

## *Updates from the Acting State Conservationist*

- **COVID 19 Update**

- FPAC continues to monitor COVID data daily.
- At this time, all FPAC facilities are authorized to operate at full staffing levels.
- Currently, all Service Centers and State offices allow visitors. USDA Service Centers are focused heavily on protecting both employees and customers in accordance with Centers for Disease Control guidelines, including masking if appropriate.
- Masking Requirements are updated weekly by FPAC based on current COVID-19 levels. For the dates of Monday January 16, 2023, through Sunday January 22, 2023, all WI NRCS service centers, area offices and the state office do not require mask. They are optional.

- **Operations and Personnel Updates**

- Congratulations are in order for former Wisconsin State Conservationist Angela Biggs. She recently announced that she has accepted a new position with NRCS at National Headquarters. She will be serving as the new Deputy Chief for Management and Strategy. She began serving in her new position on January 15, 2023.
- Congrats are also in order for the retirement of ASTC-Easements Gregg Kidd. He retired effective December 31, 2023
- Wisconsin Leadership Team welcomes two new members:
  - ASTC-Compliance - Derrick Klimesh: Derrick joins us from Iowa where he currently serves as ASTC-Compliance. He possesses a vast wealth of HEL and Compliance knowledge and is very familiar with statutory, regulatory, and HEL/Wetland Compliance policies. He also holds experience building teams and implementing standard operating procedures for efficient and effective conservation delivery. Derrick will begin in his new role February 27, 2023. He is looking forward to bringing his expertise to assist WI in building and developing our new Highly erodible land and wetland compliance team.
  - ASTC-Easements - David Gundlach: He is an NRCS WI Native that previously served on the financial assistance/programs staff as a Resource Conservationist. He brings a wealth of easement field experience and working with easement programs. He is familiar with policy and working with easement partner. He possesses a good working relationship with the current easement's team from field work completed on easements. Dave is looking forward to carrying the torch forward with Easement's team and brings. Dave is on the meeting today and he will be giving easement updates. Dave began serving in his new position January 3, 2023.

- **Farm Bill Updates**

- **IRA Updates**

- Exciting times are forthcoming for USDA, we here at NRCS are particularly excited about the charge that we have been tasked with. As many of you may have heard or are aware, with the signing of the IRA (Inflation Reduction Act) on 8/16/2022, NRCS will be entrusted with \$20 billion dollars over a course of FY starting in 2023 through 2031 to support conservation programs that yield climate smart related benefits and promote clean energy solutions.
    - For Wisconsin farmers, ranchers, and foresters: IRA funds will be used to seamlessly expand opportunities to participate in our core conservation programs: EQIP, CSP, RCPP, ACEP, and CTA. We are looking for new customers (such as historically underserved groups, minorities, tribes, non-traditional farmers) to work with as well as our encouraging our repeat customers to expand their current management objectives to incorporate climate smart activities. For the public: IRA funds will be disbursed and tracked with scientific integrity and accountability.
    - Climate Smart Commodity practices and clean energy solutions is the drive behind IRA and provides us the flexibility to center our focus around 3 axis: Capacity, Streamlining Program Delivery, Partnerships
    - IRA will provide an opportunity for NRCS to aid tribal nations in having their commodities competitive in the open market
    - One of our goals is to work to increase local and regional tribal leaderships and partnerships
    - The Chief is looking to start accomplishing this through creating a National Tribal Liaison position that will work on tribal relationships and serve as counsel to the Chief to help strengthen nation to nation relationships. All levels have a nation to nation responsibility
    - IRA could also bring opportunities for hiring local tribal positions through a direct hire authority
    - Updates to the new payment schedule include practice scenarios that cater to small scale farming – continuously working to develop techniques and programs for small scale farmers as well as incorporating indigenous stewardship methods and activities that may not be available.
    - To effectively implement the provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act, we are working to develop strategies to expand capacity, target the additional funding, streamline program delivery, leverage partnerships, advance equity, and quantify outcomes. Our main focus is to look for these quantifiable outcomes in the form of carbon sequestration and/or greenhouse gas reduction measurements.
    - We are keeping the focus on locally led conservation and we want to encourage the input of our local workgroups, stakeholders, and our state technical committee.
    - WI does not have an exact amount of IRA funds that we will be receiving right now. We do anticipate seeing some funding in FY 2023 but don't

anticipate seeing funding ramp up until FY 2024. These funds do expire September 30, 2031.

- While FY 2024 through FY 2026 will be focused on outreach and obligation or funds, FY 2027 through FY 2031 will be driven by implementation of climate smart commodity practices as well as monitoring and tell our story of climate smart mitigation and encouraging the adoption of climate smart commodities.
- WI NRCS needs your assistance in developing strategies on how to best maximize benefits for climate mitigation, including targeting practices and programs that provide quantifiable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

○ **Organic Transition Initiative and Interim Conservation Practice 823 Organic Management**

- USDA is making available up to \$300 million for a new Organic Transition Initiative to provide comprehensive support for farmers transitioning to organic production as well as to support current organic producers.
- NRCS has developed a new Organic Management conservation practice standard and will offer financial assistance and conservation planning to producers who implement the practice. The new practice standard will:
  - Strengthen the linkage between conservation management systems and organic transition.
  - Incentivize and support producers through transition to organic production.
  - Payments will be modeled on those available to producers meeting the existing nutrient and pest management conservation practice standards. This allows for specialized consultants to provide detailed plans to meet organic management objectives.
- Wisconsin will use this practice as a resource tool to assist those producers interested in transitioning to an organic operation.
- Framework and additional guidance will be forthcoming from NHQ, however, Wisconsin NRCS encourages and welcome input from organic specialist, partners, and stakeholders on interest and how we can work to embody technical expertise and promote this opportunity.

○ **Partnerships for Climate Smart Commodities Recipients**

- USDA invested in 23 projects with WI based partners under the partnerships for climate smart commodities opportunity.
- These projects will: Provide technical and financial assistance to producers to implement climate-smart production practices on a voluntary basis on working lands; Pilot innovative and cost-effective methods for quantification, monitoring, reporting and verification of greenhouse gas benefits; and Develop markets and promote the resulting climate-smart commodities.
- This is a wonderful win for NRCS WI and our natural resource partners in joining together in the fight against climate change. NRCS WI would like to send a warm congratulations to the recipients of this funding and we look forward to working

with each of you in joining efforts to support climate-smart agriculture and forestry now and into the future. ASTC-Partnerships, Eric Allness will talk a little more about these agreements during his segment.

