

Wisconsin

State Outreach Report 2012

A report on
NRCS
outreach
efforts to
inform all
potential
USDA
customers



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Natural Resources Conservation Service
Madison, Wisconsin 2012

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State Outreach Activities

Hispanic And Women Farmer Claims Process Outreach

Wisconsin NRCS conducted an extensive outreach campaign in 2011-12 to inform potential claimants about the USDA Women and Hispanic Farmer/Rancher Claims process. The Claims Process is open to anyone who feels that USDA improperly denied them farm loan benefits between 1981 and 2000 because they are Hispanic, Latino, or female. Wisconsin NRCS, FSA and RD coordinated extensive outreach and notice efforts to Hispanic and/or women farmer and rancher communities so that all eligible farmers and ranchers could learn about this option and were provided an opportunity to participate.

A total of 42 claims packet requests were received from Wisconsin as of Feb. 2012, during the first round of outreach. Weekly reports were submitted to USDA on Wisconsin HWFC outreach. All outreach efforts were coordinated through the Joint Information Council with partner agencies, Rural Development and Farm Service Agency.

USDA – Wisconsin Intertribal Listening Session

The USDA Service Center agencies held a listening session on Thursday, January 26, 2012 for all 11 Wisconsin federally recognized tribes. All Tribal Chairs, Tribal Planners, Tribal leaders and staff interested in USDA programs and potential partnerships for economic growth and development were invited. Each tribe gave a 15-minute presentation sharing the priorities and concerns in their communities. Agency heads responded to questions and responded to issues raised. Action items were identified for agencies to further the dialog and explore ways that USDA programs can assist in reaching tribal goals.

Harmony Training in Wisconsin

In August, Wisconsin hosted a week-long training session, Working Effectively with American Indians, in coordination with the National Employee Development Center. The Forest County Potawatomi and Mole Lake Tribes co-sponsored the event, providing tribal speakers, cultural activities and foods. The training was attended by NRCS staff, as well as some federal partners.

Tribal TSP Agreement with College of Menominee Nation

Wisconsin NRCS began a pilot project, funded through USDA, with the College of Menominee Nation to identify, train and certify tribal Technical Service Providers to plan conservation practices for implementation on tribal lands. The project will serve as a national model for TSPs among tribes, to build tribal and tribal college capacities. Project included two 2-day training sessions completed for 13 participants and followup webinars.

As tribal members, these planners will be uniquely qualified to address the cultural as well as technical issues involved in the development of a Conservation Activity Plan. Specific work products include:

- establishment of a tribal TSP working group to advise NRCS on implementation of the process,
- identifying potential candidates to participate in the training,
- coordinate the training and certification with the Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council,
- identify training needs unique to the development of CAP's on tribal lands and
- provide support to training participants to complete the NRCS TechReg certification process for Forestry Management Conservation Activity Plans

Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council Participation in NRCS Programs, Chris Borden State Tribal Liaison

WTCAC continues to serve as the primary forum for tribal conservation and resource issues and program participation. NRCS staff serve as liaisons to all of the 11 tribes, with two dedicated staff for programs and technical resource conservation assistance.

NRCS and WTCAC Keep EQIP Working on Tribal Lands in Wisconsin

Since April 2012, NRCS and WTCAC have been working together to assure that EQIP practice scenarios are available which meet the conservation needs of WI Tribes.

The NRCS considered the conservation needs of Tribes on 27 scenarios involving 17 practice standards. As a result, EQIP will be able to facilitate wild rice bed restoration, loon and osprey habitat, tribal walleye stocking, fish passage, and tribal forest management practices in 2013.

Team Leaders; Steve Bertjens, Mike Dreischmeier, Terry Kelly, Mary King, Brian Pillsbury and Dean Sylla, CET Kent Wabrowetz, Resource Conservationist Chris Borden, the NRCS Tribal Liaisons, and Regional leaders Scott Mueller and June Grabemeyer all worked hard to assure that tribal conservation needs were met. Input from WTCAC members and WTCAC staff including retired NRCS employees Randy Gilbertson, Keith Sengbush and Jerry Thompson proved crucial to the success of the process. WTCAC members expressed their thanks for all NRCS's work to Pat Leavenworth at her last meeting with WTCAC as Wisconsin's NRCS State Conservationist.

The process of regionalizing all NRCS practices nationally was a complex and at times frustrating process for NRCS staff, but the process gives us an opportunity to more easily share ideas between States and across the US. As a result, in the future it will be easier for a Tribe in Maine to implement a wild rice bed restoration or other practice scenarios developed in WI.

Agrability – Assisting Disabled Farmers

NRCS serves as an advisor to the Wisconsin Agrability Board. We have provided information to all NRCS offices to share with farmers with disabilities so that they are aware of the services Agrability can provide. – Dec. 2011

USDA Outreach Events

NRCS organized a number of events in Wisconsin for visiting USDA dignitaries in 2012

- **Womens Roundtable** for Dep. Under Secretary Joan Walsh on 2/1/12
- Roundtable for Undersecretary Harris Sherman for diverse conservation stakeholders in Green Bay area, tour of Oneida conservation projects and meeting with Menominee College.
- Deputy Sec. Merrigan visit to regional food coop in Vernon county, and Coon Creek Watershed tour – 4/2/12
- Deputy Undersecretary Ann Mills visit during National RC&D Conference in Madison and tours of Coon Creek Watershed, Leopold Shack and WRP sites.
- Sec. Vilsack visit to Catholic Multi-Cultural Center and Open Forum at World Dairy Expo

Women’s Food and Ag Network

The Wisconsin Women’s Food and Ag Network, a Conservation Innovation Grant recipient, conducted 4 workshops for Conservation for Women Landowners, with assistance from NRCS state and field staff in the summer of 2012.

Exhibits and Events

NRCS exhibited at 74 Conferences and Educational Events,

Higher profile events include:

- Women in Farming Conference
- FFA Statewide Career Fair



- International Urban Ag conference organized by Growing Power, Milwaukee – targeting assistance to underserved, urban and minority communities
- World Dairy Expo - 60,000 attendance
- Midwest Organic and Sustainable Agricultural Service (MOSES) - Largest in the nation
- Wisconsin Farm Technology Days-1000's in attendance
- Hmong Growers Conferences

Public Affairs support for multiple types of events to include career fairs, county fairs, dairy breakfasts, farmer appreciation days, multicultural events, field days and farm tours as well as many other events attracting small and beginning farmers.

Special initiative taken to disseminate information at these and all events on Hispanic-Women Farmer Claims Process.

Publications

- Completion of the Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council Report for 2011. Coordinated with all tribal contacts to finalize submissions.
- Several publications were finalized that targeted Hmong and Spanish producers to encourage participation in EQIP.
- Publications on farm bill programs translated into Hmong and Spanish.

- Success story on Oneida Nations Farm and Ho-Chunk-Kickapoo Valley Reserve.
- Brochure developed for State Outreach Council –Get to know your USDA Partners - RD, NRCS, FSA
- Organic Initiative factsheet
- High Tunnel factsheet
- Beginning Farmer factsheet and display

Earth Team Volunteer Program

- Several Native American volunteers and one disabled volunteer.
- Success story with Dep. Sec. Merrigan and Earth Team volunteer Tim Bennis who is a wounded warrior.

NRCS Program Participation – FY2012

Beginning Farmers	249	\$3.4 million	11,545 acres
Socially Disadvantaged and Tribal	37	\$615,877	10,986 acres
Limited Resource	48	\$725,967	2,807 acres

Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI)

- Meetings with individual Land Conservation Departments and Conservation Organizations were conducted to provide information regarding the FY12 MRBI Request for Proposals. Press releases and web sites were utilized to promote existing projects and encourage partner participation. Presentations were conducted for NRCS staff and conservation partners to provide guidance and updates regarding the program.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- Press releases, radio interviews, and web sites were utilized to promote existing projects and encourage farmer participation. Presentations were conducted for NRCS staff and conservation partners to provide guidance and updates regarding the program. Sixty-eight beginning farmers received Conservation Stewardship Program contracts in FY12.

NORTHWEST AREA

Altoona Service Center, John Sippl, DC

5 Minutes of Fame (WAXX Radio): NRCS does monthly radio interviews about local conservation activities and efforts. These radio station broadcasts and can be heard in the NW, NE and SW areas of WI.

Farm City Day: Annual event to showcase agriculture in the Chippewa Valley. (Also see Menomonie report.) Over 750 people attended.

Dairy Breakfast for Eau Claire County. The conservation tent had about 3200 people pass through and learn how to help the land.



Youth Leadership Eau Claire: Local NRCS staff led a tour of local agricultural operations to 30 high school students from 5 high schools. Students toured a dairy facility which utilized waste to produce electricity for over 600 homes. The students then toured a local CSA where small scale food production was discussed. The afternoon brought a twist to ag production, where forest products were discussed. The afternoon was culminated by a demonstration of conservation practices and how they helped control erosion.



FFA Farm City Day: Ag day at the high school for elementary school students and high school students interested in ag and ag careers. Zenik Crespo, Soil Conservationist and Shaunna Repking, Soil Scientist taught students about soil. They also completed in a local tradition of corn shucking, it looks like they made a mess.

Cluster A -Career Fair: Local NRCS Conservation staff discussed careers within the NRCS with high school students within a 5 county area of Eau Claire. We interacted on a one on one level as well as gave brief presentations to groups of students. During the day middle school students were allowed to walk the area and discuss careers with staff. About 1200 students attended the event.

Habitat for Education: NRCS staff worked with Wildlands School staff and students on forest health and wildlife habitat establishment for non-game species. Students learned the benefits of having a healthy forest and some of the aspects of creating habitat for amphibians, reptiles and small mammals. Below are students creating lined small vernal pools and brush piles for wildlife.



Mock Job Interview: NRCS staff assisted high school Guidance Counselors, English Teachers, and students at Altoona High School with mock interviews. Students are given a mock interview for jobs within the Natural Resources field. After the interview, students are able to ask questions one on one to a resource professional.

RC&D 25th Anniversary – NRCS booth at 25th Anniversary of the RC&D council focused on beginning farmer programs through NRCS.

4-H Malt Stand/Booth – NRCS participated in two facets at Eau Claire Counties’ Youth Fair. 1) Maybelle the cow made her debut at the fair educating fair goers to what inputs are needed to produce a certain amount of milk. The other aspect of the display shows the amount of manure that is also produced and what environmental benefits manure has. 2) Another aspect is NRCS staff making malts and shakes with our partners. Working at the booth allows Eau Claire producers to see NRCS staff in a different positive light.

