$838,496 to cost share best management practices in the last fourteen years. Landowners countywide are eligible for these funds. In 2014 the Wood County LCD secured \$20,000 for nutrient management and \$70,000 to install selected practices. On an annual basis, the LCD 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 2014 include:

- 2 Barnyard Settling Basins
- 7 Waste Transfer Systems to Long Term Storage
- 1 Earthen Waste Storage Facility Structure
- 1 Concrete Waste Storage Facility Structure

- 2 Roof Runoff Systems
- 2 Wells Decommissioned
- 2 Underground Outlets
- 11 Nutrient Management Plans



Pictured above is a newly constructed earthen waste storage system and waste transfer pipe which gravity flows 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 Ordinance.

### The following landowners installed Best Management Practices in 2014

Jerry & Kay Sternweis Farms  
 Paul & Mary Ann Ashbeck  
 Robert & Vicki Wiskerchen  
 Steven & Debra Pittz  
 Mitch & Colleen Perkl  
 Scott & Linda Heeg  
 Weiler Dairy, LLC  
 Jeff Hahn  
 Kathryn Hamus  
 Taylor Johnson  
 KMA Dairy, Inc.  
 Loren Leverance



Pictured above is a precast tank being installed to receive manure & wastewater from a flow channel which will gravity flow manure to the earthen long term waste storage facility pictured to the left. 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

As 2014 has come and gone, much of it was an unfortunate repeat of 2013! Not as wet as 2013 in most areas but we still saw many unplanted acres again in 2014. 2014 gave us a cool summer and didn't provide many heat units causing immature corn and soybean crops. Overall weather left soybeans and, especially corn at very high moisture levels that did not dry down and low test weights. On top of that \$3.00+ corn and \$9.00+ soybeans hasn't relieved any pain of a poor growing season. We did see favorable milk prices for most of the year but as the year ended we watched prices received by farmers drop significantly. Can we expect a "normal" Spring this year? I'm not sure what that is but let's start with getting the crops in the ground timely!

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 everyday. 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 out there as with limited staff traveling back and forth between the Portage and Wood County offices it is a struggle keeping appointments and information organized and in the right offices. Thank you!

For the year 2014, FSA distributed the following program dollars here in Wood County:

Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP)	\$ 12,730
Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)	\$ 3,736
Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFDSP)	\$ 69,799
2014 CRP, CREP, SAFE & Continuous CRP Annual Payments	\$ 112,511
Grassland Reserve Program	\$ 425
<b>Total Economic Boost from FSA to Wood County</b>	<b>\$ 199,201</b>

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) Donna Roth, Program Technician; Lindy Pataska, Program Technician; Jake Bourget, County Executive Director

# NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

## 2014 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 2014 workload and landowner interest in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) remained high. The EQIP obligated \$365,130 to 12 landowners in Wood County to plan and apply new conservation practices on their land, in total over a million dollars in funds was requested. An additional \$345,746 was paid to landowners through the EQIP for various conservation practices applied from previous years contracts, and to existing CSP contract participants. The following is a partial list of landowner accomplishments completed with NRCS assistance from October 2013 through September 2014:

Conservation Plans Developed	2,949 acres	Waste Transfer Applied	1 applied
Prescribed Grazing Practice Applied	432 acres	Water Facilities (Grazing) Applied	3 applied
Nutrient Management Planned	2,027 acres	Well Decommissioning Applied	3 applied
Nutrient Management Applied	1,901 acres	Wildlife Habitat Management Applied	7 acres
Animal Trails & Walkways Applied	175 feet	<b>Brief Technical Assistance</b>	<b>488 landowners</b>
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan	4 planned, 1 applied	<b>Estimated Soil Erosion Reduction</b>	<b>11,322 tons</b>
Brush Management Applied	8 acres		
Conservation Crop Rotation Applied	2,949 acres		
Fence (Grazing) Installed	18,575 feet		
Field Windbreaks Applied	5,235 feet		
Forage Harvesting for Wildlife Escape Applied (CSP)	1,112 acres		
Heavy Use Area Protection Applied	4 applied		
Irrigation Pipeline Applied	1,400 feet		
Livestock Pipeline (Grazing) Applied	1,500 feet		
Residue Management (All) Applied	1,174 acres		
Roof Runoff Structure Planned	1 planned		
Seasonal High Tunnels Applied	2 applied		
Plant Tissue Testing Applied (CSP)	56 acres		
Pumping Plant Applied	1 applied		
Split Nitrogen Application Applied (CSP)	25 acres		
Underground Outlet Installed	294 feet		
Vegetated Treatment Area Applied	1 applied		



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

## WOOD COUNTY UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERVICE

UW Extension assists the Wood County Land 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, Agriculture Agent; Peter Manley, Community Resource & Development Agent; Amanda Darr, Administrative Support