

U.S. Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service

Wisconsin Report 2004



From the desk of the State Conservationist

Dear Friends of Wisconsin Conservation,

I proudly present this 2004 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) state report to you, the shareholders in Wisconsin's soil and water resources.

In 2004, we took an historic step in a new direction with the launch of the Conservation Security Program (CSP). By actively supporting the farmers who have cared for the land, we have entered a new era of farmland conservation policy.

CSP is intended for those producers who have been historical stewards, have applied an effective conservation system, and practice good management and record keeping. Producers who aren't yet ready for CSP are invited to look into other financial and technical programs offered by NRCS and other state, federal and private partners to become eligible in the future. In rewarding historical stewards, who have been diligent for so long, we believe we are paving a path for others to follow. We are also confirming that farmers and ranchers, given the appropriate incentives, can and will voluntarily create farms that are showcases of conservation - for generations to come. This year, Wisconsin received nearly \$29 million in Farm Bill conservation programs delivered through NRCS. Each year, gains in conservation take us closer to our goal of maintaining a productive land in harmony with a quality environment.

I want to thank the thousands of Wisconsin farmers and landowners for their commitment to conservation. The conservation accomplishments realized this year are due to that commitment as well as the extraordinary hard work and diligence of our NRCS staff in rolling out a new program while juggling the ongoing workload. We also most sincerely thank the conservation partnership for their dedicated efforts – the county Land Conservation Committees and Departments, DNR, DATCP, UW Extension, FSA, and other members of the Wisconsin State Technical Committee and the Tribal Conservation Advisory Council. Private and non-profit sectors further strengthen the conservation partnership, particularly farm and environmental groups, Resource Conservation & Development councils, the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association, and the Wisconsin Association of Land Conservation Employees. Our growing cadre of private Technical Service Providers is also assisting in the delivery of conservation services. This conservation partnership has reaffirmed its commitment to locally led conservation as one of the most effective ways to help landowners and communities achieve their conservation goals through a voluntary, incentive-based approach to land stewardship.

Sincerely,



Patricia S. Lavenworth





NRCS Conservationists work with landowners to explain the benefits of conservation practices and how to implement them.

CTA Program Highlights

- 554,690 acres of conservation plans developed on cropland
- 10,628 acres of comprehensive nutrient management plans applied
- 26,633 acres of conservation plans developed on grazing land
- 11,978 acres practices applied on grazing land
- 11,786 acres of forest stand improvement
- 4,249 acres of agricultural wetland restored

Conservation Technical Assistance

NRCS helps landowners in planning and implementing conservation systems that reduce erosion, improve soil, air and water quality, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve pastures, reduce upstream flooding, and improve woodlands.

Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) is available to any landowner or operator regardless of participation in other USDA cost-share or conservation programs. NRCS helps farmers to meet their goals for resource stewardship and assist individuals to comply with state and local requirements.

Conservation compliance activities, such as highly erodible land determinations, wetland delineations and determinations, as well as program appeals, are ongoing CTA work.

CTA is the basic foundation for NRCS conservation activities. It is carried out in cooperation with county Land Conservation Departments and Committees throughout Wisconsin. This effort allows for seamless delivery of local, state and federal conservation programs.



The landscape of southwestern Wisconsin compliments the conservation practices that NRCS assists with every day.

Conservation Security Program

The newest addition to the toolbox of conservation programs available to Wisconsin landowners was rolled out in June 2004. The Conservation Security Program (CSP) became available in two Wisconsin watersheds. The Lower Chippewa River and the Kishwaukee River watersheds were chosen to be the first resource areas in the state eligible for this new program.

CSP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance for the conservation, protection, and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on Tribal and private lands. The program provides payments for producers who practice good stewardship on their agricultural lands and incentives for those who want to do more. The program is designed to reward the best conservation stewards of the most environmentally sensitive areas in targeted watersheds.



Dean Rosenberg Jr., a landowner in the Lower Chippewa River Watershed was one of the first farmers in Wisconsin enrolled into the new Conservation Security Program.

CSP Program Highlights

Approved CSP contracts in Wisconsin totaled 219. The Wisconsin portion of the Kishwaukee Watershed enrolled 4,664 acres and the Lower Chippewa enrolled 67,636 acres. CSP payments for 2004 in Wisconsin were \$2,163,622 with an average payment of \$9,500 per year.

Watersheds throughout Wisconsin will become eligible for the program as funding is approved. Annual sign-up periods will take place on a rotational basis by watershed.

Wisconsin ranked third in the nation for the number of contracts awarded under the new Conservation Security Program.

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NRCS Chief Bruce Knight signing the first Conservation Security Program contract in the State of Wisconsin.

Need more information? Check out www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

Environmental Quality Incentives Program



EQIP Program Highlights

NRCS assumed full management of EQIP at the end of FY04, including all administrative functions and payments to landowners.

A total of 1,710 EQIP contracts, for \$15,526,789 were completed.

