



NRCS

Natural Resources
Conservation Service

Wisconsin Report 2005

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

From the desk of the State Conservationist

Dear Friends of Wisconsin Conservation,

I proudly present this 2005 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) state report to you, the shareholders in Wisconsin's soil and water resources.



In 2005 we fulfilled a long-standing goal by completing the initial soil mapping of Wisconsin. This effort, to map the 35 million acres of land in the state, was a herculean one, and took the concerted effort of many partners with NRCS. The State of Wisconsin dedicated funds and focus to complete the survey years ahead of the date that NRCS alone would have been able to achieve. The initial soil survey, which will be completely digitized, certified and available on-line in 2006, puts Wisconsin among an elite few states to have reached this goal. The benefits will be huge as we can all easily access soil information for better land use planning and decisions everywhere in Wisconsin.

This year, Wisconsin received nearly \$37 million in Farm Bill conservation program financial assistance. After a pilot program in 2004, the Conservation Security Program (CSP) was fully inaugurated in 2005 as the premiere program to recognize, support and stimulate farmland stewardship. By financially rewarding the farmers who have cared for the land, we have entered a new era of farmland conservation policy. In turn, these economic benefits will flow to the agricultural infrastructure and rural communities of Wisconsin.

Producers who aren't yet ready for CSP are invited to look into other programs offered by NRCS and our local, state, federal and private partners to improve their operations and become eligible in the future. Given the appropriate support, farmers can and will create farms that are showcases of conservation, sustainable for generations to come.

I want to thank the thousands of Wisconsin farmers and landowners for their commitment to conservation. I also 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 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, 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia S. Lavenworth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Conservation Technical Assistance

The Conservation Technical Assistance program (CTA) is NRCS's oldest program, and it functions as a catalyst that allows all other NRCS programs to work. CTA makes it possible for NRCS to provide technical assistance to help people conserve, maintain, and improve the long-term sustainability of the natural resource base on cropland, forest land, and grazing lands.

Since 1935, the primary mission of the agency has been to provide conservation technical assistance to our customers - landowners, land conservation committees and departments, Tribes, state agencies, local government, and other individuals and groups. Conservation Technical Assistance focuses on natural resource priorities at the local level.

Did you know...

- CTA provides the budget that supports the people and tools that make conservation happen - NRCS staff, office space, vehicles, computers and the technical tools that we need.
- CTA provides all the conservation planning that occurs prior to the commitment or approval of an application for funding in a farm bill program.
- CTA funds allow us to help farmers meet regulatory requirements, provide assistance to Land Conservation Departments, and help communities develop resource plans.
- CTA is the basic foundation for NRCS conservation activities and allows for seamless delivery of local, state and federal conservation programs.
- CTA funds allow NRCS to provide assistance to agricultural producers. In short, CTA is the engine that makes conservation work.

CTA Program Highlights - 2005

- 445,810 acres of conservation plans developed on cropland
- 31,639 acres of conservation plans developed on grazing land
- 11,500 acres practices applied on grazing land
- 4,249 acres of agricultural wetland restored
- Soil erosion reduced by 634,600 tons
- Technical assistance to partners on 22 watershed plans for water quality, flood prevention and water supply.

Helping People Help the Land



2005

Wetlands Reserve Program

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property. NRCS provides landowners the technical and financial support to make restoration possible. The NRCS goal is to restore the greatest wetland functions and values, along with optimum wildlife habitat, on every acre enrolled in the program. This program offers landowners an opportunity to establish long-term conservation and wildlife habitat protection.

WRP Highlights - 2005

- Fiscal year allocation of \$6,650,000
- 44 permanent easements
- Total acres enrolled = 3000
- Three 30-year easements

WRP total acreage in Wisconsin - 2005

- 41,596 acres enrolled in the program with 437 easements
- 1,227 acres enrolled in the program with 55 10-year contracts



The Jefferson Marsh Wildlife Area was officially dedicated in 2005. This 3100 - acre restoration contains over 2700 acres of wetland with the remaining upland and buffer acres in woodland and grass cover.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) develops or improves wildlife habitat on privately owned land. Through WHIP, NRCS provides both technical assistance and up to 75 percent cost-share assistance to establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat.

