



2013 WINNEBAGO COUNTY LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT



THE 2013 LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE EDUCATIONAL TOUR “TRIED AND TRUE, AND A FEW THINGS NEW”

By Tom Davies, Land and Water Conservation Department Director

Every two years the Land Conservation Committee (LCC) takes a tour of projects completed by the Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) staff. This year's sampling of projects and practices focused on agriculture and showcased both “tried and true” practices as well as “state of the art” approaches to improving environmental quality in Winnebago County.

Our first stop was at the Steve and Angela Luedtke Farm on County Road M in the Town of Winchester. Chad Casper, Resource Conservationist, worked with the Luedtkes to design, permit, and oversee the installation of a *Barnyard Runoff Control System*. This “tried and true” system utilized multiple components such as diversions, roof gutters with underground outlets, concrete yard and containment walls, and a slotted concrete wall with a gravel spreader and waste treatment strip. The goal of these practices is to keep rain water clean and filter the barnyard runoff before it reaches defined surface water.



Animal lot retention wall and roof gutters with underground outlets



Slotted retention wall with gravel spreader and waste treatment strip

Our second stop was at Cross Farms LLC, owned by Don and David Sleik, located on Cross Road in the Town of Winneconne. Chad Casper worked with the Sleiks to design, permit, and oversee construction of the *Manure Storage and Equipment Containment Facility*. The new equipment installed was an Accelerated Manure Composter/Pasteurizer. This “new” technology speeds up composting of the manure solids at temperatures that kill the bacteria allowing it to be reused as bedding and sold as a soil amendment in the landscape industry.

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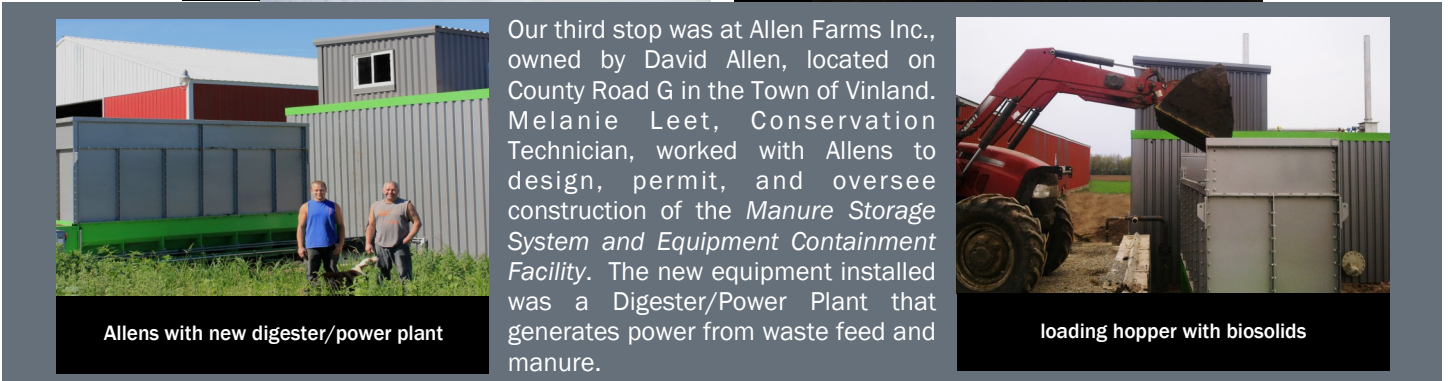
MARCH 2014

MISSION STATEMENT Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department

Providing a full range of professional services in the planning, design, and performance of programs and projects that PROTECT, RESTORE, and SUSTAIN the natural resources of Winnebago County.

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Our final stop on the tour was the Chuck and Connie Farrey Farm on County Road GG in the Town of Vinland. Melanie Leet worked with the Farreys to design, permit, and oversee construction of a difficult *Grassed Waterway* project and a *Machinery Crossing* on an adjacent water course. The Grassed Waterway is a “work horse” on the landscape for capturing sediment and is one of the best value practices that LWCD installs. The Machinery Crossing allows farm traffic through the water course without damage that can lead to erosion. The photos below were taken during the construction process.



2013 FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT AND NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLANNING

By Sheila Kiddy, Agronomist

Congratulations to the Towns of Clayton and Winchester for getting their Farmland Preservation Ordinances certified by the State of Wisconsin in 2013. This achievement maintained their landowner's eligibility to participate in the Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) and receive a substantial tax credit. Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) communicated regularly with the Towns and the State to verify that certification would occur and our constituents in Clayton and Winchester could

continue to participate in FPP.