- Animal Waste Storage:
 - ◆ 121 applications for waste storage systems
 - ◆ 58 applications were funded in FY04
 - ◆ \$7,746,062 total funds requested with \$4,082,129 in funds available
- \$300,000 were dedicated to Conservation projects on Tribal lands
- \$298,000 for conservation practices for cranberry production
- \$136,000 for Ground and Surface Water practices in Central Sands area

***See reverse for specific practice
accomplishments in 2004***

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program that addresses both local natural resource needs and national resource priorities. The funding shares the cost with farmers for installing conservation practices to improve animal waste management, grazing land, soil erosion and sediment control, and other resource concerns. Practices approved for EQIP incentive payments and cost-sharing must meet NRCS technical standards.

EQIP generally pays up to 50 percent of the costs of conservation practices, with a limited number of practices offered at rates up to 75 percent. Incentive payments may be provided for up to three years to encourage producers to try new practices. Farmers may elect to use a certified Technical Service Provider for technical assistance.

EQIP is the major cost-sharing program available in Wisconsin to help livestock operators meet new state regulations on livestock and animal waste management.

Cranberry Growers New to EQIP in 2004

For the first time, EQIP funding was made available to Wisconsin cranberry growers to help meet their unique surface and ground water quality and conservation needs. Funds totalled \$297,833, supporting six contracts:

- 210 acres of Irrigation Water Management to improve irrigation efficiency
- 363 acres of Nutrient Management
- 363 acres of Pest Management
- 4,200 feet of shoreline protection
- Plus erosion control and other practices

EQIP Practices Installed in 2004

The number of practices planned for installation in 2004 and the number that were installed may differ due to staffing availability, farmer decision or change in farming operation, or a delay in reporting.

Practice	Contracts		Practice	Contracts	
	Planned	Installed		Planned	Installed
Access Road	51	23	Prescribed Burning	2	2
Animal Trails	14	4	Prescribed Grazing	581	471
Brush Management	44	21	Residue Management/Mulch Till	199	179
Closure of Waste Impoundment	9	3	Residue Management/No-Till	434	400
Conservation Cover	2	1	Roof Runoff Structure	42	19
Conservation Crop Rotation	6	1	Sediment Basin	38	13
Contour Buffer Strips	4	2	Sinkhole Treatment	4	22
Contour Farming	4	3	Spring Development	2	0
Cover Crop	38	10	Stream Habitat Improvement	2	0
Critical Area Planting	48	35	Streambank/Shoreline Protection	2	0
Diversion	27	14	Stripcropping	11	7
Fence	43	19	Structure for Water Control	3	1
Field Border	2	1	Subsurface Drain	25	9
Filter Strip	6	2	Terrace	3	2
Forest Site Preparation	35	9	Tree/Shrub Establishment	70	49
Forest Stand Improvement	32	15	Tree/Shrub Pruning	2	1
Forest Trails and Landings	1	1	Underground Outlet	23	9
Grade Stabilization Structures	93	44	Upland Wildlife Management	4	0
Grassed Waterway	157	82	Use Exclusion	5	4
Heavy Use Protection	36	16	Waste Storage Facility	49	31
Lined Waterway	7	2	Wastewater Treatment	2	0
Nutrient Management	970	797	Water and Sediment Control Basin	4	1
Obstruction Removal	12	8	Water Well	14	7
Pasture and Hay Planting	22	15	Well Decommissioning	49	26
Pest Management	18	12	Wetland Restoration	2	0
Pipeline	6	1	Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment	20	13
			Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation	1	0



Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

In 2004, more than 1,800 acres of Wisconsin farmland were protected from development through the USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP). With funding of \$2.03 million, NRCS funded proposals from seven different farmland protection programs throughout the state. Twelve working farms, on prime agricultural soils and under development pressure were selected.

Wisconsin loses an average of 32 square miles of prime farmland every year. FRPP is a voluntary program that helps landowners keep productive farmland in agricultural use through the sale of agricultural conservation easements. Land enrolled in this program will remain in agricultural use.

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program provides matching funds to existing farmland preservation programs, such as land trusts, state, tribal, or local government programs that purchase development rights from farmers and place agricultural easements on the land. The farm remains in the farmer's hands, but the development pressure is reduced because the perpetual easement keeps the land in agricultural use.

FRPP Program Highlights

- The Driftless Area Land Conservancy easement will protect a 190 acre farm in the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area.
- The Natural Heritage Land Trust easement will protect a farm within the Black Earth Creek Resource Protection Area.
- The West Wisconsin Land Trust and Kinnickinnic River Land Trust will protect farms within the Kinnickinnic River Watershed Protection Area in Pierce County.
- DNR easements will concentrate on protecting farms around the Brooklyn Wildlife Refuge and in the new North Branch Milwaukee River Farming and Wildlife Heritage Area.
- The Town of Bayfield easements will protect specialty fruit & berry farms.
- The Baraboo Range Protection Program easement will help protect the rural character of the Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark, one of the Nature Conservancy's "last great places".
- Since FRPP was established in 1996, NRCS has helped 11 different farmland programs to purchase easements for 6800 acres on 48 working farms in 10 counties.

*Conserving the Resources
Preserving the Future*

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program



The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program was important to the success of the Pleasant Creek project in Dane County. Water quality in the stream has improved significantly and fish populations are returning to these waters because of habitat improvement.

WHIP Program Highlights

Funding in 2004 totaled \$536,400 which added 58 projects into the program. Our partners and landowners contributed an additional \$134,100 to these projects.