Conservation Tour - Eau Claire County LCD, UWEX, FSA, and NRCS partnered to complete its first annual conservation tour. We had approximately one dozen producers look at different ideas on conservation. We toured and talked cover crops, looked at a contour buffer system, and met with an established grazer and toured his facilities. Below are pictures of the tillage radish planted after winter wheat harvest. The picture of corn was a No-till planted into radish residue the following year. Notice all the worm castings in the corn field!



Eau Claire Farm Show - NRCS Staff and partners presented Conservation Programs to a group of interested producers attending the show. We also had an educational booth with our partners to inform producers of conservation program options.

Pollinator Day w/ Dunn NRCS - The Menomonie and Altoona NRCS field offices came up with five different activities that engaged the students' awareness about the importance of pollinators and their habitats.

Students walked through a prairie planting. John Sippl pointed out the values of prairie to pollinators such as butterflies, bees and other insects.



The students learned about native forbs and how it can be a food source for pollinators. Tammy Pellett showed the students how to grow native flowers using empty milk cartons.



As a fun activity, Ka Vang and Sarah Raith provided the students with paper cut out of swallowtail butterflies that they can color and then fold into a butterfly. Students can let their swallowtail butterflies fly by throwing it similar to a paper airplane.



Nicole Jacob helped the students to create butterfly wrist bands using pipe cleaners and paper. John went over the different kinds pollinators using NRCS pollinator posters. Students get to choose their favorite poster to take home.

NWTF Field Day – NRCS Area and Field Office Staff assisted partners in establishing wildlife habitat on a demonstration plot. The plot is on public property and is able to showcase valuable habitat practices offered through programs such as EQIP and CRP to users.

NWTF Presentation – NRCS and partners presented at a field day sponsored by NRCS, NWTF, Xcel Energy and WIDNR. We presented conservation programs that would benefit soil and water quality as well as practices that would increase wildlife habitat. The field day was a huge success. The day ended up with one individual thanking the Agency staff for our hard work and the group finished with a large round of applause and a very large thank you.

Soil Health Presentation Chippewa County - As part of the Chippewa County Field Day hosted by UWEX, NRCS presented Soil Quality information to the producers that attended. Staff performed a slake test and an infiltration test on soils from fields that were no tilled vs. conventional tilled fields. The field tests easily showed the advantages of increased soil quality through using No-till.

Hmong Outreach – Local staff attended a Hmong education event aimed at increasing the knowledge of the Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative through EQIP. The eight producers attending

from various counties left with a much better understanding of the EQIP process. One of the participants ended up applying for a Seasonal High Tunnel and received a contract.

Local/Area Speaking Contest – NRCS staff judged the local and area speaking events for the county and regional speaking events. The local speaking event winner won the regional competition and went on to speak at the State contest.

FFA Speaking Contest – NRCS staff participated with local partners in judging our local FFA speaking event. Numerous high school FFA Chapters participated in the event with over 100 speakers.

Sustainability Fair - NRCS was invited to have a booth at the first annual Sustainability Fair. Our booth educated people about the benefits of beginning farmer programs through NRCS. The event was well attended and ended up with NRCS partnering with several other groups to put conservation on the ground.

FSA Newsletter – Wrote a news article for the Eau Claire County FSA newsletter. Our first ever electronic news letter contacted producers in midst of a severe weather pattern. NRCS's article on cover crops and improving soil health will hopefully achieve more conservation.

TU Dare Meeting in Mondovi – Augusta – Alma and Altoona NRCS staff hosted a Trout Stream Restoration informational meeting on the benefits of partnering to achieve a common goal. Working together with LCD, WDNR, Sportsman's Clubs, Trout Unlimited, and landowners; all players can reach a desired outcome. The meeting consisted of presentations by partners on what they have to offer and reviewed some of the positive outcomes of the projects. Over 50 landowners participated and this spawned several new stream restoration projects in the Eau Claire and Buffalo County area.

Ashland Service Center, Gary Haughn, DC

Conducted special educational outreach effort with posters to tribes and schools:
and education:

Conservation - Our Past, Present, and Future

- American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month
- Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College North (Washburn)

Earth Team Volunteers

- Northland College
- Ashland High School
- WITC – Ashland
- Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College North (Washburn)

Pollinator Pathways

- Washburn High School
- Ashland High School
- Hurley High School
- Mellon High School
- Drummond High School
- Bayfield High School
- NorthWestern High School

Balsam Lake Service Center, Keith Zygowicz, DC

FY 2012 started with the Tri County Soil contest, although it was held in Grantsburg, at least 3 schools and 45 participants were from Polk County. Close to 100 students and 15 adults were in attendance. Along with the soils/land judging we took time to explain what our agency does day to day and how people can use our information.

Our office had a presentation table at the annual hunter's night out at Amery Coop. This year we highlighted the use of soils, Web soil survey and wildlife food plots. Over 75 people attended with many one on one questions answered.

CRP info meetings, we helped present information and answered one on one questions with the many attendees. We handed out the poster/flyers with the other information.

Had a display set at the Fair with the Farmer claims process handouts. Posters are up in Office and placed at post office in Balsam Lake and at the Polk county Court house/ government center.

At least 8 news paper articles were sent to all 4 newspapers each giving multiple ways to get ahold of us and or where to get information on various programs. These papers reach upwards of ¾'s of the county population, by either direct mailings or available over the counter at many business places.

LWG meeting was held, asked if anyone knew of underserved groups or individuals and no new producers were noted.

Black River Falls Service Center, Ryan Swatek, DC

- Participated in bring your child to work day. Soil con Tech had both daughters at work for the day and they participated in touring conservation practices, took part in conducting a survey, helped with soil borings and viewed information online about conservation.
- NRCS partnered with UW-Extension to host a Soil Quality field day for producers. UW-Extension specialists spoke along with NRCS staff to about 30 producers on the effects of soil quality in relation to crop yields.

- Hosted a field day at a streambank project where Whitehall High School students helped install stream habitat, seed and mulch. The US Fish and Wildlife, WI DNR, NRCS, Trout Unlimited, York Rod and Gun club were all present for the day.
- Talked with multiple producers at the Jackson County Fair in August.

Chippewa Falls Service Center, Tammy Lindsay, DC

- Doug Sippl, Chippewa SC gave a presentation to 10 producers, 2 Hmong at a grazing meeting. Topics included soils information, forest health, and EQIP
- Tammy Lindsay, DC spoke at a Seasonal High Tunnel Hoop house workshop with UW-Ext., Stanley, WI with 30 people in attendance and 75% Mennonite
- Chippewa County Fair display Nicole Jacob, SCEP student Altoona, Doug Sippl, Chippewa SC, Mark Grabarczyk, Chippewa SCT, and Tammy Lindsay DC all assisted with the booth
- CREP Tour Mark Grabarczyk, SCT organized the event with Lisa Richardson, LCD (see attached agenda). 30 people were in attendance. See the Country Today http://thecountrytoday.com/farm/article_225578c4-f6bc-11e1-b842-0019bb2963f4.html
- Tammy Lindsay, DC and Ka Ying Vang, SC Menomonie had a Soil Profile Booth at Farm City Days, Elk Mound, WI (see attached)
- Reena Bowman, OAC Altoona/Chippewa, Mark Grabarczyk, Chippewa SCT and Doug Sippl, Chippewa SC taught 689, 5th grade students at the Chippewa County 2012 School Conservation Days (see attached)

2012 Chippewa County 5th Grade Conservation School Days

NRCS staff joined their conservation partners this year and taught 689 5th grade students from 18 different schools some techniques used in the field for conservation surveying. At the first field day, at Lake Wissota State Park, Mark Grabarczyk, Chippewa SCT and Reena Bowman, Altoona/Chippewa OAC taught the classes. The second day at Brunet Island State Park, Mark and Doug Sippl, Chippewa SC, were instructors. The students learned their pace, saw a survey drawing, used hand levels, rod, a laser, and looked through the total station.



Reena Bowman, OAC Altoona/Chippewa



Mark Grabarczyk, SCT Chippewa with the survey drawing



Mark with the laser and rod



Doug Sippl, SC Chippewa hand level session



Mark having the 5th graders look through the total station

Jerry Clark from UW-Extension provided the following:
"Thanks for your time and commitment to School Conservation Days. I realize it is a busy couple of days on top of your already hectic schedules. The evaluations I received back are once again very positive and the teachers really enjoy the program."

A few comments from the teacher evaluations:

"Excellent program. The speakers were well prepared and did a great job connecting with the kids."

"I have never attended before. Excellent grade appropriate and curriculum approach."

"Like the addition of the surveyors." (NRCS)

Ladysmith Service Center, Mike Koehler, DC

- Dec. 20, 2011 Local Tribal Food Grower Forum-Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College-Distributed material
- EQIP contract with the LCO Tribal Govt.
- EQIP Contracts with 2 Socially Disadvantage Farmers (Native Americans)
- March 23, 2012NW Wisconsin Regional Food Summit-Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College-Distributed material
- April 25, 2012 Sustainable Living Fair-Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College-Distributed material
- Sept. 26, 2012 Met with Raymond Burns Interim President-Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College-Recruitment, College farm, programs, educational materials.
- Sept. 27, 2012 Rusk Co. Farm Bureau Mtg.-Distributed material.
- Several new articles in papers and on Radio.
- Poster displayed on Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers claim process.
- Presentations to Land Conservation Committees and Farm Service Agency County Committee.

Menomonie Service Center, Bruni Velez

NRCS participated in a Town Hall meeting for the ***Red Cedar Phosphorus Reduction Program (PRP)***, a cooperative project with the Red Cedar TMDL Coordination Team, local farmers, Conservation Specialists from both Dunn County and River Country RC&D.

5th Annual Hmong New Year Celebration hosted by UW- Stout Hmong Student Organization. Hmong students and members of the community wear traditional clothing and enjoy traditional foods, dance and music. The New Year's Celebration "Nyob Zoo Xyoo Tshiab" gives thanks to ancestors and spirits, and welcomes in a new beginning. NRCS, FSA and RD staff provided information on USDA employment, student programs, and assistance through USDA programs, such as first time home ownership, home repair grants, conservation programs, and beginner farmer loans.



