



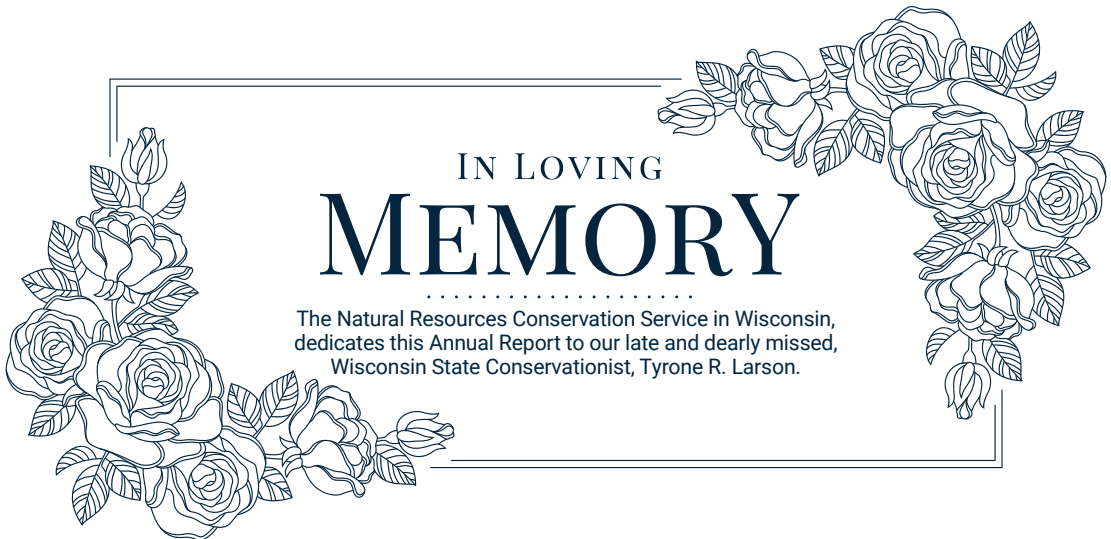
Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Wisconsin Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2023

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.



IN LOVING
MEMORY

.....
The Natural Resources Conservation Service in Wisconsin,
dedicates this Annual Report to our late and dearly missed,
Wisconsin State Conservationist, Tyrone R. Larson.



Helping People Help the Land

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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All technical content and data in this report is acquired from ProTracts and NEST.

Greetings

For more than 85 years, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Wisconsin has worked directly with America's farmers and landowners to put conservation on the ground and protect our natural resources. We are dedicated to helping people make investments in their operations and local communities to keep our working lands working.

Last year brought many opportunities for NRCS to work with private landowners and Tribal Nations through the 2018 Farm Bill and the additional funding provided by the Inflation Reduction Act. Both resources have allowed NRCS to provide the necessary financial and technical assistance needed to support conservation opportunities in a way that is cost effective and aligns with your conservation goals. Each of our voluntary programs incorporates enhancements aimed at bolstering conservation opportunities at the local level, and through the adoption of conservation practices, we work together to address your natural resource concerns. Wisconsin NRCS is dedicated to assisting those who are helping improve soil health, water and air quality and many more of our nation's natural resources.

In this annual report, you'll learn about our fiscal year 2023 program successes, along with highlights of the work we do. Through our continued focus and emphasis on conservation planning, our field staff are connecting with customers across the state to develop and implement plans to protect, conserve, restore and enhance the country's life-supporting vital natural assets. We will continue to meet the unique conservation and business goals of those who grow our nation's food and fiber. We are 'Helping People Help the Land' to ensure our natural resources are regenerative for future generations.



For the Resources.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyrone R. Larson'.