This funding went to restore, create or enhance the following wildlife habitats:

- 1347 acres oak savanna restoration
- 771 acres prairie restoration/prairie plantings
- 57,004 feet stream habitat improvement
- 24 acres wetland enhancement
- 162 acres woodland/ wildlife practices
- 16 acres of wild rice plantings
- 4000 feet of fish passages

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This voluntary program encourages landowners to restore high quality wildlife habitats that support species of local significance. The funding provides technical and financial assistance to landowners and others to develop upland, wetland, riparian, and aquatic habitat areas on their property.

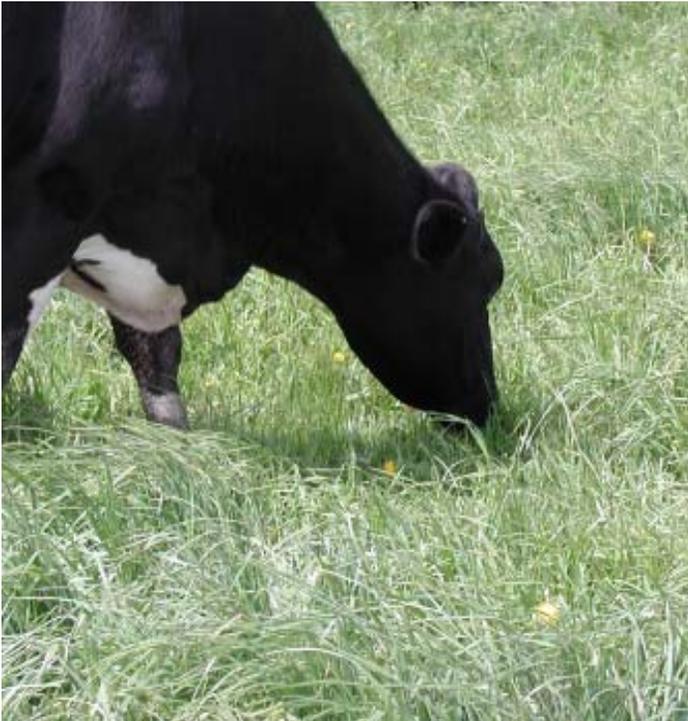
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) has proven to be a highly effective and popular program across the country. WHIP primarily concentrates on improving upland wildlife habitat, such as native prairie, but there is an increasing emphasis on improving riparian and aquatic areas. The Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area in Iowa and Dane counties is one of the landscapes enrolled in this conservation program that protects and manages one of the Midwest's best large scale grassland areas.

WHIP was instrumental in restoring streambanks in the Upper Sugar River, which became the first Wisconsin river removed from the EPA list of degraded waters, in 2004.



Stream habitat improvement through the WHIP program has brought back trout in southern Wisconsin waters.

Need more information? Check out www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov



Grazing cows at the Bert Paris Farm in Belleville, Wisconsin. The Grazing networks in Wisconsin have become very active over the last five years.

GLCI Program Highlights

Technical Assistance:

- 240 grazing plans written covering 26,000 acres
- Prescribed grazing applied to 18,000 acres
- Conservation Planning Certification Program implemented with specialization on grazing
- Pasture Condition Scoring completed on over 50 contracts for the Conservation Security Program
- Two additional Grazing Lands Specialists hired in 2004
- Three introductory and two advanced Grazing Lands Training sessions completed

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Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative

The goal of the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) is to increase public awareness regarding the importance of privately owned grazing lands. More than 80 NRCS and county employees have been trained in prescribed grazing. The number of acres of grazing plans has jumped from 5000 acres in 1998 to over 26,000 in 2004. In 2004 NRCS-Wisconsin hired two additional Grazing Lands Specialists to work with producers in developing Managed Grazing Systems.

In the last five years, through a congressional directive, NRCS-Wisconsin funded over \$1.75 million in outside technical assistance, education and on-farm research and demonstration through the GLCI Grant Program.

The Wisconsin Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative is a voluntary initiative working to develop and enhance grazing lands in harmony with the environment.

See reverse side for a listing of NRCS
Grazing Lands Specialists.

Need more information? Check out www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

Where To Get Grazing Lands Assistance from NRCS

State Grazing Lands Specialist

★ Brian Pillsbury
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
505 Broadway, Room 232
Baraboo, WI 53913
608-355-4470
brian.pillsbury@wi.usda.gov