(Above left USDA Display), Brunilda Velez – NRCS District Conservationist, Tammy Pellett – NRCS Soil Conservationist Technician, Mary Hensley- RD Area Specialists, Marylan Duque - RD Area Technician, Maryann Bravo – RD Area Specialist and Laurie Tietz RD Area Technician. Not Pictured: Susan Larson – RD Area Director, Landis Wagner – RD Area Specialist



The Red Cedar: Land, Water, and People, Coming Together

Conference at UW-Stout University - Menomonie and Barron County NRCS participated. In attendance were farmers, urban and rural landowners, teachers, and college students, as well as many people in various occupations in the conservation field. The idea behind the conference was for all people living in a watershed to come together and share ideas of how to clean up and protect a watershed through many different avenues, and to realize that everyone is responsible for protecting their environment, not just one group.



Tammy Pellet and Christopher “Lars” Olson participated at the Red Cedar conference in the NRCS booth.

Pollinator Day with Menomonie and Altoona – (see also Altoona report.)

The field offices came up with five activities that engaged the students' awareness about the importance of pollinators and their habitats. Students walked through a prairie planting and field office staff pointed out the values of prairie to pollinators such as butterflies, bees and other insects.



Jenny Roetter teaches students about different plants to attract pollinators.

19th Annual Dunn County Dairy Breakfast held at the Baier Family Farm near Eau Galle with over 2,700 attendees.

The Baier family farm has been in operation since 1857 and in August of 2011 the family was awarded the Century and the Sesquicentennial farm awards from the Wisconsin State fair for 155 years of continuous ownership. NRCS assisted the Dunn County Dairy Promotion Committee with staffing along with other partners and had an a booth with information about pollinators, residue management, and backyard conservation.



NRCS display at the Dunn County Breakfast.

UW Extension Crop Management Field Day. Brunilda Velez, DC in Dunn County, talked to participants about in Soil Quality, Aggregate Stability and Conservation Programs to install conservation practices to address soil erosion and water quality due to sedimentation.

John Sippl, DC in Altoona Field Office, demonstrated soil quality by using samples of no tilled and tilled soils and adding water to demonstrate soil infiltration rate and water retention.

Farm City Days: The Chippewa and Menomonie field offices participated at Sandy Acres Dairy, in Chippewa County <http://www.farmcityday.com/index.html> Kids could make their own soil profile by using the soil horizon tubes to show the layers in the soil. They also learned about sand, clay and silt texture by feeling different samples. Approximately 300 children came through the booth and completed the activity.

The Farm City Days is for the Chippewa Valley, rotating from Eau Claire, Dunn, and Chippewa for the last 5 years. John Sippl, District Conservationist, Altoona, has been on the Farm City Days planning committee the last 4 years, while other NRCS staffs participate when it is their host county. It is a great partnership effort with the local Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVCT) that organizes this event as a marketing class hand on experience with advertisement, and students narrating the tour. The local UW-Extension agents, associations, along with private businesses make this event a success each year. The committee reported that 700 people were in attendance.



Tammy Lindsay, Chippewa County District Conservationist, teaches children about soil texture.



(Pictured at the left) Levi and Taylor Lindsay, Rochelle Ripp, 2012 Alice in Dairyland, and KaYing Vang, Soil Conservationist in Dunn County.



Spooner Service Center, Tom Fredrickson, DC

- Met with students from the Spooner and Shell Lake FFA to review the Soil Study and Land Evaluation Handbook in preparation for the Tri-County Land Judging Contest.
- Assisted with a diverse group of high school students in the annual Tri-County Land Judging Contest held in Burnett County.
- Discussed soil properties and soil erosion with the 5th grade students from Burnett County at Conservation Field Day at Crex Meadows Wildlife Area.
- Met at Tomahawk Boy Scout Camp on Long Lake in Washburn County with Scout Directors from throughout the Midwest and discussed NRCS Conservation Programs.
- Participated in a late fall meeting in Burnett County addressing landowners affected by the wind damage from a summer storm that hit Northwest Wisconsin. A presentation was given discussing the EQIP and CStP program.
- Gave a presentation to the Burnett County Board on the various Conservation Programs offered by NRCS.
- Sent News articles throughout the year to the various newspapers in Burnett and Washburn Counties.
- Participated with Rural Development and the Farm Service Agency in providing outreach in regards to the Hispanic and Women Farmers Outreach. Outreach posters have been placed throughout the 2 counties on HWFC process.

Whitehall Service Center, Mark Kunz, DC

We worked with our FSA office to ensure all potential minority landowners were being given the opportunity to receive assistance from USDA in the county. We pulled a demographic report for the county and did a record search for the county to attempt to identify all minority landowners in the county.

Hmong Outreach and Direct Assistance: SC Jason Barrick met with the landowner, and his farm operator, a female Hmong vegetable crop farmer, at the farm to discuss the HEL determination process and soil conservation needs. She had recently applied for vegetable crop insurance on 30 different varieties she grows there and sells at local farmers markets. The request for insurance triggered a 1026 request from FSA to NRCS to determine the HEL status of the farmed areas.

On the farm, Samantha explained that last year pesticide drift from the neighboring operation killed their highly valuable snow peas they were planning on selling at market. This prompted them to look at crop insurance to hopefully alleviate forgone income in the future. Samantha does not spray any pesticides so this was quite disheartening to her losing a valuable crop that way she said. They had looked for crop insurance from several private crop insurance agencies,

being denied each time until a local Hmong community group suggested she contact the USDA for assistance. They found help with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) are now having their vegetable crops covered.

Addressing the overspray issue, I suggested that they first talk with their neighbor operator about the importance of spraying only when calm and preferably in the early morning when winds are typically lightest. This should help to prevent any over spraying from occurring in the future. I also discussed with them spreading restrictions of the 590 standard that the neighbor should follow and also the 200' setback from their private well on the farm site.

Samantha has her own machinery out there including a tractor and a chisel plow. In talking with the owner and operator, everyone agreed that tillage should be done in the spring time only as the area they farm could be prone to springtime runoff events and concentrated flow. I also suggested possibly planting a green manure cover crop such as winter rye for increased soil fertility and to lessen the chance of soil erosion. The area that Samantha is currently farming (2.5 acres) is relatively flat, less than 3% slope surrounded by a steeper topography. The owner is only allowing the operator to farm the least erodible valley bottom areas. These areas I explained to them are likely the most fertile and least prone to erosion when properly cared for.

Owner and operator were appreciative of our prompt and helpful services and the Conservation Plan and soils maps we provided. We also mailed them the DATCP 590 spreading restrictions map with a note explaining the setbacks. They wanted the maps as a talking point to discuss with their neighbor operators and to avoid potential overspray in the future and possible contamination of their water source on the farm.

Results: Owner and Operator are willingly participating in USDA programs and have suggestions on how they can sustainably farm and improve soil fertilities.

Amish Outreach and Awareness: On May 2, 2012 the Whitehall Field Office – Mark Kunz, Jason Barrick, Allene Howard, Laurel Qualley, and Diane Sczepanski visited an Amish goat dairy farm near Coral City. Roy & Esther Wengerd and their nine children milk 156 dairy goats. During the tour of the farm/goat/greenhouse operation, we had an opportunity to talk to the landowners and provide information about EQIP and how we can provide funding for high tunnel hoop houses.



This doe gave birth to twins as we were standing in the barn.

NORTHEAST AREA

Cranberry Office Outreach, Julie Ammel, RC

- 8 newsletter articles informing growers about NRCS conservation programs
- Summer Meeting Booklet article
- Energy Conservation meeting for growers & NRCS staff
- FY12 EQIP New Farmer contract, husband & wife owned marsh, wife is an Oneida Tribal member. This is the first known EQIP contract on a cranberry marsh owned by a tribal member.

Potato and Vegetable Growers Outreach, Julie Ammel, RC

Outreach to encourage participation in EQIP, and/or any conservation efforts.

Attended 5 WPVGA Water Task Force grower meetings to represent NRCS conservation programs.

Provided information for newsletter and general grower knowledge about NRCS conservation programs.

EQIP sign-up info

CIG sign-up info

Drought Emergency sign-up info

A major focus with this outreach is to encourage all P & V growers to view NRCS as a partner in conservation; specifically with water quality, water quantity, energy conservation, and soil conservation (i.e. wind erosion). These are all important issues for growers in the Central Sands area, especially with the recent drought. Many growers are above the AGI requirements, but others are not. It is these AGI qualified growers we want to reach with regards to our cost incentives programs. But again, a major goal is to build a working partnership with the WPVGA and its grower group.

Appleton Service Center, Lynn Szulczewski, DC

- The field office took part in the Oneida Nation's Day-On-The-Farm event, on April 12, 2012. This is an annual, educational event held at the Oneida Nation's farm, in Outagamie County. FSA and NRCS set up a display and provided general information to students about our agencies and what we do. I also explained



career and volunteer opportunities within NRCS. FSA went over their youth loan program. In addition, we asked the students to participate in a general farm-fact question and answer game and provided small prizes for correct answers. Approximately, 36 Native American middle school students (11 boys, 15 girls) and 5 high school FFA students (3 girls, 2 boys) participated in the event.

- A multi agency effort, organized by the LCD and involving DNR, NRCS, DATCP, UW-Ext and the private sector, was included in our outreach activity in FY12. 4th, 5th and 6th graders from 15 Outagamie County schools participated in the event. The 48th Annual Conservation Field Days was a huge success with approximately 800 students attending the 3-day event, held on September 18, 19 and 20. Public and private schools in the county are invited to attend, including the Oneida Nation and Parochial schools. The Field Days offers an outdoor teaching/learning environment with 9 different stations setup throughout a working farm. The students rotate to all the stations throughout the day to learn about soils (at the soils pit), geology (at the on-site quarry), forestry, wildlife, recycling, and farm practices. Minority groups were represented with approximately 2% being African American, 5% Hispanic and 5% Hmong.
- Field office staff also assisted with the Waupaca County Youth Conservation Fields Day in September.
- News articles, providing NRCS program information and contacts, were regularly submitted to the papers, placed on UW Extension's website and printed in UW-Extension's quarterly newsletter.
- Farm Technology Days was held in Outagamie County this year. The Appleton Field Office was involved in the Media Day for that event as well as assisting with the soil pit and displays in the Conservation Tent and Progress Pavilion.



Soil Pit Display - Farm Tech Days 2012



Conservation Tent – Farm Tech Days 2012



Progress Pavilion – Farm Tech Days 2012

- I attended the Women Caring for the Land Learning Circle which was held in Green Bay on August 16, 2012. I discussed how NRCS could provide assistance with conservation planning and the cost of implementation related to resource concerns, explained the NRCS programs and stressed that NRCS is here to help especially help beginning farmers. 21 women were in attendance with 2 being Native American.
- The Hispanic Women Farmer Claim process was shared with the Land Conservation Committee members this summer and information is always available in the public area of the field office. The process was also discussed at the Women Caring for the Land Learning Circle event.