WHIP Highlights - 2005

- Fiscal year allocation of \$540,945
- 109 applicants
- 87 accepted contracts

Project breakdown:

Aquatic = 16	\$111,067
Terrestrial = 56	\$249,941
Tribal lands = 6	\$32,741
Special = 9	\$146,205

Wisconsin Projects completed-2005

Prairie/savanna contracts = 1847 acres
Stream habitat = 58,412 feet
Wetland enhancement = 36.8 acres
Woodland wildlife = 29 acres
Wild rice plantings = 13.5 acres
Fish passage projects = 4
Pine Barrens = 11.9 acres



In-stream wooden structures were installed in shallow Ox Creek (Douglas County) that caused water to scour deep holes, providing fish habitat.

Soil Survey

In Wisconsin, the National Cooperative Soil Survey program is a joint effort of the NRCS and other federal, state, and local agencies.

Soil survey activities in Wisconsin include:

- *Making and publishing detailed soil surveys*
- *Updating older soil surveys*
- *Digitizing modern soil surveys*
- *Developing soil property and interpretive data*
- *Completing scientific soils studies*
- *Assisting with the use of soil data*

Soil Survey Highlights - 2005

- *Soil mapping on over one million acres completing the mapping for the entire state of Wisconsin.*
- *Digitizing and certification of soil surveys is continuing on pace to complete the state by June 2006.*
- *Soil technical assistance provided for thousands of soil survey users including landowners, state and local government, students and consulting firms.*

The New Web Soil Survey

In 2005, the Web Soil Survey was first released. It is a new delivery system for soil survey information and is available online at <http://soils.usda.gov/survey/>. It is a national soil information system that stores and delivers soil reports and spatial information. It allows the user to select an area of interest, view maps and data, and sort by geographic area. In June of 2006, Wisconsin will have all the soils in the state digitized and accessible on the Web soil survey.

Conserving the Resources Preserving the Future

The 13-year undertaking of mapping the soils in the Northwest ten counties in Wisconsin was completed in 2005. NRCS celebrated this event with other partner agencies, a milestone that without partnerships, would have taken until 2016 to complete. Now the 7.03 million acre soil survey marks the end of the initial phase of the National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) in Wisconsin, which began in 1899. Every acre in the state now has soil information available as an important tool for land use planning. Thanks to our partners for making this project such a success:

- The 10 northwestern counties of Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor and Washburn
- Northwest Regional Planning Commission
- USDA Forest Service
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- The Five Bands of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
- National Park Service
- Wisconsin DNR
- Wisconsin DATCP
- UW Research Division of Ag and Life Sciences



NRCS Soil Scientist, Randy Gilbertson explains many of the important facets of the soil survey. He was one of the many speakers at the Last Acre Ceremony celebrating the completion of the soil survey in the northwest 10 counties in Wisconsin.

2005

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides a voluntary conservation program for farmers that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land.

EQIP is the major cost-sharing 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 cost-share up to 50 and 75 percent 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 - 2005

A total of 1,439 contracts for \$16,360,137 were signed:

- *Animal waste storage*
 - › *82 applications for waste storage systems*
 - › *80 applications were funded in FY05*
 - › *\$6,243,253 total funds requested with \$6,065,983 in funds available*
- *\$208,200 were dedicated to conservation projects on Tribal lands*
- *\$292,100 for conservation practices for cranberry production*
- *\$105,000 for ground and surface water practices in the Central Sands area*
- *\$99,200 for pest scouting and pesticide reduction in orchards*

First special sign-up for Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans

- *\$1,280,000 in 68 contracts*

Specific practice accomplishments

<u>Practice</u>	<u>Planned</u>	<u>Installed</u>
Access Road	148	48
Animal Trails	41	16
Brush Management	137	45
Closure of Waste Impoundment	14	7
Conservation Cover	11	5
Conservation Crop Rotation	23	18
Contour Buffer Strips	5	4
Contour Farming	3	2
Cover Crop	66	25
Critical Area Planting	83	33
Diversion	66	17
Feed Management	18	0
Fence	137	51
Field Border	3	1
Filter Strip	24	4
Forest Site Preparation	36	17
Forest Stand Improvement	62	30
Forest Trails and Landings	22	9
Grade Stabilization Structures	215	91
Grassed Waterway	385	185
Heavy Use Protection	93	30
Lined Waterway	14	4
Nutrient Management	2197	1616
Obstruction Removal	21	7
Pasture and Hay Planting	67	30
Pest Management	86	35
Pipeline	9	5
Prescribed Burning	11	7
Prescribed Grazing	891	628
Residue Mgmt/Mulch Till	393	325
Residue Mgmt/No-Till	860	725
Roof Runoff Structure	122	37
Sediment Basin	66	21
Sinkhole Treatment	4	2
Spring Development	10	3
Stream Habitat Improvement	4	0
Streambank/Shoreline Protection	137	58
Stripcropping	9	4
Structure for Water Control	5	1
Subsurface Drain	37	13
Terrace	8	4
Tree/Shrub Establishment	138	90
Tree/Shrub Pruning	1	0
Underground Outlet	63	16
Upland Wildlife Management	17	7
Use Exclusion	7	1
Waste Storage Facility	95	41
Wastewater Treatment	37	9
Water and Sediment Control Basin	9	2
Water Well	13	6
Well Decommissioning	88	44
Wetland Restoration	5	3
Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment	16	8
Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation	2	0

EQIP Efforts for Cranberry Production

In 2004 and 2005, 13 Wisconsin cranberry growers signed EQIP costsharing contracts to help address the unique environmental concerns with surface and ground water quality associated with that crop. Irrigation Water Management and Pest Management are being implemented on all of the participating marshes, and 9 of the 13 contracts also include Nutrient Management. These three management practices form the basis of comprehensive Resource Management Systems on cranberry marshes.

By necessity, cranberries are grown very close to water in order to flood the beds for frost protection and harvest. Cranberries are native to wet soils with typically high water tables. Even with very careful management, nutrients and pesticides may be easily transported to surface and groundwater.

Nutrient Management activities are focusing on reducing applications of phosphorous fertilizer to protect water quality. Pest Management incentive payments are being used to offset the costs associated with implementing Integrated Pest Management and to reduce the environmental hazards associated with using high-risk pesticides.

And, Irrigation Water Management is focusing on increasing irrigation application efficiencies and uniformity of application, to conserve water and to limit leaching and runoff of fertilizers and pesticides. Additional conservation efforts being funded through EQIP include erosion control projects, replacing inefficient irrigation systems, and installing irrigation tailwater recovery systems for the recycling and re-use of water.

More than \$500,000 in EQIP funding has been obligated to these contracts. These funds will result in conservation efforts in excess of \$1,000,000 when labor, equipment, and material costs to participants are complete.



A bountiful cranberry harvest near Warrens, Wisconsin.

EQIP workload for both practice planning and practice installation is increasing dramatically. This reflects the substantial growth in Farm Bill EQIP funding in the past five years, and should continue at this high level as contracts signed in previous years are fulfilled.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of practices</i>	
	<i>Planned</i>	<i>Installed</i>
2004	4452	3806
2005	7266	4689
<i>% change</i>	+ 63%	+ 23%