- If you would like more information on the recipients, funding levels, and the purpose of those projects that were funded, you can visit the USDA website at [www.usda.gov/climate-solutions/climate-smart-commodities](http://www.usda.gov/climate-solutions/climate-smart-commodities)
- **Encouraging Input for Upcoming Farm Bill**
  - The 2018 Farm Bill expires at the close of September this year. One the hill, the house and the senate are in discussion to package legislation that connects the food on our plates, the farmers and ranchers who produce that food, and the natural resources – our soil, air and water – that make growing food possible. We encourage stakeholders, partners, natural resource advocates, forestry and agricultural producers to provide comments through your political affiliates and representatives and make sure that your voice is heard for the new farm bill. While NRCS is a government agency and we are only tasked with delivering the contents of the farm bill, we always want to do our due diligence to ensure that we encourage folks to make sure that the farm bill reflects and confronts new challenges today through stakeholder and citizen action and input.
- **Ag Census Reminder**
  - It's that time again to make sure that forestry and agricultural producers voices are heard and farms are counted via the 2022 Ag Census. The Census of Agriculture is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Even small plots of land – whether rural or urban – count if \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year. The Census of Agriculture provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive, and impartial agriculture data for every state and county in the nation. Through the ag census, producers can show the nation the value and importance of U.S. agriculture and influence decisions that will shape the future of their industries. NRCS highly values this information to help us make informed decisions on delivering technical and financial assistance through our farm bill programs. Be sure that your ag census responses are submitted back by **February 6, 2023**.
  - If your farm meets this benchmark and you have never received NASS surveys or censuses, you can sign up to be counted online or you can reach out to the NASS agency for more information. If anyone needs contact information for NASS please drop it in the chat and we will get you in contact with a representative with NASS.
- **New Look for NRCS Wisconsin Website**
  - It's a new year so our NRCS WI website has taken on a new look and received a makeover. Our Acting State Public Affairs Specialist, Amanda Zelinski gave a wonderful demo on the new website during the last State Tech Committee meeting in October of 2022 and I wanted to do a bit of a follow up. I hope that each of you have had the opportunity to visit our website and you are excited

about the new functions and the layout. We hope that it makes it easier for you to navigate to obtain information and updates easier and more efficiently.

- I want to take the time to just give you a brief overview of our new look and to point out some key areas that may be of interest.
- Our **FY 2022 Annual Report** has been released and can also be found on the website along with feature success stories that include an illustration of the fantastic year of successful conservation with many thanks and appreciation to our partners for helping us to reach our goals. Our collaborations and partnerships are cherished and a positive force in not only marketing but implementing sound conservation. We couldn't have done any of this without your support and assistance.

- **Link to annual report:** [FY22 NRCS Wisconsin Annual Report \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/press-releases/2022/01/2022-nrcs-wisconsin-annual-report)

- **Remaining Calendar Year State Technical Committee Meeting Dates**

- April 20th, July 20th, Oct 19th. All will begin at 9:30 am and an agenda and/or talking points will be provided for those meetings
- As we move to our next presenter Melissa Bartz, ASTC-Financial Assistance Programs and as she prepares her presentation, I want to put a poll out that I would like for each of you to think about and provide a response. WE are trying to ensure that we are serving you, hearing and implementing your recommendations via the State Technical Committee platform. We want to make sure you have the most optimal experience: Input and Thoughts on Wisconsin Conducting Future State Tech Committee Meetings.
  - Place in Chat: How would you like to see future Wisconsin State Technical Committee Meetings?
    - a. In-Person
    - b. Hybrid (Option for both In-Person and Virtual Participation)
    - c. Virtual

**Closing/Adjourn:**

Last but not least, we will have our partner reports.

First, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our sister agency head Gene Schriefer, FSA - State Executive Director and Ian Krause, FSA CRP lead. If you would like please turn your camera on and introduce yourself and provide any agency updates if applicable.

Any questions for our partners (Check Chat)

Before we Adjourn today, I would like to sincerely thank each and every one of you for your participation in our State Technical Committee Meeting. Based on the results of the poll, it seems that many of you would like for us to conduct our State Tech Committee Meeting hybrid with in-person and virtual options. We will work to incorporate your input and feedback as we plan and develop our future meetings. If anyone would like to elaborate, please do so at this time.

I also want to take the time for partners to turn their cameras on to introduce themselves and or provide any recommendations, request, or comments to the State Tech Committee for consideration. If you don't feel comfortable or didn't get an opportunity to provide recommendations, request, or comments publicly on the teams platform, I encourage you to



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# FA Programs

State Tech Advisory Committee  
January 2023



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# Programs Staffing

**Acting State Tribal Liaison: Brian Briski**



**Acting GLRI, MRBI, NWQI Program Manager: Twyla Kite**  
**- Starts January 29th**



# Upcoming Program Deadlines

**February 3rd: EQIP/RCPP SU1 Ranking & Cost Estimates**

**February 10th: CSP Classic Application Deadline**

**February 24th: CSP Payment Approval Deadline**





# FY23 CSP Renewal Wrap Up



- All High Priority CSP Renewal Applications were funded in the FY2023 Renewal Sign up.
- All CSP – GCI applications were funded in state

		Contracts	Acres	\$ Obligated	% Obligated toward HU (by #of contracts)
CSP - GCI	Total	3	55.6	\$5,010	0%
	HU Total	0	--	--	
CSP - Renewal	Total	291	100,107	\$8,501,221	3.3%
	HU Total	13	5,461	\$284,135	

**HU = Historically Underserved (Includes: Limited Resource, Beginning, Socially Disadvantaged, & Veteran Farmers)**



# FY23 CSP Renewal Practices

## Top Planned Activities

- **Forest Stand Improvement**
- **Improving nutrient uptake efficiency**
- **Brush Management**
- **Tree/Shrub Establishment**
- **Cover Crop**
- **Leave standing grain crops unharvested**



