



United States Department of Agriculture

2022 - 2023 Local Working Group Virtual Meeting

June 7, 2022

Introduction

Eric Allness, Moderator

Assistant State Conservationist-
Partnerships



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Agenda



- 10:00 - 10:05: Welcome – Eric Allness**
- 10:05 - 10:10: State Overview – Jeff Vander Wilt, Acting State Conservationist**
- 10:10- 10:20: WI Program Updates - Melissa Bartz**
- 10:20- 10:30: Natural Resource Concerns – Eric Hurley**
- 10:30 - 10:40: Review Purpose of LWG and move to Breakout Meetings – Eric Allness**
- 10:45 - 12:00: Area Breakout Discussions**





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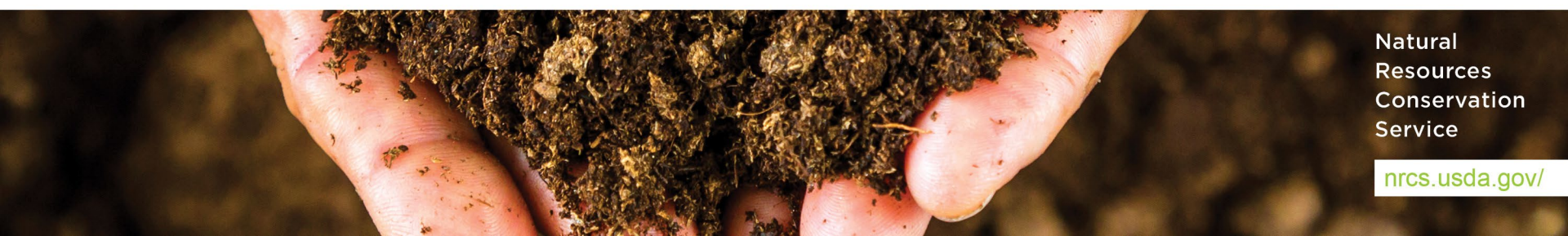
Wisconsin Overview

Jeff Vander Wilt
Acting State Conservationist



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NRCS Mission and Vision



Our Mission: We deliver conservation solutions so agricultural producers can protect natural resources and feed a growing world.



Our Vision: A world of clean and abundant water, healthy soils, resilient landscapes, and thriving agricultural communities through voluntary conservation.



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Administrative Goals



- **Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry**
 - Focused on partnerships – with agriculture, with forestry, with tribes, with businesses, with communities;
 - Focused on creating new opportunities and markets for agriculture and forestry;
 - Focused on ensuring rural America plays a key role in our transition to cleaner sources of energy; and
- **Urban Agriculture**
 - USDA stood up new Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production
 - Plays an important role in:
 - growing fresh, healthy produce
 - access to fresh, healthy food in food deserts
- **Historically Underserved Participants**
 - Increasing outreach to Historically Underserved participants
 - Improve representation by Historically Underserved participants



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Understanding USDA Civil Rights

- Across USDA and NRCS, Civil Rights ensures equal employment opportunities and program access for all employees and customers.
- Civil Rights ensures that every employee, applicant and program participant is treated with dignity, equality and respect by enforcing Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity policies.
- These policies and emphasis on Civil Rights makes USDA an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender to customers.
- USDA is committed to equitable program delivery. By working with our partner groups, we will ensure these funds are equitably distributed to include historically underserved producers.



Civil Rights: The Historically Underserved

- **Historically underserved (HU) customers are beginning farmers, limited resource farmers and socially disadvantaged farmers and Veterans**
 - Beginning Farmer or Rancher – is new to farming or has operated a farm or ranch for less than 10 consecutive years.
 - Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher – is a member of a group whose members have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of that group without regard to their individual qualities.
 - Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher – has a household income at or below the national poverty level.
 - Veteran Farmer or Rancher – has served in the armed forces and has not operated a farm or ranch, has operated a farm or ranch for less than 10 consecutive years, or first obtained veteran status during the last 10 years.

