



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Wisconsin Report 2006



Dear Friends of Wisconsin Conservation,

I proudly present this 2006 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) state report to you, the shareholders in Wisconsin's soil and water resources. Here are some of the highlights:



More than 100 years in the making, the soil survey of Wisconsin was officially completed on May 15, 2006. All 72 Wisconsin counties, 35 million acres, now have completed soil surveys, and the final digital product is available on-line. Wisconsin is one of only a handful of states to have accomplished this colossal goal. The soil survey provides the foundation for land use planning and good land management. It describes the characteristics, limitations and best potential uses for the 800 different soil types found in Wisconsin. The Web Soil Survey provides secure public access to the national soils information system, with maps and information usable for individual farms or parcels of land. To celebrate this accomplishment, Governor Jim Doyle proclaimed 2006 the Year of Soil, and with our partners, we hosted several hundred people for the Year of Soil Celebration in the State Capitol on May 16, 2006.

This year, Wisconsin received nearly \$25.7 million in Farm Bill conservation program financial assistance. These funds directly help farmers and landowners to protect our natural resources. They support the individual farm's economics, and thereby strengthen the future of agriculture in Wisconsin.

I want to thank our NRCS staff for their dedication and extraordinary efforts to meet or exceed nearly all our goals. We also most sincerely thank our conservation partners for their efforts – the Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Dept. of Natural Resources, county Land Conservation Committees and Departments, University of Wisconsin Extension, Farm Service Agency, 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, Technical Service Providers, Resource Conservation & Development councils, and the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association. This partnership for conservation is the most effective way to help landowners and communities achieve the high caliber of land stewardship we seek in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

State Conservationist

Conservation Technical Assistance

With the mission of “Helping People Help the Land”, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides products and services that enable people to be good stewards of the land. With our help, people are better able to conserve, maintain or improve our natural resources.

Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) is the basic foundation for NRCS activities. Our locally-based NRCS staff works directly with farmers and others to provide technical and financial conservation assistance. Our guiding principles are service, partnership and technical excellence.

NRCS helps landowners develop conservation plans and provides advice on recommended voluntary conservation practices. These conservation systems reduce erosion, improve soil, air, and water quality and enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve pastures, reduce upstream flooding, and improve woodlands. CTA is carried out in cooperation with the county Land Conservation Departments throughout Wisconsin which allows for a seamless delivery of local, state and federal conservation programs.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is known for its accomplishments and innovations in conservation. The employees of NRCS are recognized for their talent, dedication, and ingenuity in making the agency’s programs work. Participation in NRCS programs is voluntary. Our customers help to preserve the Nation’s natural resources for future generations.

Highlights of 2006 Accomplishments:

- ✧ 520,818 acres of conservation plans developed
- ✧ 160 comprehensive nutrient management plans written
- ✧ 141,206 acres of erosion reduction on cropland (831,055 tons)
- ✧ 89,904 acres of wildlife habitat management applied
- ✧ 3,656 acres of wetlands restored
- ✧ 60 animal waste storage facilities installed
- ✧ 1,674 acres of buffers installed
- ✧ 2,663 acres of trees and shrubs established



Environmental Quality Incentives Program

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that provides assistance to farmers who face threats to soil, water, air, and related natural resources on agricultural land. Through EQIP, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides assistance to agricultural producers in a manner that will promote agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals, optimize environmental benefits, and help farmers and ranchers meet Federal, State, Tribal, and local environmental requirements.

EQIP is the major program available in Wisconsin to help livestock operators meet new state regulations on livestock and animal waste management. EQIP identifies conservation practices to address priority resource concerns and may provide financial assistance on certain conservation practices. Incentive payments may be offered for up to three years to encourage producers to carry out management practices. Farmers may elect to use a certified technical service provider for technical assistance.

