

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Wisconsin Demonstration Farm Networks



Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in Wisconsin

Over 30 million Americans get their drinking water from the Great Lakes. There are 75 million acres in eight states, including Wisconsin, flowing to the Great Lakes. Nearly one-third of the drainage area is agricultural land. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), along with 15 other Federal agencies, are supporting and participating in the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), the largest investment into protecting the Great Lakes in two decades.

Launched in 2010, GLRI helps the NRCS accelerate conservation efforts on private lands located in targeted watersheds throughout the region. Through GLRI, NRCS works with farmers and landowners to combat invasive species, protect watersheds and shorelines from non-point source pollution and restore wetlands and other habitat areas.

Demonstration Farm Networks

Funded through GLRI, NRCS Demonstration Farm Networks demonstrate the best, leading-edge conservation practices to reduce phosphorus and sediment from entering the Great Lakes.

Six Demonstration Farm Networks exist across Wisconsin. Each network is comprised of conservation and soil health-minded farmers leading the way in partnership with local agencies and NRCS. These networks of farms are demonstrating new approaches and sharing experiences with other farmers to move conservation forward to protect the Great Lakes. These network farmers demonstrate that soil health practices like no-till, cover crops and low disturbance manure applications can work with the right management and time frames.

Demo farms are trying new practices and approaches to existing practices that farms can implement on the ground, where NRCS offers assistance to make their goals reachable. Networks also offer field days and opportunities for farmer-to-farmer interactions.

Our Local Networks

Lower Fox Demonstration Farms Network

Participating Farms: 7

The Lower Fox Demonstration Farms Network ("Fox Demo Farms") is an off-site project designed to showcase and demonstrate leading edge conservation practices that improve Great Lakes water quality by reducing phosphorus and sediment from entering Green Bay and Lake Michigan. The partnership was the first of its kind in the Great Lakes region and within the Fox River Basin. Partners include farmers, their crop consultants, Brown and Outagamie County Land and Water Conservation Departments, the NRCS, University of Wisconsin–Extension and the Great Lakes Commission.

Door-Kewaunee Watershed Demonstration Farm Network

Participating Farms: 4

Northeastern Wisconsin's Door-Kewaunee Watershed is home to a network of farms demonstrating the best conservation practices to protect the Great Lakes. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and the NRCS are tackling this effort in cooperation with Peninsula Pride Farms, a farmer-led organization. Groundwater and surface water quality are top priorities for the farmers of this network, who contend with shallow, fractured bedrock that can provide a direct path for contaminants to groundwater.

Ozaukee Demonstration Farm Network

Participating Farms: 4

Ozaukee County is home to a network of demonstration farms that are trying and demonstrating the best conservation practices to protect the Great Lakes by reducing phosphorus and sediment from entering Lake Michigan through Sauk Creek, Sucker Creek and the Milwaukee River. Ozaukee County Land and Water Management and the NRCS are tackling this effort in cooperation with



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Demonstration farm field days are a great opportunity for producers to learn and see conservation practices in action.

Clean Farm Families, a farmer-led conservation organization. Major focuses are improving soil health and condition, encouraging innovative land management that reduces costs and increases profits and improving the conservation systems used to reduce non-point source pollution. Network farmers are working to keep ground and surface water clean to protect local streams and rivers feeding the Great Lakes.

Upper Fox-Wolf Demonstration Farm Network

Participating Farms: 10

Waupaca County is home to a network of farms demonstrating conservation practices to protect the Great Lakes. Waupaca County Land and Water Conservation and the NRCS are tackling this effort in partnership with Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Outagamie, Portage, Shawano, and Winnebago counties and the Green Lake Association. This large partnership is testing the effectiveness of current conservation systems used to reduce non-point source pollution. The network will demonstrate to farmers and the public that the right combination of traditional conservation practices and other new, innovative technologies functioning on the landscape can produce viable and sustainable economic and environmental benefits.

Between the Lakes Demonstration Farm Network

Participating Farms: 4

Northeastern Wisconsin's Manitowoc-Sheboygan Watershed is home to a network of farms demonstrating the best conservation practices to protect water sources that flow into the Great Lakes. Calumet County Land and Water Conservation and the NRCS are



tackling this effort in partnership with Fond du Lac, Sheboygan and Manitowoc counties. These farmers are demonstrating conservation practices and systems used to reduce non-point source pollution. The network highlights implementing traditional conservation practices that protect water quality, while also trying and highlighting new technologies on participating farms.