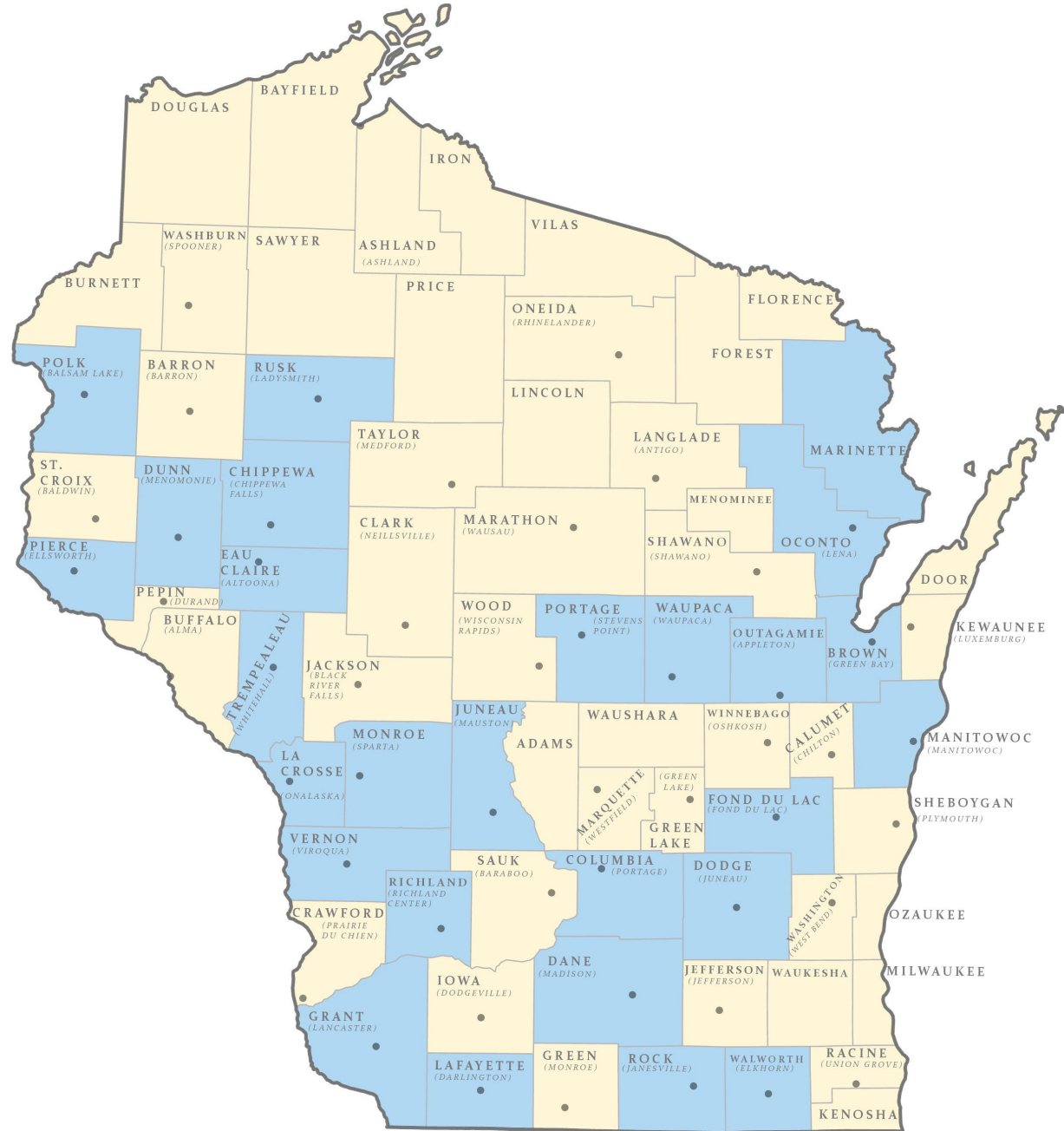


Staffing additions since last LWG Meeting

- **Overall - 39 additional positions (34 federal; 5 affiliate/contract):**
 - 28 Field level positions
 - 4 Area level positions
 - 6 State level positions
- **Positions by Area:**
 - NW – 10
 - NE – 6
 - SW – 10
 - SE – 7
 - State Office - 6
- **Positions by Type:**
 - Soil Conservationist – 16
 - Program Assistant – 8
 - Engineer/Eng Tech – 4
 - Resource Conservationist – 4
 - Wetland/Wildlife Specialist – 3
 - Soil Scientist – 1
 - State Outreach Coordinator – 1
 - State Training Officer – 1
 - Admin Assistant - 1