Area Grazing Lands Specialists

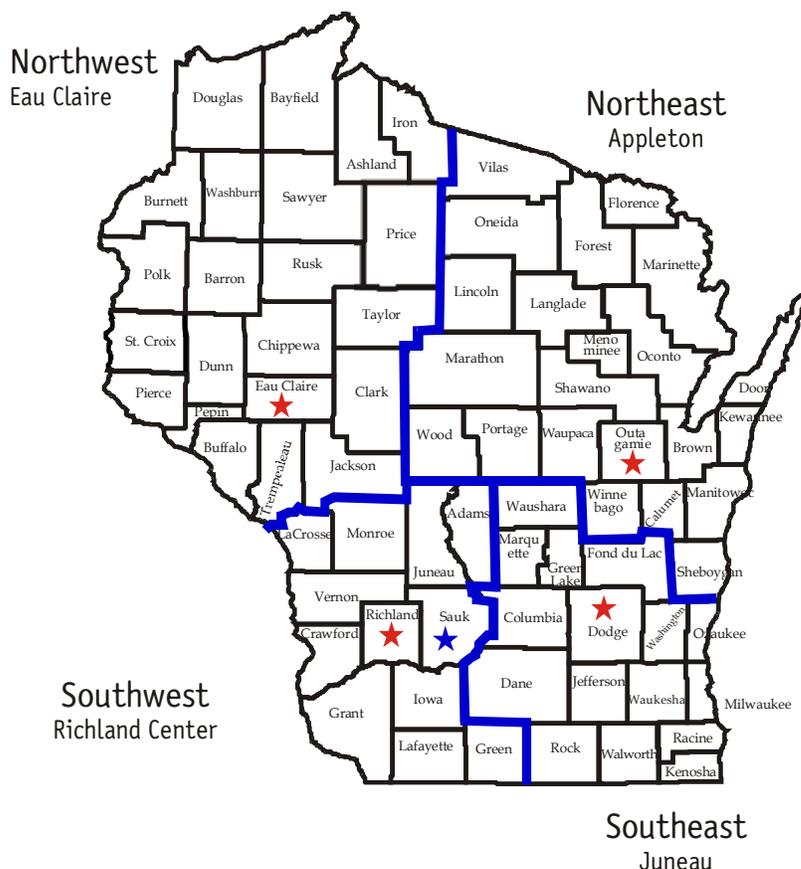
★ Southwest Area – Richland Center
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Location of NRCS Grazing Lands Specialists





Protecting pastureland like this is one of the goals of the new Grassland Reserve Program.

GRP Program Highlights

2004 Accomplishments:

207 landowners in Wisconsin filed GRP applications covering over 29,845 acres. Of these applications 39 were funded. Lease agreements totaled 34, covering 7209 acres with funding for these applications and agreements at \$1,244,508. Five easements were funded at \$644,598 covering an estimated 620 acres.

To date, GRP lease agreements total 47 covering 8592 acres, easements contracts total 7 covering 706 acres. There are currently over 22,000 acres in 193 backlogged applications in Wisconsin.

Grasslands Reserve Program

Grasslands make up the largest land cover on America's private land. The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) helps landowners restore and protect grassland, pastureland, shrubland and certain other lands and provides assistance for rehabilitating grasslands. The program will conserve vulnerable grasslands from conversion to cropland.

Restoring and protecting grasslands contributes positively to the economy, provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations, and improves environmental quality.

GRP is administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency in cooperation with the Forest Service.



Photo by Mike Engel, Fish and Wildlife Service

Regal Fritillary butterfly inhabits the restored grasslands area of southern Wisconsin.

Wetlands Reserve Program

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) was established by the 1990 Farm Bill. Over the past 14 years it has become a popular, cost-effective, and ecologically successful voluntary wetlands restoration program.

WRP provides financial incentives to help farmers restore cultivated areas that were once wetlands and make them fully functioning wetlands again. WRP continues to be a viable option for the nation's private landowners who want to restore wetlands.

In 2004, Wisconsin received \$6 million for wetland restoration, which allowed 32 projects to be enrolled on approximately 3,368 acres. Landowner interest in the program remains strong. Through 2004 Wisconsin has enrolled 42,416 acres in WRP.



The Turtle Valley Wildlife Area is the largest WRP restoration to date in Wisconsin. This 1800-acre project is in Walworth County, Wisconsin.

WRP Program Highlights

In the spring of 2004, NRCS dedicated the new Turtle Valley Wildlife Area, the largest WRP project to date in Wisconsin. This 1800-acre jewel forms the core of a 2300-acre high quality wetland complex in Walworth County in southeastern Wisconsin. This prime wetland stretches for more than five miles in the northwest part of the county. This project is a collaborative effort between the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, which now owns and operates the area.

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The dedication celebration at the Turtle Valley Wildlife Area drew crowds from all over southern Wisconsin. This wetland and wildlife area will continue to serve future generations with cleaner water, open space and recreational opportunities.

Need more information? Check out www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

Technical Service Providers

Technical Service Providers (TSPs) are individuals, private businesses, non-profit organizations, or public agencies that help apply conservation systems on the land. Resource professionals are certified by NRCS and assist in delivering technical services to landowners who participate in USDA programs. Certified specialists are listed on a national, web-based registry called TechReg that is available to landowners, and others seeking conservation technical assistance.

By the end of 2004, Wisconsin ranked second in the nation in number of TSPs, with 218 providers certified and 33 pending certification.

Through contribution agreements, NRCS dedicated \$568,519 to counties to help stimulate the implementation of continuous CRP and CREP.

Wisconsin NRCS also entered into a cooperative agreement for \$433,000 to provide technical services to Wisconsin landowners.

EQIP participants hired private TSP's from the TechReg registry that totaled \$353,000 with 270 participants.

Architectural and Engineering (A&E) contracts totaled over \$321,000 utilizing five engineering firms to assist NRCS in delivering technical services to farm bill program participants.



TechReg is NRCS new Internet-based registry that makes it easy for technical service providers to register, become certified and manage their profile.

<http://techreg.usda.gov/>

Need more information? Check out www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov



TSP workshop for new and potential providers that explained the opportunities and responsibilities of becoming a technical service provider.