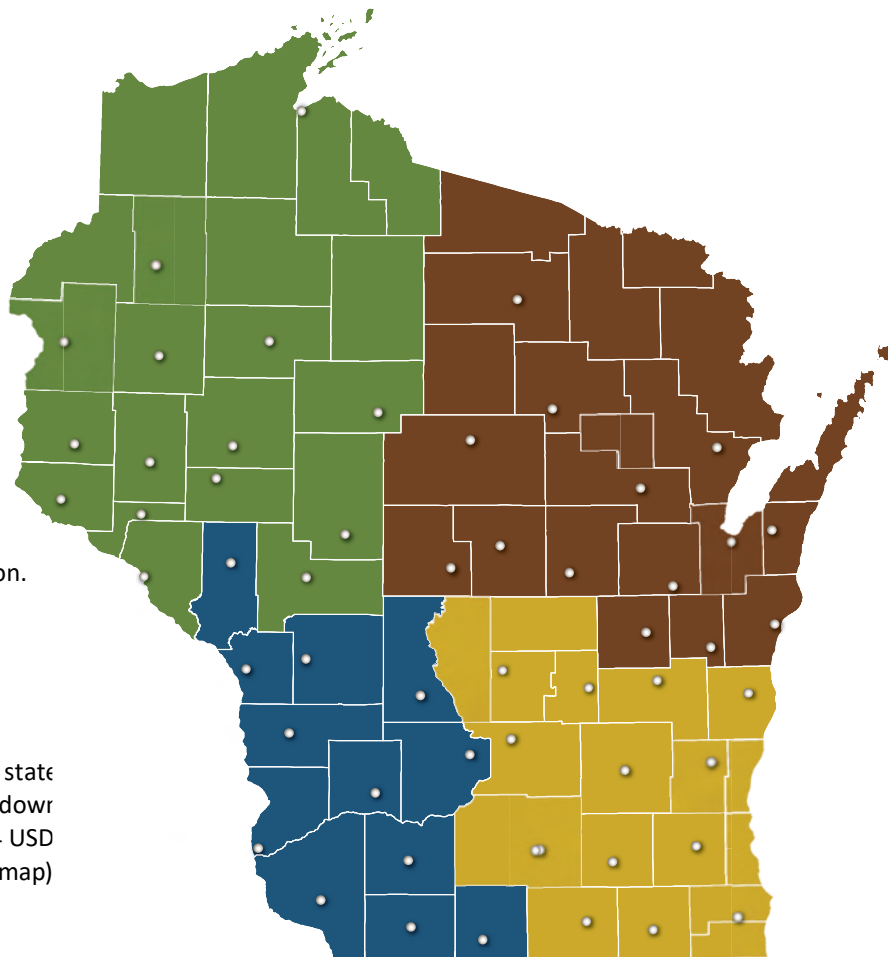
Tyrone R. Larson
Beloved Wisconsin State Conservationist

Our Agency

NRCS works with farmers, forest landowners, small-scale and urban agricultural producers of all-sized operations across the country to help them boost agricultural productivity and protect our natural resources through conservation.

Our Staff

NRCS in Wisconsin has nearly 300 staff across the state the unique resource needs of our farmers and landowner county in Wisconsin is supported by one of the 54 USD Centers located across the state. Our offices (see map) customer service at the local level.



Conservation Results



1,012,640

ACRES OF CONSERVATION
APPLIED TO IMPROVE
ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY.



40,560

ACRES OF FOREST LAND
WITH CONSERVATION
APPLIED TO IMPROVE
VEGETATIVE CONDITION.



605,879

ACRES OF CROPLAND
WITH CONSERVATION
APPLIED TO IMPROVE
SOIL QUALITY.

703,142 acres were covered under conservation plans.

29,602 acres of grazing land with conservation applied to improve the resource base.