Offices w/staff additions since last LWG Meeting (blue counties)





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 **Wisconsin
Program
Updates**

Melissa Bartz

Assistant State Conservationist-FA
Programs



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Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers and non-industrial forest managers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits.

- **Funding is available Statewide**
- **2022 Sign up 1**
 - 334 Contracts in State & National Initiatives
 - \$10,709,511 in State & National Initiatives
 - 399 Contracts in Local Work Groups
 - \$7,418,561 in Local Work Groups
- **2022 Sign up 2 (ongoing signup)**
 - ~\$3 million available



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Any Questions Contact: meagan.duberstein@usda.gov

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Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Most agriculture producers that participate in CSP have already implemented conservation practices on their land. CSP offers additional opportunities to expand on existing conservation efforts on their operation.

- **Funding is available Statewide**
- **2022 Renewal Sign up**
 - 218 Contracts
 - \$6,429,023
- **2022 Classic Sign up**
 - 260 Applications have been preapproved for funding
 - \$8,640,000



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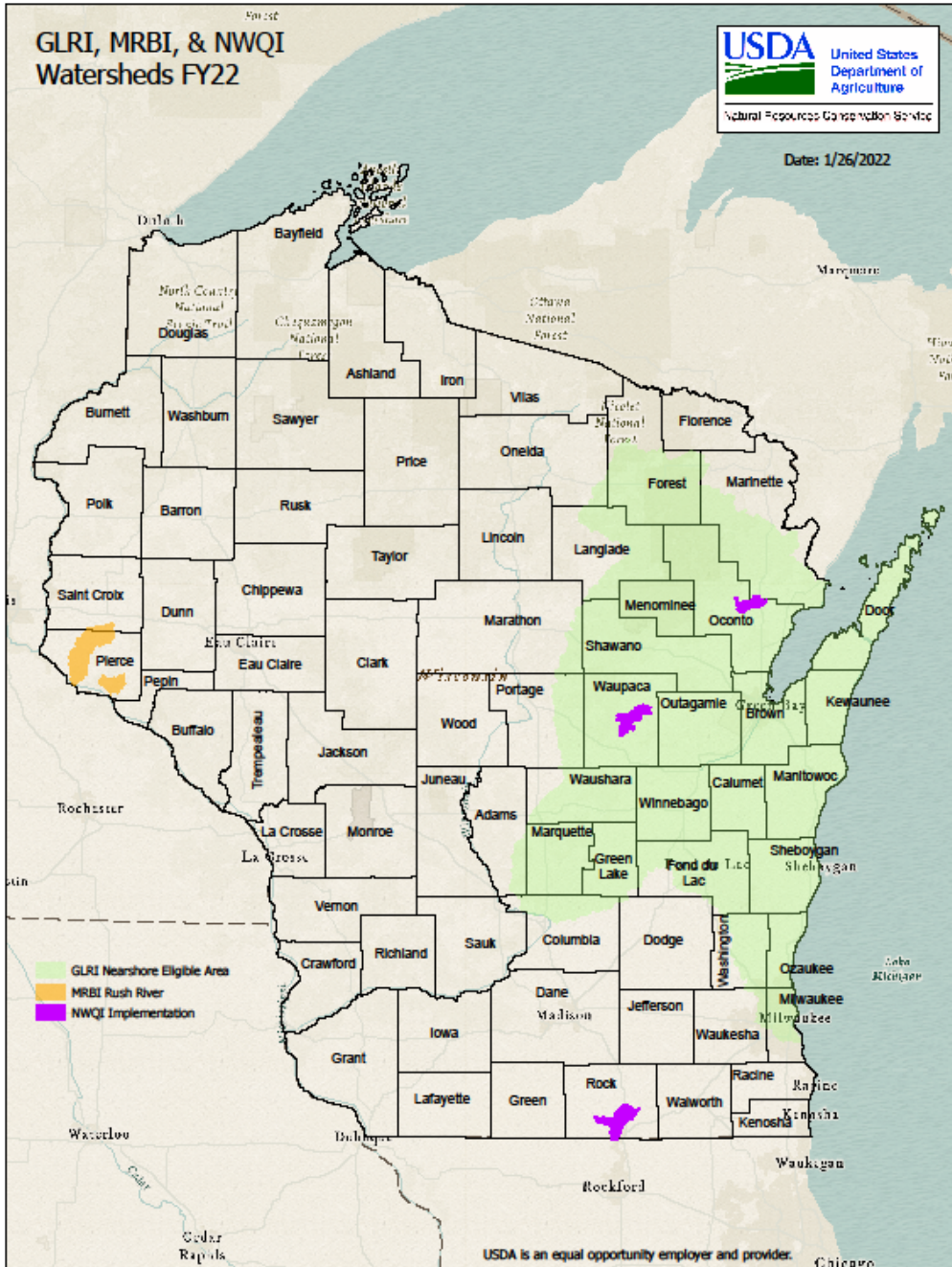
Any Questions Contact: meridith.williams@usda.gov