# Active Contracts



**CSP: 2,269**

**EQIP 18: 1,780**

**EQIP 14: 145**

**Total: 4,194**





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Conservation Innovation Grants and  
Regional Conservation Partnership Program  
January 19, 2023 – Ryan Gerlich, RCPP Coordinator

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# State Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG):

- Background on the 3 types of CIG
- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO)
- Past State CIG
- 2023 State CIG



## 3 Types of Conservation Innovation Grants:



- National CIG (2022 NFO Information used below)
  - On-Farm Trials
    - 3-5 year projects
    - Floor \$250,000; Ceiling \$5 Million
    - \$25 Million Available
    - 25% Match
    - 10% set aside for HU
    - Individuals are not eligible
  - Classic
    - 1-3 year projects
    - Floor \$300,000; Ceiling \$2 Million
    - \$15 Million Available
    - 50% Match, except HU Projects
    - 10% set aside for HU
    - Individual are eligible\*
- State CIG (operates like National CIG Classic)
  - 1-3 year Projects
  - Floor \$50,000, Ceiling \$500,000
  - \$500,000 Available
  - 50% Match
  - 10% set aside for HU
  - Individuals are eligible\*

More program information found at this link:

[NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-innovation-grants)



# Wisconsin State CIG History:



## 2021 Projects:

Partner	Title
University of Wisconsin System (UW-Extension - NHGS)	Southwest Wisconsin Karst Bedrock Mapping
Savanna Institute	Conservation Planning for Agroforestry
University of Wisconsin System (CALs – Plant Pathology)	Increasing Efficacy and Adoption of Interseeding Systems

## 2022 Projects:

Partner	Title
Sand County Foundation	Performance Based Conservation to Incentivize Climate Smart Management
Michael Fields	Addressing Transitional Economics to Increase Conservation Adoption for Climate-Smart Agriculture



# 2023 State Conservation Innovation Grant:

- The Notice of Funding Opportunity
  - Currently under review by State Leadership Team members
  - 2022 Priorities (starting on page 7 of the 2022 NFO)
    - Manure Management Systems
    - Conservation Planning
    - Climate Smart Agriculture/Forestry Systems
  - \$500,000 set aside from the EQIP allocation
  - February Goal to post to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (60 days signup)
  - Outreach to follow





# State CIG Questions and Input:

**Ryan Gerlich**

**State Conservation Innovation Grants Coordinator**

**[ryan.gerlich@usda.gov](mailto:ryan.gerlich@usda.gov)**

**608-662-4422 ext 227**



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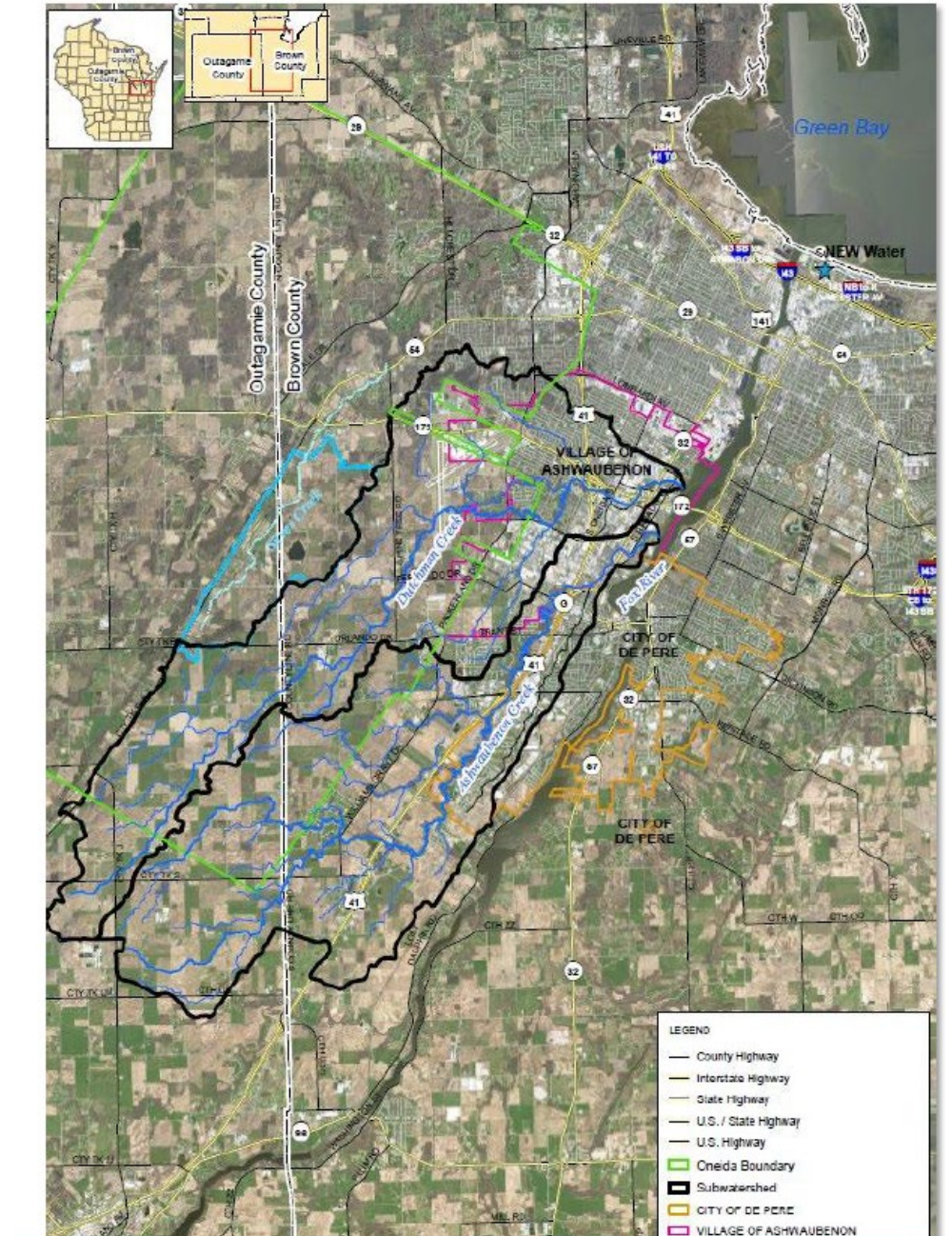
# Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