County wide, 80 landowners certified in the FPP for the tax year 2012. FPP participants are required to work with the LWCD to certify they are meeting the State Agricultural Performance Standards (NR151) to claim a tax credit. In 2012, 13,730 acres were certified which generated \$102,975 in tax credits for those Winnebago County participants.

The LWCD continues to assist participants to become compliant with the State Ag-Performance

Standards. All cropland and livestock facilities located on the enrolled land must be in compliance by December 31, 2015. If a participant is not in compliance by the deadline, they will be deemed noncompliant and ineligible for the tax credit until they achieve compliance. The LWCD has been, and will continue to work diligently to get all FPP participants in compliance before 2015 so they can continue to receive their tax credits.

Nutrient Management Planning

Nutrient management farmer training classes were

held again in 2013 with ten producers operating 4,246 acres in attendance. Farmers develop a better understanding about the steps taken to write Nutrient Management Plans (NMP) and a basic knowledge about soil, nutrients, manure, and the growing of crops.

The total number of NMP acres for 2013 was 46,455, a 7% increase (3,158 acres) from 2012. This increase illustrates the priority LWCD has placed on this practice and the impact of the State Agricultural Performance Standards on Ag Producers within Winnebago County.

WINNEBAGO COUNTY LWCD AND NRCS ADMINISTER \$810,205 IN GRANT FUNDS

By Tom Davies, Director

In 2013, the Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) applied for and received \$233,298 in state grant funding. This funding was used to cost share projects and practices for landowners and offset departmental expenses. In addition, the LWCD budgeted \$84,000 of cost share funds provided to county constituents through the Winnebago County Water Quality Improvement Program. The LWCD also carried over \$109,002 of state and local contracted cost share funds from 2009 through 2012 to be utilized in 2013 and 2014.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provided \$383,905 for the installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) contracted through the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

These funds totaling approximately \$810,200 are utilized to cost-share and support the installation of BMPs throughout Winnebago County. Grant and program funds such as these provide a significant and positive economic impact for our local contractors and related businesses.

STATE AGRICULTURAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

By Sheila Kiddy, Agronomist

NR151: Runoff Management is Wisconsin's administrative code that establishes polluted runoff performance standards for agricultural facilities and practices as well as non-agricultural practices. These Ag Performance Standards (APS) are intended to be the minimum requirements to protect water quality. The code also establishes

implementation and enforcement provisions.

The standards and prohibitions are intended to protect water quality by minimizing the amount of soil erosion, nutrients from manure and croplands, and other nonpoint source pollutants that enter waterways. The following eight key elements are used for evaluating APS: sheet, rill, & wind erosion, manure storage facilities, clean

water diversions, nutrient management planning, tillage setbacks, phosphorous index, wastewater handling, and fertilizer & manure management.

Winnebago County Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD) employees are contacting farmers throughout the county in an effort to assess their current compliance status with the State APS.

LWCD employees are informing farmers about the standards, how they affect their operation, and what is required to bring them into compliance.

Currently, many landowners are in the process of getting their cropland and/or facilities in compliance. In 2013, 32 farms reached full compliance. To date, a total of 9,700 cropland acres and 55 farms have been certified compliant.

WILDLIFE DAMAGE ABATEMENT AND CLAIMS PROGRAM

By Tom Davies, Director

Wisconsin has a program that assists farmers when wildlife damages their agricultural crops. The Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program (WDACP) provides damage prevention assistance and partial compensation to farmers when wild deer, elk, bear, geese, and turkeys damage their agricultural crops. Wildlife managers issue agricultural damage shooting permits to farmers for removal of deer and occasionally bear, geese, and turkeys that cause damage.

The Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) and Land Conservation Committee (LCC) administer the WDACP for Winnebago County. The LWCD works with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) -

Wildlife Management and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Wildlife Services to implement the program. The LCC approves the program budget and any needed damage protection practices, sets the harvest cut-off date and the commodity prices used to reimburse the participants, approves or denies the claims, and is a part of the claim appeals process.

In the previous five years (2008 to 2012), 37 producer claims were paid, providing \$141,616 in reimbursement for wildlife generated crop loss. In 2013, six claims were paid, providing \$20,794 in reimbursement for wildlife generated crop loss.



Wisconsin Deer Donation Program

Associated with the WDACP is the Wisconsin Deer Donation Program. Wisconsin has a network of venison donation efforts including: Hunt for the Hungry, which operates in the Green Bay area; Target Hunger, which handles donations from the Chronic Wasting Disease Management Zone; and the

Wisconsin Deer Donation Program, which covers all remaining areas of the state. The LWCD works with USDA - Wildlife Services staff to administer the program.