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GLRI, MRBI, & NWQI Watersheds FY22



Date: 1/26/2022



Wisconsin Water Quality Initiatives

- 27 of 72 Counties have GLRI, NWQI, or MRBI coverage
- ~19.2% of the state

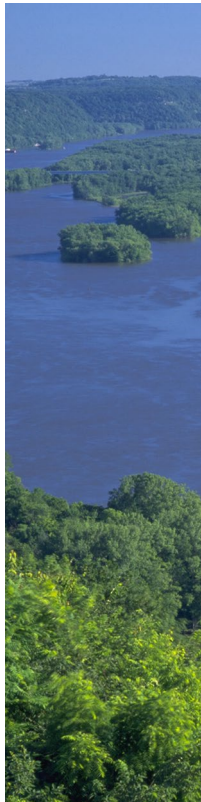
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Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI)

MRBI emphasizes supporting nutrient loss reduction strategies through a targeted approach aided by watershed assessments to implement conservation systems composed of practices that avoid, control, and trap sediment and nutrients.

- **Funding is available in the Pierce/St. Croix Co. project**
- **2022 Sign up #1:**
 - 11 Contracts
 - \$445,131
- **2022 Sign up #2 (ongoing signup)**
 - \$182,169 available



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For Questions Contact: david.gundlach@usda.gov

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National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)

Through NWQI, NRCS works with producers and landowners to implement voluntary conservation practices that address agricultural sources of water pollution as part of areawide efforts to improve water quality in priority watersheds throughout the country.

- **Funding is available in 3 active project areas in WI**
- **2022 Sign up #1**
 - 3 Contracts
 - \$914,628
- **2022 Sign up #2 (ongoing signup)**
 - \$234,476 available



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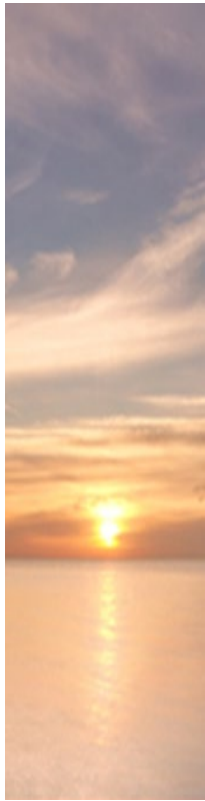
For Questions Contact: david.gundlach@usda.gov

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Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)

With GLRI funding, 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.