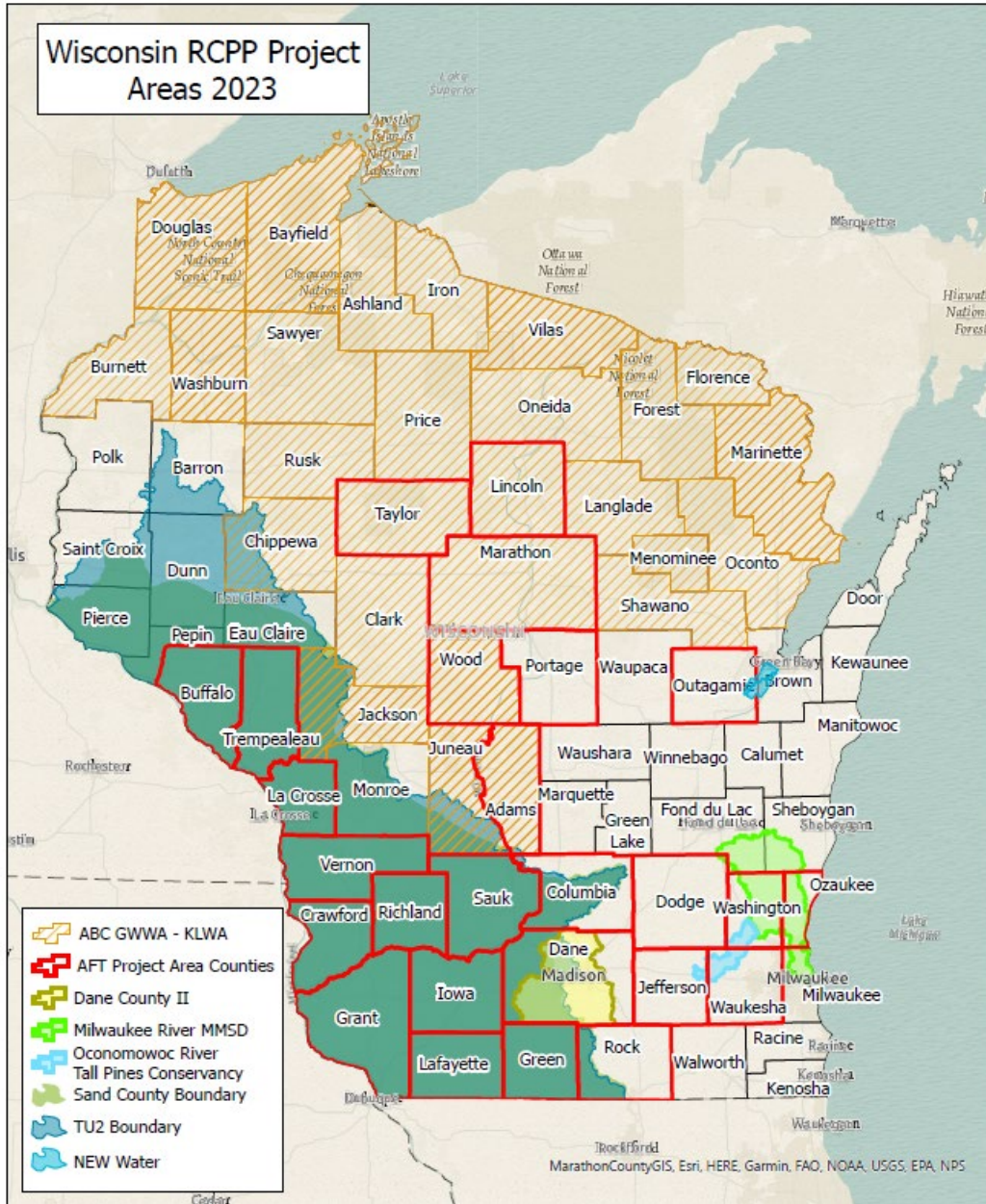
- 2023 Notice of Funding Opportunities expected late winter – early spring
- Expect 2 NFOs
  - Classic
    - Portal
    - NRCS involvement negotiated (planning, design, inherent government duties, contract management)
  - Alternative Funding Arrangements
    - Grants and Agreements
    - Limited NRCS involvement (inherent government duties)



# 2023 new RCPP Project, Ashwaubenon & Dutchman Creek (called AC/DC)

- Lead Partner: **NEW Water**, Green Bay, WI
- Other Partners
  - Outagamie Co LCD
  - Brown Co (LCD & Airport)
  - Oneida Nation
  - UW-Ext
- Resource Concerns
  - Surface Water Quality (Phos. & Sediment)
  - Soil Erosion
  - Soil Health
  - Wildlife Habitat





## WI RCPP Lead Partners

- American Bird Conservancy
- American Farmland Trust
- Dane County
- Milwaukee MSD
- NEW Water
- Oconomowoc
- Sand County Foundation
- Tall Pines
- Trout Unlimited



# Questions?



**Ryan Gerlich**

**State CIG and RCPP Coordinator**

**[ryan.gerlich@usda.gov](mailto:ryan.gerlich@usda.gov)**

**608-662-4422 ext 227**



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request written comments on agenda items from all members of the State Technical Committee. Comments received will be summarized and presented at the next State Technical Committee meeting and will be directly posted on the NRCS State Web site.

Thanks again to each of you and we hope you have a wonderful rest of the week. See you at the next State Technical Committee Meeting scheduled for April 20th. More information will be forth coming.



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Wisconsin State Technical Committee  
Partnerships Division Update  
January 19, 2023

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STATE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE  
PROGRESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS



## Partnerships Division Update

- Partner Affiliate Staffing Updates
- Partnerships for Climate Smart Commodities
- Funding Opportunities





# Partner Affiliate Staffing Updates

## Welcome Tom Manley Organic Conservation Specialist Marbleseed Partner Affiliate



Tom Manley is an Organic Conservation Specialist working with Marbleseed (formerly MOSES) and Wisconsin NRCS. He joined Marbleseed in 2016 and is part of the team that manages their programming. He is committed to working to find the synergies and alignment that exist between conservation programs and certified organic production, and facilitating the utilization of these programs to benefit farmers and their environments. Tom is also a producer himself, focusing on managed grazing and creating habitat wherever possible for all the creatures that share his family's farm.