Chilton Service Center, Joe Smedberg, DC

- 3 Newspaper Articles Promoting NRCS programs
- 2 Pipeline news articles directed to the farm community that includes Hispanic and historically underserved groups
- Calumet County NRCS staff provided extensive technical and financial assistance to four women farmers (historically underserved)
- Provided flyers for the Hispanic Women Farmer Claims Process at the Calumet County Fair

Green Bay Service Center, John Malvitz, DC

Worked with the Green Bay Hmong Community to promote EQIP. We had 6 applications for High Tunnels for growing vegetables for farm markets. However, all applicants canceled and were not funded. One difficulty involved the concept of reimbursement and their unwillingness to pay for the High Tunnel first with reimbursement after the structure was built.

Two women-owned businesses signed up for High Tunnels. While at the Green Bay Farmers Market I talked with them about how EQIP/ High Tunnels could help extend their growing season. One of the High Tunnels is under construction now and will be used to grow flowers for area farmers markets and a retail shop.

Green Bay SC hosted an outreach meeting for the Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment, Harris Sherman. The SC staff worked to arrange the event and identified key groups and individuals that were invited to attend. The event had excellent participation from a broad range of constituencies.

Luxemburg Service Center, Joe Johnson, DC

Dana (Clark) Swanson volunteered as the soils coach for the Luxemburg-Casco Envirothon Team, under adviser Charles Frisk. The team placed 1st at the WI Envirothon Competition then traveled to the National Canon Envirothon at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. They placed 31st out of 54 teams. Dana enjoyed teaching the students about observing soil properties, judging soil profiles, understanding soil's importance, and using a soil survey to find soils information.

Presented EQIP and CSP information at the FSA Annual Information Meeting in Casco, WI. About 10 landowners attended the meeting, including two women farmers. Several participants were interested in the High Tunnel Initiative and CSP.

Presented EQIP and CSP information at the Ag Information Meeting held at Bay Lake Bank in Kewaunee, WI. About 15 landowners attended, including several EQIP and CSP participants.

Led a stream ecology field day for the 6th, 7th, and 8th graders at St. Paul's Lutheran School in Luxemburg. Joe and Dana showed the students how stream invertebrates can be used to determine the stream quality. They borrowed teaching materials and tools from the Groundwater Guardian's Volunteer Program. The students had a lot of fun using kick nets to dig up little creatures in the stream, especially the crawdads!



Joe is helping the students identify invertebrates.



Joe is helping students find the best spots for invertebrates.

Dana Swanson attended the Women in Agriculture Meeting at the NWTC in Green Bay, WI. She, along with Lynn Szulczewski from the Appleton office, spoke about NRCS programs and answered questions. About 20 women were in attendance. They also toured the Oneida Nation's wetland restoration and buffalo farm.

Verna Molina and Dana Swanson visited with all of the high tunnel participants, gathering information about their growing season and their experience with the high tunnels. Four of the participants were women. All of the participants were very pleased with the increased quantity and quality of their products.

Manitowoc Service Center, Matt Rataczak, DC

The District Conservationist and GLRI Soil Conservationist teamed to work with Amanda Peterka, a reporter from Environment & Energy Publishing, LLC. That group was looking to do a story about the benefits of federal farm conservation programs and the reduced pollution in the Great Lakes region. NRCS worked with the reporter along with one of the farms highlighted in the story in Manitowoc County that was published on Greenwire on Thursday, November 17, 2011.

Marinette Service Center, Jeff Marosczek, Acting DC

October 2011 - District Conservationist Jodie Reisner went on radio show, "Our Town Show", to promote NRCS programs.

January 2012 - 2012 EQIP signup resulted in 3 contracts with Historically Underserved Participants. The 2012 CSP signup also produced 3 contracts for Historically Underserved Participants.

January 2012 - Hosted an Earth Team Volunteer student. He was able to learn about NRCS and complete some tasks in the office.

March 2012 - NRCS staff spoke at area co-op meeting to approximately 90 farmers to discuss NRCS programs. We talked about ways to improve conservation on their farms.

April 2012 - Hosted a forestry themed "Conservation Coffee". NRCS met with DNR and private foresters to discuss new forestry practices in EQIP and in CSP.

August 2012 - Hung up poster at service center announcing the Hispanic or Women Discrimination Claims Process.

Merrill Service Center, Peggy Lane, DC

The NRCS field office staff assisted the Tomahawk Elementary School's 4K students with a field trip to



Timm's Hill (the highest natural point in Wisconsin). The day was spent with ~66 four-five year olds rotating stations to learn about nature and outdoor activities through scavenger hunts, fishing, arts and craft, games, and a nature hike.



- District Conservationist, Peggy Lane, and Soil Conservation Technician, Pam Denzine assisted one of the Tomahawk Elementary School's 4K classrooms with their farming unit. The day was spent making butter and coloring a cow for on the classroom wall. The kids also learned about farm animals and products that come from a farm.
- Program information was provided for a Pheasants Forever (PF) meeting held in Lincoln County, WI. Unfortunately the event was not well attended, but of those that were present, 4 landowners requested additional program information on EQIP and CSP.
- Paul Daigle and Bill Kolodziej from Marathon Conservation Office held a beginning grazing meeting in Lincoln County. Cost share programs were discussed and several landowners have contacted the NRCS field office for program applications.
- The posters have been displayed at the counter and send to the county LCD's for outreach of the Hispanic Women Farmer Claims Process.



Neillsville Service Center, Jane Reigel, DC

NRCS provided brochures for a USDA display at the Neillsville Horse Auctions. This event is attended by many Amish and Mennonite producers.

Continue to offer technical assistance, EQIP and CSP contracts to Amish, Mennonite, limited resource and beginning farmers. Continue to have beginning farmer applicants this year, along with an increase in women owner/operator/decision maker contracts. Continue to provide soils

and soil information to new producers in the county. Wetland and highly erodible determinations were completed on 2 Amish and Mennonite producers, and conservation plans were developed on highly erodible land for those producers.

NRCS spoke at a UW Extension sponsored workshop about CSP for a Split Application Nitrogen field day.

NRCS field office staff took a field trip to a WHIP funded prairie planting to see firsthand how the prairie was growing and gain insight from the owner.

Oconto Service Center, Jeff Maroszek, DC

December 2011 - Worked together with UW Extension and UW Discovery Farms on a field day highlighting the effects of agricultural tile drainage. Presented information on wetland compliance for USDA programs. The event was attended by 35 farmers from Oconto and Marinette Counties.

January 2012 - Highlighting the diverse EQIP signup, NRCS worked on an application with a Hmong producer for a seasonal high tunnel house. The 2012 EQIP signup produced 4 EQIP contracts with Historically Underserved Participants. Also had 1 CSP contract for a Historically Underserved Participant.

February 2012 - NRCS and LCD staff presented various natural resource topics to 3rd graders at the Oconto Elementary School. NRCS staff spoke on the importance of healthy soil and had students build their own edible soil profile. Feedback and thank you cards from students indicated the NRCS station was their favorite! Event was attended by 75 students.

May 2012 - NRCS and LCD staff presented at the 1st Annual Oconto Outdoor Education Day. Among topics presented were: rusty crayfish identification, nature scavenger hunt, bird species of Wisconsin, and a tree identification station. This event was attended by about 70 students and 20 parents/teachers.



July 2012 – DC and Soil Conservationist Chris Stephenson volunteered in the NRCS booth at Farm Technology Days in Bear Creek, WI. The annual event was attended by nearly 40,000 people. The afternoon was spent talking to attendees on a wide range of topics from “What is NRCS?” to specific program questions.

August 2012 - Hung up posters at service center and courthouse announcing the Hispanic or Women Discrimination Claims Process. Also announced at Land Conservation Committee meeting.

Fall 2012

The Oconto Field Office hosted a college student as an Earth Team Volunteer. This “job shadowing” experience showed him what NRCS does and gave him a knowledge base for future career decisions. He also gained experience in air photo interpretation by organizing aerial slides for scanning.



Oshkosh Service Center, Merrie Schamberger, DC

HWFC Outreach: Throughout the year we have conducted outreach to female and Hispanic farmers, sending letters to all pertinent cooperators and hanging information in prominent areas of the office and outside our office. We sent articles to the local newspapers and the UW-Extension regarding the matter as well.

The WI Plant Materials Committee met in Oshkosh this year. We visited a WRP easement with plantings of Prairie Cord grass (PCG) and Canada Blue-Joint grass. We are studying how PCG competes with canary grass.



Earth Team Volunteer Melanie Boone helped with EQIP practice certification, CRP field evaluation, wetland determinations, CSP field checks, correspondence and filing. Melanie was hired as an intermittent in June -September. Melanie volunteered at Farm Technology Days helping helping out where needed.



NRCS participated in the 3-day WPS farm show that is held at the EAA grounds in Oshkosh in March.

In September NRCS held the annual Stakeholders meeting where we agreed upon a process and ranking for local EQIP fund pools. I had inquired of local newspapers if they would print the public meeting notice but never did see it in the paper.

Shared information about Backyard Conservation the Urban Ecology Center in Milwaukee.

NRCS participate at a Bird Festival in Oshkosh. The celebration is in honor of International Migratory Bird Day as well as the fact that Oshkosh has been designated as a “Bird City”. We had “Backyard Conservation” display as well as pollinator habitat info.

Outreach at the farmers’ market - provided general EQIP and high tunnel information (in Hmong and English) along with my business card to vendors. Many of the farmers were from Brown, Outagamie and Waupaca in addition to Winnebago County. I gave them the name of the DC in their respective counties.



Rhineland Service Center, Michael Stinebrink, DC

Continue direct contacts to the 3 tribes within our service area – Lac du Flambeau Chippewa, Sokaogon Chippewa, and Forest County Potawatomi – to promote and explain programs and support existing EQIP, WHIP, and CSP contracts. Those efforts resulted in the first Seasonal High Tunnel System, funded through EQIP, to be contracted with any of the 3 tribes. Rhineland NRCS also coordinated with Farm Service Agency to update the Common Land Unit map for Forest County Potawatomi – a substantial undertaking, given the amount of land under tribal control – while processing their CSP application. Forest County Potawatomi decided to withdraw their application, due to concerns about increases in workload associated with a potential CSP application.