- **Funding is available in the Great Lakes Basin**
- **2022 Nearshore Health Sign up #1**
 - 76 Contracts - \$5,402,713
- **2022 Wildlife Habitat Sign up**
 - 11 Contracts - \$139,495
- **2022 Invasives Species Sign up**
 - 3 Contracts - \$28,031
- **2022 Nearshore Health Sign up #2 – Ongoing signup**



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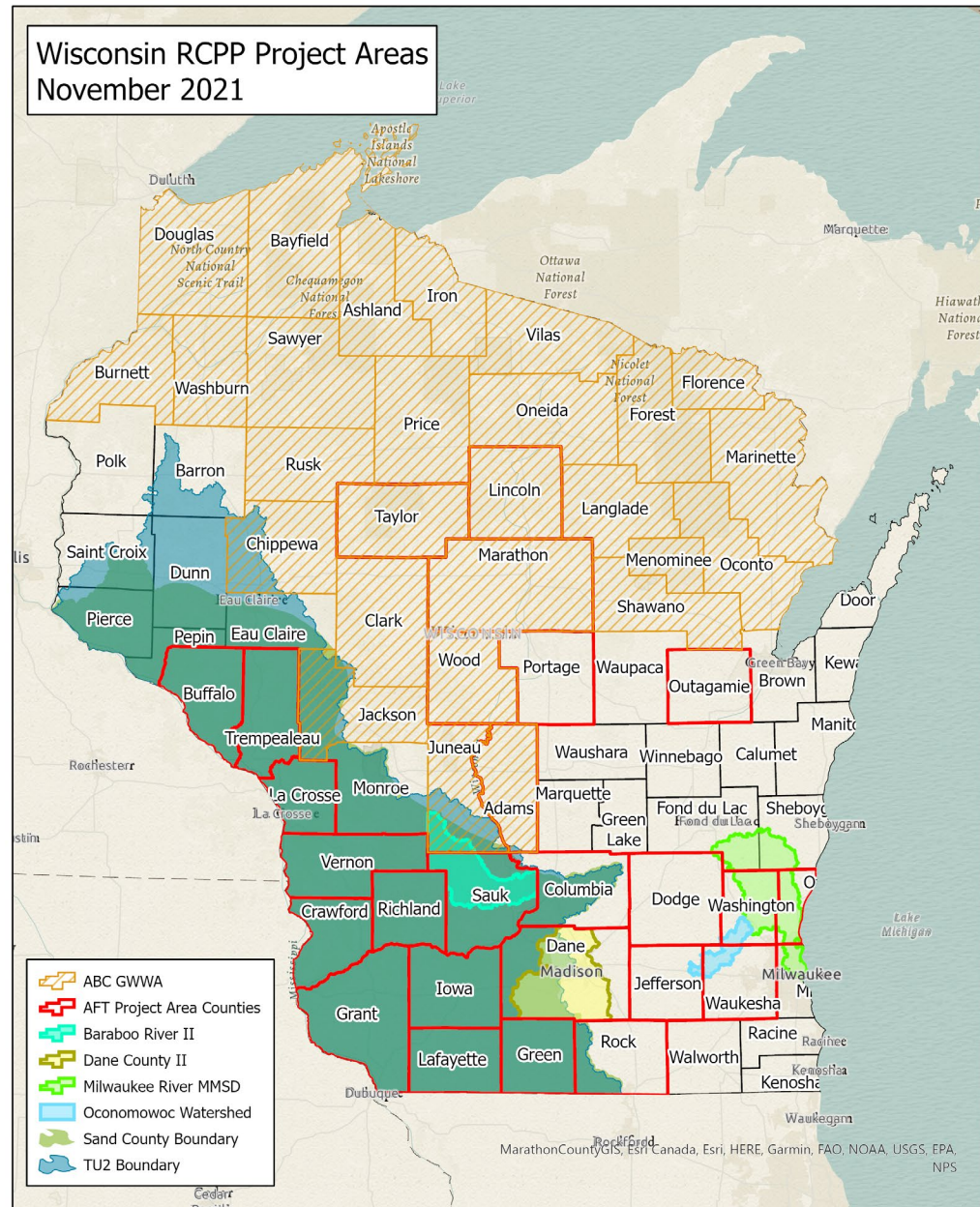