EQIP Program Highlights - 2006

A total of 1,182 contracts for \$17,160,949 were signed:

- * Animal waste systems

102 applications received for waste storage systems

66 applications were funded in FY06

- * \$9,131,480 total funds requested with \$6,213,957 in funds available



Conservation Practices Planned and Applied through EQIP, 2006

Practice	Planned	Applied	Practice	Planned	Applied
Access Road	136	49	Prescribed Burning	13	5
Animal Trails	56	16	Prescribed Grazing	855	593
Brush Management	174	85	Residue Mgmt/No-Till	708	597
Closure of Waste Impoundment	30	11	Roof Runoff Structure	100	20
Conservation Cover	4	3	Sediment Basin	50	11
Conservation Crop Rotation	85	55	Sinkhole Treatment	9	4
Contour Buffer Strips	4	3	Spring Development	5	0
CNMP	170	22	Stream Habitat Improvement	5	2
Critical Area Planting	65	13	Streambank/Shoreline	93	48
Diversion	60	10	Protection		
Feed Management	124	42	Stripcropping	3	2
Fence	141	40	Structure for Water Control	4	1
Filter Strip	10	5	Terrace	9	2
Firebreaks	6	3	Tree/Shrub Establishment	102	48
Forest Site Preparation	36	10	Tree/Shrub Pruning	4	0
Forest Stand Improvement	40	9	Underground Outlet	72	15
Forest Trails and Landings	19	3	Upland Wildlife Management	12	4
Grade Stabilization Structures	173	87	Use Exclusion	2	0
Grassed Waterway	349	160	Waste Storage Facility	101	33
Heavy Use Protection	108	28	Wastewater Treatment	44	9
Irrigation Water Management	51	15	Water and Sediment Control	9	1
Lined Waterway	15	6	Basin		
Nutrient Management	2271	1584	Water Well	17	5
Obstruction Removal	27	14	Well Decommissioning	101	53
Pasture and Hay Planting	48	24	Wetland Restoration	5	3
Pest Management	171	82	Windbreak/Shelterbelt	19	6
Pipeline	17	6	Establishment		
			Windbreak/Shelterbelt	2	1
			Renovation		

EQIP Special Initiatives

- ✧ \$138,844 were dedicated to conservation projects on Tribal lands
- ✧ \$271,387 for conservation practices for cranberry production
- ✧ \$105,864 for ground and surface water practices in the Central Sands area
- ✧ \$82,241 for pest scouting and pesticide reduction in orchards
- ✧ First special sign-up for comprehensive nutrient management plans \$3,825,348 in 186 contracts



Soils



Soil mapping and soil survey digitizing are now complete for the entire state of Wisconsin. All Wisconsin soil survey maps and interpretations can be viewed on-line through Web Soil Survey. This effort, which began over 100 years ago, has resulted in a comprehensive digital database of soil information and maps for all 72 counties, about 35 million acres. On May 16, 2006, a "Year of Soil" celebration was held at the State Capital in Madison to mark these accomplishments. A proclamation from the governor was read that declared 2006 as the "Year of Soil" in Wisconsin.

Soil surveys contain the fundamental resource data to help understand how land use affects water and air and health of animals, plants and people. Soils survey help us recognize the presence of prime farmlands, wetlands, and the suitability of soils for agriculture, forestry, recreation, and urban development. Wisconsin is one of only a handful of states to have accomplished this colossal goal, thanks to a critical partnership effort with the State of Wisconsin.

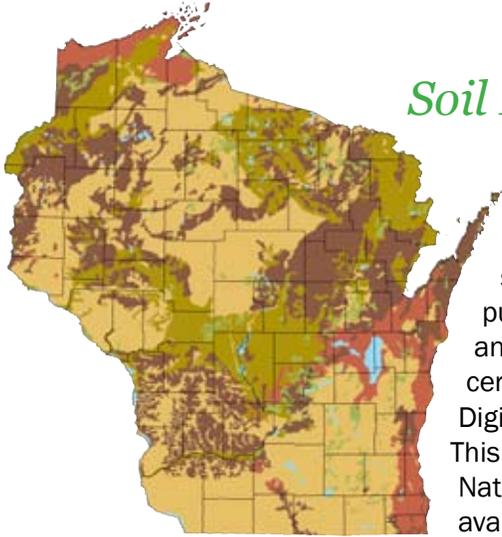
NRCS is the federal agency responsible for conducting the national soil survey. The process is an enormous undertaking, sending soil scientists out to sample and map every acre, determine soil type and characteristics. In 2000, the State of Wisconsin signed an agreement with NRCS to accelerate the work with state funds to bring more soil mappers on board. The Wisconsin agreement also called for digitizing all soil surveys so they would be easily available for use in Geographic Information Systems and through the internet. With the boost from state funds, NRCS was able to finish mapping the northwest 10 counties and digitize all remaining surveys years sooner than otherwise possible.