The Rhineland NRCS staff – Tom Melnarik and I – attended the Working Effectively with Native Americans training course and I attended the Civil Rights Compliance in Program Delivery course, both of which were offered by NEDC. One or both of us regularly attend WTCAC meetings. And, we hosted a WTCAC intern, who is a Sokaogon Chippewa tribal member.

I have researched the Census of Agriculture data, for my 4 counties, which show a total of 6 producers of “more than one race” and 12 of “Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino origin.” I have not made efforts to directly contact those producers.

I have informed the 4 Land Conservation Committees of the Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process, on multiple occasions, and I have hung the appropriate posters in the USDA Service Center and requested that they be hung at the Land Conservation Department offices.

Shawano Service Center, Sherrie Zenk-Reed, Tribal Liaison/Soil Conservationist

Outreach through Education

Teamed up with Waupaca County NRCS and set-up the NRCS career booth at the Clintonville Career Fair, April 2012. This annual event invites 8th graders from Shawano, Waupaca, and Menominee counties to explore career opportunities. This year’s event was attended by approximately 830 students.

Presented a PowerPoint about USDA programs and how Tribes can participate at the Great Lakes Regional Tribal Food Producer Summit held in Green Bay on April 24, 2012. The summit has approximately 50 attendees from a variety of Midwest Tribes.

Talked to a Shawano High School Agriculture Class on May 3, 2012 about resource issues and land conservation. The class was made up of 30 high school age young adults.

Assisted with the June 24, 2012, Shawano County Breakfast on the Farm by providing and staffing a soil pit display. The event was attended by approximately 6000 people.

New and Beginning Farmer

Developed 7 2012 EQIP contracts with Beginning Farmer certification.

Stevens Point Service Center, Melissa Knipfel, DC

Provided AgrAbility of Wisconsin information to a Portage County landowner.

Outreach to women landowners at Trout Unlimited chapter and Portage County Forage Council on NRCS Programs and benefits;

Participated in UW-Stevens Point Job fair, made many student contacts; prepared a USAJobs handout, with webpage address and the different positions available in NRCS and other Federal Agencies.

Participate in two June Dairy Breakfasts –made 7 Beginning Farmer contacts (2F/5M) and many other traditional farm participant contacts.

Hosted Eleanor Horvath, summer intern, at Stevens Point FO

Waupaca Service Center, Lisa Neuenfeldt, DC

- On February 16, Lisa spoke at Fox Valley Technical College in Clintonville. In attendance were approximately 17 men and 3 women; all farmers. She summarized many of the NRCS programs that are helpful to agricultural producers, such as EQIP and CSP.
- In May, Lisa was a guest lecturer at a field biology class conducted by Perdue University-Calumet Campus. The class consisted of mainly minority and non-traditional students. The lecture topics included the history and demise of the tall grass prairie, types of prairie, prairie restoration and invasive species management.
- The NRCS office wrote an article that was published in the summer UWEX newsletter which explained the new Separation of Duties policy and how to stay in compliance with HEL/WC regulations.
- On October 5, Waupaca County held its annual Conservation Field Day at Hartmann Creek State Park. Adam Abel, Pat Lake, Chris Miller and Lisa Neuenfeldt spoke to over 300 5th graders throughout the day about the importance of conserving soil, how to make their own soil profile and went on a soil scavenger hunt.
- On October 19, Lisa spoke to the Applied Science class from Weyauwega H.S. about the importance of soil and water conservation and general soil science principles.
- The office approved six EQIP contracts with beginning farmers, one of which was also female, and one contract with a limited resource farmer. Two additional EQIP contracts were approved with female farmers. One CSP contract was signed with a beginning farmer.



Waupaca Conservation Field Day



Wausau Service Center, Amy Neigum, DC

The *Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims* poster was available at the USDA Service Center

The Permanent Trellis at the USDA Service Center grew pole beans with the help of the Master Gardeners.

The Samoset Council of the Boy Scouts installed the stream bank protection project.

A mailing to promote WRP was prepared by the summer student and will be mailed to landowners when the WRP program is re-authorized. An article promoting WRP was published in the Aglink newsletter.

Wausau field office employees staffed a booth on NRCS programs at the Farmers Union conference in January.

Amy Neigum helped staff the AgVentures tent for a day at the Central Wisconsin Fair that taught kids about agriculture.

Wisconsin Rapids Service Center, Roy Diver, DC

- 1) Set up and staffed an NRCS display at the Wisconsin Rapids Dairy-Berry Breakfast, over 1100 people attended the event, included in the display were several publications that have been translated into the Hmong language for distribution.
- 2) Brief technical assistance to 32 female landowners.

- 3) Assisted four female farmers with 2012 EQIP applications, 3 were approved for funding and are now new contracts.

- 4) Provided NRCS career information to 12 MSTC students during a conservation field trip organized by NRCS for an urban forestry class, one student was female.

- 5) One female Earth Team Volunteer still available for work at the field office, but due to changes in her work schedule no hours worked in 2012.

- 6) DC attended "Working Effectively with American Indians" training, at the training he gave contact information to Ho-Chunk Nation employee and offered assistance if needed in Wood County.

SOUTHWEST AREA

SW Area Office

- Facilitated a distance Learning site for the WI School for Beginning Dairy and Livestock Farmers at Viroqua (Nov 2011- April 2012)
- Participated in panel discussion as an Agency representative during 2 “Women Caring for the Land” Forums that was held in Southern Wisconsin. (Grant and Lafayette Counties) This opportunity afforded the Agency the opportunity to inform female landowners of the services and programs that the Agency has available to the public.
- Supported efforts to provide a wide variety of resources for landowners of all backgrounds and abilities, giving advice to help them make land management decisions. These efforts would include assistance provided to both the Amish and Organic Farming communities.
- Example A: Staff fostered relationships with the Amish community. Staff also played a major role in encouraging the Amish to host a pasture walk within the Amish community and approximately 20 Amish producers were in attendance.
- Example B: Prepared informational packages tailored toward underserved audiences, such as: non program specific information Amish Landowners and non-chemical packages for Organic Landowners.
- Effectively promoted open exchange of information and ideas within and outside own team; solicits others' ideas and perspectives. Examples would include: serving as the state representative by participating in the planning 2013 session for The Organic Conference, attend the Organic Valley Stewardship Network Agency Collaboration.
- Educational activities with Universities and local Schools
- UW-Platteville (11/23) – lectured approximately 20 students about cultural resources and T&E species and importance during the planning process.
- Gave presentation to approximately 15 students about NRCS careers and how they impact agriculture. Richland Center High School.
- Conducted wetland compliance meeting to include Sauk County, WI DNR and ACOE. During Sauk County wetland compliance meetings, landowners/operators on wetland determination procedures, soils, plants, hydrology, appeal procedures, and other state, county and federal required approvals during wetland determinations on their land.
- Actively participated in Farm Technology Days, Region 3 collegiate soil judging, River Valley Youth Conservation Day, Crawford County youth days, Richland Youth Conservation Days, Grant and Green County Soil Judging Meets X3.
- Developed Outreach promotional plans for WRP, CStP and Healthy Grazing Lands.

Prairie du Chien Service Center, Rick Lange, DC

- Implementing (or continue to implement) at least one value-added initiative/plan to increase participation of historically underserved populations in conservation programs. Seven new EQIP contracts were written with Female landowners and currently 16 contracts are being serviced to include a combination of female landowners and GLTB customers

- provided tech support of WAAE in annual update of WI High School Land Judging Manual
- Providing conservation planning, resource assessments, and technical application assistance to a growing number of diverse, eclectic, non-traditional landowners
- Continues to support the soils education within the community, by serving as an official judge of UWP, Green County, and River Ridge High School Land Judging Contests. Lange also served as speaking contest judge for LCD speaking contest as well as participating as an annual presenter for LCD Youth Conservation Days.

Lancaster Service Center, Melissa Bartz DC

- Participating in Cuba City High School Career Fair
- Participated in panel discussion as an Agency representative during 2 “Women Caring for the Land” Forums that was held in Southern Wisconsin. (Grant and Lafayette Counties) This opportunity afforded the Agency the opportunity to inform female landowners of the services and programs that the Agency has available to the public.
- Participated in Wings Over WI seed/food plot/ CRP day by distributing seed and answering CRP questions
- Assisted the Grand County LWCD by serving as an instructor at 4 days of nutrient mgmt. classes for farmers

Monroe Service Center, Jason Thomas, DC

- Held CRP workshop with cooperation from Lafayette County and Erin Holmes at Woodford, Wisconsin as our one area wide outreach effort. Women producers and the potential reenrolls were invited.
- Utilized the VRA hiring authority to assist the agency with filling a critical staffing position.
- Met with Clayton Ruegsegger the local veteran affairs officers and his staff to discuss the VRA hiring authorities. They were unaware of USAJOBS. Called Rachel Geiselman and recommended one of our staff speak at their annual meeting in Richland Center in May 2013.

Dodgeville Service Center, Andy Walsh, DC

- Participating in various Conservation oriented events, such as: Conservation Day at the Iowa Co. Farm for approx. 120 Iowa Co. 6th graders, presenting NRCS program information at Military Ridge Landowner Workshop.(57 were in attendance)
- Attended 2 outreach meetings for approx. 30 landowners interested in CRP
- Sponsored a booth to distribute program information at the Iowa Co. Farmers Appreciation Day in Dodgeville and provided program information to landowners attending the Prairie Festival held at Folklore Village.

Mauston Service Center, Jon Field, DC

- Outreach efforts included booths at county fair, county dairy breakfast and Mauston farmer’s market and news articles on program sign-ups in two local papers

Onalaska Service Center, Greg Yakle, DC

- Participated in the La Crosse Youth Conservation Day exhibit w/ MLRA Staff

- Visited 2 Farmers Market to visit with farmers on services Farm Bill Program availability and services the agency has to offer. There was an emphasis on the promotion of Hoop Houses.
- Continuing to foster relations with the Ho Chunk nation by working with tribal planning staff to completed plan reviews and modifications on 12 existing contracts for Ho-Chunk Nation. Met w/ Nation representatives quarterly to determine conservation needs for special projects including Muscoda Bison Ranch Effigy Mounds Protection and Parameter Native Plants Project. These reviews would include the task related to access road repairs.
- Personal Mailing completed to Hmong landowners regarding 2012 SHTS EQIP sign-up.
- Serving as AIAN-SEPM to WI State Civil Rights Committee. Recruited 4 WI AI students to complete applications for 2012 WI STEP student program. Completed 4 mailings for WI NRCS staff during American Indian History Month.