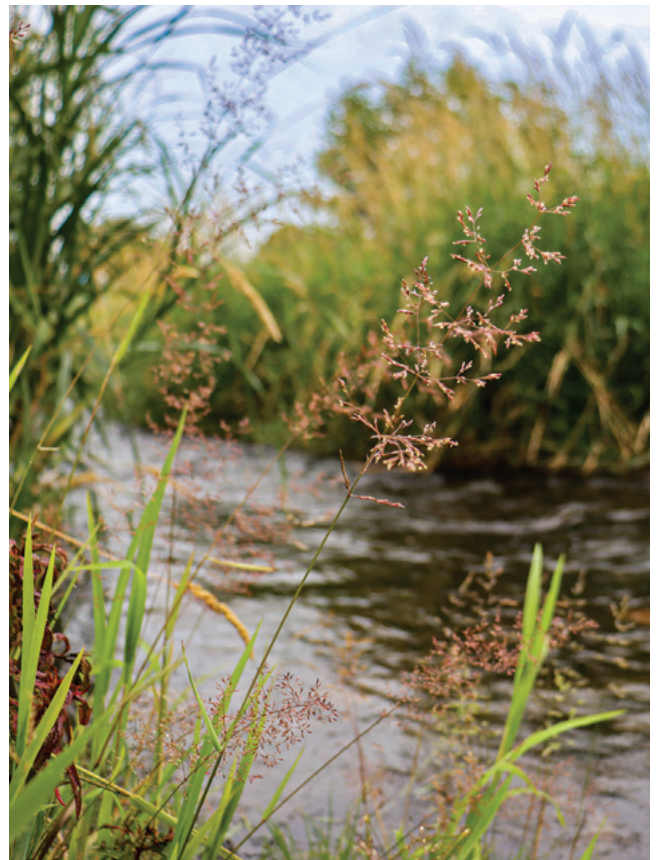
10,076 acres of cropland with conservation applied to improve soil health and sustainability.

3,562 acres with conservation applied to improve agricultural irrigation water management.

15,495 acres of non-federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat.

State Resource Priorities

- 1 **Water** Quality Degradation
- 2 **Soil** Erosion
- 3 **Soil** Quality Degradation
- 4 Inadequate **Habitat** for Fish and Wildlife
- 5 Degraded **Plant** Conditions
- 6 **Livestock** Production Limitation
- 7 Excess **Water** and Insufficient **Water**
- 8 **Air** Quality Impacts
- 9 Insufficient **Energy** Use



Funding Impact

\$2.4 MIL.
REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

\$23.7 MIL.
CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

\$24.1 MIL.
AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM

\$37.4 MIL.
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM



\$87.6 MILLION
PROVIDED THROUGH
CONSERVATION PROGRAMS
TO PRIVATE LANDS.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program promoting agricultural production, forest management, and environmental quality that helps install or implement structural, agronomic, or management conservation practices to protect soil and water quality. In fiscal year 2023, NRCS staff worked to establish 1,098 contracts, enrolling 134,368 acres. Conservation results are below.

9.73 MIL. dollars provided in 167 EQIP contracts on 46,420 acres through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

3.31 MIL. dollars provided for Socially Disadvantaged Groups.

7.45 MIL. dollars provided in 277 EQIP contracts covering 12,708 acres for New and Beginning Farmers.

2.3 MIL. dollars provided through EQIP to 5 Tribes covering 3,575 acres for conservation improvements.

164,559 dollars provided in 9 EQIP contracts covering 210 acres for On-Farm Energy.

2.8 MIL. dollars provided in 41 EQIP contracts for Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry through the Inflation Reduction Act.

358,222 dollars provided in 9 EQIP contracts covering 1,640 acres for the National Water Quality Initiative.

512,651 dollars provided in 25 EQIP contracts for Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry.

263,655 dollars provided in 17 EQIP contracts covering 1,832 acres for Mississippi River Basin Initiative.

2.06 MIL. dollars provided in 51 EQIP contracts covering 9,773 acres for Source Water Protection.

145,342 dollars provided in 6 EQIP contracts covering 325 acres for the National Organic Initiative.

132,747 dollars provided in 8 EQIP contracts covering 245 acres for Urban Agriculture and Forestry Conservation.

227,449 dollars provided in 2 EQIP contracts covering 259 acres for the Organic Transition Initiative.

991,029 dollars provided in 201 EQIP contracts covering 17,726 acres for Conservation Planning Activities, Design and Implementation Activities, and Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activities.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands, wetlands and their related benefits. Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE) provide technical and financial assistance directly to private landowners and Tribal Nations to restore, protect and enhance wetlands. Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) provide financial assistance to eligible partners for purchasing easements that protect the agricultural and conservation values of eligible land. In the case of working farms, the program helps farmers and landowners keep their land in agricultural use. Highlights for fiscal year 2023 include:

23.75 MIL. dollars were provided for 10 ACEP-WRE agreements covering 2,289 acres.

1.35 MIL. dollars were obligated to partnership agreements providing easement monitoring and management services.

350,000 dollars were provided for one ACEP-ALE agreement covering 289 acres.