TSP Program Highlights

Over 180 people attended a one-day workshop on how to become a technical service provider (TSP) in Wisconsin.

Providers sign up to become a TSP through a new Internet based registry called TechReg. This session provided an on-line demonstration of the new TechReg website and provided guidance and answered questions about the process of registering to become a TSP.

TechReg also helps landowners locate and choose certified registered technical service providers who can help them meet their conservation goals.

State Technical Committee

The State Technical Committee authorized in the 1996 Farm Bill, serves as an advisory group to the NRCS State Conservationist. Wisconsin's Committee has broad representation from private industry, partner agencies, producer groups, environmental groups, and others. In Fiscal Year 2004, the Wisconsin State Technical Committee convened seven times and held one teleconference, providing guidance on:

- Allocation of Environmental Quality Incentives Program funds, cost-share rates, eligible practices, and policies
- Grassland Reserve Program ranking system
- Signup dates for Farm Bill programs
- Wetlands Reserve Program easement purchase caps
- Farm and Ranchland Protection Program policies
- Wisconsin nomination for Conservation Partnership Initiative Grant

In addition, the committee receives regular updates on farm bill programs and resources issues in Wisconsin.

Conservation on the Land Internship Program

The internship program continued throughout Wisconsin in 2004. Students are assigned to field offices throughout Wisconsin working side-by-side with conservation professionals. This is a great opportunity for students to get experience in their field of study while helping deliver important conservation on the land. In 2004, 10 interns worked in southern Wisconsin as part of the Pheasants Forever/ Buffer Internship program and 19 students worked as conservation interns at 15 additional locations throughout the state.

Additional information on the program can be found at: <http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/about/internships.html>

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Conservation Partners

Earth Team

The Earth Team is the volunteer arm of NRCS and continues to help NRCS and conservation partners deliver quality service to farmers in Wisconsin.



Earth Team members in Wisconsin

In 2004, 163 volunteers contributed over 21,080 hours at 41 different Wisconsin field office locations. This is the equivalent of more than 10 employees working full time.

The contribution of these volunteers carries more value than a dollar amount; the Earth Team volunteers are dedicated to their cause--caring for the earth. Thanks to all who helped with the volunteer program.

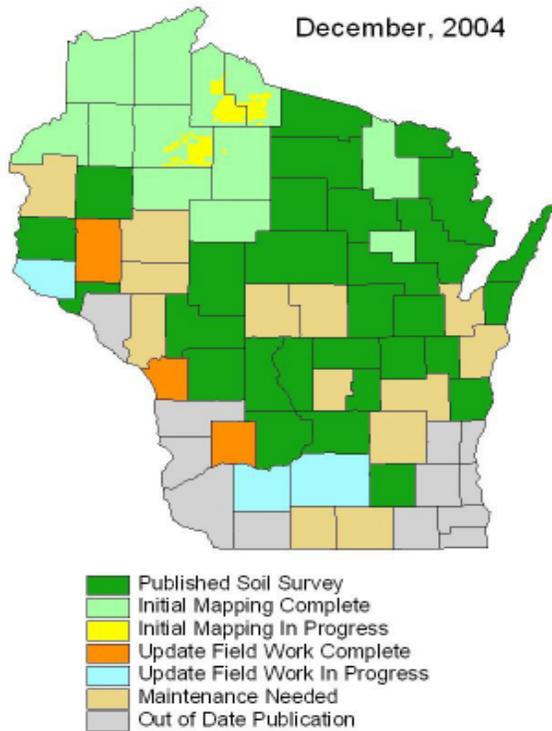
Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council

The Wisconsin Tribal Advisory Council (WTCAC), provides a forum for the 11 Native American Tribes in Wisconsin to identify and solve natural resource issues on tribal lands. Each tribe has a representative that serves on the Council. NRCS and the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Service (GLIFWC) serve as advisors to WTCAC.

The Council gives a strong voice to the tribes on conservation issues at the state and national level. In 2004, WTCAC assisted NRCS in identifying priority projects for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

Need more information? Check out www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

**Wisconsin Soil Survey
Mapping and Publication Status**



Soil Survey Highlights

- Soil mapping completed on over 880,000 acres
- Soil maps digitized for 8 counties
- Soil survey reports published for 3 counties
- Certified spatial and tabular data for 63 counties posted on the new Soil Data Mart
- Soil technical assistance provided for thousands of soil survey users including landowners, state and local government, students, and consulting firms

NRCS remained on-schedule in 2004 towards our goal of mapping and digitizing all Wisconsin counties by 2006. By the end of the 2004 field season, 98% of Wisconsin was soil mapped and 86% of the soil surveys were digitized.

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Soil Survey Program

The Soil Survey Program provides a field-based scientific inventory of soil resources, including soil maps, data describing physical and chemical properties of soils, and information on the potentials and limitations of soils for a wide variety of land uses. NRCS is the lead federal agency responsible for soil mapping on private lands. The National Cooperative Soil Survey program includes many other state and local partners, who also contribute staff, expertise, and funding for the program.