2005

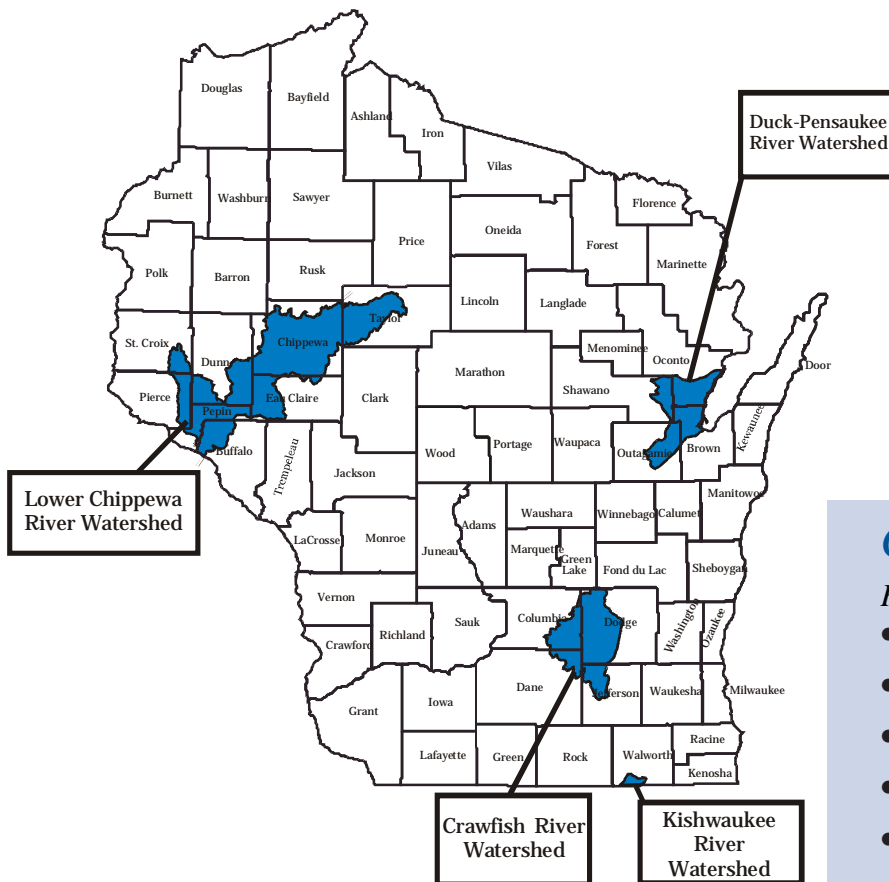
Conservation Security Program

The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is a voluntary program that rewards farmers with a history of good farmland conservation through stewardship and incentive payments. The program is designed to reward the best conservation stewards of the soil, water and other natural resources in targeted watersheds through 5-10 year contracts. The program provides equitable access to benefits to all producers, regardless of size or type of farm operation.

Wisconsin rated 16th in the nation in the number of CSP contracts, 85 % of applications were selected.

In 2005, the Conservation Security Program opened in two new Wisconsin watersheds, the Duck-Pensaukee and the Crawfish River watersheds. The Lower Chippewa and the Kishwaukee watersheds, which were eligible in the CSP pilot year 2004, were eligible again in 2005 as well.

In the two years the program has been open, 485 Wisconsin farmers were selected for enrollment.



Pat Leavenworth acknowledges the host of the farm field days in Dodge County, Nancy Kavazanjian and Charlie Hammer.

CSP Program Highlights

Four eligible watersheds in the state

- \$3,597,294 obligated in 2005
- \$3,560,820 in payments in 2005
- 339 applications/273 approved
- 84,794 acres enrolled in 2005
- Average payment \$7,233

<u>2005 CSP Statistics</u>				
<i>Watershed</i>	<i>Crawfish</i>	<i>Duck-Pensaukee</i>	<i>Lower Chippewa</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Approved Applications</i>	136	95	42	273
<i>Tier I</i>	108	47	24	179
<i>Tier II</i>	19	31	12	62
<i>Tier III</i>	9	17	6	32
<i>Approved Acreage</i>	42,711	32,293	9,790	84,794
<i>2005 Payment Average</i>	\$6,343	\$8,920	\$6,212	\$7,233
<i>2005 Payment Total</i>	\$837,366	\$847,388	\$260,925	\$1,945,679

Conservation Security Program Farm Field Days

In September 2005, in cooperation with the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, NRCS conducted two farm field days highlighting CSP farms and farmers. In the Lower Chippewa watershed, the tour visited four farms that showcased a variety of farm size, type of operation, and management techniques. In the Crawfish watershed, a farm field day drew over 100 visitors to see demonstrations on improving soil health and organic content, cover crops, and precision nutrient management.



Pat Leavenworth and Dan Weiss. The Weiss family farm is a Tier III farm enrolled in the program.



Dave Mikelson of Cloverleaf Dairy in Buffalo County stresses the importance of taking care of the farm for future generations. Shown here is his grandson.



The Greg and Judie Sage Farm utilizes managed intensive grazing in their operation.



Brian Prissel, a host of the CSP Farm Field Days tours.



Participants at the Dodge County farm field days.

2005

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.