For Questions Contact: david.gundlach@usda.gov

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Regional Conservation Partnership Projects

- 59 of 72 Counties have RCPP coverage
- ~82% of the state



Regional Conservation Partnership Program Vision and Goals

RCPP offers new opportunities for NRCS to work with partners to encourage:

- Impact
- Partner Contributions
- Innovation
- Partnerships and Management



For Questions Contact: ryan.gerlich@usda.gov

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Regional Conservation Partnership Program

2021 Results

- \$1.3 Million, 88 contracts, 2,100 acres

2022-1 Signups Available -

- Baraboo River II *RCPP-EQIP
- Tall Pines (Oconomowoc Watershed) *RCPP-EQIP
- Milwaukee River Watershed Conservation Partnership II *LMR
- Oconomowoc River Watershed II *LM
- Trout Unlimited II (Driftless) *RCPP-EQIP
- American Bird Conservancy II (Northern WI) *LM
- \$645,703, 42 Contracts to date (1 more signup this FY)



For Questions Contact: ryan.gerlich@usda.gov



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Natural Resource Concerns

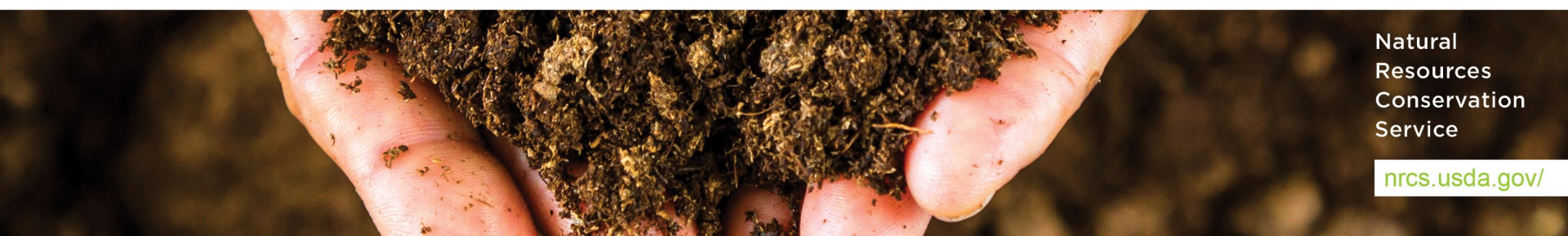
Eric Hurley

Wisconsin State Resource
Conservationist



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Natural Resource Concern Classification

- **Soil**
 - **Water**
 - **Air**
 - **Plant**
 - **Animal**
 - **Energy**
 - **+ Human**
-
- **SWAPAE+H**



Soil Resource Concerns



SWAPAE+H	Category	CART Category	Resource Concern
SOIL	SOIL EROSION	<i>Wind and water erosion</i>	Sheet and rill erosion
			Wind erosion
		<i>Concentrated erosion</i>	Ephemeral gully erosion
			Classic gully erosion
			Bank erosion from streams, shorelines or water conveyance channels
	SOIL HEALTH	<i>Soil quality limitations</i>	Subsidence
			Compaction
			Organic matter depletion
			Concentration of salts or other chemicals
			Soil organism habitat loss or degradation
			Aggregate instability



Water Resource Concerns



SWAPAE+H	Category	CART Category	Resource Concern
WATER	EXCESS WATER	<i>Weather resilience</i>	Ponding and flooding
			Seasonal high water table
			Seeps
			Drifted snow
			Naturally available moisture use
	INSUFFICIENT WATER	<i>Source water depletion</i>	Surface water depletion
			Groundwater depletion
			Inefficient irrigation water use
	WATER QUALITY	<i>Field sediment, nutrient and pathogen loss</i>	Nutrients transported to surface water
			Nutrients transported to groundwater
			Pathogens and chemicals from manure, biosolids or compost applications transported to surface water
			Sediment transported to surface water
		<i>Field Pesticide loss</i>	Pesticides transported to surface water
			Pesticides transported to groundwater
		<i>Storage and handling of pollutants</i>	Nutrients transported to surface water
			Nutrients transported to groundwater
			Petroleum, heavy metals and other pollutants transported to surface water
			Petroleum, heavy metals and other pollutants transported to groundwater
<i>Salt losses to water</i>	Salts transported to surface water		
	Salts transported to groundwater		