The soil survey provides the foundation layer for geographic information systems used for land use planning and good land management. It describes the characteristics, limitations and best potential uses for about 800 different kinds of soil found in Wisconsin. The Web Soil Survey and the Soil Data Mart provides secure public access to soil maps and information usable for individual farms or parcels of land.

The completion of field mapping marked the end of one era of soil survey in Wisconsin and the start of another. The central focus of Soil Survey on Wisconsin will now be the maintenance and update of existing soil surveys. Older soil surveys will be brought up to modern standards and more detailed soil maps and data will be developed, as needed. Future updates will be by major physiographic regions known as Major Land Resource Areas (MLRA). Additional emphasis is being placed on providing training and support for the interpretation and use of the soil survey information.



Hundreds of people attended the "Year of Soil" celebration at the Wisconsin State Capitol last May.



Soil Digitizing in Wisconsin

The Wisconsin digitizing Unit (WIDU) completed the Wisconsin Soil Survey Geographic database (SSURGO) digitizing initiative. As of May 15, 2006 all 69 Wisconsin soil survey areas have a digital database available to the public. The completion was just two weeks short of the ten year anniversary of the first Wisconsin survey becoming SSURGO certified. In addition to completing Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Digitizing Unit (WIDU) completed 45 surveys for SSURGO digitizing. This number was three surveys above the national goal set by the National SSURGO coordinator. The digital soil surveys reports are available at <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov>

WIDU has become a leader in a new national initiative. The WIDU was selected to be the location for a pilot project to digitize the national wetland delineation maps. The WIDU has digitized one county from Minnesota and one county from North Dakota, with more on the way. During the digitizing process, the first of its kind, the WIDU is helping to establish a national model for capturing this vital wetlands data.

The WIDU, in collaboration with other NRCS staff, has developed a new product for use at the field office level. Soil survey maps can now be printed on-demand. Single sections and maps that capture six sections at a time, are now available for each county. This on-demand printing process is an alternative for traditional hardcopy mapfinishing. By developing this process NRCS was able to save thousands of dollars normally appropriated for hard copy production of Soil Survey maps.

The WIDU staff was instrumental in the production of Geographic Informational maps for inclusion into the Wisconsin Rapid Watershed Assessment Project.

The soil survey is one of the best investments for planning and managing future uses of Wisconsin soil and water resources. A complete soil survey helps us make better land use decisions, protect prime farmland, and protect our natural resource base.



John Campbell, NRCS Soil scientist, demonstrating the Web Soil Survey to interested participants at the Ducks Unlimited Great Outdoors Festival.

Web Soil Survey is just a click away at www.soils.nrcs.usda.gov



Grazing

NRCS offers the essential tools for successful grazing: technical, educational and financial assistance. Certified Grazing Specialists are available to develop grazing plans and give suggestions to producers with their questions about grazing. Assistance includes stocking rate calculations, seeding recommendations, fencing and watering system designs, dry matter intake assessment and others. These specialists are available upon request to the Field Offices.

Wisconsin Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) Grant Program

- ✦ Cooperative agreement developed with DATCP to administer grants, including multi-year report of activities by UW-Center for Integrated Ag. Systems, and grazing network oversight by GrassWorks, Inc.
- ✦ On-going administration of 2003 GLCI grants by NRCS and 2004, 2005, and 2006 grants by DATCP.
- ✦ Review of applications for 2006 grant program. Approved 9 technical services projects (\$378,000), 11 educational/demonstration projects (\$189,000) and accepted 5 research proposals (\$189,000) for a total of \$756,000.

2006 Accomplishments Technical Assistance:

- ✦ 28,560 acres of grazing land with conservation practices planned, including 18,318 acres with new Prescribed Grazing Plans. This resulted in approximately 300 Prescribed Grazing Plans written by producers.
- ✦ 23,187 acres of grazing land with conservation practices applied, including 15,344 acres of Prescribed Grazing.
- ✦ 4 Introductory, 1 Intermediate, and 2 Advanced Grazing Land Training Sessions
- ✦ Certification Program for Prescribed/Managed Grazing Land Conservation Planners - Wisconsin now has 33 Certified Grazing Land Planners.
- ✦ Conservation Security Program - Pasture Assessment for 250 contracts. Conducted Pasture Monitoring Workshop for CSP participants.