In 2005, all of Wisconsin's TSP funding, over \$1.3 million, went to private sector TSPs. Over 600 EQIP participants hired TSPs in FY05 for a total of \$939,040 obligated, to install conservation practices. Ninety percent of the farmer-hired TSP dollars were for development of Nutrient Management (590) plans.

Contracted engineering technical services for EQIP participants totaled \$319,558. A cooperative agreement for Cultural Resources services was developed totaling \$59,200. Additional agreements were signed for non-engineering technical services to CRP and EQIP participants and to complete 35 comprehensive nutrient management plans for non-Farm Bill Program participants.

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

Wisconsin ranks second in the nation in number of TSPs, with 243 TechReg certified providers.

TechReg

TSP Program Highlights - 2005

A listening forum for Wisconsin's Technical Service Providers was held in Stevens Point in July. Over 25 TSPs attended to comment on the TSP program and discuss issues with NRCS state staff. Comments and concerns from attendees were provided to the national office or addressed at the state level, depending on the scope of the issue.

NRCS provided information and exhibits on TSP issues at the 2005 Agriculture Lime and Fertilizer and Trade show, for the Wisconsin Association of Professional Agricultural Consultants newsletter, maintained extensive TSP web information for providers and farmers, and published seven TSP updates to all Wisconsin TSPs informing them of program changes, training, and updates.



State TSP Coordinator, Ken Rismeyer (right) explains the TSP process to an interested participant at the Wisconsin Fertilizer and Chemical Conference in Madison, Wisconsin.

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and rangeland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA partners with State, tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations to acquire conservation easements or other interests in land from landowners. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market value for the conservation easement. The farm remains in the farmer's hands, but the development pressure is reduced because the perpetual easement keeps the land in agricultural use.

In 2005, more than 2,434 acres of Wisconsin farmland were protected from development through the USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP). With funding of \$3.6 million, NRCS funded proposals from four different farmland protection programs throughout the state. Sixteen working farms in seven counties, 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.

Since FRPP was established in 1996, NRCS has helped 11 different farmland programs to purchase easements for over 9,000 acres on 60 working farms in 10 counties.

FRPP Program Highlights - 2005

- In 2005, FRPP partnered with the Driftless Area Land Conservancy to protect a 181 acre farm in the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area, including a stone barn listed on the National Register of Historic Places. One additional easement was funded.
- FRPP helped West Wisconsin Land Trust protect a farm in the Kinnickinnic River Watershed Protection Area and provided funding to protect an additional farm.
- Two fruit and berry specialty farms in the Bayfield area were protected.
- The first easement acquired in partnership with the new Dane County Agricultural Easement Program was closed and 3 additional easements were funded.
- FRPP provided funding to help DNR protect 10 farms in the North Branch Milwaukee River Farming and Wildlife Heritage Area, the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway, Brooklyn Wildlife Area, Governor Dodge State Park, and the Baraboo Hills.



The Thomas Family Farm near Barneveld with its magnificent historic stone barn will forever be protected and preserved to remind us of our rural beginnings and our cultural heritage.

2005

Resource Conservation and Development

The purpose of the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) program is to accelerate the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, improve the general level of economic activity, and to enhance the environment and standard of living in designated RC&D areas. The program also establishes or improves coordination of activities in rural areas. Current program objectives focus on improvement of quality of life through natural resources conservation and community development leading to sustainable communities and sound management and conservation of natural resources.

RC&D Program Highlights - 2005

There are seven RC&D areas in the state. The following figures are total accomplishments for all RC&D's in Wisconsin:

- *New projects undertaken = 134*
- *Projects completed = 122*
- *Funds leveraged from other federal funds, state and local governments and non-government funds = \$3,538,534.*
- *Workshops and training events provided training and developed new skills to 4945 participants.*
- *7,669 economic or socially disadvantaged people served.*
- *395 businesses expanded and 430 businesses received financial assistance.*

Renewable Energy was a major focus of RC&D activities in 2005.



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

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, Dodge, Green Lake, Jefferson, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Rock, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha Counties

Contact: Diane Georgetta 262.335.4855

Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative

The Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) is a nationwide collaboration of individuals and organizations working to maintain and improve the management, productivity, and health of the Nation's privately owned grazing land. Coalitions formed through GLCI actively seek sources to increase technical assistance and education to maintain or enhance grazing land resources.