Current Activities:

Because the digitized soil maps are a foundational layer for the Wisconsin Land Information Program, the state is contributing significant funds to accelerate completion of mapping and digitizing for all Wisconsin soil surveys. Soil scientists are working to update several older soil surveys to meet current needs. Work continues on recently mapped survey areas, to prepare the maps and data for publication. These survey areas include Forest, Menominee, Taylor, LaCrosse, Richland, Dunn, Washburn, and Burnett counties.



NRCS Soil Scientist Chanc Vogel taking soil samples for the Soil Survey.

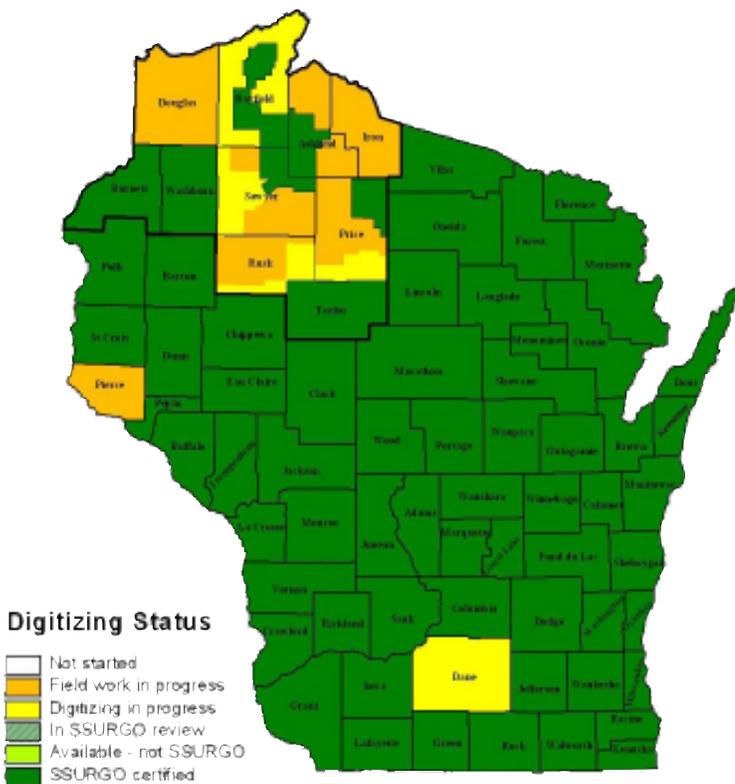
Need more information? Check out www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

Geographic Information Systems

In Dane County, a national pilot project is underway to utilize existing Geographic Information System (GIS) data and techniques to update soil survey information more efficiently and with improved quality. Wisconsin is a national leader in use of 3D modeling techniques to improve the soil survey.

NRCS Resource Soil Scientists continue to provide valuable assistance for the public, and state and local governments, in acquiring and using soil maps and data.

Wisconsin Digital Soil Survey Status



New Initiatives:

The new Soil Data Mart came on-line in 2004: <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>. The Soil Data Mart is the official source for soil tabular and spatial data. Certified soils data is now posted on the Soil Data Mart for 63 of the 72 counties in Wisconsin. Several pilot projects are underway to deliver soil maps and data in a user-friendly format on CD (eg: SoilView) and on the internet. In partnership with the University of Wisconsin, the state of Wisconsin, and other soil survey cooperators, the most promising initiatives will be developed for more widespread application.

As the initial soil survey is completed, soil scientists will accelerate activities to update older soil surveys to meet the growing demand for more detailed, complete, and current soil maps and data. Research activities with the University of Wisconsin and other soil survey partners will continue. Soils research helps develop improved techniques for collecting, analyzing, and using soil information. Data on soil properties and potentials such as wetland hydrology, pesticide movement, carbon sequestration potential, or crop yields is needed for many applications.

All of Wisconsin mapping and digital soil surveys are expected to be completed by 2006.

Water Resources Programs



A 19-mile stretch of the West Branch - Upper Sugar River flowing in Dane County is the first river in the State of Wisconsin to be removed from the U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency's list of degraded waters as a result of environmental restoration. Over the years, the river was degraded by streambank erosion, animal waste, and sediment eroded from croplands. In 1980, Dane County requested USDA assistance to help landowners through its P.L.- 566 Watershed Protection Program. Over 13 years, P.L.- 566 focused on upland conservation to reduce animal waste and sediment to the stream. Streambank restoration and habitat enhancement projects, through USDA, state and local programs were the last steps in bringing the stream back to its potential and prompting its removal from the list.

Water Resources Program Highlights

Plain-Honey Creek Watershed

Considerable siltation behind the dam at White Mound Lake was impairing storage capacity of the dam, making it a high-risk dam. NRCS recommendations were to remove sediment from behind the dam, relocation of two houses and one business, and adoption of a floodplain ordinance that prohibits future development. Project cost: \$1,927,000.

Twin Parks Structure No. 10

Structural repair to this dam in Iowa county extended the life of the dam structure providing continued flood protection to the area. A zoning ordinance now restricts future development in the breach inundation area downstream of the dam. Project cost: \$72,500.

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An exceptionally wet spring flooded fields, roads, farms and homes in Wisconsin. In 2004, the situation could have been decidedly worse, but in many places throughout the state, roads and bridges were not washed out, lives and property were not lost, and whole towns were not flooded because of steps taken decades ago through the Watershed Flood Protection and Flood Control Act (P.L.-566).