NRCS grazing specialists are available throughout the state. A network of certified planners provide service in every county. For more information contact Brian Pillsbury, State Grazing Lands Specialist at 608-355-4470.

Grazing-the next generation of conservation



Wetlands Reserve Program

The Wetlands Reserve Program is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property. NRCS provides financial assistance in the form of easement payments and restoration cost-share assistance, and technical assistance for restoration and wetland management. This program offers landowners an opportunity to establish long-term conservation and wildlife practices and protection.

NRCS's goal is to achieve the greatest wetland functions and values, along with optimum wildlife habitat, on every acre enrolled in the program.

WRP Highlights - 2006

Fiscal year allocation of \$7,167,313

6 permanent easements

✧ 495 total acres enrolled

✧ Total Obligation: \$1,004,325

14 permanent easements committed

✧ Total Acres committed: 838.70

✧ Total Commitment: \$1,064,198



\$5,098,790 funds returned unobligated. Wisconsin has historically never turned money back prior to 2006.

The highlight for Wisconsin's Wetlands Reserve Program this year was the completion of the 1,497 acre Zeloski Marsh near Lake Mills in Jefferson County. 1,300 acres were restored to wetland habitat and over 100 acres were seeded to tall grass prairie. Restoration methods included ditch fills, tile breaks and low embankments. An artesian well will allow for water management and provide high quality habitat for numerous wetland dependent species. The restoration also included a designed snake hibernaculum that utilized the old clay tiles. This project area was purchased by Madison Audubon who transferred the majority of the land to the Department of Natural Resources so this gem of a restoration will be open for the public to enjoy.

Wetlands Reserve Program



Wetland restoration on Zeloski Marsh showing microtopography.



Construction of the snake hibernaculum utilizing broken clay tiles.

Conservation Security Program

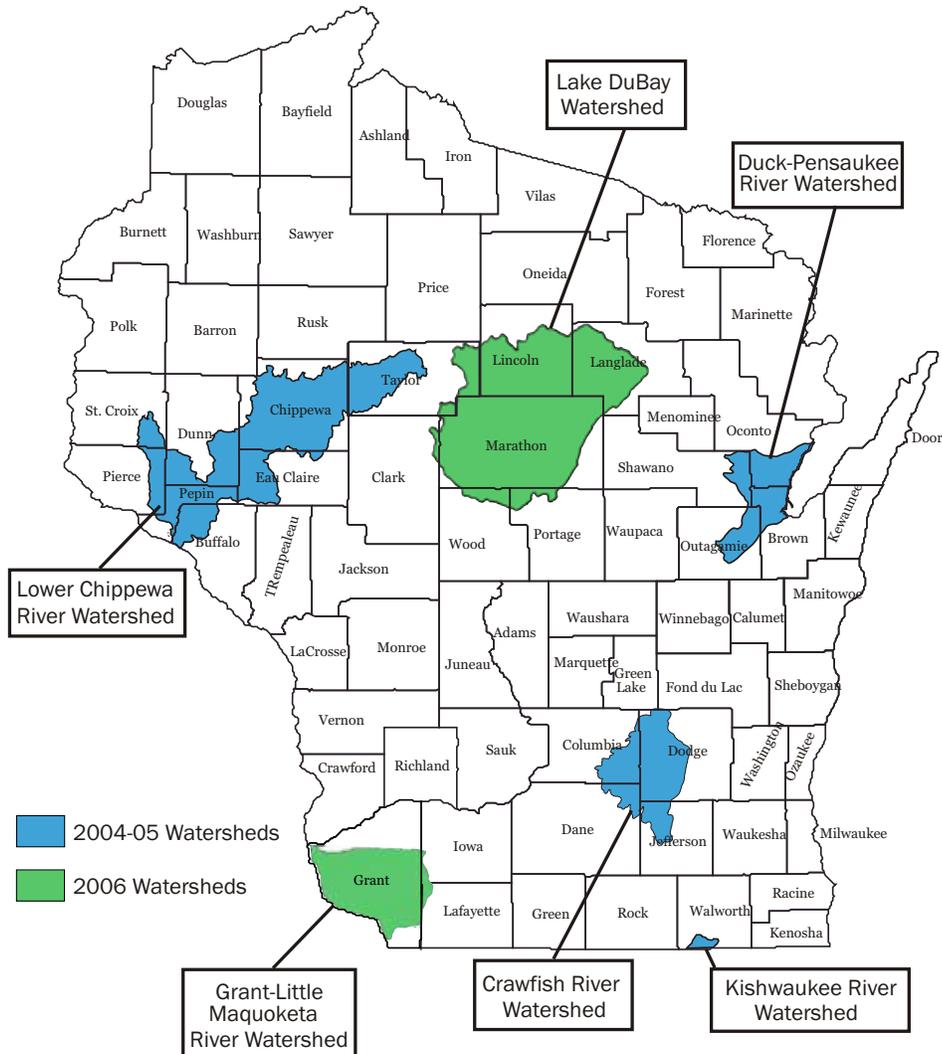
CSP is a voluntary program that supports ongoing stewardship of working farmland. CSP provides a great opportunity to reward good conservation farmers and to encourage others to protect land and water quality in their farm operations. This program rewards those with a strong history of good stewardship and provides powerful incentives for others to follow.