Winnebago County LWCD works with Beck's Meats in

Ring, Wisconsin to process the deer into ground venison for local food pantries. LWCD reimburses Beck's for their efforts \$55.00 per deer. In the previous five years (2008 to 2012), 220 deer were donated yielding 7,391 lbs. of venison for deserving families. In 2013, 14 deer were donated providing 560 lbs. of ground venison.

A very special "Thank You" goes out to Beck's Meats from the Winnebago County LWCD and LCC for their continuous support and participation in this worthwhile program.

All costs incurred by the Winnebago County LWCD to administer these programs are fully reimbursed by the WDNR from a portion of the revenue from the sale of hunting licenses. **It is the hunters in Wisconsin that finance these programs!**

PREPARING FOR TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDL)

By Tom Davies, Director

Impaired waters in Wisconsin are addressed through an analysis known as a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). A TMDL is the amount of a pollutant a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards. Basically it is a pollution "budget" for a waterbody or watershed that establishes the pollutant reduction needed from each pollutant source to meet water quality goals. The two pollutant sources are *point sources* (municipal and industrial wastewater facilities, CAFOs, and MS4s), and *nonpoint sources* (agricultural runoff and non-regulated urban areas). The

main pollutants we will need to address are sediment and phosphorus. The third component to establishing the TMDL is the *margin of safety* which accounts for any uncertainty in the analysis and modeling.

Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act requires all states to develop TMDLs for waters on the Impaired Waters List.

Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) is currently working with neighboring counties, partner agencies, environmental organizations and consultants, and the Wisconsin Department of

Natural Resources (WDNR) to develop the TMDL implementation plan for agricultural non-point sources in the Lower Fox River Watershed (downstream from the dams in Neenah and Menasha). This work will lay the foundation for addressing the TMDL requirements on certain tributaries delivering into the Lower Fox River. It will also set the stage for implementation of the TMDLs in the Upper Fox River and Wolf River Watersheds.

TMDLs also impact the requirements of the County's WDNR Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System (MS4) permit.

Currently the LWCD administers the MS4 permit compliance effort and completes all mandatory monitoring and submittals to WDNR. Winnebago County's MS4 is comprised of "county-owned" road right-of-ways located within the "urbanized areas" based on the 2010 Census. LWCD works cooperatively with the Winnebago County Highway Department to assure compliance for the County.

TMDLs will have a significant impact on municipalities, industry, and agriculture in Winnebago County and most certainly the workload of the LWCD.

2013 INSTALLED BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



Gully Erosion

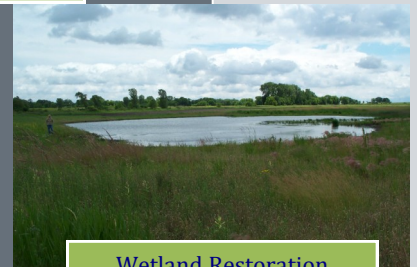
By Chad Casper, Resource Conservationist and Melanie Leet, Conservation Technician

The Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) has several funding sources available to provide cost sharing for the installation of conservation projects. These funds provide financial assistance for landowners to offset the cost of various Best Management Practices (BMPs). Along with the funding assistance, our department provides surveying, engineering designs, and construction supervision to ensure the projects are installed according to design specifications. Installing these BMPs will reduce the sediment and phosphorus loading to our local waterways. The BMPs will provide protection of water quality and groundwater resources in Winnebago County. In 2013, the LWCD allocated \$39,946.36 for the installation of structural BMPs in addition to federal funding. The table below illustrates a summary of the structural BMPs installed in 2013.

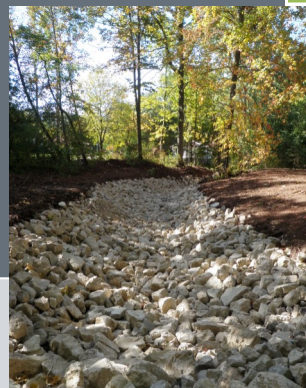
Best Management Practice	Units Installed
Grassed Waterway	3,052 ft.
Lined Waterway or Outlet	586 ft.
Critical Area Stabilization	5.5 acres
Diversion	925 ft.
Wetland Restoration	4.6 acres
Livestock/Machinery Crossing	3 ea.
Well Abandonments	8 ea.
Manure Storage	2 ea.
Waste Transfer	4 ea.
Pumping Plant	1 ea.
Fencing	800 ft.