In Wisconsin more than 80 NRCS and county employees have been trained in prescribed grazing. The number of acres of grazing plans written has jumped from 5000 acres in 1998, to over 27,000 acres in 2005. Wisconsin has 10 Grazing Lands Specialists - four are NRCS employees and six are funded on contract with GLCI.

In the last six years, through a congressional directive NRCS-Wisconsin funded over \$2.6 million in outside technical assistance, education and on-farm research and demonstration through the GLCI Grant Program.

GLCI Program Highlights

- 330 prescribed grazing plans written covering 27,000 acres
- Prescribed grazing applied to 24,000 acres.
- Certified 22 Managed Grazing Planners.
- Developed managed grazing plans for new producers in the Grassland Reserve Program and Conservation Security Program.
- Three introductory, one intermediate and two advanced grazing lands training sessions completed.
- 9,200 tons of soil saved from sheet and rill erosion by converting cropland to pasture.
- Reduction in nitrate concentration by 10 times in some field groundwater.
- Reduction in water runoff by 75%.

The Wisconsin Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative works to develop and enhance grazing lands in harmony with the environment.



2005

Where To Get Grazing Lands Assistance from NRCS

State Grazing Lands Specialist

Brian Pillsbury
USDA, NRCS
505 Broadway, Room 232
Baraboo, WI 53913
Phone: 608-355-4470
brian.pillsbury@wi.usda.gov

Area Grazing Lands Specialists

Southwest Area - Richland Center

Jean Stramel
USDA, NRCS
24136 Executive Lane, Suite C
Richland Center, WI 53581
Phone: 608-647-8874, ext. 110
Jean.Stramel@wi.usda.gov

Northwest Area - Altoona

Richard Zirk
USDA, NRCS
1304 North Hillcrest Parkway, Suite A
Altoona, WI 54720
Phone: 715-832-6547, ext. 112
Rick.Zirk@wi.usda.gov

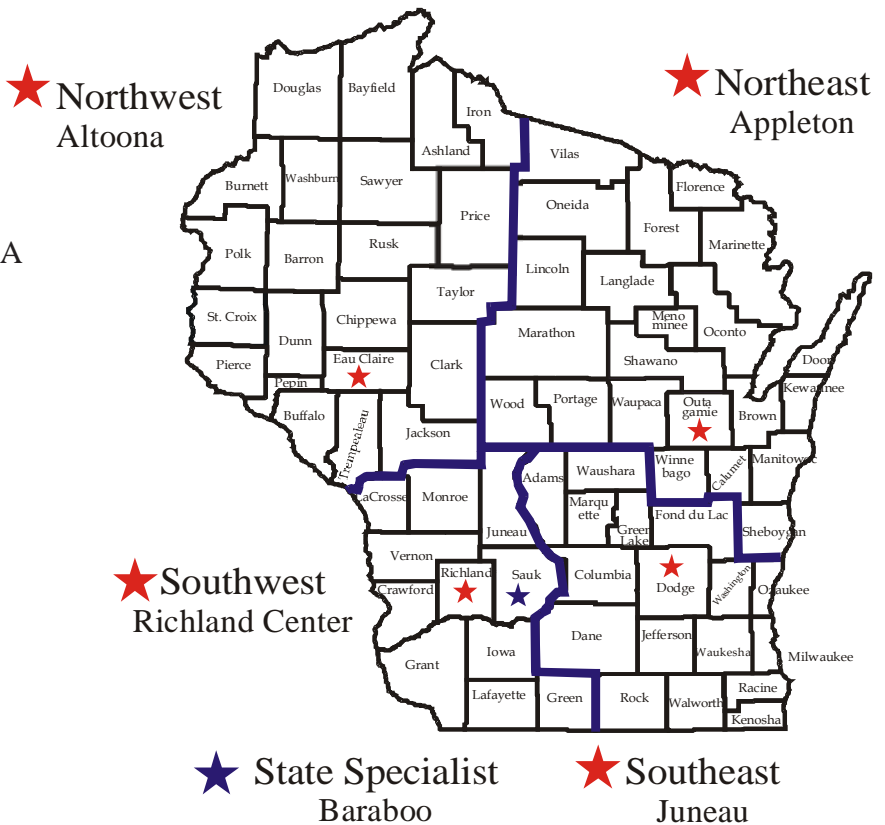
Northeast Area - Appleton

Larry Brummund
USDA, NRCS
3369 West Brewster Street
Appleton, WI 54914
Phone: 920-733-1575, ext. 127
Larry.Brummund@wi.usda.gov