The selected watersheds in 2006 were the Grant/Little Maquoketa Watershed in southwest Wisconsin/northeast Iowa, and the Lake Du Bay Watershed in central Wisconsin.

The 2006 signup marks the third CSP enrollment. Wisconsin enrolled 195,159 acres and 649 farmers from six watersheds in the three years that CSP has been offered. Last year, the average first year payment was \$6,492 for CSP farmers in Wisconsin, with total CSP payments of 4.2 million for 2006.

CSP pays farmers based on Tiers, ranging from Tier 1 where soil and water resources are protected on part of the farm, to Tier 3, where all resources are protected on the whole operation. In addition, farmers may increase payments through enhancements, such as energy conservation measures, wildlife habitat, or extra nutrient and pest management practices. Payments are made annually, for five to 10 years, depending on tier level of conservation.

Wisconsin ranked 5th nationally in number of applications. 33% of those eligible were selected in Wisconsin.



Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) is a voluntary program that helps farmers and ranchers keep their land in agriculture and prevents conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses. The program provides matching funds to State, Tribal, and local governments and nongovernmental organizations with existing farmland protection programs to purchase conservation easements. These entities purchase easements from landowners in exchange for a lump sum payment, not to exceed the appraised fair market value of the land's development rights. The easements are perpetual easements.

2006 Funding:

- ✦ Dane County Agricultural Easement Program, \$717,946 481 acres, three easements, Dane County
- ✦ Driftless Area Land Conservancy, \$212,696 338 acres, two easements, Iowa County
- ✦ West Wisconsin Land Trust, \$281,141 275 acres, one easement, Pepin County
- ✦ Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources 341 acres, two easements, Ozaukee County

Preserved Forever

FRPP easements protect orchards and fruit farms in Bayfield County. These perpetual easements were achieved through a partnership effort of the City of Bayfield the Bayfield Regional Conservancy and NRCS. These farms were recognized with brass plaques marking the accomplishment.



Betzold Orchards preserved by the Betzold Family



Blue Vista Farms preserved by the Carlson Family.



Highland Valley Farms preserved by the Dale Family.



Good Earth Gardens preserved by the Johnson Family.

Water Resources

Eighty-seven small flood control dams have been built in Wisconsin through the Watershed Protection and Flood Control Act of 1954 (Public Law 83-566). Most of these dams were built from the mid-1950's through the 1980's. These dams provide flood control to prime farmland, highways, and communities. They are an integral part of the communities and benefit people's lives every day.