From the 1950s through the 1980s, 87 dams were built in 26 Wisconsin watersheds through P.L.- 566. These dams are still there, performing as designed, holding back thousands of "acre-feet" of water - the equivalent of thousands of acres of land covered in a foot of water. During and after major rains, the dams release the water slowly, preventing flooding downstream.

In an average year, these watershed projects reduce flood damages on crops, roads and communities by an estimated \$2 million. This year, with the unrelenting heavy rains, the estimated reduction was \$15 million less in flood damages.

Dam Rehabilitation

To date, 11 structures in seven counties have been rehabilitated or are in progress through the P.L.-566 Dam Rehabilitation Pilot Project. These dams provide flood control to prime farmland, highways and communities. They are an integral part of the community providing economic and recreational benefits.

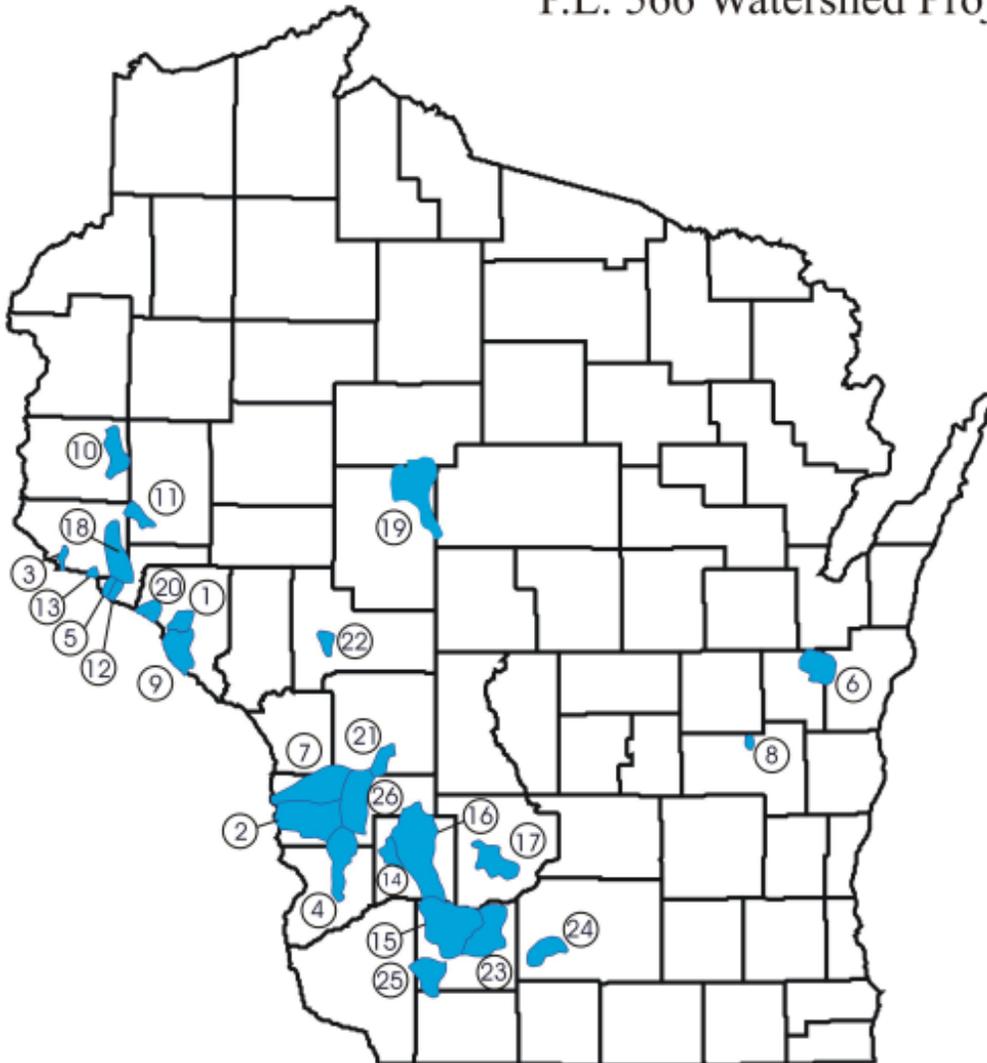
50th anniversary of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act

Governor Jim Doyle proclaimed August 4, 2004 as the 50th anniversary of the Act proclaiming Vernon County, Wisconsin as "The Heart of Natural Resource Conservation in America" because of the many conservation projects in that county.

Need more information? Check out www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

Wisconsin

P.L. 566 Watershed Projects



- 1 Alma Mill Creek*
- 2 Bad Axe*
- 3 Bay City
- 4 Blackhawk Kickapoo
- 5 Bogus Creek
- 6 Brillion
- 7 Coon Creek
- 8 North Fond du Lac
- 9 Garden (Rose) Valley
- 10 Glen Hills*

- 11 Knights Creek
- 12 Lost Creek
- 13 Maiden Rock
- 14 Mill Creek*
- 15 Otter Creek*
- 16 Pine River
- 17 Plain Honey Creek*
- 18 Plum Creek*
- 19 Poplar Creek
- 20 South Nelson

- 21 Tri Creek
- 22 Trout Run
- 23 Twin Parks*
- 24 Upper Sugar River
- 25 Upper West Branch Pecatonica
- 26 West Fork Kickapoo*

* Indicates projects with one or more structures rehabilitated through Pilot Project

July 2004

Resource Conservation and Development

The Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) is a voluntary program that helps people protect and develop their economic, natural and social resources. Wisconsin has seven RC&D areas, covering the entire state. Each area is governed by a Council made up of local citizens who identify concerns, determine solutions, and pool financial and technical resources to accomplish their goals and objectives. This grassroots involvement is highly valuable in shaping the decision making process at the local level.