Air Resource Concerns



SWAPAE+H	Category	CART Category	Resource Concern
AIR	AIR QUALITY	<i>Air quality emissions</i>	Emissions of particulate matter (PM) and PM precursors
			Emissions of greenhouse gases - GHGs
			Emissions of ozone precursors
			Objectionable odor
			Emissions of airborne reactive nitrogen



Plant & Animal Resource Concerns

SWAPAE+H	Category	CART Category	Resource Concern
PLANT	PLANT CONDITION	<i>Pest pressure</i>	Plant pest pressure
		<i>Degraded plant condition</i>	Plant productivity and health
			Plant structure and composition
<i>Fire management</i>	Wildfire hazard from biomass accumulation		

SWAPAE+H	Category	CART Category	Resource Concern
ANIMAL	LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION	<i>Livestock production limitation</i>	Feed and forage balance
			Inadequate livestock shelter
			Inadequate livestock water quantity, quality and distribution
	HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE	<i>Terrestrial habitat</i>	Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates
		<i>Aquatic habitat</i>	Aquatic habitat for fish and other organisms
Elevated water temperature			



Energy & Human Resource Concerns

SWAPAE+H	Category	CART Category	Resource Concern
ENERGY	ENERGY EFFICIENCY	<i>Inefficient energy use</i>	Energy efficiency of equipment and facilities
			Energy efficiency of farming/ranching practices and field operations

+ Human

HUMAN	LAND, LABOR, CAPITAL, MANAGEMENT, AND RISK
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Role of Local Work Groups

- Identify priority resource concerns
- Be specific
- Table is posted in the chat as a reference





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LWG Purpose and Breakout Meetings

Eric Allness

Wisconsin Assistant for State
Partnerships



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Local Work Group Purpose

- **LWG's – a subcommittee of the State Technical Committee**
 - Other subcommittees: Source Water Protection, Wildlife, Soil Health, Forestry, Urban Agriculture
- **Provides recommendations to NRCS**
 - Natural resource priorities
 - Conservation activities and practices
 - Technical and financial assistance
 - Needs assessments
- **Interested in joining a subcommittee?**
 - Contact Eric Allness
eric.allness@usda.gov
 - Letter to STC