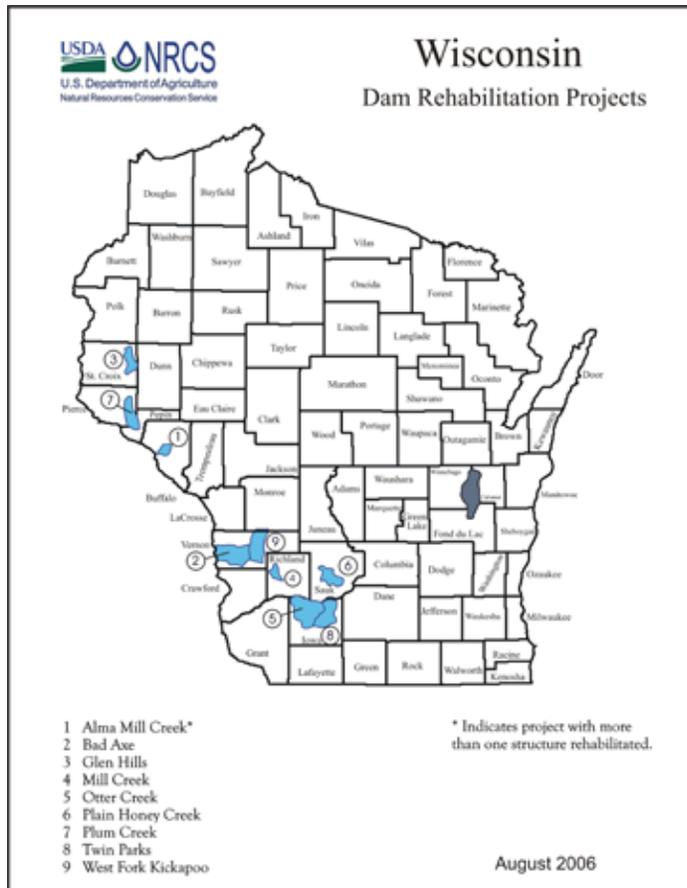
Watershed Rehabilitation Program

To date, 11 dams in seven counties have been rehabilitated through the Pilot Watershed Rehabilitation Program and another project is in the planning phase under the Watershed Rehabilitation Program.

✦ **Completion of Klinkner Dam** **Construction project cost: \$1.3 million**

Four homes and a school were found to be in the breach inundation area of the dam, making them susceptible to flooding should the dam fail. Through the watershed rehabilitation program the school and residences were protected by upgrading the dam to meet the criteria for a high hazard structure. An engineering design innovation greatly reduced the cost for this project. Concrete block mats secured to the top and downstream face of the dam eliminated the need to increase the height of the dam. Rehabilitation of Klinkner Dam extends the life of this dam by 50 years.

Funding: Sixty-five percent of the project construction cost and 100 percent of the technical assistance costs were provided by NRCS. The remaining cost of repair work was provided by the project sponsor, Vernon County Land and Water Conservation Department and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.



Amish school protected by Klinkner Dam



Watershed Planning

Geologic Investigation of West Fork Kickapoo Structure No. 1

Rock in the foundation was investigated to evaluate the potential for failure of the dam from water entering fractures and to gather information for possible repair.

Otter Creek Watershed, Sauk County

This unique watershed contains three distinct regions – the Baraboo Hills made of impervious quartzite, the driftless area – a region untouched by glaciers, and glacial outwash – an area containing thick glacial sands and gravels. This watershed has a history of flooding and residents are concerned. The planning process will guide watershed landowners in development of alternatives.

West Fork Kickapoo Watershed Structure No. 1, Vernon County

NRCS representatives worked out some rough draft alternatives which were presented to the Vernon County Land Conservation Committee, the governing body of the Vernon County Board. The planning process will guide the community in selection of alternatives which will satisfy the needs of the community balanced with the cost of repair.

Coon Creek Watershed Structures 33 and 35

A hydraulics and hydrology model was used to assess the danger of flooding to homes in the valleys downstream of these dams. The information was used to determine the hazard classification of the dams. The assessment showed no homes at risk should structure 35 fail. A watershed plan will be developed to address the danger to homes in the hydraulic shadow of dam 33.



During high flows when the dam is overtopped, concrete blocks connected with cables protect the down stream face of the dam. This project is Klinkner Dam located in Vernon County, Wisconsin.