Darlington Service Center, Chris Miller, DC

- Conservation Field Days for Lafayette County 6TH graders
- Contacted Female producer via mailing in order to stimulate interested in CRP sign up.
- Held CRP workshop and invite included female landowners.
- Assisted UW Extension with arrangements to conduct 2 pasture walks with the county to encourage healthy pasture/hayland management.
- Provided technical assistance to Amish producers on HEL and Wetland Compliance



Women Caring for the Land Workshop held in Lafayette County in September, 2012

Sparta Service Center, Greg Wheeler DC

- During the FY12 CSP signup Wheeler was able to secure a contract with a Hispanic (HU) producer. This producer has had an EQIP contract in the past and this CSP contract will help him with his apple orchard. Also an EQIP contract with a female Native American (HU) was written for assistance with their organic Maple Syrup and a High Tunnel. Thirdly a CSP contract was written with a female producer on her organic farm to assist with composting. A total of Eight CSP and EQIP contracts were written with female producers.
- On July 20 the Sparta NRCS FO hosted a CRP participant meeting. They were happy with the turnout. This should make completing current Cons Plans easier and quicker. Steve Bertjens came and covered burn policy as well. Erin, farm bill biologist was there as well. Agencies included FSA, US FWS, NRCS, DNR and RC&D Central Wisconsin Windshed. An afternoon field trip was also successful for NRCS and the other agencies invited.
- Staff worked with SC Julie Ammel to make arrangements to provide Technical Assistance to Cranberry growers.
- Sparta NRCS had a booth at the Monroe County Dairy Breakfast on Saturday June 2 and a booth at the Monroe County Fair on July 26-29. Wheeler was able to assist county residents with questions on USDA-NRCS programs and Conservation Technical Assistance.

Richland Center Service Center, Carlton Peterson, DC

- Provided assistance to historically underserved (beginning farmers, minorities, religion) EQIP participants with contract development. The field office had 39 General EQIP applications for the FY-12 signup. Sixteen percent (6) were female applicants, and 16% beginning farmers. Of the total 19 contracts that were approved, 21% were contracts associated with female operators, and 31% were contracts associated with beginning farmers.
- Provided similar assistance to EQIP Driftless Area Land Conservation Initiative participants. Forty-six applications were received. This includes 5 female, and 1 Hispanic applicant. Of these historically underserved participants, four contracts were obligated.
- Provided “Women Caring for the Land” news release to the local radio station (WROC).
- Wisconsin Woodland Advocacy Group - The Richland County NRCS staff presented an overview of conservation programs to the Richland County Woodland Advocacy Group (<http://mywisconsinwoods.org/get-to-know-your-woodland-advocate>). Attendees serve as mentors to other private small woodland owners in Richland County, helping landowners take advantage of the opportunities – and tackle the challenges – of managing woodlands in southwestern Wisconsin. The group requested an informational meeting with NRCS & FSA staff regarding available conservation programs and program eligibility requirements. The group wanted to experience what a private landowner, having no established farm records, may face when entering USDA offices.

One advocate member who had no previous experience with USDA was singled out to serve as an example. While other members observed, Farm Service Agency staff walked

the group through farm and tract establishment, SCIMS data entry, and compliance eligibility. NRCS staff discussed the various programs offering cost share assistance and additional technical assistance.

Apparently the program was a success. During the recent Driftless Area Land Conservation Initiative, the field office, with support of the WDNR foresters had 46 DALCI applications for practices ranging from brush management to forest health improvement.

- **Richland County Fair CSP Display** The most recent Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) saw a record 19 applications. Of those, 13 applications became obligated contracts. Each year has seen an increase in applications. Hopping to continue this success, a CSP display was set up in the conservation building during the Richland County Fair.



- **Conservation Field Days-Richland School District** - On October 2, 2012, NRCS technician Todd Cockroft assisted the Richland County Land Conservation Department with Conservation Field Days at the Ash Creek County Forest. Approximately 120 6th grade students from the Ithaca & Riverdale school districts learned about conservation practices, resource protection, and gained hands-on experience using surveying equipment.



Baraboo Service Center

- Conservation Youth Days on September 19 and October 4 – 350 School Students from Sauk Prairie and River Valley Middle Schools.
- Represented Baraboo Field Office and staffed an NRCS exhibit at the North American Manure Expo in Prairie du Sac on August 22, 2012. Approximately 5000 attendees.
- The Acting District Conservationist participated in an interview with the Baraboo News Republic about the EQIP Drought Cover Crop sign-up. Circulation went out to Portage and Sauk Prairie newspapers also.
- Soil Conservation Technician, Tony Pillow wrote an article for the County Land Conservation Department Newsletter (Conservation Chronicles) on the topic of Grass Waterways and the need to implement this practice in Sauk County. Circulation is about 1000 copies.
- The Acting D.C. participated in a UW Extension working session with agricultural producers in the county to determine the needs for agricultural programs and more specifically the type of skills needed by a new agricultural agent. A diverse group of farmers participated in the session and all the agriculture agencies gave an overview of their agency priorities and strategic plan.

- During the EQIP Drought Cover Crop signup the Acting District Conservationist contacted agricultural consultants (crop consultants) to publicize the drought assistance.

Viroqua Service Center, Sam Skemp, DC

- I talked about NRCS programs with over 100 growers and producers in August at the local Farmers Market. These discussions included several minority and beginning farmers, many who were not familiar with NRCS programs. These producers expressed gratitude for the information and talked about pursuing program participation in the future.
- Due to radio interviews and other efforts to emphasize the availability of our programs to all producers, the Vernon FO once again received over 20 applications for programs from female and historically underserved producers. 15 of these applications were successfully funded in FY 2012.
- Attended four local pasture walks, including farms managed by beginning and limited resource farmers. These were well attended and staff discussed the programs NRCS has available.
- Conservation plans were completed and technical assistance was given to eight Amish producers.


Onalaska MLRA Soil Survey Office, Shaunna Repking, Soil Scientist

- Onalaska MLRA Soil Survey staff acted as official judges, sometimes in conjunction with Field Office and Area Office Staff, for high school land judging competitions in Dunn (October 2011), Grant (April 2012), and Trempealeau (May 2012) Counties. Staff also acted as official judges for the Regional Collegiate Soil Judging completion held in Richland Center, WI in October 2011.
- In May, Shaunna Repking represented Soil Scientists/Conservationists at the LaGrange Elementary School career day in Tomah, WI. She used a powerpoint presentation and field demonstrations to teach the children about the education needed and skills used as a soil scientist or conservationist.
- Shaunna Repking was Station Captain and Donna Ferren Guy and Mike England were Station Moderators for the 2012 Canon Envirothon on April 20, 2012; 100 students attended. The Wisconsin Canon Envirothon is a competition where high school students compete for a spot at the National Canon Envirothon. The Envirothon tests students' knowledge in Wildlife, Aquatics, Forestry, and Soils.
- Shaunna Repking, Mike England, and Donna Ferren Guy acted as soil experts for the UW-La Crosse Basic Wetland Delineation Course held July 16-18, 2012 in La Crosse.
- Shaunna Repking and Greg Yakle taught children about soil at their a Scoop on Soil booth during the Youth Outdoor Festival at Pettibone Park in La Crosse, WI. Over 250 children and their parents were in attendance, a record year! They had children investigate samples for soil fauna with magnifying glasses and also build their own mini soil monoliths.
- In September, Shaunna Repking gave a presentation at the Crawford County Youth Conservation Day; 184 students attended. She taught them about soil science and soil mapping basics.

SOUTHEAST AREA

Elkhorn Service Center, Greg Igl, DC

Walworth County Outreach Activities are a collaborative effort with local other local agencies

Activities	Date	Comments
Presentation to the Elkhorn Rotary Club	1/4/2011	presentation regarding NRCS activities and programs by Igl
Southeast WI Grazing Seminar in Whitewater	3/21/2012	NRCS helped sponsor meeting
NRCS display set up for Delavan Lake Watershed Initiative	4/25/2012	
NRCS display set up for Walworth Co Dairy Breakfast	6/16/2012	
Walworth County Prairie Walk	7/11/2012	
MRBI Outreach Activities*- collaborative effort with KMLT		 MRBI Outreach 2012 Media Releases.pdf
See attached file for full report on MRBI outreach		
MRBI Outreach materials displayed at USDA Service Center	FY12	displayed at counter
See attachment regarding MRBI - outreach	FY12	various outreach activities - collaborative effort through KMLT
Landowner Workshops for CRP in Elkhorn	3/7/12	Cooperative efforts with FSA
Outreach to Hispanic and women farmers*		<i>*collaborative effort with Farm Service Agency</i>
HWCP outreach to Sharon Brigham Memorial Public Library	10/26/2011	HWCP fact sheets, posters and summary provided
HWCP outreach to Darien Public Library	10/19/2011	HWCP fact sheets, posters and summary provided
News Release: USDA Notice to Women and Hispanic Farmers	10/12/2011	11 area news publications
Newsreleases		
Conservation Stewardship Program announced	12/12/2011	sent to local newspapers
EQIP/WHIP Program announced "NRCS offers New Opportunities for Farms and Wildlife"	2/3/2012	sent to local newspapers
"NRCS announces Assistance in Drought Affected Counties"	8/13/2012	sent to local newspapers
Waking up Wisconsin's Wetlands - Igl contacted for	August	Wisconsin Agriculturist



Greg Igl, DC in Elkhorn, discusses conservation with landowner in the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watershed Initiative Special Project area.

Fond du Lac Service Center, Cory Drummond, DC

- Worked with 15 HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) liaisons to share with them opportunities in NRCS and encourage agriculture, biological sciences, and engineer students to apply and explore these opportunities.
- Brian Kind worked at the 2012 Farm Technology Days NRCS booth and was able to promote NRCS to many attendees.
- Cory Drummond worked at the Fond du Lac “Breakfast on the Farm Event” which took place at a local farm. Over 3,500 people were served a great breakfast and a good time was enjoyed by all.
- Cory worked the NRCS/ FSA booth at the Growing Power International Urban Ag Conference at the State Fairgrounds. There was great interest in the Seasonal High Tunnel practice and organic initiatives

Jefferson Service Center, Dennis Vollmer, DC

NRCS District Conservationist Dennis Vollmer, and Soil Conservation Technician Brendon Blank, both of the Jefferson Service Center, have been talking with Hmong farmer, Cheu Vang, about soil erosion and ways to improve his soil health. Some of his fields are highly erodible and he is anxious to learn as much as he can to protect the soil for his vegetable/fresh market operations. He is also converting some acres to organic vegetable production.