Manure Storage



Wetland Restoration



Lined Waterway or Outlet

WEIGH IN ON THE WINNEBAGO WATERWAYS

By Chad Casper, Resource Conservationist

The Winnebago System is one of Wisconsin's most significant water resources. This system is composed of Lakes Winnebago, Butte des Morts, Winneconne and Poygan, plus their main tributary waters of the upper Fox and Wolf Rivers. The Winnebago System represents 17% of the entire State of Wisconsin's surface water acreage. These lakes and rivers offer public parks, beaches and boat docks that are the foundation of the economy. Over a dozen species of game fish in these waters fuel a \$234 million per year recreational fishing industry. In addition, over 250,000 people get their drinking water from Lake Winnebago alone.

A healthy Lake Winnebago system depends on everyone. We can reduce inefficient spending and redundant policies by rethinking how we oversee this incredible and important system. The best way to address some of these issues is by first understanding the needs and priorities of the system's users, which is what the **Weigh in on the Winnebago Waterways** Steering Team set out to achieve in 2013. The steering team is currently researching ways in which counties and local municipalities can work together and share resources. The hope is to develop recommendations that will be transparent, save tax-payer dollars and promote the economic and

natural health of our rivers and lakes.

Weigh in on the Winnebago Waterways is supported by staff from the five counties surrounding the system – Calumet, Fond du Lac, Outagamie, Waushara and Winnebago – along with members of the University of Wisconsin-Extension, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), East Central Regional Planning Commission and the Winnebago Lakes Council. This partnership received a planning grant from the WDNR in 2013. The partners are working collaboratively to gather public input and turn those ideas into a plan.

Over a four-month period, the Winnebago Waterways Steering Team sought public input during a multi-step public engagement effort. From March to May 2013, participants revealed their favorite activities in the region and concerns about the waterways and their management through a series of eight public meetings, surveys and an online engagement tool. Collectively from those sources, we learned about the many ways people are using the waterways and their top concerns for the future of these lakes and rivers.

The most important issues facing our Winnebago

system, according to local residents and business owners are:

- **Algae blooms:** Although feelings about algae blooms differed slightly depending on where participants live, participants noted that algae blooms impact drinking water, hinder



Algae Blooms

recreation, and are the result of many sources of pollution such as chemicals or fertilizers in runoff.

- **Polluted runoff:** Feedback from participants around the entire Winnebago system shows that polluted runoff, from



Zebra Mussels

various sources, is a major issue that needs to be addressed. Polluted

runoff leads to many problems for the health of the waterways that can ultimately hinder recreational uses which, in turn, affect the region's economy and industry.

- **Invasive species:** Lake Winnebago is a recognized Statewide Aquatic Invasive Species

(AIS) Source Water and the public has clearly noticed the effects of invasive species in the Winnebago Waterways. Many people specifically reported

zebra mussels as a major nuisance when their shells accumulate on shorelines and beaches, though many believe the zebra mussels contribute to improved water clarity.

Weigh in on the Winnebago Waterways will be continuing to collect public input on possible solutions to the problems outlined in 2013. Online engagement opportunities are available at www.WinnebagoWaterways.com

WinnebagoWaterways.com now through May 2014. On this site, visitors can post ideas or concerns, take short surveys, and respond to other people's comments. The steering team will be tuned in to what people are saying and keeping track of what they want to see happen around Lake Winnebago. Weigh in on Winnebago Waterways wants 2014 to be a year of progress for our waters.



TREE SALE

By Lynette Hein,
Secretary

Once again, the Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) held their annual distribution of trees and shrubs to aid landowners inside and outside of Winnebago County. The trees and shrubs arrived in late April through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Tree Program from their Griffith Nursery in Wisconsin Rapids.

In 2013, 39,700 trees and shrubs were planted by landowners in Winnebago County and 8,000 trees and shrubs were planted by landowners outside of Winnebago County. Not only do landowners take advantage of this opportunity, our area schools take part by observing Arbor Day with distributing trees to students. We had 17 schools in the Neenah, Menasha, Oshkosh, and Omro areas pick up trees for distribution to students for a

total of 2,800 trees.

As part of the tree distribution day, the LWCD offers many materials and tools to aid landowners in the growth of a healthy tree such as root gel, fertilizer tablets, and 4 foot Tubex tree shelters. Another service the LWCD offers is the rental of tree planters. The planters are used mostly by landowners with large tree/shrub amounts. A "Tree Planting Workshop" held prior to tree delivery offers an opportunity for

landowners to learn how to plant the trees with a planter or with a tree planting bar. All materials and equipment listed above are available year round for purchase and rental and can be found on our website @ www.co.winnebago.wi.us/lwcd.