Resource Conservation and Development

The Resource Conservation and Development Program (RC&D) is a voluntary program that helps people protect and develop their economic, natural, and social resources. Program objectives address improving the quality of life, including social, economic, and environmental concerns; continuing prudent use of natural resources; and strengthening local citizens' ability to use available sources of assistance through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and other Federal agency partnerships. The program is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service

The purpose of RC&D is to improve the capability of local leaders to plan and execute projects for resource conservation and community development. The local RC&D councils provide leadership in enhancing the environment and standard of living. Councils are composed of local government officials, farmers, ranchers, civic leaders, business leaders and others who are engaged in contributing to the overall well-being of the region. The local RC&D council sets policy, direction, and priorities for the operation of their RC&D. Wisconsin RC&D's are located around the state with assistance available in each county.

In 2006 the RC&D's created 169 new jobs. Projects where wildlife habitat is a primary or secondary concern: 26,697 acres were treated.

Community Involvement



Just a sample of the types of projects that RC&D's are involved with in their communities. Community volunteers assisted 60 students from Wausau East and DC Everest high schools in removing buckthorn, an invasive shrub species, on Fern Island, part of Oak Island Park in Wausau, WI.

Island, part of Oak Island Park in Wausau, WI.

The Student Field Trip was part one of a two-day event organized by Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development, a non-profit conservation organization, with the support of a grant from the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board.

Wisconsin RC&D Areas

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D - Medford, Wisconsin
Serving Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Rusk, Taylor and Washburn Counties
Contact: Chris Borden 715.748.2008

River Country RC&D - Altoona, Wisconsin
Serving Barron, Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, St. Croix and Trempealeau Counties
Contact: Pam Herdrich 715.834.9672

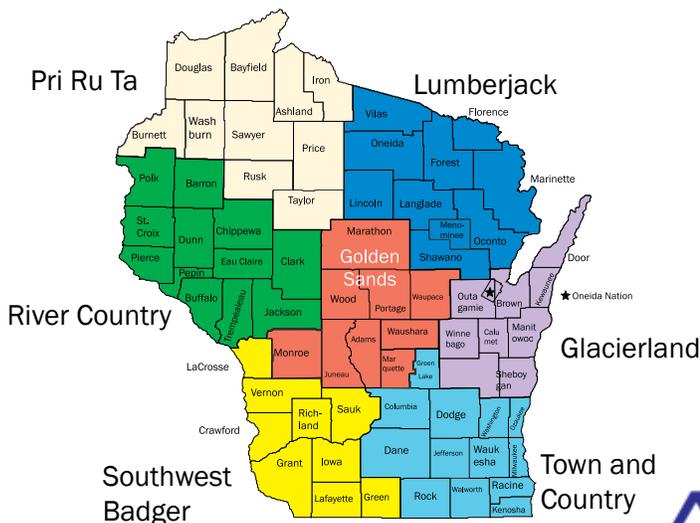
Lumberjack RC&D - Rhinelander, Wisconsin
Serving Forest, Florence, Langlade, Lincoln, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, Shawano and Vilas Counties
Contact: Kim Goerg 715.362.3690

Glacierland RC&D - Green Bay, Wisconsin
Serving Brown, Calumet, Door, Fond du Lac, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Outagamie, Sheboygan and Winnebago Counties and the Oneida Nation
Contact: Greg Hines 920.465.3006

Golden Sands RC&D - Stevens Point, Wisconsin
Serving Adams, Juneau, Marathon, Marquette, Monroe, Portage, Waupaca, Waushara and Wood Counties
Contact: Bill Ebert 715.343.6215

Southwest Badger RC&D - Lancaster Wisconsin
Serving Crawford, Grant, Iowa, Green, LaCrosse, Lafayette, Richland, Sauk and Vernon Counties
Contact: Steve Bertjens 608.723.6377

Town and Country RC&D - West Bend, Wisconsin
Serving Dane, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green Lake, Jefferson, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Rock, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha Counties
Contact: Diane Georgetta 262.335.4855



Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

The Wildlife Incentives Program (WHIP) develops or improves wildlife habitat on privately owned land. Through WHIP, NRCS provides both technical assistance and financial assistance to establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat

WHIP Highlights for 2006

Fiscal year allocation - \$414,660

- * 61 applicants
- * 50 accepted contracts

Project breakdown:

- Aquatic 12 contracts \$104,090
- Terrestrial 31 contracts \$177,081
- Tribal Lands 5 contracts \$28,753
- Special 4 contracts \$101,396

Practice	Planned	Installed
Brush Management	51	14
Conservation Cover	13	5
Firebreak	7	2
Fish Passage	4	1
Forest Stand Improvement	3	1
Prescribed Burning	35	4
Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitat	9	1
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management	26	14
Streambank and Shoreline Protection	18	9
Tree/Shrub Establishment	3	1
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	37	7
Wetland Wildlife Habitat management	5	0



Earth Team

The job of conserving natural resources cannot be done by government alone. The collective talents and energies of private individuals and groups are also needed. Since 1981, NRCS has provided an opportunity for volunteers to use their talents and abilities on behalf of conservation. These volunteers are known as the Earth Team.