Cheu and Chia Vang moved to America in April 1976 from Laos. Cheu had been in the Laotian Army and worked for USA Aid during the war. They moved to Jefferson, Wisconsin, in 2005 and started growing vegetables for local Farmer's Markets.

Cheu heard about NRCS and the seasonal high tunnel pilot project from his brother in Rhode Island. He was interested in growing earlier produced vegetables for the farmer's markets. Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Cheu's high tunnel is now complete. This project has served as an introduction to NRCS, opening the door to more conservation practices to address erosion and runoff on the highly erodible acres. Cheu has started growing cover crops after the vegetables. Next spring he plans to install Contour Grass Buffer Strips with technical assistance from NRCS. If that doesn't slow the erosion enough, he may work with NRCS to install a grassed waterway and diversion in the future.





The Season High Tunnel Pilot Project has introduced many new customers to NRCS, leading them to initiate other types of practices for erosion and runoff control, nutrient management and water quality practices.

Juneau Service Center, Nathan Fikkert, DC

Participating in the Dodge County 4-H Farm City days

On-Site “field trip” with middle-school children from Beaver Dam, discussions included conservation, NRCS job duties, and career opportunities

Posted HWFRCP posters up at Post Offices, Hardware stores, and CO-Ops throughout the County

Created an “e-newsletter” that is distributed to any Dodge County Producer willing to share their email with us, newsletter includes information about programs, conservation, special events, and HWFRCP information.

Madison Service Center, Adam Dowling, DC

- Sent out grazing class, conference and pasture walk info out to all grazing clients.
- Distribution of information about the Women and Hispanic Farmer Claims process, posted information at local office in public places.
- Worked with local orchard owners, farm market producers, local CSA producers, some resulting in contracts.
- Continued to offer assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers, Limited Resource and Beginning Farmers resulting in program contracts, and conventional operations owned by females.
- Gave presentation on NRCS employment opportunities to Dane County Parks interns.

Portage Service Center, Twyle Kite, DC

The Portage Field Office submitted articles for the agricultural newsletter called the *Columbia County Ag Reporter*. This free educational newsletter is a joint outreach effort between multiple agricultural/conservation agencies & organizations located within the county. It contains numerous articles informing & educating readers of available opportunities, technical assistance, & financial assistance. The local Field Office receives numerous inquiries from this valuable outreach publication. <http://columbia.uwex.edu/agriculture/newsletter/>

The local Field office continues to work with the Ho Chunk Nation on a WHIP contract for an oak savanna restoration project which contains numerous effigy mounds. This project was featured in the national NRCS This Week, dated June 13, 2007. The 40-acre wayside, formerly

owned by the WI Dept of Transportation and now by the Ho-Chunk Nation, contains over 20 effigy mounds. Restoration of the site will take place over the next couple years.

In cooperation with Columbia County FSA, local Service Center had a joint booth at the Columbia County Fair to create awareness of conservation & programs available from NRCS, FSA & Columbia Co LWCD. This outreach project allowed staff to talk with both traditional & untraditional customers, which included several women & minorities.



NRCS participating in Columbia County LWCD Fall Tour

Participated in LWCD Fall Tour, which highlighted several projects completed in 2011 to the public & elected officials. A couple of the projects were jointly completed with assistance from LWCD & NRCS. Event was covered by the local media.

In cooperation with Columbia County LWCD, UWEX & DATCP, we have developed an annual nutrient management farmer training program. Farmers successfully completing the course are certified through DATCP to write their own plans. Female producers often participate in the training.

Distributed fact sheets and posted notice for Hispanic &/or Women Farmers & Ranchers Claims of Discrimination. Activities included the following: posted at Portage USDA Service Center, Columbia County Fair, numerous local businesses, Columbia County LWCD, UWEX, printed in *Columbia County Ag Reporter*, and distributed at local farmers' market & local women/Hispanic organizations.

Local Field Office Staff participated in Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association Black Hawk Chapter's Fall Field Day. Among presenters was Tyler Maas, NRCS Soil Conservationist Technician, talking about locating & designing of forest trails/stream crossings.

Numerous press releases were issued to local newspapers & radio stations throughout the fiscal year. Articles are submitted for FSA's e-newsletters.

Coordinated "hoop house" outreach project with UWEX to target untraditional or under represented producers. NRCS presentation



Tyler Maass presenting at WI Woodland Owners Assoc Fall Field Day

was given at Columbia County Master Gardeners November Meeting.

Distributed NRCS publications to members of the Women's Professional Rodeo Association (WPRA) at their Great Lakes Circuit Finals held in Louisville, KY. WPRA is the oldest women's sports association in the country and the only one governed entirely by women. Members are often women who own both livestock and land.

Portage FO has the following active CSP, EQIP & WHIP contracts:

- 12 with females
- 1 with American Indians
- 5 with Beginning Farmers, Limited Resource Producers, or Socially Disadvantaged

Field Office staff assisted RC&D Grazing Specialist with outreach efforts to Amish farmers in Columbia, Green Lake & Marquette Counties. Numerous prescribed grazing plans were developed & implemented.

Sheboygan Service Center, Mike Patin, DC

- Outreached to the Sheboygan County Farmers Market director to send Seasonal High Tunnel Materials, and volunteer to do a presentation on EQIP and the Seasonal High Tunnel.
- Contacted Kia Thao, who previously applied for a Seasonal High Tunnel to see if she was interested in following up with an application for 2013. Sent application information to her.
- Contracted 1 Seasonal High Tunnel with a Limited Resource Farmer.
- Contracted with 2 beginning farmers: Seasonal High Tunnel and Orchard Pest Management.
- Worked with Greg Booher from Lakeshore Technical College on their Progressive Operators Series, and discussed cover crops and NRCS programs to assist beginning farmers.
- Posted Hispanic Women Farmer Claims Process in several places within the office and hallway.

Waukesha Service Center, Megan Duberstein, Acting DC

- This year the Waukesha NRCS Field Office teamed up with the local FSA office to put on a brief workshop about the Conservation Reserve Program for the general sign up 43. We had about 120 people show up for this meeting.

- Waukesha field office staff also volunteered time at the Rural Landowner Conference held in Kenosha and at the Farm Technology Days held in New London to provide information on programs and answer general questions.
- The Field Office also worked with FSA on locally posting information about the Hispanic and Women Farmers Claim Process.

West Bend Service Center, Joshua Odekirk

Walk an Hour in My Shoes Hispanic Cultural Awareness Program on April 6, 2012: Elsie Gonzalez, soil conservationist, and the HEPM were present at this meeting to share their experiences about working more effectively with Hispanic/Latino communities. Brochures about NRCS volunteer and careers opportunities were displayed and available to participants.

Tree Program on April 23-27, 2012: West Bend Field Office staff worked along with the Washington County LWCD and the Ozaukee County LWD during their annual tree programs in preparing tree orders for customers and providing information on how to manage the trees. The tree programs are sponsored by the counties and offer a variety of evergreens and deciduous trees, wildlife shrubs and wildflower seeds. NRCS programs were discussed with members of the public as they picked up their trees.

Grazing Seminar on April 25, 2012: Elsie Gonzalez, soil conservationist, was present at the seminar to talk to participants about EQIP cost shared practices and technical assistance available to grazing operations and people interested in becoming grazers. About 40 people attended the seminar and at least 3 follow up were conducted to landowners interested in conservation practices, one HU application was taken.

Clean Sweep on May 12 and October 13, 2011: The Washington County LWCD sponsored the Bi-Annual Clean Sweep which provides an opportunity for county residents to properly dispose or recycle unwanted hazardous chemicals, electronic goods, pharmaceutical medication and used tires. LCD and West Bend FO staff helped provide customer full service for tires disposal.

Farm Technology Days on July 19, 2012: Aaron Reynolds, soil conservation technician, was present at the NRCS booth to answer questions about conservation programs and practices to attendees.

Ozaukee County Fair on August 1-5, 2012: NRCS had a display to promote the conservation programs. Display included the “Notice to Hispanic and/or women farmers or ranchers” for compensation for claims of discrimination. Program brochures and booklets were available in both English and Spanish. The West Bend FO staff was present to answer questions on conservation practices and programs, as well as careers in agriculture and volunteer opportunities. A station



with different soil profile layers was setup for kids to make their own soil profile to take home while learning about soils.

Second National-International Urban & Small Farm Conference on September 7- 9, 2012:

Josh Odekirk, district conservationist, was present at the NRCS booth to answer questions on conservation programs to attendees. The conference, sponsored by Growing Power had the goal to provide guidance on how to plan, develop and grow small farms in urban and rural areas. The conference was attended by agricultural producers from around the world.

Josh Odekirk, district conservationist, prepared several articles to be published in the **Washington County Planning Department Spring/Summer 2012 Newsletter**. The newsletter is sent to all landowners in the county.

West Bend Field Office had a **volunteer** (Travis Mead) who worked over 88 hours. He recently took a full time position with NRCS in Louisiana.

Westfield Service Center, Michelle Komiskey, DC

2012 was a great year for getting out of the office for some outreach activities.

Our Farm Bill Biologist assisted the Westfield Service Center in hosting a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) landowner meeting in March. This meeting included the Farm Bill Biologist, Farm Service Agency (FSA) and NRCS staff. The goal is to reach new and seasoned CRP participants for open discussion on maintenance, goals and expectations of CRP. This meeting was attended by about 10 landowners.

NRCS assisted the Marquette County Land and Water Conservation Department with their tree sale, distributing 50,000 trees to about 300 orders. We also use the days to meet with our customers and discuss construction, contracts and conservation plans that we are working on.

The entire Westfield NRCS Office participated in the Waushara County Conservation Field Days in May. Many facets of the conservation community come together at Lake Lucerne Camp & Retreat Center in Waushara County to share our experiences and knowledge with 5th graders in the county. This event includes presenters from local, state and federal agencies as well as local conservation experts. The Westfield NRCS sets up an area to discuss the importance of soil conservation, what is living beneath the surface and to do some soil texturing and soil probing with the kids. Our main goal is to have about 200 kids leave with dirty hands.

June 29, UW-Madison hosted a PEOPLE Program event. About 15 elementary children from the Madison area with varied backgrounds attended this event. Westfield NRCS presented a discussion about careers in the natural resources, specific conservation practices and tools that we use to do our job.

Westfield NRCS and Marquette County Land and Water Conservation Department displayed a joint fair booth at the Marquette County Fair. This display highlighted projects from both offices showing before and after photos, included information about programs, technical assistance and contact information.