Southeast Area - Juneau

Brian Pillsbury
USDA, NRCS
505 Broadway, Room 232
Baraboo, WI 53913
Phone: 608-355-4470
Brian.Pillsbury@wi.usda.gov

Location of NRCS Grazing Lands Specialists



Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention

The Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566), August 4, 1954, as amended, authorized NRCS to cooperate with States and local agencies to carry out works of improvement for soil conservation and for other purposes including flood prevention; conservation, development, utilization and disposal of water; and conservation and proper utilization of land.

NRCS implements the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act through three programs:

- *Watershed Surveys and Planning*
- *Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Operations*
- *Watershed Rehabilitation*

Dam Rehabilitation Program Otter Creek Watershed

Under the Dam Rehabilitation Program, two dams that create Blackhawk Lake in Iowa County were repaired. The dams were built in 1970 with the dual purpose of flood control and recreation. One dam contains the principal spillway, the primary means to convey water from the watershed through the dam and into the stream below. The other houses the drawdown spillway, which can be used to draw the lake level down if needed.

One home in the breach inundation area of the Blackhawk Lake dams was floodproofed by constructing a reinforce concrete retaining wall to protect against flooding from the 100-year flood event.

In addition, the principal spillway of dam was modified to allow more cold water to flow out of the lake. Cold water temperatures are needed for trout downstream. As a result of improved land conservation in the watershed since the dam was built, there has been an increase in ground water entering the lake and increased base flow which is naturally colder than runoff. The capacity of the cold water discharge feature had been exceeded and was modified for current conditions.



Prior to construction, Iowa County implemented flood plain zoning in the hydraulic shadow (breach inundation area) of the dam.

Emergency Watershed Protection

The purpose of the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program is to undertake emergency measures, including the purchase of flood plain easements, for runoff retardation and soil erosion prevention to safeguard lives and property from floods, drought, and the products of erosion on any watershed whenever fire, flood or any other natural occurrence is causing or has caused a sudden impairment of the watershed.

Repeated storms during May and June 2004 caused flood damage that impaired several waterways in Crawford County. The townships in the county were concerned with the potential hazards to life and property if additional rainfall was received.. Through the EWP program, debris was removed to protect five road crossings and bridges, restoring the hydraulic capacity of the stream channels and thereby reducing the threat of catastrophic flooding.

2005

NRCS - Your Conservation Partner for over 70 years

In March 1935, fierce windstorms from the Great Plains carried huge dark clouds of dust eastward and blackened skies as far away as the nation's capital. Hugh Hammond Bennett convinced Congress that soil erosion was a menace that merited national attention. On April 27, 1935, Congress established the Soil Conservation Service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture to conserve natural resources on agricultural lands and named Bennett as Chief. During his tenure, Bennett stressed the importance of soil conservation to crowds across the country.

2005 marked the agency's 70th anniversary. Today, NRCS remains the nation's leading agency in conserving natural resources on private lands. Every employee and partner contributed to the agency's many accomplishments. The nation's citizens can enjoy the benefits of productive soils, clean air and water, and open spaces because of the agency's work.

Conservation Partners

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 2005, the Wisconsin State Technical Committee convened eight times including once in Wisconsin Rapids for a tour of cranberry operations in support of the EQIP practice signup.

Other actions to provide guidance were:

- Allocation of Environmental Quality Incentives Program funds, cost-share rates, eligible practices, and policies, addition of cranberry and orchard practices signups
- EQIP public comment session
- Subcommittee on Comprehensive Nutrient Management Practices
- 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 2005. 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 with field and technical work. In 2005, 23 interns worked in 20 locations throughout the state.

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.

In 2005, 182 volunteers contributed over 18,712 hours at 43 different Wisconsin field office locations. This is the equivalent of more than nine 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.

The Wisconsin Tribal 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 2005, WTCAC assisted NRCS in identifying priority projects for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program.



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