

CONSERVATION COUNTS

JEFFERSON COUNTY LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

FALL 2012

Farmland Preservation Program: On Farm Inspections for Livestock Farmers

The Jefferson County LWCD is in the process of evaluating all the farms in the Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) for compliance with the State Conservation Standards (NR 151). Farms with livestock will need to have an on farm inspection to determine their Conservation Standard status.

Inspection Schedule

2011-2012: Jefferson, Oakland, Koshkonong, & Sumner
2012-2013: Lake Mills, Aztalan, Waterloo, & Milford
2013-2014: Watertown, Ixonia, Farmington, & Concord
2010 & 2014: Hebron, Cold Spring, Palmyra, & Sullivan



If a farm is found to be in full compliance, they will be given a form documenting their status. If a farm is found to have an issue that needs to be corrected, they will be given a reasonable schedule of compliance and a source of funding for cost-shareable practices will be sought. Funding is limited however, so if there is any concern about meeting one of new Conservation Standards please contact the LWCD as soon as possible. All farms must be in full compliance by the end of 2014 to remain eligible for the FPP Tax Credit. Once a farm is found in compliance, they must remain in compliance.

What We are Evaluating

Manure Storage Facilities: All new (since 2002), substantially altered, or idle manure storage facilities must be constructed, maintained, or abandoned in accordance with accepted standards.

Clean Water Diversions: Clean water must be diverted from contacting feedlots, manure storage areas, barnyards within 300 ft of a stream, wetland, or areas susceptible to groundwater contamination, and barnyards within 1,000 ft of a lake.

Manure Management Prohibitions:

No livestock operations, regardless of size, can have any of the following:

- Manure storage facility overflows
- Unconfined manure piles within 300 ft of a stream, wetland, or areas susceptible to groundwater contamination or within 1,000 ft of a lake.
- Direct runoff from a feedlot or stored manure into waters of the state (surface water)
- Unlimited access by livestock to waters of the state where the high concentration of animals could prevent maintenance of adequate sod or self-sustaining vegetative cover on the shoreline or streambank.

Jefferson County LWCD Approach

It is our department's goal to work cooperatively with farmers to implement the Conservation Standards in NR 151. The LWCD tries to find conservation practices that provide solutions to benefit the environment and the farm, as well as securing County, State, or Federal cost-share funds whenever possible.

The Department's Partnership with Lower Spring Lake

Lower Spring Lake is an impoundment on the Scuppernong River and is located in both the Town and Village of Palmyra, Jefferson County. The lake has populations of 2 invasive aquatic plant species: Eurasian water milfoil and curly-leaf pondweed. These plants are not native to Wisconsin and pose many negative impacts to the lake that include: hinder navigation and other recreational activities, reduce the number of native plant species in the lake, and reduce diverse habitat needed by fish. Curly-leaf pondweed has an additional negative impact when it dies-off in July/August because it releases nutrients and causes excess algae blooms.

Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department and the Lower Spring Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District have been working cooperatively to address the aquatic invasive plant species for many years now. The first step was an aquatic plant survey and development of an Aquatic Plant Management plan. This plan is a requirement of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that enables lake groups to take steps to control the invasive plants in the lake. This plan was approved by the DNR in 2010.

The main goal of the plan is to work on controlling Eurasian water milfoil and curly-leaf pondweed through an adaptive management approach. This main goal will be implemented primarily through chemical control of the exotic plants. Each year, the invasive species reduction goal will be 50% for Eurasian water milfoil and 50% for curly-leaf pondweed. A concurrent goal is to protect and enhance the native plants found in the lake. This will be done by controlling the timing and location of various control techniques so that native plant disturbance is minimized. In the Spring of 2012, a whole lake chemical treatment was applied to Lower Spring Lake to control both Eurasian water milfoil and curly-leaf pondweed.

Ultimately, the goal of the adaptive management approach is to target control to the areas where the species are starting to re-establish after whole-lake chemical treatments. This means that the financial expenditures will be targeted at the problem areas.

In order to ensure that the control plan is as effective as possible, LWCD works with the Lake District on the goal of educating its board, members, and especially those involved in the control activities.

Preventing new introductions of invasive species to Lower Spring Lake in addition to preventing the export of existing species to other lakes is another goal of the project. Earlier this year, Lake District citizen volunteers were trained to educate boaters and anglers through the Clean Boats/Clean Waters Program. The citizens are volunteering their time at the boat launch. In addition, they will communicate with anglers who fish along the shoreline (and on the ice) regarding proper bait handling procedures to protect our waters.

Another goal of the project is to monitor the lake for new exotic species. It is important to be diligent in this monitoring because early detection can lead to timely treatment and thus more effective control. Control is more effective on a small population of exotic species than it is on an established large population. Volunteers from the Lake District are monitoring the lake for new introductions of exotic species.

Educating the public is a key objective of the project. The public is being kept informed of the management actions taken and their feedback will be sought throughout the implementation of the management plan.

The next meeting of the Lower Spring Lake District Board will be at 10 am, Saturday, January 12, 2013 at the Palmyra Village Hall. For more information on aquatic invasive species or on aquatic invasive plant control efforts, please contact Patricia Cicero (920-674-7172).

Land and Water Conservation Committee

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Land and Water Conservation Department

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Farmland Preservation Annual Certification

Each year, participants are required to certify that they are claiming the Farmland Preservation tax credit and are following the required conservation practices on their land. Some important notes on the 2012 tax year certification being mailed out after the beginning of the new year:

Due to increased administrative costs, the Annual Certification fee has been raised to \$25. Certifications are due to Land and Water Conservation Department by April 15, 2013. Each month after this date, a late fee of \$10 per month will be added to the cost of certification.