In August, Westfield Office hosted informational meetings about management practices on a large Wetland Reserve Program easement. One meeting was with our conservation partners for

input and discussion, the second one was with the private landowners to discuss future management practices. We worked with about 5 partners and about 5 individual landowners and the meetings included local, area and state office staff.

Westfield NRCS hosted three Local Work Group Meetings. One was held in each of our counties, Adams, Marquette and Waushara. These meetings are open to conservation partners and local community members. Each meeting was attended by 5-10 people. We discussed local conservation priorities, new and existing resource concerns and trends in the agricultural industry.

Marquette County Land and Water Conservation Department hosted the annual speaking contest in October. Several area students presented original speeches to the judges for ranking, and for critique to better the speech content and delivery. One person from our Westfield Office volunteers for this event annually to assist in the judging. This year, about 6 speakers presented.

Continuous Outreach throughout the year included advertising of the Hispanic Women Farmer Claims Process. Our office posted fliers in the office and at several public locations in Adams, Marquette and Waushara Counties. Information was handed out at all local meetings and to partners such as LWCDs and UW-Extension offices.

Events that were held near our area were also attended by staff. The Westfield NRCS staff represented the NRCS at the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Farm Technology Days in Appleton and the Farm Bureau State Meeting in Wisconsin Dells.



Marian with captive audience at PEOPLE Project presentation

Special Emphasis Program Reports

Asian Pacific Islander Program Manager Report, Ka Ying Vang

Kev pab ua liajteb



USDA UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NRCS
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Funding for Agriculture

November 15, 2011 5:30 - 7:00 PM
Gander Mountain Lodge Meeting Room at Gander Mountain
6440 Sculy Drive
Eau Claire, WI 54701



Kawm txog:

- kev pab los ntawm USDA-NRCS kho tej liajteb kom zoo
- Technical assistance from NRCS to conserve and improve the natural resources
- nyiaj txiag pab rau pejxeem ua liajteb/qoobloo thiab tu tsiaj txu
- cost-share on conservation practices on agriculture land
- nyiaj txiag pab tu thiab kho tej dej tej av kom zoo rau tej ntses, mikab menoog, thiab tsiaj havzoov
- Cost-share to improve wildlife and natural resources on private land

Pab txog \$4,856 losis 2,178 sq.ft. rau pejxeem ua ib lub tsev vov ntaub yas cog qoobloo
Cost-share up to \$4,856 (2011 rate) for underserved groups for installing a high tunnel or hoop house

Xab paub ntxiv hu rau:
For more information contact:
Kabyeeb Vaj ntaum:
Ka Ying Vang at:
715-232-2614 ext. 113





NRCS is an equal opportunity provider and employer

Lub Koomtxoos Kev Ualaj Uateb Thiab Yug Tsiajtshu (United States Department of Agriculture, USDA) txwv tsis pub muaj kev cais pab-pawg neeg thiab cevngaj daimtawv, pojniam losyog txivneej, kevntseeg, hnubnyoog, kev xiam-oobkhab, kamteb kevchaw, kevplees keyyi, los mus rau kev muaj pojniam muaj b'iv losyog tsis muaj. (Nyob rau tej kevtxwv no yuav tsis yog siv tau rau txhua yam kev pabcuam.) Tsoomneeg xiam-oobkhab xav tau kev pab rawsli kev cev ncaujlug mus los rau tseemfw xws li pab rau covneeg dig-muag, luam cov niamntawv kom loj, cov kasxev muaj suab haislus losyog lwmyam yuav tsum tau hu xovtooj mus rau USDA lub chaw pab Target Center raws li tus xovtooj (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Federal Women’s Program Manager Report, Laurel Qualy, State Office

Highlighting Wisconsin Women	The 2012 selections were Melissa Bartz, Rachel Geiselman, Mary King, and Peggy Lane
Wisconsin Women Caring for the Land	Darlington, WI, September 18. Talking session with area female producers to provide resources and assistance for women working in agriculture. SW Grazing Specialist Jean Stramel and ASTC Patti Jackson-Kelly presented.
National Organization of Professional Women in NRCS (WIN).	A new employee organization was introduced to the states in year of the 150 th Anniversary of the Department of Agriculture 2012. This organization advocates for a gender diverse workforce, it identifies and resolves barriers to employment, promotes leadership development and the retention of female employees. This organization serves as a liaison to promote greater female participation in NRCS programs and services.
Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Day,	April 26, 2012.

American Indian Alaska Native Program Report, Greg Yakle, Onalaska

- Served as AIAN-SEPM to WI State Civil Rights Committee. Attended all WI State Civil Rights Committee Meetings and Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council Meetings(WTCAC). Assist w/ locating WTCAC Interns in WI NRCS Field Offices in 2012.
- Recruited 4 WI AI students to complete applications for 2012 WI STEP student program. Evaluated resumes and transcripts and brought forth the information to the WI State Civil Rights Committee for consideration. Made student contacts to let them know that the WI NRCS budget could not support any new student interns in 2012.
- Completed 4 mailings for WI NRCS staff during American Indian History Month in November 2012.
- Made one presentation to the SW Area at an all-employees staff meeting on progress made by WI tribes in 2012 in contracting and applying conservation practices through EQIP and WHIP and WTCAC special projects. Distributed the 2012 WTCAC Annual Report, which outlines some of these practices to each SW Area field office.

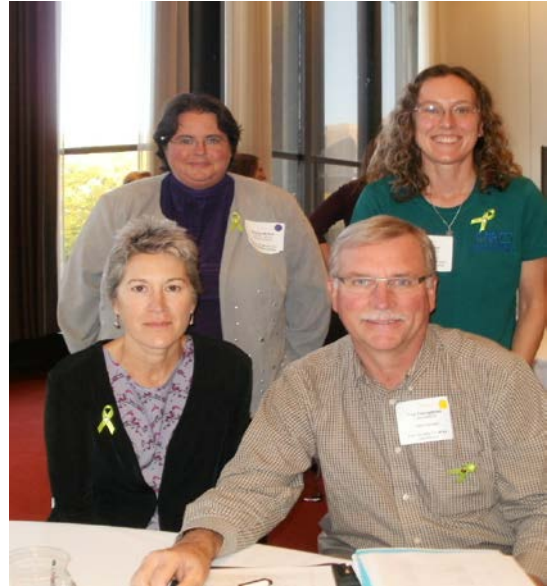
Black Employee Program Manager Report, Ty Larson, Appleton Area Office

Wisconsin NRCS participated in the Chicago High School for Ag. Sciences career fairing Sept. 2012. Ty Larson, BEPM, was very busy at the NRCS table talking with students, parents, college recruiters, and USDA partners.



GLBT Emphasis Program Manager Report, Merrie Schamberger, Oshkosh

- Participated in quarterly National GLBT conference calls and attended State Civil Rights committee meetings and teleconferences throughout the year.
- In July participated in a 3-day “Civil Rights in Program Delivery” training in Madison.
- Represented NRCS Wisconsin at a National GLBT event in Chicago, the “OUT for Work” conference was held on Sept 29-30. It consisted of workshops and a job fair. There were other NRCS reps from Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri. It was a great way to promote our agency as a “Welcoming Workplace”.



Merrie, Paul Youngstrum, IL , Nancy Walker, MO and Tandy Easler, IN



Merrie assisting several students with requests for employment information.



Merrie and our beautiful “Welcoming Workplace” poster. HQ sent a lot of freebies to give away to participants. We acquired a list of 29 students who are interested in possible employment with NRCS, the list will be sent to HQ for follow-up. We showed students the USAJOBS website and told them how they can get on the federal register for employment and get notified of job openings around the U.S. It was a very interesting and informative workshop. Prior to the event I sent flyers to several colleges and organizations in Wisconsin so they could promote the event further.

Tribal Liaison Reports

Menominee Nation and Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Sherrie Zenk Reed, Tribal Liaison

Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin
EQIP 2012: Aquatic Organism Passage (396)

Stockbridge-Munsee Community
EQIP 2012: Stream Crossing (578) and Access Road (560)
EQIP 2012 (2 contracts): Stream Crossing (578)

St Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin, Tom Fredrickson, Tribal Liaison, Spooner Field Office

- Attended 4 WTCAC meetings held throughout the state.
- Hosted a student trainee from the La Courte Oreilles College this past summer. This individual received training and instruction on NRCS roles, tasks and assignments expected of NRCS employee.
- This past winter Spooner Field Office staff met with the St Croix Environmental Department to review the 2012 EQIP obligations for the EQIP program.
- Projects completed this year with the St Croix include 1202' of Access Road, 1 Grade Stabilization Structure, 1 Obstruction removal, 1800 square feet of Stream Crossing and 7 acres of Wild Rice Seeding.
- Entered into 2012 EQIP agreement on 4 separate EQIP projects.

Oneida Nation, Tony Bush, Tribal Liaison

Tribal Technical/Administrative Assistance

- Worked with the Oneida staff to assess leased tribal agricultural lands, and develop and implement conservation plans that meet tribal requirements.
- Served as EQIP coordinator for the Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (WTCAC)
- Coordinated efforts to develop the tool used for ranking tribal EQIP applications.
- Provided guidance to the Oneida Sustainable Conservation Advisory Council (OSRAC), Oneida Department of Land Management, Oneida Nation Farm and Tsyunhehkwa Farm concerning all NRCS programs.
- Presented information to OSRAC and the Oneida Land Commission concerning current and potential EQIP, GLRI, WHIP, CSP and CRP contract involvement.
- Maintained records for and provided updates to the Oneida staff concerning NRCS program activities.
- Supervised WTCAC summer intern

2012 EQIP/WHIP Contracted Activities

3 WASCOB's	2445 feet of Grassed Waterway
8 acres of Conservation Cover	2700 sq. yds. of Mulching
100 feet of Access Road	1420 ft. of Underground Outlet
4680 sq. ft. of Stream Crossing	1 Obstruction Removal

EQIP/WHIP/GLRI Projects

Completed

122 acres of Prescribed Grazing
18000 feet of Fence
29.7 acres of native Filter Strips
5.3 acres of cool-season Filter Strips
1 Seasonal High Tunnel System
1 Well Decommissioning
29 acres of Tree Establishment

Other Tribal Liaison Reports (included in Field Office reports by Area)

Bad River/Red Cliff – see Ashland, Northwest Area
Ho Chunk Nation – see Onalaska, Southwest Area
Lac Courte Oreilles – see Ladysmith, Northwest Area
Lac du Flambeau, Forest County Potawatami, Sokaogon – see Rhinelander, Northeast Area