If you would like to take advantage of our tree distribution for 2015, please contact our office at the beginning of November-2014 for a Spring Tree and Shrub Application form.

VOLUNTEERS, IT'S A WIN, WIN, SITUATION!

By Tom Davies, Director

In 2013 the Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) utilized the skills of two volunteers to help with the Farmland Preservation Program (FPP), landowner compliance with the Agricultural Performance Standards, and other conservation efforts. While working with a volunteer or intern, we make a concerted effort to expose them to a variety of programs, projects, and tasks. This provides them valuable "on the job" experience that can help further their career.

One of our volunteers was Melanie Boone. Melanie is a recent graduate of UW Oshkosh, majoring in Environmental Studies and Geography. Melanie interned with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and volunteered with the LWCD in 2012 and early 2013. In the summer she worked for the Door County Soil and Water Conservation Department on an Aquatic Invasive Species project. In September 2013 she returned to Winnebago County NRCS as a part time employee. In February 2014 she was hired as a Soil Conservationist for Fond du Lac County LWCD. Our thanks, congratulations, and best wishes to Melanie!

Our other volunteer was Kimberly Huettl. Kimberly began volunteering for LWCD through the *Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) Natural Resource Coop Work Experience Program*. Following her graduation and the birth of her daughter, Kimberly was hired by our department as a limited term Agronomist Assistant. She worked until mid December. Kimberly is currently pursuing additional education at FVTC in the field of Agronomy. Our thanks and best wishes go to Kimberly as she continues her education and career.



Melanie Boone



Kim Huettl

POSTER CONTEST

By Lynette Hein, Secretary

For the first time since 2003, the Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD), together with UW Extension, held the Conservation Awareness Poster Contest that was

open to kindergarten through twelfth grade students. The contest's theme this year was "Dig Deeper" which opened the door for students to gain a better understanding of the process and importance of soil. This contest is a part of the Wisconsin Land and

Water Conservation Association, created to promote environmental awareness in youth.

The Winnebago County LWCD would like to extend our congratulations to these winners and to thank all the students who participated in

the contest:

GRADES K-1

1st Place Emma Nordlinder,
Butte des Morts Elementary

2nd Place Neveah Porter,
Butte des Morts Elementary

3rd Place Kaylee Lembcke,
Butte des Morts Elementary

GRADES 2-3

1st Place Shanowa Cloud,



Emma Nordlinder, 1st Place,
Grades K-1



Neveah Porter, 2nd Place,
Grades K-1



Kaylee Lembcke, 3rd Place,
Grades K-1



Melissa Moralez, 3rd Place,
Grades 4-6

Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh
2nd Place Alonso Serrano, Butte des Morts Elementary
3rd Place Felicia Turinske, Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh
GRADES 4-6
1st Place Haleigh Dodge, Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh
2nd Place Hayley Techlin, Butte des Morts Elementary
3rd Place Melissa Moralez, Butte des Morts Elementary
GRADES 7-9
1st Place Sierra Brown, Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh

If you would like to participate in our next poster contest this coming fall, please contact our office in July/August for this year's theme, (920) 232-1950, information and rules may also be found on our website @ www.co.winnebago.wi.us/lwcd.



Shanowa Cloud, 1st Place,
Grades 2-3



Alonso Serrano, 2nd Place,
Grades 2-3

Felicia Turinske, 3rd Place,
Grades 2-3



Haleigh Dodge, 1st Place,
Grades 4-6

Hayley Techlin, 2nd Place,
Grades 4-6

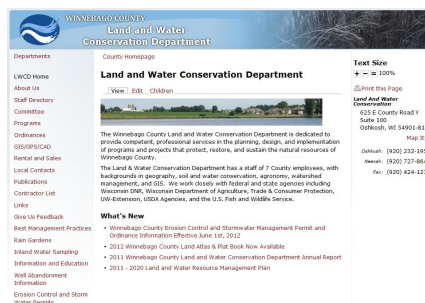


Sierra Brown, 1st Place,
Grades 7-9

LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE DIRECTORY

Chuck Farrey, Chair
Jim Englebert, Vice Chair
Nancy Barker, Secretary
Bruce Bohn, Citizen Member
Kenneth Neubauer, County Board Member
Tom Snider, County Board Member
Dan Stokes, FSA Member

The Winnebago County Land Conservation Committee (LCC) is a standing committee of the Winnebago County Board. Working through the Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department, the LCC provides local leadership and establishes policies for the delivery of land and water resource management programs and services.



Visit us on the Web at:
<http://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/lwcd>

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