You must answer all questions on the certification form. We are attempting to make the certification form more user-friendly. If you have questions, please call the Conservation Department and we will be happy to assist you.

2013 Nutrient Management 590 checklists must be turned in with your Annual Certification or if you rent your farm out, your renter must have one on file with our office before we can accept your certification. If you or your renter already turned in a 2013 checklist, you will not need to turn it in again. Read your certification letter carefully. It will tell you what is required.

Incomplete certifications will be returned for correction.



FPP Landowner Contact Information

Effective January 2, 2013, family members or others wishing to be designated as the contact person for a landowner enrolled in the Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program must provide proof of their authority to Annually Certify or carry out other duties associated with program compliance. Such proof may be in the form of a Power of Attorney or trust document.

If you have any questions concerning this requirement, please contact the Conservation Department at 920-674-7110.

Find Your Weigh!

The Land and Water Conservation Staff, in conjunction with UW-Extension Agriculture Agent, Heidi Johnson, will be offering livestock farmers the chance to calibrate their manure spreaders. Staff will bring portable weigh scales out to your farm, weigh your spreader empty and full, measure the distance covered by the load and calculate your tons of manure spread per acre.

Call Heidi Johnson at 920-674-7197 or Nancy Lannert at 920-674-7115 to schedule your appointment and "find your weigh"!

Non-metallic Mining Reclamation

The Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) is responsible for permitting reclamation of non-metallic mines in the county. We have issued 27 reclamation permits, with nearly 500 total acres of disturbed area. Of these permitted sites, 24 are actively extracting material, two sites are nearing complete reclamation as site maintenance standards are fulfilled, one site is fully reclaimed, while four additional sites qualify for exemptions.

All sites are monitored annually by the LWCD. The information is compiled and reported to the Department of Natural Resources on a county-wide basis. The most current annual report showed a total active acreage of 445, while nearly 70 acres approaching full reclamation.

Over the last several months there seems to be an upward trend in extraction activity. During times of expansion it is to the operator's benefit to reclaim corresponding acreage to hold down fees and the financial assurance liability.

If you have any questions, please contact Gerry Kokkonen (920-674-7117).

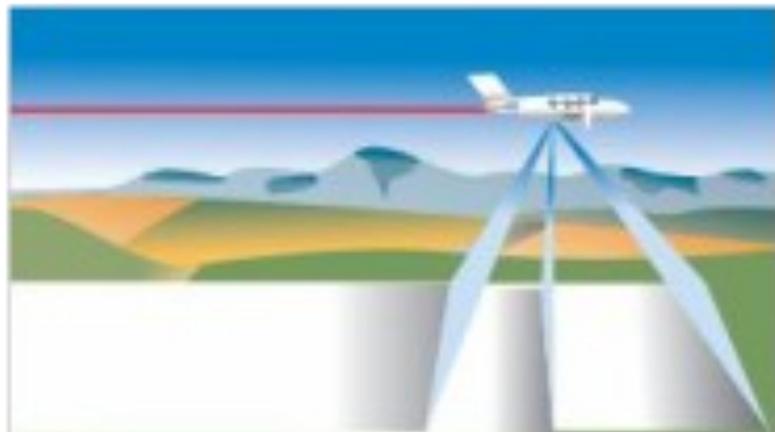
LiDAR Data

LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) is an optical remote sensing technology that can measure the distance to a target by illuminating the target with light, often using pulses from a laser. LiDAR is a relatively new and fast evolving technology. The technology is used in a wide range of professions, from surveying, engineering, archeology, agriculture, land-use planning and resource management.

The county has previously acquired and utilized LiDAR data primarily for flood plain mapping and two foot contour elevations. Many county residents are familiar with the county wide two foot contour map. The contour lines are just one product derived from the extremely data dense LiDAR project.

Over the spring and summer of this year another project was flown. The county received a grant to defray project costs along with those counties that had experienced extensive flooding during the summer of 2008. The final products from this project will include updated two foot contours, roadway and waterway break lines, elevation grids, in addition to several datasets that were previously not available. With the advancement in software and the availability of data, analysis of 3-D surfaces will become more common place. A couple specific applications involve average slope for farm fields, and a simplification of watershed analysis and delineation.

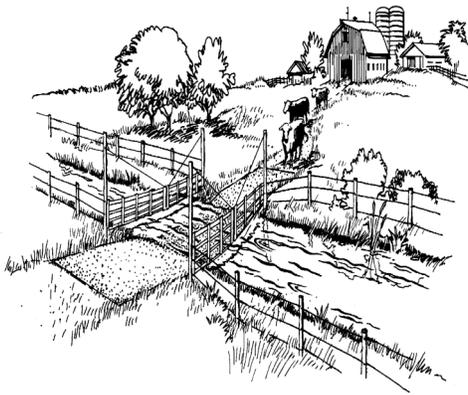
Utilizing high accuracy LiDAR data will improve conservation and resource management decision making, while saving time and potential costs. If you have questions about this mapping, please contact Gerry Kokkonen (920-674-7117).



Land and Water Conservation Department
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**WORKING TOGETHER TO
PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT**



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LWCD Web Watch

Farmers Feed Us website: www.farmersfeedus.org

Dairy Farming Today website-brought to you by America's Dairy Farmers:
www.dairyfarmingtoday.org

Beyond the Bean—The official website of the United Soybean Board:
www.unitedsoybean.org

LWCD Staff E-Mail Addresses:

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LWCD Web Site

<http://www.jeffersoncountywi.gov> — click on Land & Water Conservation