Earth Team volunteers are committed to helping people protect and conserve the earth's natural resources. Earth Team members carry out the NRCS mission "Helping People Help the Land."

2006 Accomplishments:

Wisconsin had 51 volunteers with 15,000 hours for 2006.

The National NRCS Volunteer Voice Brochure featured an article on Earth Day in Lafayette County. Pat Leavenworth presented District Conservationist Dan Cotter with a plaque recognizing him for his efforts to engage volunteers in Earth Day activities.

The Fox Valley Technical College Natural Resources Department students from Central America participated in a community service project in Menasha, Wisconsin. The students worked three days on marking approximately 200 storm sewer inlets on city streets with "No Dumping, Drains to River".

For more information on volunteer opportunities with the NRCS call your local NRCS Service Center or www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov. You can also call 1-888-LANDCARE.

Technical Service Providers

Technical Service providers 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 Tech Reg that is available to landowners, and others seeking conservation technical assistance.

In 2006, 43% of Wisconsin TSP funding, over \$1.1 million, went to private sector TSPs. EQIP participants hired 372 TSPs in FY06 for a total of \$499,042 obligated, to install conservation practices. Ninety percent of the farmer-hired TSP dollars were for development of Nutrient Management Plans.

A cooperative agreement for Cultural Resources services was developed totaling \$103,620. Additional agreements were signed for non-engineering technical services to CRP and EQIP participants.

Wisconsin ranks 2nd in the nation in number of TSPs, with 297 TechReg certified providers.

You can find more information on Technical Service Providers at <http://techreg.usda.gov>

The logo for TechReg features the word "TechReg" in a white, sans-serif font. The text is centered on a rectangular background that has a blue-to-yellow gradient and a fine grid pattern. The logo is set against a dark, shadowed rectangular base.

Outreach

Wisconsin NRCS is committed to ensuring that all potential participants are aware of our conservation programs and technical assistance available. Special outreach efforts are part of doing business for every NRCS office. Highlights and special events from 2006:

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the oldest and largest Latino civil rights organization in the United States, held its national conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in June, 2006. An estimated 15,000 political, community and business leaders attended to discuss Latino issues. Wisconsin NRCS staffed an NRCS exhibit at the LULAC Expo, and provided information materials and promotional items for distribution. Wisconsin NRCS Special Emphasis Program Managers participated in SEPM training offered at the conference.

Wisconsin has one of the highest populations of Hmong, an agrarian culture from SE Asia, in the US. In La Crosse, NRCS met with 20 local Hmong agricultural producers to present information on land use decisions to consider when purchasing farmland. There is considerable local interest among the Hmong to begin purchasing farmland to raise market vegetable and small livestock operations. Wisconsin NRCS provided an updated brochure in both English and Hmong language to the 11 Hmong Mutual Associations in Wisconsin. The brochure describes NRCS conservation technical assistance and the farm bill conservation programs. NRCS has also provided additional copies of the Pesticide Applicators training handbook and video to the Hmong associations.

Disabled Farmers — NRCS serves as an advisor to the Wisconsin Agrability Council, a program through Easter Seals and the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension to help disabled farmers continue farming. Wisconsin Agrability was recognized with a national award in 2006 for the excellent assistance provided to disabled farmers. NRCS Field Offices in Wisconsin have been provided information on Agrability, to serve as a referral to farmers who are disabled through traumatic injury or chronic illness.

Native American Assistance - In 2006, over \$138,000 was obligated for Tribal conservation projects through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. NRCS Tribal Liaisons work closely with Tribal Conservation Departments to identify resource issues and find solutions for them.



The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer



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