# Partner Affiliate Staffing Updates

## Dane County Land & Water Resources Department



**Position Title:** Agronomist (Demonstration Farm Network Project Manager)

**Duty Location:** Madison, WI (Dane County)

**Application Deadline:** Monday, January 23rd

- Under general supervision of the County Conservationist, responsible for the professional implementation of voluntary and regulatory programs, projects, and best management practices to address nutrient management, soil health, water quality and quantity, and other agronomic activities by providing planning assistance and technical services to landowners and agricultural producers in the application of conservation practices to meet federal, state, and local requirements and regulations as well as function as a lead worker in the Land Conservation Division (LCD) of the Land & Water Resources Department (LWRD) for Dane County.
- Funding for this position is provided through a cooperative agreement between Dane County LWMD and NRCS. This position will coordinate the establishment of a new Demonstration Farm Network in Dane County.



Demonstration Farm  
Networks

<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/countyofdane/jobs/3859923/agronomist-demonstration-farm-network-project-manager?pagetype=jobOpportunitiesJobs>

# Partner Affiliate Staffing Updates

## WI Land + Water/Monroe County LCD



**Position Title:** Agronomist

**Duty Location:** Sparta, WI (Monroe County)

**Applications will be accepted until the position is filled –  
please share with local partners or other qualified potential applicants!**

- Driven, go-getting, and interested in the farming community? Successful candidates will have a Bachelor's degree in agronomy, soil science, or plant-based biology or botany. Two years of professional experience in production agriculture involving field based agronomic consulting, nutrient and pest management, and on-farm planning is desired.
- This is a collaborative position with Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association and Monroe County Land Conservation Department via an agreement.

<https://www.co.monroe.wi.us/Home/Components/JobPosts/Job/350/318>

# PARTNERSHIPS FOR CLIMATE-SMART COMMODITIES

## BY THE NUMBERS



The U.S. Department of Agriculture is investing over **\$3.1 billion** in **141 selected** projects under the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities.

### PROJECTS BY COMMODITY



### PROPOSAL INVESTMENTS

Proposals for the **141** tentatively selected projects include plans to match an average of **50%** of the federal investment with non-federal funds.

### PROJECTS BY AWARD SIZE\*

**71** Under \$5M  
**22** \$5-20M  
**25** \$25M-45M  
**09** \$50M-65M  
**14** \$70M-95M

**~100** universities, including more than **30** minority-serving institutions, engaged & helping advance projects. **20+** tribes and tribal groups engaged and leading on many projects across a wide geography.

**60,000** farms reached, encompassing **acres of working land** engaged in climate-smart production practices. **25M**

**Hundreds of expanded markets** and revenue streams for producers and commodities across agriculture ranging from **traditional crops** to **specialty crops**.

More than **60 million metric tons** of carbon dioxide equivalent sequestered over the lives of the projects. This is equivalent to removing more than **12 million gasoline-powered** passenger vehicles from the road for one year.

# PARTNERSHIPS FOR CLIMATE-SMART COMMODITIES



Organic Valley Roundtable Event  
September 15, 2022



Marbleseed Roundtable Event  
December 13, 2022

# Partnerships for Climate Smart Commodities



## 1<sup>st</sup> Funding Announcement

Projects \$5M to \$100M  
 Fnded awards that include Wisconsin within project area (16 qty):

- Archer - Daniels - Midland
- American Sustainable Business Institute Inc.
- Carbon A List LLC
- Cooperative Regions of Organic Producer Pools**
- Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative**
- Farm Journal Inc.
- Field to Market
- Iconoclast Industries LLC
- Iowa Soybean Association
- Low Carbon Beef LLC
- Millborn Seeds Inc.
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
- The DeLong Co. Inc.**
- The Meridian Institute
- The Nature Conservancy

## 2nd Funding Announcement

Projects ≤ \$5M  
 Fnded awards that include Wisconsin within project area (7 qty):

- Regeneration International /  
 Regenerative Agriculture Alliance
- Marbleseed**
- Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship**
- American Lamb Board
- Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance**
- Texas A&M University-Kingsville
- TH Cattle Company LLC

*Partners highlighted in blue are Wisconsin based organizations.*

## Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities Project Summaries

USDA is investing \$5.1 billion in 141 successful projects under Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities. Below are individual projects provided below.

Equity

Climate Solutions

Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities

Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities Project Summaries

FAQs

Climate Change, Agriculture, and USDA

Food and Nutrition Security

Water, Soils, and Non-Market Opportunities

Help us improve USA.gov

▼ First Funding Pool Project Summaries

▼ Second Funding Pool Project Summaries

Projects by Approximate Funding Ceiling:

▼ 14 Projects with Approximate Funding Ceiling from \$20M-\$45M

▼ 9 Projects with Approximate Funding Ceiling from \$5M-\$20M

▼ 20 Projects with Approximate Funding Ceiling from \$20M-\$45M

▼ 22 Projects with Approximate Funding Ceiling from \$5M-\$20M

▼ 21 Projects with Approximate Funding Ceiling of \$200,000 to less than \$5M

<https://www.usda.gov/climate-solutions/climate-smart-commodities/projects>

**Organic Valley Carbon Insetting Program: Building a Multi-stakeholder Path to Produce, Market and Promote Climate-Smart Commodities Across the U.S.** --This project will expand climate-smart markets and help finance partnerships and incentivize farmers to advance the Organic Valley Carbon Insetting Program. Organic Valley will use two strategies to reduce supply chain emissions: mitigate GHG emissions and maximize opportunities for carbon sequestration, focusing specifically on dairy and eggs as the climate-smart commodities.