336,000
DOLLARS WERE PROVIDED IN WRE REPAIR, MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT PROJECTS.



23.7 MILLION
DOLLARS PROVIDED IN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THROUGH CSP.

Conservation Stewardship Program

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resource concerns. The CSP provides assistance to landowners who practice good stewardship on their land and are willing to take additional steps over the next five years.

356,969 acres were enrolled in new Conservation Stewardship Program contracts.

402 classic (new) Conservation Stewardship Program contracts.

291 renewed Conservation Stewardship Program contracts.

3 Grassland Conservation Initiative contracts.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) uses partnerships to multiply conservation investments and reach goals on a regional or watershed scale, promoting coordination between partners to deliver assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance through partnership agreements and program contracts or easement agreements.

2.4 MIL. dollars were provided in financial assistance through RCPP-EQIP, Land Management and Rental (LMR), and Entity Held Easements (EHE).

85 contracts were established through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program.



4,846
ACRES ENROLLED THROUGH RCPP.

TOP 10 EQIP PRACTICES *by Practice Count*



1 **COVER CROP**
Practice count: 638
Funds obligated: \$6,955,894

2 **BRUSH MANAGEMENT**
Practice count: 363
Funds obligated: \$834,239

3 **PRESCRIBED GRAZING**
Practice count: 362
Funds obligated: \$820,599

4 **RESIDUE & TILLAGE MANAGEMENT, NO-TILL**
Practice count: 324
Funds obligated: \$1,351,056

5 **TREE/SHRUB ESTABLISHMENT**
Practice count: 212
Funds obligated: \$1,273,671

6 **FENCE**
Practice count: 202
Funds obligated: \$1,118,524



7 **MULCHING**
Practice count: 183
Funds obligated: \$367,786

8 **FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN**
Practice count: 152
Funds obligated: \$301,746

9 **GRASSED WATERWAYS**
Practice count: 139
Funds obligated: \$368,567

10 **FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENT**
Practice count: 139
Funds obligated: \$460,283





Partnerships in Focus

Partnerships allows NRCS to expand the reach and depth of conservation. In fiscal year 2023, NRCS Wisconsin collaborated with conservation partners to enter into 32 new agreements. These agreements leverage NRCS financial investments with partner contributions to help put conservation on the land and address natural resource concerns.



13.4 MILLION
DOLLARS INTO
AGREEMENTS,
WITH FINANCIAL
COMMITMENTS
FROM PARTNERS
TOTALING \$1 MIL.

NRCS Wisconsin thanks the following partners for their collaboration and financial commitment in making conservation work:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship | Oneida Nation | Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection |
| Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council | Outagamie County Land Conservation Department | Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources |
| GrassWorks | Purdue University | Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association |
| Green Fire | Sand County Foundation | Wisconsin Prescribed Fire Council |
| Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin | Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department | Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council |
| Mequon Nature Preserve | Savanna Institute | Wisconsin Waterfowl Association |
| Michael Fields Agricultural Institute | The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System | |
| Milwaukee Public Schools | University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension | |
| North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission | Waupaca County Land & Water Conservation Department | |
| Northcentral Technical College | | |

Thank you!

Outreach in Action

NRCS is dedicated to ensuring our programs and services are made accessible to all NRCS customers, fairly and equitably, with an emphasis on reaching underserved and socially disadvantaged agricultural producers throughout Wisconsin. By institutionalizing outreach and partnerships in delivering our services and programs, we are increasing our ability to reach a broader, more diverse group of producers. Supportive efforts made in fiscal year 2023 are highlighted below.

190 outreach events were recorded by field staff at the local/area level.

72 of the recorded events identified at least one of the following groups as being the primary target audience: Historically Underserved, Urban/Small-Scale agricultural producers, Veterans, women and new customers.

16 statewide conferences/events housed NRCS booths, that were staffed with employee volunteers.

23% of the contracts funded in fiscal year 2023, were awarded to participants identifying as historically underserved producers. The approximate breakdown of these contracts are as follows: **35%** RCPP, **29%** EQIP, **24%** GLRI and **12%** CSP.





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Natural Resources Conservation Service