Green Bay West Shore Demonstration Farm Network

Participating Farms: 4

The NRCS and Oconto County Land & Water Conservation Department, in partnership with Marinette and Shawano counties, have entered an agreement to launch a new network, the Green Bay West Shore Demonstration Farm Network. This is the sixth demonstration farm network in Wisconsin that NRCS has collaborated with conservation partners to establish. The new partnership will support a network of farms demonstrating the best conservation practices to reduce phosphorus and sediment into local water sources that flow into the Great Lakes. The network will demonstrate proven traditional and new, innovative conservation practices on farms that are both viable and sustainable for farm owners and the environment.

More Information

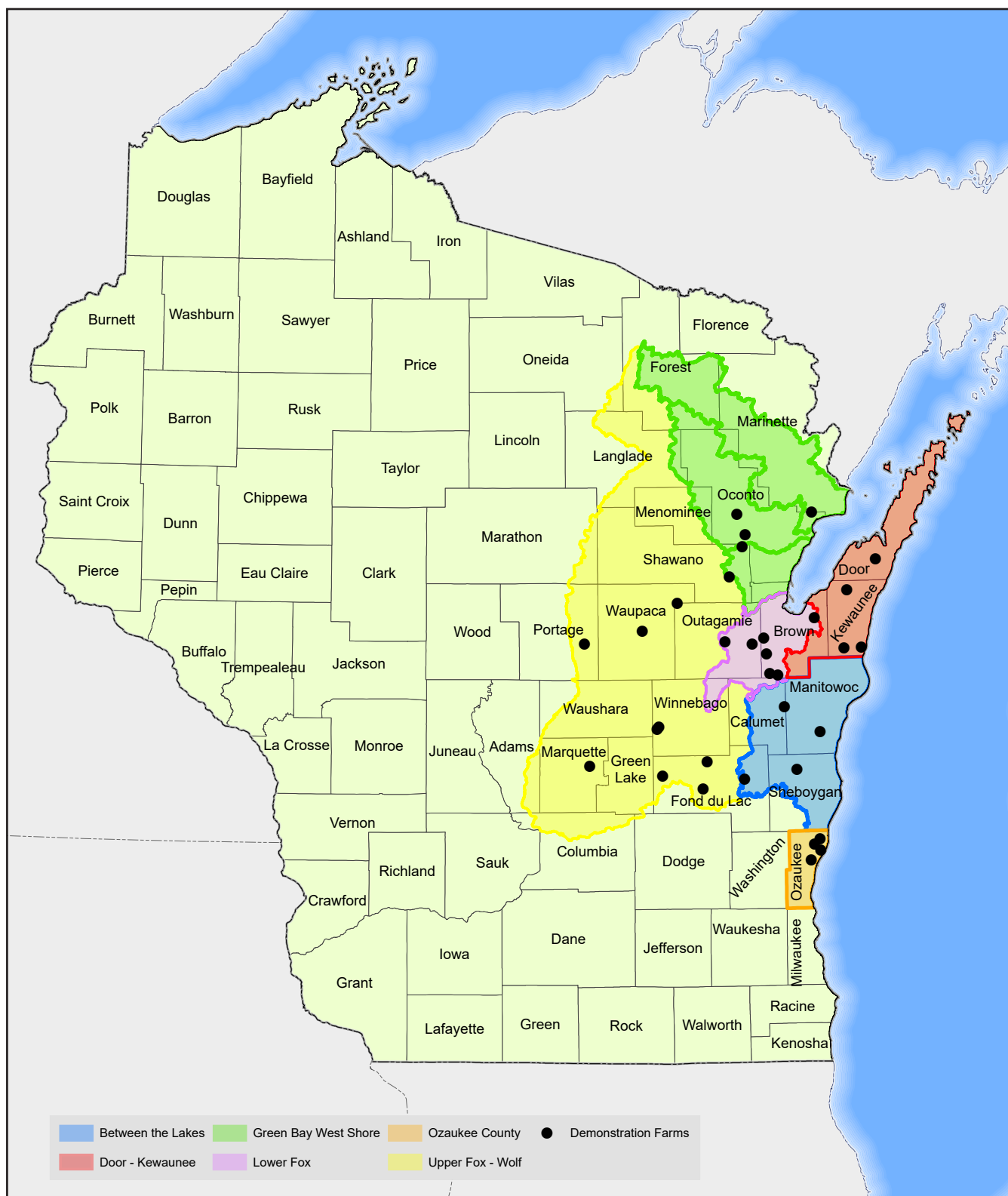
For more information about the demo farms, visit the website below and click on Great Lakes Restoration Initiative: www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/wi/programs/landscape/. See a map of the demonstration farms on page three.



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NRCS Wisconsin Demonstration Farm Networks



Funded through GLRI, NRCS Wisconsin established six Demonstration Farm Networks with 33 unique farms participating in conservation to protect the Great Lakes.

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