**Lead Partner:** Cooperative Regions of Organic Producer Pools

**Major Partners:** Good Company, SustainCERT, PUR Project, Yardstick, University of Wisconsin – Madison, Planet Labs, American Farmland Trust, Organic Trade Association, The Organic Center, Agrilab Technologies, Inc., Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Amicus Solar Cooperative, Carissa Stein Consulting, GDS Engineering, Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District, Interlace Commons, Sarah Flack Consulting, Savanna Institute, Sonoma Resource Conservation District, Trees for Graziers, Stonyfield Organic, Nancy’s Organic/Springfield Creamery, General Mills/Annie’s

**Major Commodities:** Dairy, Eggs

**Approximate Funding Ceiling:** \$25,000,000



# FY 2023 Grant & Agreement Funding Opportunities

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# Partners Funding Opportunities (NRCS funding contribution)



Opportunity	Purpose	FY 2023 Proposal Submission Deadline	Contact	Webpage
<p>National Fish &amp; Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)</p> <p>Sustain Our Great Lakes Program</p>	<p>NFWF provides grants to benefit fish, wildlife, habitat and water quality in the Great Lakes basin.</p> <p>Funding priorities for this program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restore and enhance stream and riparian habitat;</li> <li>Restore and enhance coastal wetland habitat;</li> <li>Expand green stormwater infrastructure in Great Lakes communities; Maintain and enhance benefits of habitat restoration through invasive species control; Restore and preserve natural areas and biodiversity in Wisconsin’s Lake Michigan watershed; Accelerate implementation of conservation practices and regenerative agriculture on working lands.</li> </ul>	<p>Applicant Webinar: January 19, 2023 1 - 2:30 PM Central Time</p> <p>Pre-Proposal Due Date: February 14, 2023</p> <p>Full Proposal Due Date: April 25, 2023</p>	<p>Aislinn Gauchay aislinn.gauchay@nfwf.org</p>	<p><a href="https://www.nfwf.org/programs/sustain-our-great-lakes-program">https://www.nfwf.org/programs/sustain-our-great-lakes-program</a></p>

<https://www.nfwf.org/programs/sustain-our-great-lakes-program>

## Notice of Funding Opportunities (Wisconsin)

Anticipated to be posted in Grants.gov in February 2023

- **Urban Agriculture Grants**
  - Establish community gardens
  - Install and demonstrate seasonal high tunnel benefits
  
- **Cooperative Conservation Agreements**
  - Build technical capacity to implement Farm Bill & NRCS conservation programs
  - Establish Demonstration Farm Networks
  - Urban Agriculture technical assistance
  - Build technical capacity of NRCS and partner field conservation employees
  - Build the capacity of local partners to develop and implement effective projects
  - Achieve positive and measurable natural resources conservation outcomes

Anticipated to be posted in Grants.gov in February 2023

- **Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)**



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# STAC Easements Update

January 19, 2023 | David Gundlach, ASTC-Easements

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Easements Update

 **-Greg's  
Replacement  
-WI FY23  
-IRA and ACEP**



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# New ASTC-Easements



## Work history:

- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)  
20+ years
- SCEP/STEP, Soil Scientist, Soil Con, DC

## Most recently: Resource Conservationist

- Coordinator for Water Quality Initiatives

## Lives in Madison, WI

## Likes: Long walks on the beach

[david.gundlach@usda.gov](mailto:david.gundlach@usda.gov)