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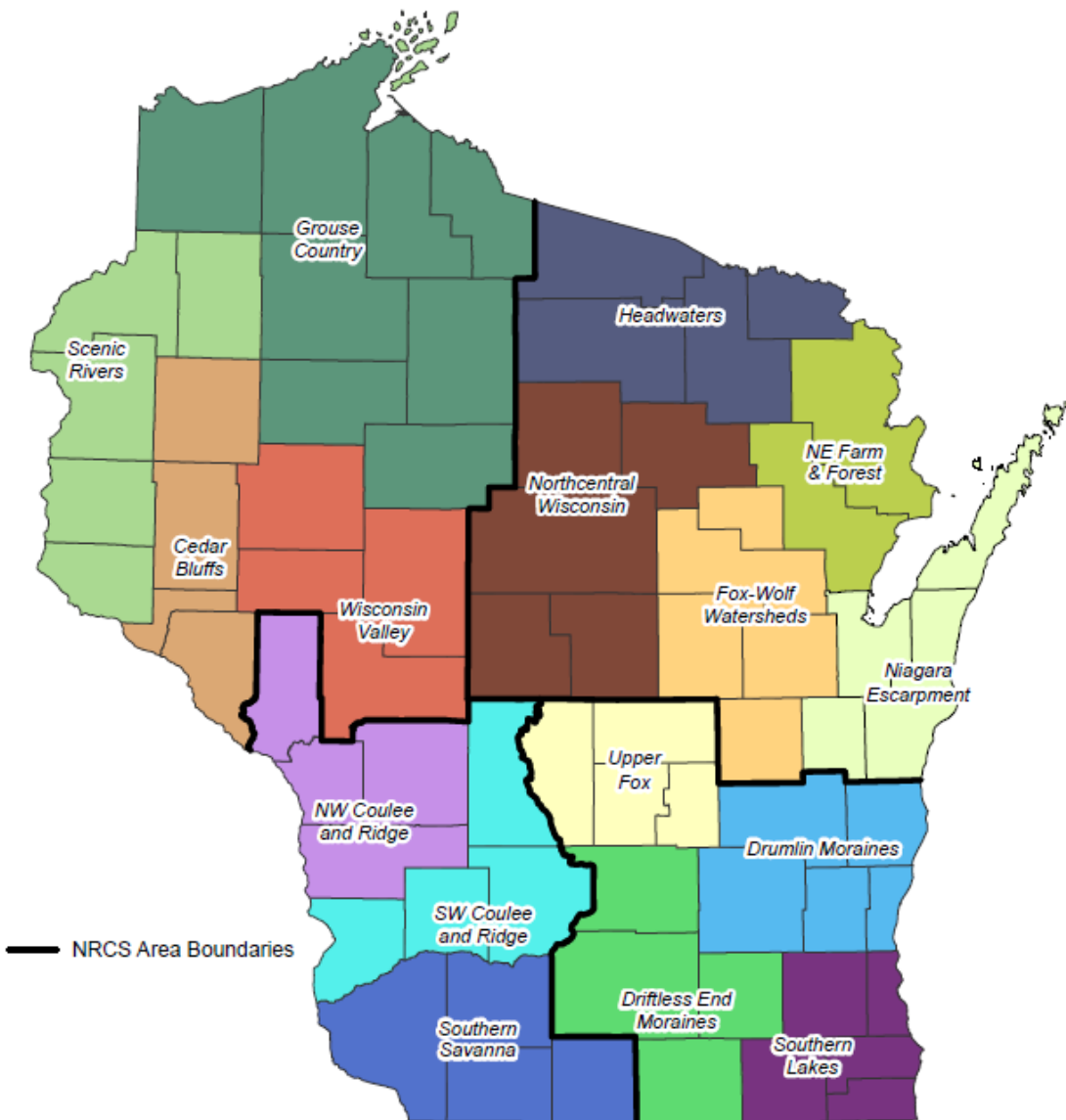
Local Working Group Details

- **16 LWG's grouped by geographic region and resources**
- **Open to the public and meet annually**
- **Members are a diverse group with agricultural and natural resource interests**
- **Examples include:**
 - agricultural producers representing diverse crops and livestock
 - nonindustrial private forest landowners
 - representatives of agricultural and environmental organizations
 - representatives of governmental agencies carrying out conservation



FY 2022-23 Local Work Groups

March 2022



Northwest Breakout 10:45am-Noon:

Microsoft Teams meeting
Join on your computer or mobile app
[Click here to join the meeting](#)
Or call in (audio only)
[+1 202-650-0123,,265812109#](tel:+12026500123265812109)
Phone Conference ID: 265 812 109#

Northeast Breakout 10:45am-Noon:

Microsoft Teams meeting
Join on your computer or mobile app
[Click here to join the meeting](#)
Or call in (audio only)
[+1 202-650-0123,,353965933#](tel:+12026500123353965933)
Phone Conference ID: 353 965 933#

Southwest Breakout 10:45am-Noon:

Microsoft Teams meeting
Join on your computer or mobile app
[Click here to join the meeting](#)
Or call in (audio only)
[+1 202-650-0123,,393822479#](tel:+12026500123393822479)
Phone Conference ID: 393 822 479#

Southeast Breakout 10:45am-Noon:

Microsoft Teams meeting
Join on your computer or mobile app
[Click here to join the meeting](#)
Or call in (audio only)
[+1 202-650-0123,,237102859#](tel:+12026500123237102859)
Phone Conference ID: 237 102 859#