RC&D Councils throughout Wisconsin carry out projects that may include:

- Natural Resource Improvement
- Community Improvement
- Forestry
- Information and Education
- Economic Development
- Water and Water Quality
- Recreation and Tourism
- Marketing and Merchandising
- Fish and Wildlife Projects
- Waste and Waste Utilization



River Country RC&D assisted in writing a managed grazing plan for Promise Farm.



This tour of Promise Farms, owned and operated by Shawn and John McMartin, was part of the RC&D State Association Meeting in the fall of 2004. Wisconsin RC&D's work with producers offering assistance to improve their business

RC&D Highlights

The seven RC&D areas in Wisconsin continue to plan and carry out new projects. In 2004, 73 new projects were proposed to the RC&D Councils throughout the state.

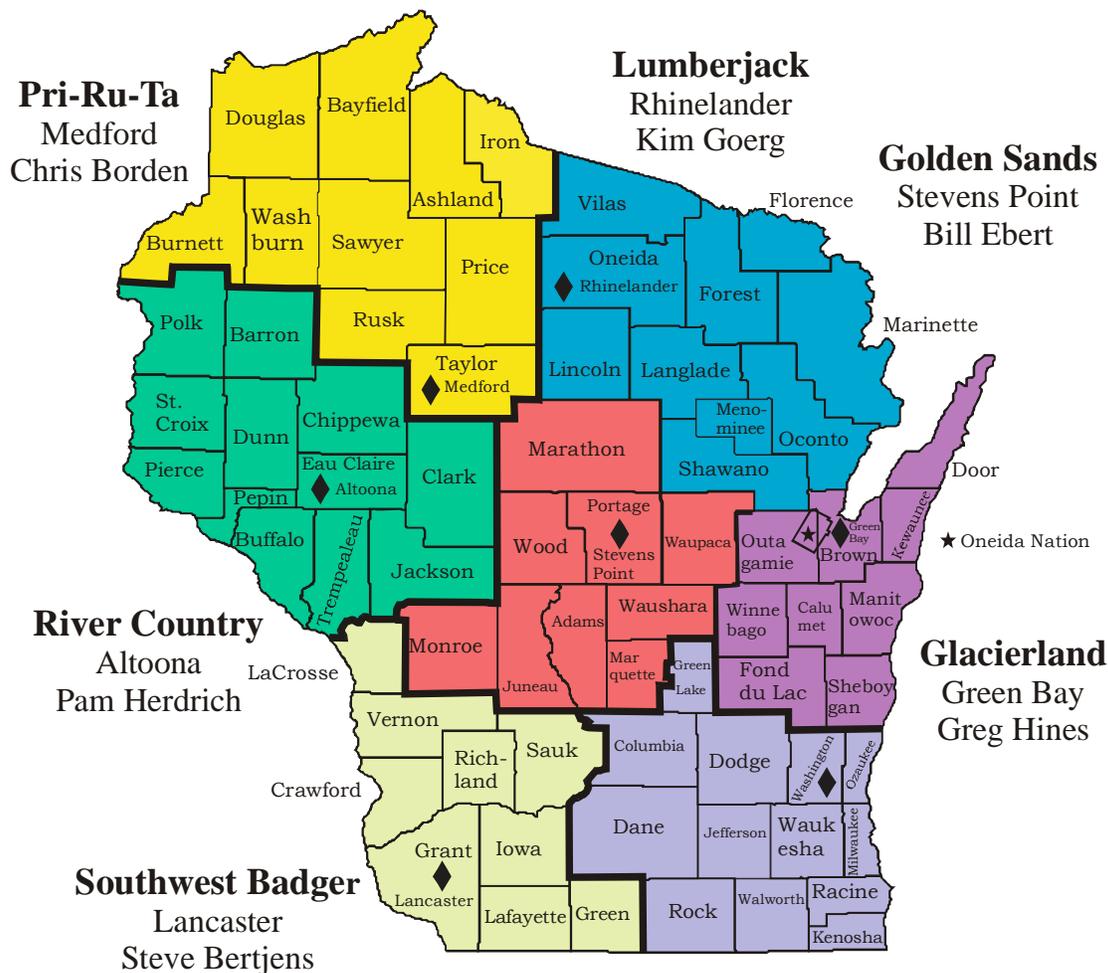
The work that the RC&D areas accomplish throughout the year is a result of these new projects, as well as, projects that have multi-year commitments to complete. RC&D's completed 69 projects in 2004.

Find out more about the RC&D in your area by contacting the Coordinators listed on the reverse side or checking the web www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/RC&D.



RC&D assisted the owner of the Bullfrog Fish Farm, Herby Radman of Menomonie WI, develop local networks for promoting sales of his high quality products raised at his aquaculture facility.

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The RC&D program is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.