(608) 751-5276



# FY23 ACEP Update



## Initial Funding Allocation

- \$500,000 General WRE
- \$356,000 WRE Stewardship
- \$304,000 ALE

## New for FY23

- \$3.5 million GLRI WRE



# GLRI WRE Eligible Area

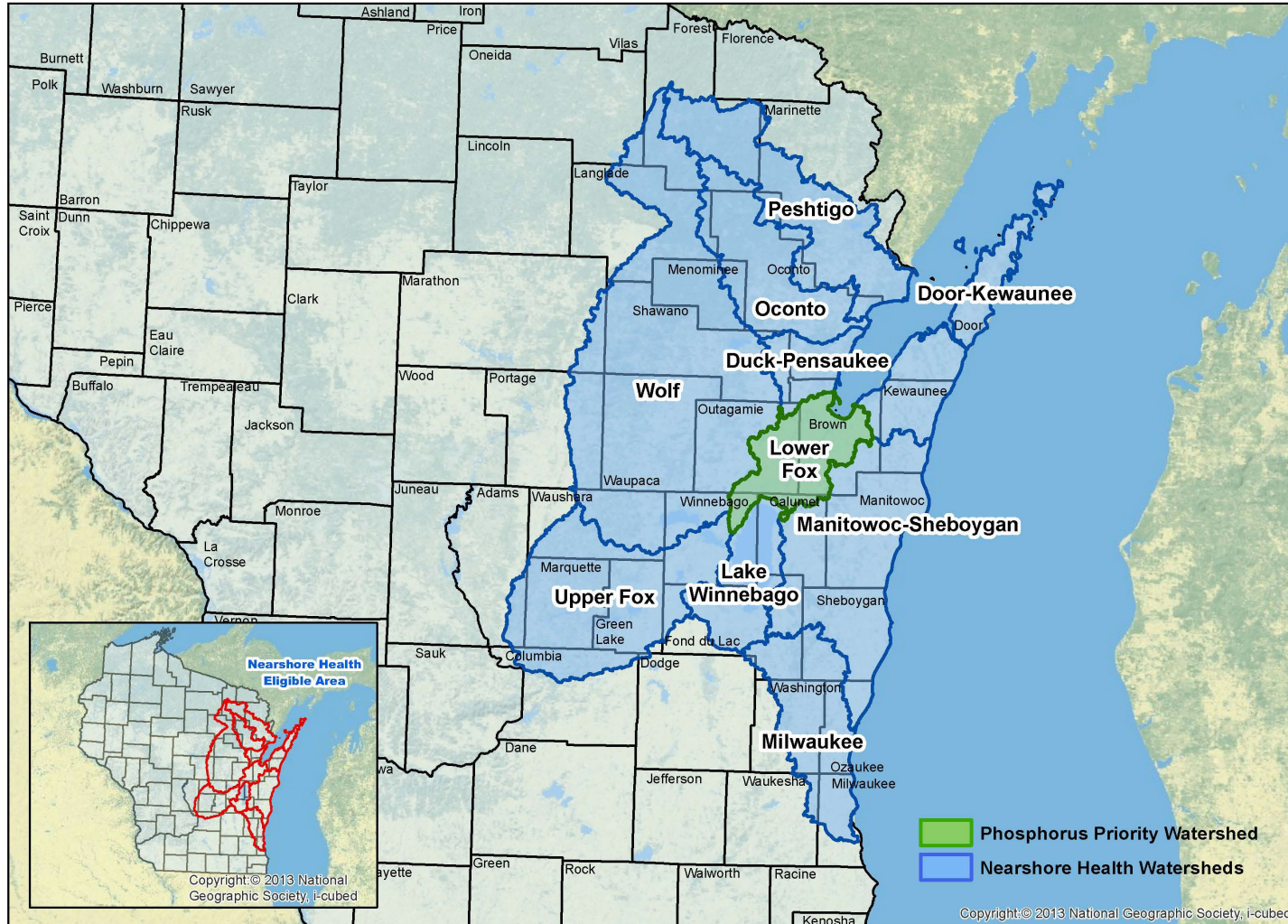


## Wisconsin GLRI Nearshore Health Watersheds



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service



Natural  
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Service

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# FY23 ACEP Update



## WRE Applications

- **13 total**
- **7 eligible in GLRI**
  - All will be funded
- **6 remaining will go to “Draft Day”**
  - February 1





# IRA Update



For FY23...

- **Anticipated IRA Authorization for ACEP**

<b>New Authority*</b>	\$ 100,000,000
<b>Financial Assistance</b>	\$ 65,000,000
<b>Technical Assistance</b>	\$ 35,000,000

- **Will be split between ALE and WRE**
  - NHQ has not determined split yet



# IRA Funds Targeting



**For FY23, eligibility and ranking will target sites that...**

- **Have the highest soil carbon sequestration potential (based on soils data)**
- **Will restore or protect permanent and persistent vegetative cover types (wetlands and grasslands)**
- **Are subject to highest risk of conversion to uses that would result in a net contribution of greenhouse gases**

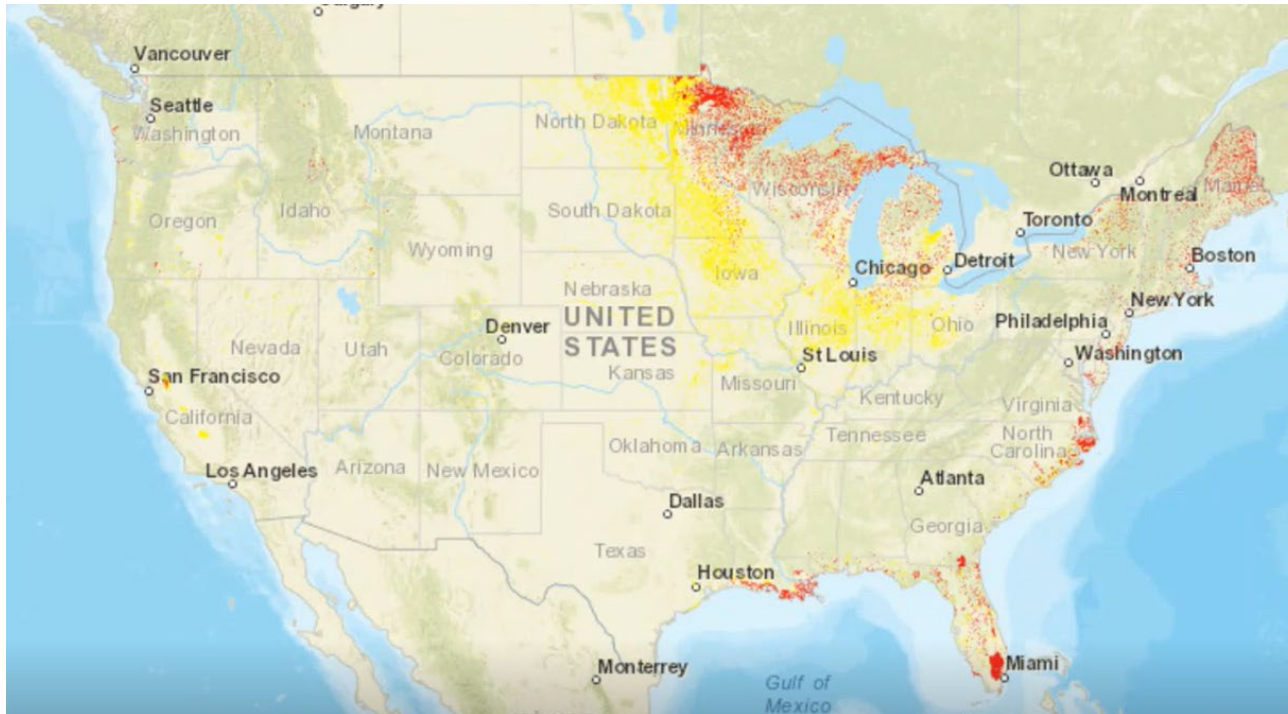


# IRA Funds Targeting



## ACEP WRE IRA Target Areas

- **Soils high in organic carbon meeting designated thresholds**
  - Histosols, soils with histic epipedons, aquolls (wet mollisols), and soils with umbric epipedons

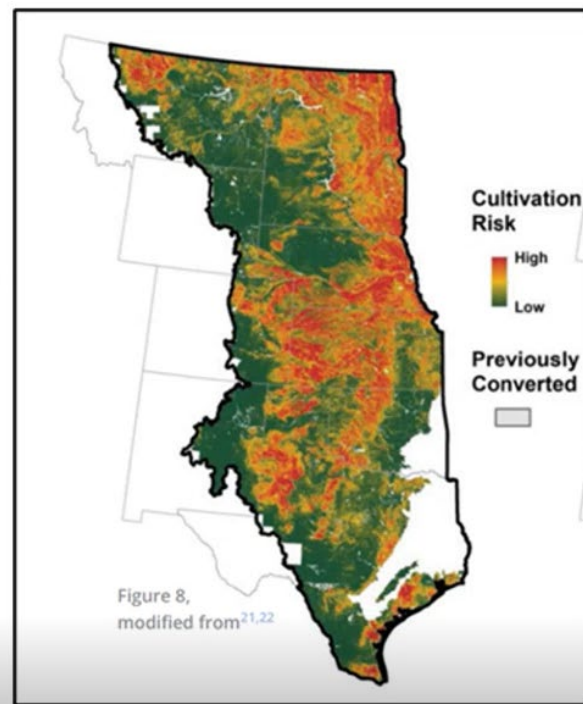


# IRA Funds Targeting



## ACEP ALE IRA Target Areas

- Grasslands located in the NRCS-WLFW Great Plains Grassland Biome
  - Likely not Wisconsin



Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service

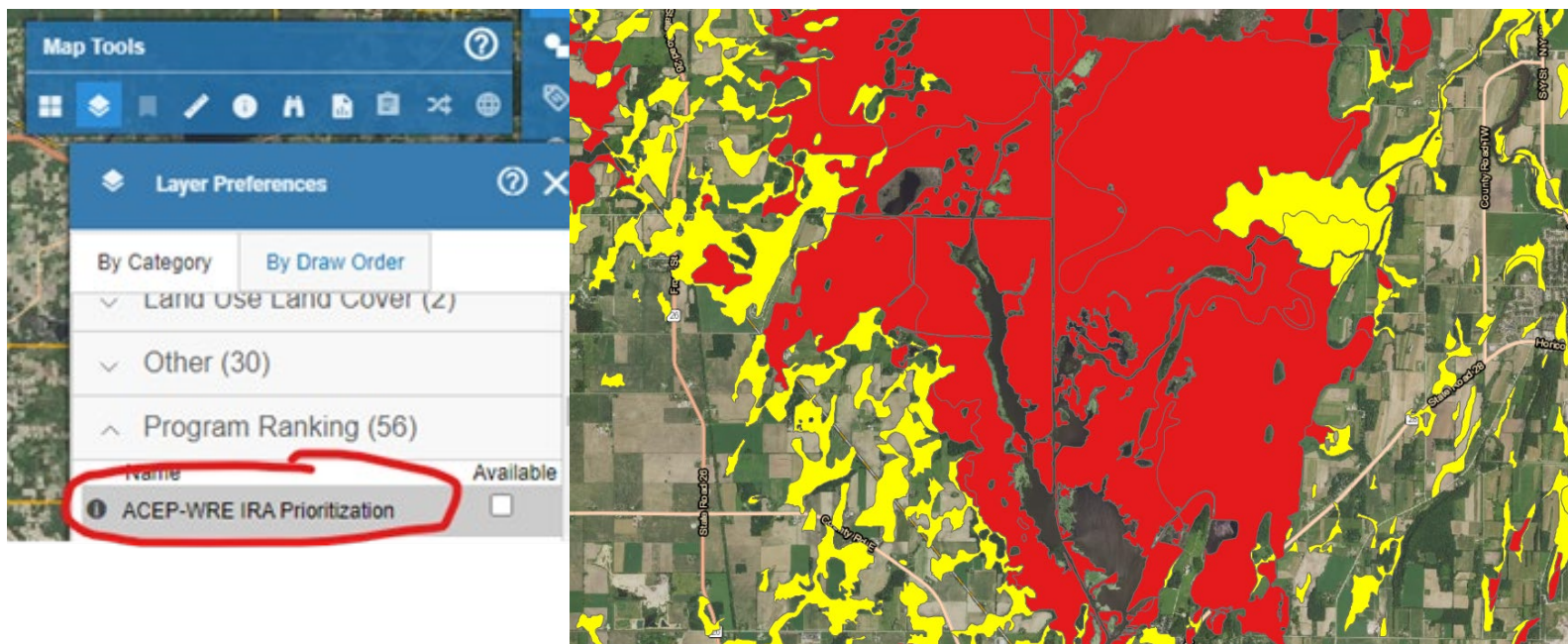


# IRA Funds Targeting



## Prioritization Areas in CD

- Under Program Ranking category
  - In map tools layer preferences



Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service

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# IRA Funds Targeting



## Benefits of the FY23 IRA ACEP Strategy

- **ACEP-WRE**

- Per acre GHG net-benefit of organic soils many times higher than benefit from other soil types
- Wetland restoration on degraded organic soils aligns with GHG mitigation strategies of several other countries under the UN Climate Convention

- **ACEP-ALE**

- Focus on preserving grasslands in areas of highest risk for conversion to prevent release of stored soil carbon
- Within in the target area, prioritizing highest soil organic carbon percentage to preference to grassland areas with highest potential for carbon sequestration



# IRA Timeline



## Still unknown at this time...

- **National sign up announcement and press release**
  - Still waiting on this (tentative was Jan. 17)
- **National application and ranking cutoff dates will be provided to States**
- **National ranking pools will be published for States' use**
- **States rank applications to be considered for IRA funding**



# Staff Update



## Pheasants Forever Wetlands Easement Biologist

- Refilling position vacated in Chippewa Falls
- Interviews will be January 27





# Questions



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Subcommittees:

Forestry: Allan Braun

Soil Health: Andy Paolucci

Wildlife: Steve Bertjens

Source Water Protection: Eric Hurley

Urban & Community Ag: Eric Allness

Chat links:

<http://www.usda.gov/climate-solutions/climate-smart-commodities>

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wi/cig> Conservation Innovation Grants

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wi/stc> State Tech Committee page

<https://ozaukeecounty.applytojob.com/apply/KgGHvLfLkK/Conservation-Planner-Soil-Health-Specialist>

[https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAFARMERS/subscriber/topics?qsp=USDAFARMERS\\_WI](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAFARMERS/subscriber/topics?qsp=USDAFARMERS_WI)

<https://wisconsinwoodlands.org/calendar-of-events/>

<https://wisconsinlandwater.org/conservation/annual-conference>

<https://conference.wisconsinwetlands.org>

<https://www.fishhabitat.org/the-partnerships/driftless-area-restoration-effort>

Wisconsin Women in Conservation (WiWiC) will be hosting a conference for Conservation Educators on April 28th at Stevens Point on "Lighting the Fire with Women Landowners". We'll get the webpage out soon @www.wiwic.org!